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TITLE FROM PEACE TO WAR: A Study of
THE NEUTRALITY AND NON-BELLIGERENCY OF
THE UNITED STATES, 1937 - 1941

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1949

**FROM PEACE TO WAR: A STUDY
OF THE NEUTRALITY AND NON-BELLIGERENCY
OF THE UNITED STATES, 1937-1941**

By

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PREFACE

Notwithstanding the flow of American tradition, the second World War and its aftermath have given the United States a more or less permanent role of leadership in world affairs; and the present conditions of that leadership grow at least in part from the conditions under which it was first assumed.

One basic fact is obvious: If this country had been much slower to recognize the dangers and necessities of its position in the midst of world crisis, it might soon have been confronted with an order which held no place for American leadership of any kind. Thus the exact course followed by the United States in shifting from negative isolation to what might be described as a neutrality that was friendly to Great Britain and France, from neutrality to non-belligerent coöperation with Great Britain and Russia, and thence to full involvement in the war is a matter of prime historical significance. To chart the whole pattern of American foreign policy as it evolved, facet by facet, through the years 1937-1941, to show its connection with the policies and actions of other states, and to align it with such imponderables as the growth of public opinion and the force of executive resolve are the objectives of this study.

The events, decisions, and pressures on which this development hinged have already inspired a good deal of scholarly and literary effort; but so far as this writer is aware, there has been no attempt to present a synthesis on anything like the scale contemplated here. Although it treats the whole question rather than a few selected aspects, Allan Nevins' brief essay, America in World Affairs (1942), is merely an enlightened commentary on the drift of United States policy during the pre-war years, not a study of its formulation. How War Came (1942) by the well-known journalists, Forrest Davis and Ernest K. Lindley, offers a reasonably circumstantial account of American non-belligerency after June 1940. But it does nothing with the earlier period; and while it contains a certain amount of "inside" information gleaned through the authors' excellent connections at the White House, its treatment is severely limited by the restraints of wartime security. Because of their early publication, moreover, neither of these works draws any strength from the highly important documentary and memoir materials which have become available since 1945. On the other hand, the more recent contributions of Charles A. Beard--American Foreign Policy in the Making, 1932-1940 (1946), and President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941 (1948)--suffer from a different kind of limitation. Taken together, they cover in detail all the years of the Roosevelt administration down to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. But they deal almost exclusively with the verbal aspects of foreign policy, and

Beard has limited himself still further by taking presidential deception of the American people as his major theme.

As distinguished from the more or less general treatments listed above, there are a yet greater number of works dealing with special phases of the subject: the United States and Japan, the United States and Vichy France, the United States and Spain, naval plans and movements in the Atlantic and the Pacific, the influence of public opinion on the making of policy. That some of these books have no great merit goes without saying, but even those which are excellent within their particular limitations make no effort to view American policy as a whole.

Most sections of this study are based primarily on official records and documents. The publications of the Joint Committee established by Congress in 1945 to investigate the circumstances surrounding the Pearl Harbor disaster form the largest single repository of such material. While it was mainly concerned with American-Japanese relations, the inquiry had many ramifications; and the eleven volumes of testimony assembled at the Committee's hearings, plus the nearly two hundred documents and series of documents introduced as exhibits, shed light on many other aspects of American policy.

Various State Department publications have been equally useful. Among these, three collections of documents--Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States:

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Japan, 1931-1941; and Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941--
deserve special mention. The Department of State Bulletin
and its forerunner, the Press Releases, are, of course, in-
dispensable to any study of recent American foreign rela-
tions. The Congressional Record, the reports of various
congressional committees, and certain publications of other
branches of the United States government have also been used
extensively; the collection of captured German documents
issued at the direction of the Office of Naval Intelligence
under title of Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing with
the German Navy has been particularly illuminating with re-
gard to certain phases of the Atlantic war in 1941. Foreign
government publications, especially British, have been em-
ployed where necessary. Most important of these is the
Parliamentary Debates. Documents on American Foreign Rela-
tions, edited by Samuel Shepard Jones and Denys P. Myers,
and The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt
have proved the most valuable documentary collections of an un-
official nature.

Since it was no longer necessary to rely heavily on
newspaper files and periodical records for most phases of
the study, these sources have been used only sparingly. On
the other hand, the importance of memoir material continues
to grow rapidly as more statesmen, diplomats, and other
public figures of the second World War go to press with their
reminiscences. Letters, diaries, memoirs, and personal

accounts (including the published recollections of numerous journalists) have been helpful in piecing out gaps in the documents and even more valuable for the insight they give into motive. The memoirs or diaries of Cordell Hull, Joseph C. Grew, Sumner Welles, Joseph E. Davies, Henry L. Stimson, Winston Churchill, and Count Galeazzo Ciano easily stand at the top of the list.

Among the nearly a hundred secondary works to which reference has been made, only five need be mentioned here. One of these is Our Vichy Gamble (1946) by William L. Langer. Written at the request of Secretary Hull and with full access to State Department files, this book offers a remarkably complete discussion of our policy toward Vichy France from mid-1940 to the end of the war and is especially valuable for its extensive quotations from otherwise unpublished documents bearing on this question. Working from personal knowledge gained as Economic Adviser to the State Department for many years and achieving results of similar competence, Herbert Feis covers our wartime relations with Spain in The Spanish Story (1948). In the first and third volumes of his officially inspired and supported, though not officially directed, History of United States Naval Operations in World War II, Samuel Eliot Morison expounds the development of American naval policy through the war's first stages. The remaining member of this select group is Robert E. Sherwood's Roosevelt and Hopkins (1948). A long biography of Harry L. Hopkins, with special stress on his war activities, this work is

based directly upon the latter's personal papers and gains special value through Sherwood's frequent custom of allowing Hopkins to speak directly in generous quotations from his own letters and reports. Thanks to their very extensive employment of material which is not yet published and which, in large part, is still not available to the general student, these five books are of prime utility in their respective spheres.

This study has not yet reached what the author hopes will be its ultimate form. Since its fundamental purpose is to work out a long, broad, and complex evolution, a decent regard for space and proportion has limited the amount of detail given each phase; and there has been no effort to expand the treatment either through the use of unpublished sources or the discussion of matters which do not reveal large patterns and pivotal developments. As it is, the general pattern and essential motivations are clear enough. Within this outline, the Japanese, German, and British phases of the story leave few important questions unanswered. But the synthesis will be perfected only when American relations with Russia, Finland, Vichy France, Spain, Italy (especially after June 1940), the Vatican, and the Balkan states can be treated in greater detail. Future revision and expansion must deal largely with these problems.

The author wishes, in conclusion, to express his thanks to the Dean and Executive Board of the Horace H. Rackham

School of Graduate Studies and the Regents of the University of Michigan. When they granted him a Rackham Special Fellowship for the academic year 1947-1948, they allowed him freedom to initiate this work under the best possible conditions and materially hastened its completion.

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INTRODUCTION

The failure of the United States to hold itself in any way accountable for maintaining the peace it helped design in 1919 has often been cited as a large contribution to the elements which finally produced the second World War. That this argument harbors a measure of truth cannot be denied. On the other hand, it is a point that can easily be over-emphasized; for whatever the shortcomings of American policy down to 1939, any fair appraisal of the world situation must acknowledge that American responsibility for the conflict itself was both highly indirect and shared by many others.

By common agreement, the antecedents of the second World War fall under two headings--positive causes and negative causes--and there is little question as to what countries supplied the former. The wilful aggressions by which Germany, Japan, and Italy steadily rotted the fabric of international order between 1931 and 1941 give them a claim on actual war guilt that is nearly exclusive. But ranged against the affirmative policies and militant acts of the dictatorships are the lethargy and indecision which kept the democratic powers from using effective counter-measures until affairs had reached such a pass that counter-measures rendered war inevitable. Only at this secondary level of responsibility can American policy be called into question, but here the

question is legitimate.

It seems obvious, as a general proposition, that if the United States had joined the League of Nations at the outset and insisted that the greatest weaknesses of that organization be promptly eliminated, the League might well have been strong enough by 1930 to halt the spread of international transgression as soon as it started. Indeed, if the United States had assumed true responsibility at any time before 1937, international tension might have been brought under control soon enough to prevent another war.

This cannot be regarded as axiomatic, however. Considering the stiff-necked reluctance of many other powers to become the instruments of a genuine international policy, there is no assurance that American leadership could have succeeded in making the League effective even during the 1920's. After 1932, when aggression became a constant problem, the opportunities for telling coöperation in defense of peace were certainly negligible. While something might still have been done, the caution of most European countries was nearly as unassailable as the pusillanimity of the United States; and the decision which eventually led Great Britain and France to embrace an attitude of firm opposition toward Germany a year before the United States was prepared to do likewise seems to have rested less upon a firmer adherence to internationalist theory than upon their greater proximity to the source of trouble.

The critics of America must still be allowed the justice of their case: If American foresight was little more restricted than that of other countries, no amount of qualification can represent it as having been greater. The monumental character of Europe's indecision cannot change the fact that the United States, as a whole, was blindly isolationist through much of the period between the two wars. But these other circumstances, as well as isolationism, helped form the background of United States policy during that interim.

American isolationism reached its height in 1937. By this time, practically everyone sensed the approach of war; and misgiving took refuge in an idea of super-neutrality which made it clear that our chief concern with the world situation was to live apart from overseas conflict, regardless of its nature, and to avoid international responsibility of any kind. Four years later, however, the American position was wholly changed, American commitments virtually unlimited. Despite a formidable residue of isolationist belief, the United States had recognized the explicit needs of its own defense and assumed an attitude of world leadership which few could have predicted when the neutrality act of May 1, 1937, became law. While this change did not occur in time to prevent war, it came early enough to save the democratic world from defeat; and it ripened into a concept of world responsibility which has formed the basis of United

States policy in the post-war years. Whether this new outlook can prevent a third world conflict remains to be seen; but whatever the result, it does not now appear likely that the United States can again be charged with the omissions of the 1930's.

CHAPTER I

1937--AND ITS ANTECEDENTS

I.

By the spring of 1937, the international situation held little that was calculated to beget optimism among informed and thoughtful lovers of peace anywhere. World developments of the preceding five or six years had further illuminated the admitted weaknesses of the peace program instituted in 1919, and its failure was now explicit. Since 1933, disarmament had been no more than a lingering aspiration; and the unwillingness of the powers either to make the League of Nations effective or to participate in other forms of cooperative action during the series of major crises which, since 1931, had progressively destroyed the familiar balances of international relations unmistakably revealed the hopelessness of a collective security that had never been allowed to mature. Japan still ruled Manchuria through the fiction of a puppet government; a rearmed Germany stood defiantly in the Rhineland; Italy smugly contemplated her new Ethiopian empire; and foreign intervention gave the Spanish civil war many characteristics of a European struggle in miniature despite the efforts of a British-sponsored non-intervention committee. The present and immediate past were bad enough, but the future might easily be worse; for if aggression had

thus far been waged only upon a relatively limited scale, its scale was obviously growing, and a general consciousness of impending war could no longer be denied.

Faced by these bleak promises, the United States moved to end the long interim of proposal, discussion, and experiment through which it had been endeavoring by the magic of special embargo legislation to substitute a firm notice of intent for the aloof and somewhat indifferent, but still equivocal, attitude toward European problems which had marked its foreign policy since the World War. Congress acted in the final days of April, and the new neutrality bill became law on May 1. Americans, it seemed, had at last made up their minds.

The third and most ambitious in a series of congressional acts providing that an arms embargo and various other commercial and financial restrictions should be imposed upon American trade with any nations that became involved in war, whatever the reason, this joint resolution of May 1, 1937, virtually completed an edifice of legislative neutrality that had been years in the building. Representing both a theory of international relations and a plan of action, it was not only the most complete formal expression of that determination to remain untouched by foreign wars which became such a marked feature of the American scene in the 1930's,¹ but it also provided machinery which, in the opinion of a

¹Cf. Allan Nevins, America in World Affairs (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1942), p. 91.

vast majority of the country, offered the best, if not the sole, means to that end.

This law and the state of mind which lay behind it were based primarily upon what were regarded as the lessons to be derived from American experience in the war of 1914-1918. At their base lay a conviction that this country's natural advantages of geographical position, size, and strength made it substantially immune to the effects of any European war. To maintain neutrality during such a struggle might impose many hardships and annoyances upon the United States, but these were as nothing compared with war itself. Americans might prefer the victory of one side or the other; but the victor could never, in any event, seriously threaten their national well-being. American security had not been involved in the World War; it was inconceivable that American security could depend upon the outcome of any future European conflict. It followed that the United States had gone to war in 1917 for reasons that had little to do with its vital interests. Certain idealistic objectives had been alleged at the time; but that these objectives escaped realization had long been plain to everyone, and they were not proportionate to the cost in any event. Viewed from this standpoint, American intervention in the World War became little more than a mechanical process, a huge blunder which materialized inevitably through a definite set of policies and a definite series of acts totally unrelated to fundamental considerations of national security. In consequence,

these acts and policies, having been identified and analyzed, could be avoided in future if the necessary prohibitions were established in time.

Only by ruthlessly observing the spirit of these convictions while war came and by fully implementing the provisions of this law when war arrived could American policy move further in this direction. The decision of May 1, 1937, was not final, however. It was already evident that the Roosevelt administration had never completely accepted the underlying thesis of the special neutrality acts, and soon its foreign policy was reversing the dominant trend. This movement was slow and less than steady at first, but it gained both momentum and internal consistency after the European war started and as public opinion shifted with it. While neither policy nor opinion repudiated the American intention to stay out of war, all the major premises on which this intention rested were slowly undermined as growing concern over America's place in a lawless world impelled the country first to admit a decided partisanship, then return for all practical purposes to the 1914-1917 basis of neutrality, pass abruptly into non-belligerency, and finally enter the war as a full partner.

Complete as it was, this reversal of course by an isolationist America did not lack roots in the past. To a considerable extent, it merely duplicated our experience of 1914-1917, proving once more that American sympathies and fears could be denied only up to a point. But it also

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contained a large element of prior conviction. Between the two wars, the United States always had a well-organized body of internationalist opinion which regarded American membership in the League, or lacking this, decisive activity in close coöperation with other states as the best, indeed the only, way to prevent the outbreak of another war.² Though comparatively small, this group was persistently vocal and doubtless more influential than its numbers warranted. These internationalists refused to admit defeat even in 1937, subjected the neutrality law to constant attrition from that moment forward, and mobilized opinion to demand appropriate changes as the logic of events supplemented the logic of precept.

But not all their strength lay in what happened after 1937. Another part of it grew out of their relative prominence during the years in which isolationism was reaching its height. Never confining themselves to the simple frontal attack, they hewed industriously at the enemy's flank. Tactics sometimes produced strange, if temporary, alliances; and over considerable periods the internationalists drew indirect support from many who did not accept their main thesis.³ Thanks to this confusion of the peace movement and to the chance which now and again placed one or more of

²Cf. Nevins, America in World Affairs, p. 92; also John W. Masland, "The 'Peace' Groups Join Battle," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Dec. 1940), pp. 666-67.

³Masland, "The 'Peace' Groups Join Battle," pp. 667-68.

their number in seats of power, the internationalists achieved some passing success at disarmament and treaty-making, managed to keep the United States on the threshold of international coöperation until 1935, and took a leading part in early demands for that special embargo legislation which proved such a boomerang once control of the movement left their hands. Although much of their work was undone by 1937, they had at least succeeded in keeping their ideas alive.

II.

In their distrust of advance commitments which make the policy of the United States directly and immediately dependent upon the acts or the fortunes of another power, Americans, as a people, have always been fundamentally isolationist.⁴ The conditions of life, the techniques of war, and the stability of the European state system during the nineteenth century brought them to the eve of the World War without a convincing demonstration that altered circumstances might eventually demand a changed attitude. As it turned out, the war furnished no such lesson either. That American thought was moving in a new direction seemed indicated by the objectives of the crusading zeal with which the country eventually

⁴For an excellent survey of the origins and problems of isolationism in the United States, see J. Fred Rippy, America and the Strife of Europe (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1938), chapter 1. Cf. Thomas A. Bailey, Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal (New York: Macmillan, 1945), p. 30.

fought, but this very enthusiasm raised hopes which were not fulfilled by the peace; and the fact that our participation had violated so basic a state of mind powerfully reinforced the disillusionment which was a natural outgrowth of disappointed, if somewhat fatuous, aspirations. While the bulk of American opinion in 1920-1921 probably favored our adherence to the League of Nations, at least with reservations,⁵ it was not vocal enough to keep senators and President from achieving a stalemate in the process of ratifying the peace treaty. As a consequence, the United States did not become a member in 1920; but this failed to evoke the protest Wilson expected.⁶ The League was inseparable from the war and the peace; and perhaps as a result of having filled a relatively minor place in the total war effort, Americans were inclined to view all three with a certain detachment.⁷ This, added to such factors as prolonged contemplation of secret treaties made by the Allies during the war, differences at the Peace Conference, later squabbles over war debts, evidence of what appeared to be European ingratitude, and disgust with the growing impotence of the League, contributed still further to their dissatisfaction with recent experience and hurried

⁵Bailey, Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal, p. 361; also Denna F. Fleming, The United States and the League of Nations, 1918-1920 (New York; Putnam, 1932), pp. 218-19. Cited henceforth as U. S. and the League.

⁶Fleming, U. S. and the League, pp. 499-500.

⁷Cf. R. B. McCallum, Public Opinion and the Last Peace (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1944), p. 158.

their return to a nationalistic view of world affairs which made them rest content with the action of the Senate. These forces grew stronger as time went on, and the nationalism of 1920 emerged as confirmed isolationism little more than a decade later.⁸

As such views took possession of the general mind, they derived both real and fancied support from the work of historians. Throughout the twenties, a growing number of writers joined in an ambitious reconsideration of the steps by which this country had entered the war. And whether they desired it or not, it was inevitable, if perhaps unfortunate, that this rather limited problem became so intimately connected with the whole question of war responsibility.

Appearing in 1921 before the Versailles war guilt thesis was seriously questioned, Charles Seymour's Woodrow Wilson and the World War presented the submarine issue as the decisive cause of American intervention and the idealism which Wilson persuaded the country to share as the moving force behind American policy once the United States was committed.⁹ This work added nothing but arrangement to the wartime conception of things, but it was not off the press before the larger question of Germany's sole responsibility was placed under attack by Sidney B. Fay. The latter's three famous

⁸Cf. Bailey, Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal, p. 361; also McCallum, Public Opinion and the Last Peace, p. 159.

⁹Charles Seymour, Woodrow Wilson and the World War (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1921), pp. 113, 229, 353.

articles in the American Historical Review in 1920-1921¹⁰ launched American revisionism with a moderate thesis of joint responsibility for the events of July and early August 1914. This view was later expanded in the same author's two-volume Origins of the War, published in 1928.¹¹ Another revision, less sympathetic toward Germany but still removed from the Versailles pattern, was brought forth in 1930 in Bernadotte Schmitt's Coming of the War.¹² Neither of these studies was immediately concerned with the problem of American intervention, and neither offered much direct comfort to American isolationism. It was entirely possible to accept the view of either one without retreating to an isolationist position so far as American policy was concerned. But any reapportionment of blame lent credence to the idea that our former allies were no better than they should have been, and it was only a step from questioning them to questioning ourselves. A current had been set in motion; and the more one doubted the purity of Russia, France, and Great Britain the more one was inclined to suspect the motives and wisdom of those who had guided American policy while the United States went to war on the Allied side.

¹⁰Sidney B. Fay, "New Light on the Origins of the World War," American Historical Review, Vol. 25 (July 1920), pp. 616-39; Vol. 26 (Oct. 1920), pp. 37-53; (Jan. 1921), pp. 225-54.

¹¹Sidney B. Fay, The Origins of the World War, 2 vols. (New York; Macmillan, 1928).

¹²Bernadotte E. Schmitt, The Coming of the War, 2 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1930).

This current got out of hand with the extreme revisionism developed by Harry Elmer Barnes in the middle 1920's and the direct application of his exaggerated views to the study of American neutrality before 1917. Barnes first entered the controversy over war guilt as a reviewer of other people's books. In January 1922, his spirited condemnation of Edward Raymond Turner's new textbook, Europe Since 1870, appeared in The New Republic. Turner allowed Germany to retain major responsibility for bringing on the war, and Barnes criticized him severely for not paying more attention to the new research based upon the post-war revelations of European chancelleries.¹³ The real quarrel did not begin until two years later, however, when Barnes published a full-length article in the same journal directing still heavier fire at the latest revision of Charles Downer Hazen's standard college text, Europe Since 1815. Accusing Hazen of wilful blindness and obstinacy in maintaining his stern assessment of German war guilt, Barnes expressed the view that the book's publishers were morally bound to arrange for its revision before "it misinforms and perverts the historical judgment of thousands of college students and general readers..."¹⁴ For several weeks thereafter, The New Republic served as

¹³ Harry Elmer Barnes, Review of Europe Since 1870 by E. R. Turner, New Republic, Vol. 29 (Jan. 18, 1922), pp. 228-30.

¹⁴ Harry Elmer Barnes, "Seven Books of History Against the Germans," ibid., Vol. 38 (Mar. 19, 1924), p. 15.

arena for an acrimonious exchange of letters between Turner and Hazen on the one hand and Barnes on the other. As this personal struggle subsided, Barnes broadened his front with a long article in the May 1924 number of Current History which examined the responsibility of each country in some detail and concluded that Austria was most guilty, followed by Russia, France, Germany, and England, in that order.¹⁵ Albert Bushnell Hart replied with a brief dissent in the same number;¹⁶ but the next month Current History offered a symposium by a group of leading historians which indicated that, while Barnes was regarded as too precipitate, the major tenets of revisionism were gaining favor with the profession generally.¹⁷ During the next two years, Current History continued to publish articles bearing on different aspects of the question; and by 1926, when Barnes rounded out his thesis in a book-length treatment, the whole matter had been quite thoroughly publicized.

In his Genesis of the War, Barnes announced views even more extreme than he had defended in 1924. Here he made Russia and France bear the major responsibility for the

¹⁵Harry Elmer Barnes, "Assessing the Blame for the World War," Current History, Vol. 20 (May 1924), p. 194.

¹⁶Albert Bushnell Hart, "A Dissent from the Conclusions of Professor Barnes," Current History, Vol. 20 (May 1924), pp. 195-96.

¹⁷-----"Assessing the Blame for the World War: A Symposium," Current History, Vol. 20 (June 1924), pp. 452-62.

outbreak of the war and then applied the assumption of Allied culpability to the question of how the United States became involved in so unedifying a struggle.¹⁸ Holding that Allied propaganda was highly effective in persuading Americans to accept the view that Germany was solely responsible for provoking the war and that German ambition threatened the security of the entire world, Barnes maintained that our trade relations with the Allies and our extensive loans to them largely completed the task of directing our sympathies toward England and France.¹⁹ Taking advantage of this situation, the unneutral Wilson, ably seconded by such warmongering assistants as Colonel House and Secretary Lansing, deliberately worked the nation into a declaration of war by playing up the submarine issue and related matters within a misty shroud of idealism.²⁰

Barnes' entry was followed in 1929 by C. Hartley Grattan's Why We Fought.²¹ Here an entire book was devoted to the problem of American intervention. Although Grattan

¹⁸ Harry Elmer Barnes, The Genesis of the World War: An Introduction to the Problem of War Guilt (New York: Knopf, 1926), chapter 9.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 610.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 624-27, 594-96.

²¹ C. Hartley Grattan, Why We Fought (New York: Vanguard Press, 1929).

studied Allied and German propaganda in the United States much more thoroughly than Barnes and was somewhat less unsympathetic toward President Wilson, his conclusions were generally the same: that the submarine controversy was less the reason than the excuse for our entry and that American participation was made inevitable by a complex of deeper, more sinister, and less readily isolated forces than the war-time explanation implied.

This long dispute and its one-sided summing-up in the two latter works, taken in conjunction with such studies as Harold Laswell's Propaganda Technique in the World War and such refutations of the familiar atrocity story as Sir Arthur Ponsonby's Falsehood in War-Time,²² gave the isolationists a good deal of ammunition by 1930. A considerable, if not overwhelming, weight of scholarly and semi-scholarly authority had retired the submarine to an ignominiously secondary position, leaving America exposed to the world and itself as the dupe of propaganda, the profit motive, warmongering leaders, a baseless conviction of moral superiority, and a trumped-up appeal to its better nature. It was enough to confirm popular feeling in its isolationist predilection and to set the stage for the great debate of the 1930's, when generalizations about the last war were to be transformed into specific measures against the next.

²²Harold D. Lasswell, Propaganda Technique in the World War (New York: Knopf, 1927); and Sir Arthur Ponsonby, Falsehood in War-Time (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1928).

III.

Confronted by this determined advance of isolationist sentiment, the internationalists were able to conduct no more than a rear-guard action. Their position grew increasingly desperate as time went on, but their efforts were never relaxed and their work not entirely futile. Although it had been twice rejected by the Senate, the League of Nations emerged as a prominent issue in the presidential campaign of 1920. The Democratic platform called definitely for American membership in the League.²³ The Republicans, on the other hand, managed to straddle the question;²⁴ and even though thirty-one prominent citizens publicly stated their belief in October 1920 that Harding's election would be the surest step toward world organization,²⁵ the latter, once elected, went only far enough to recommend in 1923 that the United States join the World Court.²⁶ Within a short time, the establishment of any direct relationship between this country and the League became palpably hopeless; but proceeding on the theory that half a loaf is better than nothing at all, League advocates strove unremittingly to approximate

²³Fleming, U. S. and the League, p. 456.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 453-54.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 461-64.

²⁶Denna F. Fleming, The United States and World Organization, 1920-1933 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1938), p. 239. Cited henceforth as U. S. and World Organization.

their objective in other ways.

Working unofficially, a number of Americans--including James T. Shotwell and David Hunter Miller--gave freely of their personal advice and support in connection with the League's efforts between 1920 and 1925 to strengthen its own security system, especially through agreements which rendered a member's obligations under the Covenant less vague. When this move culminated in the failure of the Geneva Protocol of 1924 to gain acceptance²⁷ and individual European countries began looking for security in regional pacts of the Locarno type, other branches of the American peace movement were already hard at work on plans of their own.

The central theme of these new inspirations was the idea of a general agreement to outlaw war. Salmon O. Levinson, a wealthy Chicago lawyer, is generally credited with having originated the project. As early as 1919, this gentleman convinced himself that war should be divested of its legality and that states which resorted to it should be treated as criminals before the law of nations. At first, he believed that force might be required to implement his scheme, and he offered no special objection to the principle of sanctions in the League's peace machinery. However, in order to gain the support of such isolationists as Senators

²⁷For a brief, first-hand survey of these efforts, see James T. Shotwell, "Plans and Protocols to End War: Historical Outline and Guide," International Conciliation, No. 208 (Mar. 1925), pp. 93-95. On the Geneva Protocol, see Fleming, U. S. and World Organization, pp. 197-201.

William E. Borah and Philander C. Knox--who were disposed to favor his broad thesis but objected to sanctions of any kind as snares for American policy--Levinson abandoned this part of his view and fell back upon the argument that public opinion must be the only force governing relations between states.²⁸

Knox died before anything could be accomplished, but Borah eventually assumed legislative direction of the program and in 1923 introduced a resolution asking the Senate to go on record with a declaration that war should be "outlawed as an institution or means for the settlement of international controversies by making it a public crime under the law of nations."²⁹ This move came to nothing, but the opening gun of the campaign which was to bring forth the Kellogg-Briand Pact had been fired.

Had it not been for confusion in the American peace movement, Levinson's scheme might have gone no further; but that movement was distracted by its own multiplicity.

²⁸On these developments, see Fleming, U. S. and World Organization, pp. 291-92; Drew Pearson and Constantine Brown, The American Diplomatic Game (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1935), pp. 12-13; and John E. Stoner, S. O. Levinson and the Pact of Paris: A Study in the Techniques of Influence (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1942), pp. 48-49, 81, 89.

²⁹S. Res. 441, Feb. 13, 1923, United States, Congress, Senate, Journal of the Senate of the United States of America (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office and others, 1814-), (67th Cong., 3rd & 4th sess.), pp. 12-13. Cited henceforth as Senate Journal.

Speaking generally, Americans who thought about peace in any but the most nebulous fashion could be divided into three groups: pacifists, internationalists, and nationalists or isolationists. All favored peace, but each looked for it within a particular frame of reference. The pacifists opposed all war as evil, attacking it through such devices as moral argument and refusal to bear arms. The internationalists regarded it as a practical problem to be met through international organization and a planned coöperation among states which did not rule out the possibility of preventive war. Taking a much narrower position than either of the others, the isolationists simply viewed war as an activity from which the United States should abstain except for immediate self-defense, and believed that the American government should assume no obligations that were capable of hampering its freedom in this respect.

It was possible, nevertheless, for all three groups to cross each others' lines without receding from their basic convictions. During the early 1920's, the pacifists had supported the internationalists in their demand that the United States become a member of the League. Along about 1925, however, they became concerned over the likelihood of preventive wars under League auspices and withdrew from the internationalist camp.³⁰ Now it was the internationalists'

³⁰Cf. Masland, "The 'Peace' Groups Join Battle," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Dec. 1940), p. 667.

turn to cross lines. With the League manifestly unable to obtain from its members the powers it required for effectiveness, American coöperation with the League seemed, in their eyes, more essential than ever. For the moment, the scheme to outlaw war appeared to be the half-loaf they had been seeking, a half-loaf which patience and judicious tactics might eventually make whole. Thus the Levinson-Borah group received help from an unexpected quarter.

Despite his low opinion of Levinson,³¹ it was James T. Shotwell who furnished the connecting link. Returning home from Germany in March 1927, Shotwell paused briefly in Paris for some talks with Aristide Briand, the French Foreign Minister, and essayed to suggest a means whereby the United States might be able to coöperate with the League of Nations in the interest of peace.³² The upshot of these conversations was Briand's somewhat offhand proposal on April 6 that France and the United States conclude an agreement mutually renouncing war with respect to each other.³³ Happy with the opening thus provided, Levinson hurried to Paris, while

³¹Cf. Stoner, Levinson and the Pact of Paris, p. 215.

³²James T. Shotwell, On the Rim of the Abyss (New York: Macmillan, 1936), pp. 133-34.

³³Briand's statement to the Associated Press, Apr. 6, 1927, United States, Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1862-), 1927, Vol. 2, p. 612. Cited henceforth as Foreign Relations of U. S.

Borah took up the cudgels at home. Thanks to his position as chairman, the latter was finally able to confront Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg with the unanimous recommendation of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations that the French proposal for a bilateral pact be expanded into a general treaty outlawing war.³⁴ This formidable advice stirred the reluctant Kellogg to action; the American plan eventually gained acceptance; and the Kellogg-Briand Pact was signed in Paris on August 27, 1928.³⁵

However it may be regarded, the Pact of Paris was mainly the result of American endeavor; and it offered comfort to almost every shade of American opinion. It was a resounding denunciation of war to which no one could take exception. Its innocence of both sanctions and machinery for consultation endeared it to isolationist and pacifist alike. At the same time, its generosity of principle opened wide interpretative possibilities. Here the internationalists took their stand. Some argued that the Pact largely destroyed the old legal basis of neutrality, as between signatories, and obligated the United States to renounce that condition

³⁴Fleming, U. S. and World Organization, pp. 294-95.

³⁵Treaty between the United States and other Powers, Aug. 27, 1928, Foreign Relations of U. S., 1928, Vol. 1, pp. 153-57.

in future wars.³⁶ No one who was so minded could have much trouble deriving a moral obligation from the rather vague wording of the treaty, nor could he overlook the circumstance that most of its signatories were also members of the League of Nations. Legally, a connection was hard to establish, but could the dichotomy always be upheld in practice? A number of senators thought not. In the debate on ratification, Bruce of Maryland lauded the Pact as a move toward our adherence to the League.³⁷ Isolationist Hiram Johnson knowingly quoted an opinion of internationalist David Hunter Miller which characterized the agreement as being "in effect, a treaty between the United States and the League," meaning "that the sanctions of Article 16 of the Covenant have behind them the moral acquiescence of the United States."³⁸ Bingham of Connecticut quoted Professor Edwin M. Borchard of the Yale Law School, who condemned the League as ardently as Miller supported it, to much the same effect.³⁹ Moses of New

³⁶ Among those who ultimately took such a view was Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of State in the Hoover administration. See Henry L. Stimson, The Pact of Paris: Three Years of Development, Address before the Council on Foreign Relations, New York City, Aug. 8, 1932 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1932), p. 5. Cited henceforth as The Pact of Paris. See also Quincy Wright, "The Meaning of the Pact of Paris," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 27 (Jan. 1933), p. 59; and concurring opinions expressed by Fenwick, Whitton, Vandenbosch, Graham and Eagleton in American Society of International Law, Proceedings, 1933, pp. 55, 147, 152, 157, 163, respectively. Cf. dissenting opinion of Borchard, ibid., pp. 93-94; and views of Garner, ibid., pp. 95-96.

³⁷ United States, Congress, Congressional Record (Washington: Gov't Printing Office, 1874-), Vol. 70, p. 1284.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 1532.

³⁹ Idem.

Hampshire and Reed of Missouri unsuccessfully proposed reservations which betrayed a plain fear that the United States rested in danger of being drawn into League activities.⁴⁰

Moreover, the drive for special embargo legislation, the most obvious means by which the United States could dignify the Peace Pact and bring itself into active support of the League, was already under way. In December 1927, while negotiations leading to the treaty were still in a preliminary stage, Representative Burton of Ohio had introduced a resolution to prohibit

...the export of arms, munitions, and war material to any country engaged in a war of aggression against another, in violation of a treaty, convention, or any other arrangement providing for recourse to peaceful means for the settlement of international differences.⁴¹

This attempt to have the United States discourage foreign wars by halting the sale of war materials to aggressors and treaty-breakers was one thing. But Burton had returned to the fray in January 1928--apparently with the same broad objective in view--to offer a second resolution calling for an impartial arms embargo against all belligerent states,

⁴⁰Congressional Record, Vol. 70, p. 623.

⁴¹For the full text, see Quincy Wright, "The Future of Neutrality," International Conciliation, No. 242 (Sept. 1928), pp. 440-41.

aggressors and victims alike.⁴² This was something quite different.

Thus the wheel came to full circle and the final alternatives were presented nearly a year before the Peace Pact was ratified. That the fundamental distinction between Burton's first and second proposals escaped clear recognition at the time may be ascribed in part to the fact that the United States had not yet reached the stage of practical measures and in part to the general confusion of the peace forces already mentioned. Far from resolving this confusion, the Peace Pact tended instead to aggravate it; for the renunciation of war enlisted the support of all three groups, with the result that clear alignments were erased for a second time. Against this background of multifarious proposal, loosely-conceived means, and essentially different ends--though all of them were labeled "peace"--it was possible for any specific measure which signified one thing to one school of thought to mean something entirely different to another. The arms embargo idea, frequently united with assumptions based upon the Peace Pact and other treaties, suggested a means to everyone. Using this same wide avenue, both the isolationists and the internationalists undertook

⁴² It was referred to committee, but not reported. See United States, Congress, House of Representatives, Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States of America (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office and others, 1814-), (70th Cong., 1st sess.), p. 1231. Cited henceforth as House Journal.

to work out their respective schemes of salvation, while the pacifists trailed somewhat aimlessly in their wake. By piping the same measures, they were often in danger of dancing to each others' tunes; and this confusion was to persist until 1933. In the meanwhile, both sides had reason to hope.

IV.

The opening of extensive Japanese aggression in China in 1931 called new attention to the Peace Pact and inaugurated a new drive to render it more effective. The first important move in this direction was undertaken by Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, who pronounced his doctrine of non-recognition on January 7, 1932. In his identic note of that date, Stimson assured Japan and China that the United States did not

...intend to recognize any treaty or agreement...which may impair the treaty rights of the United States or its citizens in China...[or]...any situation, treaty, or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenants and obligations of the Pact of Paris...⁴³

As invoked here, the doctrine of non-recognition was not without precedent in United States policy. In general conception and tenor, this note closely resembled the

⁴³Identic Note to the Chinese and Japanese governments, Jan. 7, 1932, United States, Department of State, Press Releases (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1929-39), No. 119 (Jan. 9, 1932), pp. 41-42.

communication handed Japan on May 11, 1915, by Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan.⁴⁴ That Stimson regarded the doctrine as a kind of sanction--the only one available to him at the time--is clear enough. By his own account, it was intended not only to fulfill American treaty obligations to China but also to uphold the "system of cooperative action for the preservation of peace" which had been set up since the World War and of which he considered the United States a part.⁴⁵

That this definite linking of non-recognition with the Pact of Paris represented a step forward in support of international cooperation cannot be denied; but the doctrine's usefulness as a sanction is, and was then, indirect at best. The general purpose of non-recognition is "to prevent the validation of a legal nullity."⁴⁶ In this sense, it does possess a certain moral force and leaves the non-recognizing state free to nullify the change involved if the opportunity should arise at a later date. The other effects of non-recognition as applied to smaller changes of international

⁴⁴ For a comparison of these notes, see Robert Langer, Seizure of Territory: The Stimson Doctrine and Related Principles in Legal Theory and Diplomatic Practice (Princeton: Univ. Press, 1947), pp. 58-59.

⁴⁵ Henry L. Stimson, The Far Eastern Crisis; Recollections and Observations (New York: Harper, for the Council on Foreign Relations, 1936), p. 233.

⁴⁶ H. Lauterpacht, Recognition in International Law (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1947), p. 413.

significance are by no means clear. But as applied to new governments and new states, it does have certain political and juridical consequences--such as lack of formal relations between the unrecognized and other governments and the inability of the unrecognized government to maintain suit in the courts of other states--which are capable of producing serious inconveniences for the governments concerned if non-recognition is widely invoked or long continued.⁴⁷ Measured in terms of early practical results, therefore, its real value as a sanction depends upon the degree of unanimity with which the governments of the world--especially the great powers--apply the disabilities arising from non-recognition to the situation in question.

Fully aware of this fact, Stimson had made a bid for British support before dispatching the note. But London, on January 11, declined to take any formal action regarding

⁴⁷ So far as relations between the United States and Japan were concerned, the principal application of the Stimson doctrine lay in the American refusal to recognize the new state of Manchukuo, constituted in 1934. Weighing the general accomplishments and shortcomings of non-recognition as a sanction after a careful survey of its theory and practice through the second World War, Langer concludes that its positive values--political, juridical, and ethical--notably outweigh its weaknesses. See Langer, Seizure of Territory, pp. 287-88. For other estimates, largely favorable, of the value of non-recognition in theory and practice, see Lauterpacht, Recognition in International Law, pp. 415-20; Quincy Wright, "The Stimson Note of Jan. 7, 1932," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 26 (Apr. 1932), p. 346; and James W. Garner, "Non-Recognition of Illegal Territorial Annexations and Claims to Sovereignty," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 30 (Oct. 1936), p. 686. A less enthusiastic view may be found in Arnold D. McNair, "The Stimson Doctrine of Non-Recognition," British Yearbook of International Law, Vol. 14 (1933), p. 73.

the American program.⁴⁸ This show of lethargy on the part of Great Britain certainly hindered the full growth of the Stimson doctrine's theoretical possibilities; and endorsement of his stand by the League of Nations on March 11⁴⁹ was therefore not as helpful as it might otherwise have been.

Nevertheless, Stimson continued doing what he could to buttress the Pact of Paris. Speaking before the Council on Foreign Relations in August, he asserted that war had been so closely shorn of its legality that it could no longer be considered the "source and subject of rights" and that violators of the Peace Pact had to be regarded as law-breakers. Striking directly at traditional neutrality, he added: "We no longer draw a circle about them and treat them with the punctilios of the duelist's code."⁵⁰ He went on to emphasize public opinion as the real sanction behind the Pact, pointed out that non-recognition was one means of bringing it to bear upon specific problems, and concluded that since "any effective invocation of the power of world opinion postulates discussion and consultation" the Pact of

⁴⁸Stimson, The Far Eastern Crisis, pp. 98-99.

⁴⁹Resolution of Assembly of the League of Nations, Mar. 11, 1932, Department of State, Press Releases, No. 128 (Mar. 12, 1932), pp. 256-57.

⁵⁰Stimson, The Pact of Paris, p. 5.

Paris necessarily carried with it "the implication of consultation."⁵¹

A few days later, President Hoover publicly described the non-recognition doctrine as one of the significant achievements of his administration.⁵² And in a message to Congress on January 10, 1933, he aligned himself even more solidly with his Secretary of State. On the latter's recommendation, he urged legislation

...conferring upon the President authority in his discretion to limit or forbid shipment of arms for military purposes in cases where special undertakings of coöperation can be secured with the principal arms manufacturing nations.

Such a measure would

...at least enable the executive in special cases to place the United States in line with other nations willing to make such sacrifices in the prevention of military conflict.⁵³

It was clear that the executive branch of the government was veering away from the worst extremes of isolation, while the Peace Pact, aided by Stimson's vigorous interpretation, was

⁵¹Stimson, The Pact of Paris, p. 11. Cf. discussion in Charles G. Fenwick, "The Implication of Consultation in the Pact of Paris," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 26 (Oct. 1932), p. 787.

⁵²See excerpt from speech by President Hoover, Aug. 12, 1932, in Chesney Hill, "Recent Policies of Non-Recognition," International Conciliation, No. 293 (Oct. 1933), p. 420.

⁵³See Stimson's letter to Hoover, Jan. 6, 1933, in United States, Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Report to accompany H. J. Res. 580 (72nd Cong., 2nd sess.), Report No. 2040 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1933), pp. 3ff; and President's Message to Congress, Jan. 10, 1933, Congressional Record, Vol. 76, p. 1448.

beginning to assume lineaments which had long been envisioned by the internationalists.

Although it failed of adoption, the discretionary embargo measure requested by the President found a sponsor in no less a person than Senator Borah.⁵⁴ The old man went down fighting stubbornly; but his defense of the resolution made it clear that, far from being converted to internationalism, he regarded it chiefly as a blow at the munitions makers.⁵⁵ While issues were still somewhat confused, the supposed lessons of 1914-1917 were beginning to take a direct bearing on the embargo question. This fact was even more evident in the treatment accorded an identical resolution brought forward in March at the request of President Roosevelt by Sam D. McReynolds, Democratic chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.⁵⁶ It was becoming clear that isolationism had grown too strong and too sure of its ground to permit the enactment of a discretionary embargo law which would authorize the executive to distinguish between aggressor and victim. Yet, even though they failed,

⁵⁴S. J. Res. 229, Jan. 11, 1933, Congressional Record, Vol. 76, p. 1551. For text of resolution, see ibid., p. 2096.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 3591.

⁵⁶After being passed by the House in April, this measure was held in the Senate for nearly a year, eventually being approved Feb. 28, 1934, with an amendment drafted by Hiram Johnson which provided that any embargoes levied should apply equally to all parties to the conflict in question. Thus altered, the resolution was returned to the House. See Senate Journal (73rd Cong., 2nd sess.), p. 160. Nothing more came of it.

these two measures furnished a solid bridge of policy between the Hoover and Roosevelt administrations.

While this move was not directly related to the Peace Pact, Roosevelt erected still another bridge when he espoused Stimson's views on consultation at the Geneva Disarmament Conference in May 1933. Faced by virtual stalemate among the conferees and by strident French demands that some measure of security precede disarmament, he allowed Norman Davis, the American representative, to assure the body that the United States was willing to consult with other nations in the event of any threat to the peace. If the nations in conference designated an aggressor and decided to take action, the United States, provided that it shared the collective judgment, would do nothing which tended to render such measures ineffective.⁵⁷ To implement this policy, Roosevelt even thought of appointing an ambassador to the League, but desisted out of reluctance to provoke isolationist sentiment in this country.⁵⁸ A third bridge was completed in December

⁵⁷ According to presidential intimate Raymond Moley, Roosevelt agreed to adopt the main lines of the Hoover-Stimson foreign policy during a five-hour conference with the outgoing Secretary of State at Hyde Park on Jan. 9, 1933. See Raymond Moley, After Seven Years (New York: Harper, 1939), p. 94. Cf. Stimson, The Far Eastern Crisis, p. 226. Cordell Hull gives the background of the Davis statement in his memoirs. See Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1948), Vol. 1, pp. 224-26. Cited henceforth as Memoirs. For complete text of the Davis statement, see Department of State, Press Releases, No. 191 (May 27, 1933), p. 390.

⁵⁸ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 387.

1933 when the United States joined other American republics in accepting the obligation not to recognize territorial or other advantages gained by force.⁵⁹

The Davis pronouncement forecasted an attitude which was to serve the Roosevelt administration as a kind of guide in foreign affairs until almost the time of Munich, when such a stop-gap policy was no longer even remotely equal to the situation. Unable to secure anything better, the President from time to time requested the enactment of impartial embargo laws, accepted others which were offered him, and applied them to this essentially negative support of collective action. It was always clear, however, that such acts were passed by Congress only because their fine aloofness appealed to the dominant and involvement-conscious isolationist viewpoint. First in the series was a highly limited statute drawn at the President's request in May 1934 to enable the United States to support League sanctions in the Chaco war.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Art. XI, Convention on Rights and Duties of States, signed at Montevideo, Dec. 22, 1933, United States, Department of State, Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1943), No. 23, p. 201. Cited henceforth as Peace and War.

⁶⁰ See Hull's letter to McReynolds, May 22, 1934, United States, Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Report to accompany H. J. Res. 347 (73rd Cong., 2nd sess.), Report No. 1727 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1934), pp. 1-2; also Senate Journal (73rd Cong., 2nd sess.), p. 458.

Unfortunately, however, the economic policy of the New Deal, especially during its first year or two, was not designed to complement Roosevelt's foreign political program. Domestic recovery was its first concern, and the premises upon which the recovery program was originally based demanded a considerable degree of economic nationalism. It is true that Roosevelt's choice of a Secretary of State lent support to the opposite view. Cordell Hull's opinions on the tariff were sufficiently well known to presage the adoption of a much freer trade policy than the nation had enjoyed for some time; but Hull himself was to complain about the President's delay in pressing the Reciprocal Trade Act, which did not become law until June 1934.⁶¹ Although his account was written long after his break with the President and in no very charitable mood, it is difficult to avoid Raymond Moley's conclusion that, in 1933, Roosevelt's foreign and domestic objectives were at serious odds.⁶²

This variance likewise appeared in the President's refusal to countenance any measure which approached cancellation of the war debts or to follow Hoover in recognizing an

⁶¹ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 251; also pp. 353-54.

⁶² Moley, After Seven Years, p. 196. For a similar estimate by a more friendly critic, see Nevins, America in World Affairs, p. 97; also Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 248.

essential connection between the war debts and world trade.⁶³ Accordingly, Hull attended the London Economic Conference in the early summer of 1933 equipped to deal--and that only partially--with just one of the three economic questions to which the larger states were most attentive. War debts could not be discussed at all. Currency stabilization could be treated only by Treasury experts and within narrow limits. The third issue, that of tariffs and other trade barriers, proved elusive because, lacking the fulcrum of the Reciprocal Trade Act, Hull could merely negotiate with individual countries on the somewhat barren assurance that any treaties he obtained would be presented to the Senate for ratification.⁶⁴ As a result, Hull achieved nothing; and only one of the above questions was given any serious consideration. This point was gained when Raymond Moley, then Assistant Secretary of State, suddenly appeared in London as presidential liaison agent and undertook to secure a tentative agreement on currency stabilization. Although Moley claimed that the terms he got fell completely within his written instructions and had the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, Roosevelt declined to approve the understanding on the ground that the Conference should not allow details to

⁶³Moley, After Seven Years, pp. 78-79.

⁶⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 250.

supplant broad objectives. This summary move brought the parley to an end with no accomplishment whatever.⁶⁵ Whether or not the President gave his true reason for brushing stabilization aside, it was certainly the opinion of Washington experts that such an agreement would have toppled the rising domestic prices which constituted so basic an aspect of the New Deal's recovery program.⁶⁶

Thus internationalism achieved a partial victory in the executive branch of the government during the years 1932 and 1933. At the same time that isolationism was deepening its entrenchments through the country at large, and while isolationists in Congress were taking over the embargo movement which had beckoned to the internationalists with such fair promise ever since 1928, Stimson and Hoover, followed by Roosevelt and Hull, embraced a policy which, however tentative, betrayed a growing concern over the fate of world peace machinery and a desire to undertake certain limited repairs. But their program was altogether moral and political, touching economic questions most ineffectively, if at all, precisely at the time when economic problems were

⁶⁵Moley places the greatest blame for this failure upon Roosevelt's vacillation; After Seven Years, pp. 247, 250, 256. Hull regards Moley as an officious busybody who caused trouble by working over the heads of the entire delegation; Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 259-62. Cf. Moley's reply in letter to New York Times, Feb. 2, 1948, p. 18, c. 6.

⁶⁶Moley, After Seven Years, p. 234.

greatest and when vigorous action might have done the most good. For the time being, the treatment which had been prescribed for domestic conditions did not encourage economic reforms at the international level. Official internationalism had reached the highest point it was to achieve between the two world wars, but even here it was not complete. President Roosevelt did not deny the internationalists, but neither did he altogether embrace their gospel. That Rooseveltian internationalism which was to become celebrated within less than a decade lacked much of full growth as his administration began.

V.

Between 1934 and 1937, American public opinion rapidly finished absorbing the lessons of the World War as set forth by scholars and publicists and many who were neither. With more information at their disposal and aware that they were dealing with what had become a vital public question, the best of such writers adopted a tone somewhat more temperate than that employed by Barnes and Grattan a few years earlier. They were, on the whole, less concerned with general problems of war guilt and much more concerned with specific problems of neutrality.

Neutrality had been subjected to attack in the late 1920's and early 1930's chiefly with a view to proving that it was incompatible with the League, the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and other evidences of international solidarity. Now the

emphasis was changed, and neutrality was painstakingly re-examined in the light of its avowed objective: Could it be depended upon to keep the nation out of foreign wars?

Writers had no difficulty finding lessons in point; and while their arguments in no way undermined the basic American desire for neutrality, they rapidly stripped that condition, so far as it involved the assertion and defense of broad neutral rights, of the little validity it still retained in ~~the~~ American mind.

One of the opening gambits was furnished by Charles Warren, former Assistant Attorney-General of the United States, whose widely read article "The Troubles of a Neutral" appeared in the magazine Foreign Affairs in 1934 and later obtained a broad distribution in pamphlet form. Although he personally favored more vigorous action against disturbers of the peace, Warren argued cogently that, if it wished to stay out of foreign wars, the United States "must be prepared to impose upon the action of its citizens far greater restrictions than international law requires."⁶⁷ Any serious study of the World War permitted no other conclusion. Between 1914 and 1917, this country had secured no final recognition of neutral rights from any of the belligerents; every condition faced by the United States in

⁶⁷ Charles Warren, "The Troubles of a Neutral," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 12 (Apr. 1934), pp. 377-78.

that period was still "present or possible."⁶⁸ Observance of neutral rights by warring nations depended upon expediency rather than law; it would be continued only so long as the belligerents calculated that the advantages which accrued from interference with neutral activity were outweighed by the disadvantages of having to accept the injured neutral as a possible enemy. It was evident

...that the citizens of a neutral nation do not now possess any rights on the high seas which can be successfully asserted against a belligerent without danger of such assertion leading to war.⁶⁹

In pursuance of his thesis, Warren recommended several measures which, if adopted at once, would enable the United States to practice the necessary self-denial. Among them was a law imposing an impartial arms embargo against all belligerents as soon as a foreign war broke out.⁷⁰

Thus Warren cut the dilemma into its component parts and relentlessly hammered out its conclusions. Many others used a similar approach.⁷¹ Still others were less direct,

⁶⁸ Warren, "Troubles of a Neutral," p. 379.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 388.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 380-81.

⁷¹ It would be impractical to give even a partial list here. Perhaps the best guide to this phase of the neutrality debate is Allen W. Dulles and Hamilton Fish Armstrong, Can We be Neutral? (New York: Harper, for the Council on Foreign Relations, 1936). Its thesis is that American neutrality could be successful only if protected by self-imposed restrictions, but that the cure might be worse than the disease; see esp. chapter 1.

studying the last war as an historical problem rather than as an object lesson for the next. In two books published during 1934 and 1935,⁷² Charles Seymour explained American intervention in terms of the submarine issue and Wilson's control of foreign policy. Arguing that Wilson alone had made policy and that no influence could become politically effective unless espoused by him, Seymour denied the importance of the activities of bankers, munitions makers, and other industrialists because of Wilson's total lack of sympathy with their views.⁷³ Proceeding in this fashion, he isolated the submarine as the one effective cause of our intervention.⁷⁴ Seymour's case was impressive; and in undermining parts of the Barnes-Grattan thesis, it also struck at the isolationist position. So far as the troubles of neutrality were concerned, however, it indirectly confirmed Warren's analysis that we could assert neutral rights only at the risk of involvement; for there was no good reason to suppose that the submarine issue or some equivalent invasion of our rights would not arise in another war if we followed the same course that we had followed in 1914-1917. A similar effect was achieved by Edwin M. Borchard of the

⁷²Charles Seymour, American Diplomacy During the World War (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1934); and American Neutrality, 1914-1917 (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1935).

⁷³Seymour, American Neutrality, p. 29.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 171.

Yale Law School. Although his views differed materially from Seymour's, Borchard was no isolationist in the strict sense. While he distrusted international entanglements of all kinds, he found salvation in the international law of the nineteenth century rather than in novel and complicated trade restrictions whereby the United States would virtually withdraw from the seas. Striving in 1937 to rehabilitate the international law of neutrality, he argued in his Neutrality for the United States⁷⁵ that, if America had been truly neutral in 1914-1917 and had made a genuine effort to observe its neutral obligations in deed as well as in word, insisting at the same time that its rights be scrupulously observed by all belligerents, everything would have gone well. But not even his considerable powers of exposition were equal to the task of working out a dependable compromise between self-denial and war. His was a counsel of perfection for the belligerents as well as the United States, and such an argument was forced to neglect political realities so badly that it did virtually nothing to combat distrust of neutrality as it had been practiced in the past and would likely be practiced in the future.

A number of other studies, some narrower in scope, some more inclusive, appeared side-by-side with those mentioned above. Among them was Walter Millis' immensely popular

⁷⁵ Edwin M. Borchard and William P. Lage, Neutrality for the United States (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1937). See esp. the authors' definition of neutrality, p. vi.

The Road to War.⁷⁶ Brilliantly written on a sustained note of artful scepticism, this book offered a fascinating panorama of the social appeals and the cultural forces, the economic entanglements and the propaganda campaign that had worked against American neutrality up to 1917. Singling out one facet of this very popular thesis, Professor James D. Squires of Colby Junior College wrote a short but closely-argued monograph which exposed the operation of the British propaganda machine at home and in the United States.⁷⁷ Also released in 1935 were the memoirs of Robert Lansing, Wilson's Secretary of State. Lansing's frank admission that he had never approached the problems of neutrality in a really neutral spirit⁷⁸ simply added more fuel to the spreading flames.

In that they were either placed on the defensive or supplied with vast amounts of corroborating evidence--depending upon their point of view--all such books produced in the middle 1930's were affected by the mental climate engendered by the famous Nye Committee; for in keeping the neutrality question constantly before the public eye and in the endless

⁷⁶Walter Millis, The Road to War; America, 1914-1917 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1935).

⁷⁷James D. Squires, British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917 (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1935).

⁷⁸Robert Lansing, War Memoirs of Robert Lansing (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935), pp. 18-19.

reiteration of a narrowly isolationist approach, the work of this body was second to nothing. Established by the Senate in 1934,⁷⁹ the Committee opened its hearings in September of that year. Its original purpose was to investigate the manufacture and sale of arms and munitions, particularly at the international level; but under the chairmanship of Senator Gerald P. Nye--perhaps the country's leading isolationist--its energies were channeled into an effort to prove that bankers and industrialists had dictated policies during the period of American neutrality between 1914 and 1917 which supplied the real cause of our intervention. Provided with a considerable staff and generous appropriations, the Committee surveyed a good deal of ground in the next two years. Through lavish use of its authority to summon witnesses and examine records, it uncovered much evidence which appeared to support not only the arguments of Barnes, Grattan, and Millis, but also helped confirm such exposés of the international arms traffic as "Arms and the Men"--an article which appeared in Fortune in the spring of 1934 describing the ability of the armaments makers to "supply everything you need for a war from cannons to the casus belli"--⁸⁰ and

⁷⁹Hull explains the Roosevelt administration's initial approval of the munitions investigation on the ground that it expected a Democrat rather than an isolationist Republican to be made chairman. Nye's appointment, he adds, was a tactical error on the part of Senator Key Pittman, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and something of an isolationist himself. See Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 398.

⁸⁰-----"Arms and the Men," Fortune, Vol. 9 (Mar. 1934), p. 53.

Helmuth C. Engelbrecht's Merchants of Death.⁸¹ More than adequately treated by the press and further illuminated by copious reports of hearings and conclusions, the work of the Nye Committee was soon deeply imbedded in a receptive public opinion; and its denunciations of the munitions industry unquestionably had much to do with the final shaping of the arms embargo feature of the neutrality acts.⁸²

Among historians of high repute, it was probably Charles A. Beard who found the conclusions of the Nye Committee most alluring. His hastily-prepared tract, The Devil Theory of War, reached the bookshops in 1936 while the Committee was winding up its labors. Beginning with a selective examination of various happenings and documents bearing upon American intervention in 1917, Beard heartily endorsed an expansion of the mandatory and impartial embargo policy with which Congress, by that time, had been experimenting for more than a year.⁸³ Both his method and much of his material were borrowed from the Committee, and thus its influence was

⁸¹Helmuth C. Engelbrecht and F. C. Hanighen, Merchants of Death: A Study of the International Armaments Industry (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1934).

⁸²The Committee hearings were finally published in 40 parts. The main result of its findings, as expressed in specific recommendations, is to be found in United States, Congress, Senate, Special Committee to Investigate the Munitions Industry, Munitions Industry: Report on Existing Legislation (74th Cong., 2nd sess.), Report No. 944, pt. 5 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1936), pp. 3-9. For Hull's comments on the work of the Nye Committee, see Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 398-99.

⁸³Charles A. Beard, The Devil Theory of War (New York: Vanguard Press, 1936), see esp. pp. 122-23.

perpetuated in ever widening circles. Thanks to such vast stimulation, the flood of material on the World War continued to the end of the decade when three of the best works in the field--Charles C. Tansill's America Goes to War, Alice M. Morrissey's The American Defense of Neutral Rights, 1914-1917, and H. C. Peterson's Propaganda for War--⁸⁴ offered a kind of general summing-up.

It cannot be doubted that the findings of historians, the arguments of publicists, and the activities of the Nye Committee had an important bearing upon the development of public opinion in the middle 1930's. While there was a marked lack of unanimity in detailed conclusions, the net effect of all this research was to crystallize popular thought about a few closely related beliefs and a definite program which, together, constituted isolationism in its most advanced form.

The isolationist gospel was simple and, if one accepted the premise that the United States could always take care of itself regardless of what happened in the rest of the world, virtually irresistible. While it contended that we had to stay out of foreign wars, it admitted that adherence to ordinary neutrality, the traditional means to the end, was a parlous undertaking. We had to improve upon neutrality by

⁸⁴ Charles C. Tansill, America Goes to War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1938); Alice M. Morrissey, The American Defense of Neutral Rights, 1914-1917 (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1939); H. C. Peterson, Propaganda for War: The Campaign Against American Neutrality, 1914-1917 (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1939).

relinquishing most of the neutral claims which produce friction. Opinions differed as to just what activities should be abandoned, but it seemed clear to everyone of this view that we should begin by impartially prohibiting the export of arms and munitions and the extension of loans to all countries that became involved in war. This would not only foil the bankers and industrialists whose machinations had been so roundly exposed of late. It would also give us a particularly dependable and exalted type of neutrality. And to make certain that neutrality would not be compromised before the country realized what was happening, the essential laws had to be framed in advance, removing neutrality as far as possible from the sphere of executive discretion. For who could guarantee that the President would always be as neutral as the country?

According to public opinion polls, between 70 and 82 percent of the American people desired a larger Army, Navy, and Air Force in December 1935. But that they were thinking defensively was indicated by a September 1936 survey which reported that 71 percent favored a national referendum on any question of declaring war. In March 1936, no less than 82 percent wanted to prohibit the manufacture and sale of munitions for private profit. In November, 95 percent thought that the United States should not take part in another conflict like the World War. And in April 1937,

70 percent believed we had erred in 1917.⁸⁵ The way was now open for consummation of legislative neutrality.

VI.

It was not surprising that this lopsided growth of sentiment enabled the isolationists in Congress to assume virtually full, though by no means unopposed, control of the embargo movement after 1933. The McReynolds resolution of that year stands as the great watershed. After its rejection, lines were sufficiently plain to keep true isolationists from supporting any measure which allowed the President to choose between aggressor and victim. They knew that impartial embargoes were what they wanted, and pacifists speedily took up residence in the same camp.⁸⁶ If international coöperation were able to derive incidental benefit from some law which did not tamper with American neutrality--as in the Chaco embargo of 1934--neither isolationist nor pacifist had any special objection. Otherwise, the internationalists were forced to rely on their own numbers.

Some progress was made in the field of commercial arrangement. Passed in June 1934, the Reciprocal Trade Act

⁸⁵George Gallup and Claude Robinson, "American Institute of Public Opinion--Surveys, 1935-38," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 2 (July 1938), pp. 387-88.

⁸⁶Masland, "The 'Peace' Groups Join Battle," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Dec. 1940), p. 668.

inaugurated a shift away from the nationalism in matters of foreign trade which had marked the New Deal's first year. This had its political bearing. As Hull was later to observe with some complacency, not one of the nations with which the United States made trade agreements under this act was found on the opposite side when war came, and most of them eventually fought the Axis.⁸⁷ It is noteworthy, too, that a special clause in the act was used to withhold tariff reductions from Germany--a policy which helped make the entire program distasteful to Berlin, as Hjalmar Schacht told Ambassador Dodd in August 1936.⁸⁸ The establishment of the Second Export-Import Bank earlier the same year to help finance exports was another move in this direction and partially overcame the effects of the Johnson Act with its ban on private loans to governments in default upon their obligations to the United States.⁸⁹

But these accomplishments rested in a kind of backwater, and little could be done against the main stream. Passed

⁸⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 365.

⁸⁸Benjamin H. Williams, "The Coming of Economic Sanctions into American Practice," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 37 (July 1943), p. 389; and W. E. Dodd, Jr. and Martha Dodd (eds.), Ambassador Dodd's Diary (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1941), pp. 344-45.

⁸⁹Benjamin H. Williams, Foreign Loan Policy of the United States Since 1933 (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1939), pp. 24-25.

under impetus furnished by approaching hostilities between Italy and Ethiopia in the summer of 1935, the first general embargo statute was signed on August 31.⁹⁰ At the last minute, the administration's wishes had been revealed again in a bill drafted by the State Department which would have given the President wide freedom to designate the nation or nations to which the embargo should apply, to prohibit loans to such states, to forbid the use of American waters by belligerent submarines, and to caution American citizens that they traveled on the ships of warring states at their own risk.⁹¹ But the joint resolution of August 31 followed the pattern set by the Chaco embargo. Frankly experimental and scheduled to run only until February 29, 1936, the most significant provisions related to the arms embargo and to machinery for implementing it.

While the new law permitted no discrimination between the parties to a conflict, it had some application to immediate needs. Since Ethiopia's geographical position hindered reception of imports from the United States in any event, the arms embargo theoretically operated somewhat to Italy's disadvantage and actually permitted this country to

⁹⁰United States, Department of State, United States Statutes at Large (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office and others, 1845-), Vol. 49, pp. 1081-85.

⁹¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 410-11.

steal the initiative from the League.⁹² To inconvenience the Italians still further, the administration tried to discourage the sale of other commodities as well.⁹³ A moral embargo was not without merit; but in directing these efforts against Ethiopia as well as Italy, it was needlessly impartial and disarmingly cautious of neutrality opinion. This venture, which amounted to an extension of the neutrality act, temporarily caused the Roosevelt administration to appear more isolationist than the isolationists themselves.⁹⁴

As the law expired on February 29, 1936, a new one was enacted. Besides reaffirming the impartial embargo, it prohibited the loaning of money and the extension of credit to belligerent nations and the sale of their securities within the United States.⁹⁵ Congress was still following internationalist recommendations on specific measures but adapting them to its own views by removing them from executive discretion as far as that seemed practicable.

⁹²Dulles and Armstrong, Can We Be Neutral?, p. 62. Cf. Hull's memorandum of conversation with the Italian Ambassador, November 22, 1935, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 61, p. 294. Hull explains that he moved ahead of the League so that American isolationists could not accuse him of following Geneva's leadership. See Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 429.

⁹³Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 430.

⁹⁴Cf. Dulles and Armstrong, Can We Be Neutral?, pp. 59, 68-69.

⁹⁵United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 49, pp. 1152-53.

The next significant foreign upheaval was the Spanish civil war, which began in the summer of 1936. Since the joint resolution of February 29 said nothing about domestic conflicts, it was useless here as an instrument of policy. To avoid undermining the ineffectual and somewhat ridiculous non-intervention committee led by Great Britain, the Roosevelt administration openly took the initiative, requesting and obtaining in January 1937 a non-discriminatory embargo applying specifically to the Spanish affair.⁹⁶ That this move deprived the recognized Spanish government of the opportunity to purchase arms for resisting domestic insurrection which it had every right to expect, and that non-intervention was a public farce anyhow, weighed as nothing in the scales against Roosevelt's determination to cooperate. Even Senator Nye perceived the unhappy effect of this regime on the Spanish Republican government; but his attempt to substitute a measure which would have lifted the embargo for the loyalists alone elicited no support from the administration.⁹⁷ While it was perhaps unimportant in the larger scheme of things, this blind spot was another item tending somewhat

⁹⁶United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 50, p. 3. For statement of the purpose of this measure, see preamble as originally presented. See Congressional Record, Vol. 81, p. 75.

⁹⁷Hull to Pittman, May 12, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 104, pp. 419-20.

to weaken Roosevelt's later case against the isolationists.⁹⁸

Behind the agitation over the neutrality acts and their use, the State Department mounted a close watch over developments abroad. As early as January 1935, Hull joined our Ambassador in Tokyo, Joseph C. Grew, in recommending a larger Navy.⁹⁹ His growing disquietude was further manifested that summer when he endeavored to lay plans for stockpiling tin, but his efforts came to nothing because of England's refusal to apply such materials on her war debt.¹⁰⁰ With the virtual failure of the London Naval Conference in the spring of 1936, the Secretary of State was convinced that disarmament offered little hope as a basis for peace. In his view, the American government faced the question

...of when, in the light of chaotic conditions in many areas of the globe, this nation should abandon the undertaking to preserve peace through disarmament and proceed rapidly to arm sufficiently to be able to resist the plainly visible movements toward military conquest by Germany, Japan, and Italy.

¹⁰¹

But Congress, with the emphatic support of the country, expressed its concern in a different fashion, bringing isolationist belief to fulfillment in the joint resolution of May 1, 1937. Reenacting the main provisions of its

⁹⁸ For Hull's defense of this policy, see Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 483-84.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 456.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 457-58.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 455.

forerunners and making certain large additions, it forbade the export of arms, munitions, and implements of war to belligerent states and those engaged in civil strife; ordained that no materials of any kind listed in a presidential proclamation should be exported to such states except in foreign vessels and after American citizens had yielded all right, title, and interest; prohibited the loaning of money and the extension of credit to any belligerent government; enjoined American citizens against travel aboard the vessels of warring states; forbade the arming of American merchant ships; and empowered the President to restrict the use of American ports and territorial waters by the submarines and armed merchantmen of belligerent nations.¹⁰²

President Roosevelt's later complaints that such a neutrality policy interfered with his conduct of foreign affairs did not lack justification. On the other hand, his somewhat equivocal internationalism, especially before 1937, raises the question of executive leadership. The early deficiencies of the New Deal's economic program have been mentioned. Many similar contradictions stand out in the political sphere. His opposition to the various neutrality acts never ripened into a veto, while his occasional requests for impartial embargo legislation and his use of such laws as were passed tended to make it appear that he did not find them

¹⁰²United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 50, pp. 121-28.

altogether without merit.¹⁰³ There is also the question of just what he would have done if not hampered by such restrictions. As distinguished from moral appeals and habitual endorsement of international rectitude, his statements on foreign policy during these years were vague at best.¹⁰⁴

Furthermore, he still enjoyed all the ordinary controls over foreign affairs. His power to conduct relations with other governments--to frame questions, to make replies, to appoint and withdraw diplomatic agents and special missions--was still vastly important in the determination of policy.¹⁰⁵ Important likewise were his freedom to make executive agreements without Senate ratification¹⁰⁶ and his ability to wield a considerable array of crisis powers by determining, on his own responsibility, the existence of an emergency.¹⁰⁷ Even within the domain of the neutrality acts his course was not altogether predetermined. It was he who decided whether or not a foreign war did, in fact, exist; for although

¹⁰³Cf. Nevins, America in World Affairs, p. 97.

¹⁰⁴Cf. Charles A. Beard, American Foreign Policy in the Making, 1932-1940: A Study in Responsibilities (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1946), p. 183.

¹⁰⁵Cf. Louis W. Koenig, The Presidency and the Crisis: Powers of the Office from the Invasion of Poland to Pearl Harbor (New York: King's Crown Press, 1944), pp. 21-23; also Edward S. Corwin, The President: Office and Powers, 2nd ed. (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1941), pp. 229-30.

¹⁰⁶Corwin, The President, pp. 235-38; and Wallace M. McClure, International Executive Agreements (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1941), p. 248.

¹⁰⁷Koenig, The Presidency and the Crisis, pp. 11-13.

Congress retained authority to make the same finding, this power was never invoked and was of doubtful constitutionality in any event. The ending of a foreign war and termination of the embargo lay entirely within his judgment, as did all restrictions having to do with the use of American ports and territorial waters by foreign submarines and merchant vessels.¹⁰⁸ Altogether, these constituted a formidable reserve of presidential control over foreign policy; and in subsequent years Roosevelt was to draw upon it lavishly.

By the spring of 1937, therefore, the isolationist Congress and people of the United States faced the world, a cautiously dissenting executive, and a vigorously dissenting internationalist minority with a far-reaching embargo law which had taken form through a long period of growing conviction, bitter argument, and small experiment. While it was capable of hampering the executive direction of foreign policy in some ways, this aspect of the law was not, by itself, nearly as serious as it might have been. The largest question was that of its probable effectiveness in a general war. It had been tested in principle by a number of foreign conflicts; but since none had tested it enough to prove conclusively that it could be effective, as many suspected, only in cases where it was superfluous, the

¹⁰⁸Cf. Koenig, The Presidency and the Crisis, pp. 36-40.

majority of Americans still believed in its value. However, there were many influential people, both in the government and in the country at large, who did not accept its fundamental premises; and it was certain that these would be prepared to make the most of its deficiencies as the great crisis drew near.

CHAPTER II

EMERGENCE FROM ISOLATION

I.

Through the weeks immediately following passage of the neutrality act, Europe remained the focus of American interest and concern. Whatever the misgivings aroused by Far Eastern developments in 1932 and 1933, these had long since moved to the background of public awareness; and any disturbance that Japan might be capable of making was regarded as secondary to prospects inherent in the European situation¹ where, for years, crisis had followed crisis with just enough variation to preserve them from monotony. Only the previous October, Germany and Italy had formalized their growing intimacy with a statement of common purpose which revealed the Rome-Berlin Axis; henceforth they would collaborate in matters of "parallel" interest, especially in Spain, in the economic penetration of the Danube region, and in the defense of Europe against communism. But despite this professed anti-communism, the Belgian Minister to Moscow had in

¹Cf. W. C. Johnstone, The United States and Japan's New Order, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1941), pp. 229-30.

February confided to the American Ambassador, Joseph E. Davies, his belief that Hitler's denunciations of the Soviet Union were chiefly for German consumption and that an understanding between Hitler and Stalin was not beyond the realm of possibility--a view which Davies found to be quite general.² That European tensions would yield to no such easy formula was made amply apparent a few days later, however, when Maxim Litvinov, the Foreign Commissar, suggested that Russia yet nursed an anti-German regard for international coöperation, pointing out to Davies the totally negative result of American action in the still unsettled Spanish affair and urging him that the United States would only succeed in giving the Axis similar encouragement elsewhere if it maintained its existing embargo policy.³

But the new neutrality law did not provide for a complete embargo in any event; belligerent countries could still buy articles other than arms, munitions, and implements of war in the United States by paying cash on delivery and transporting them in their own ships. In contrast to Litvinov, therefore, Winston Churchill took a more cheerful view of American policy in his fortnightly letter on foreign affairs written at the end of May. Admitting that no

²Joseph E. Davies, Mission to Moscow (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1941), pp. 73, 79.

³Ibid., p. 79

European statesman might count on American military aid in any circumstances that could be foreseen, he still found that Anglo-American friendship had lately reached unprecedented heights, took comfort in reflecting that the cash-and-carry provision of the embargo act at least had "the merit of rendering to superior sea power its full deserts," and advanced the somewhat wry thesis that America's partial withdrawal from the seas in the event of war would dispel the likelihood of such contention between the United States and Great Britain as had been engendered in 1914 and 1915.⁴

But these were only portents of what might come, and immediate business required some attention. Aside from the highly publicized Spanish civil war and memories of events which had preceded it, the most impressive circumstance in Europe during May was the coronation of King George VI in London. But behind this facade of medieval pageantry, much of deeper significance was taking place. On May 8, the German National Socialist party won a two-thirds majority in the Danzig Volkstag,⁵ thus giving notice of at least one

⁴Winston S. Churchill, Step by Step, 1936-1939 (New York: Putnam, 1939), pp. 111-12.

⁵Royal Institute of International Affairs, Survey of International Affairs, by Arnold J. Toynbee and others (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1925-), 1937, Vol. 1, p. 400. Cited henceforth as Survey.

problem which Sir Neville Henderson, the new British Ambassador to Berlin, would eventually have to face. But Henderson was not interested in Danzig at the moment. Having just completed a rapid shift from the British Embassy in Buenos Aires, his present mission was to launch certain changes in London's attitude toward the Nazi government. Stanley Baldwin was about to retire from Downing Street, and Prime Minister-designate Neville Chamberlain had decreed an end to fruitless bickering with the dictatorships. In pursuance of his conviction that Hitler was a reasonable man and capable of responding to friendly treatment, he had instructed Henderson to cooperate with the existing regime as best he might.⁶ On May 14, the dominion prime ministers put festivity conscientiously behind them and opened an Imperial Conference to review possibilities of furthering this new trend in British policy with a vaguely-conceived measure of economic appeasement.⁷ Shortly after his arrival in Berlin, Henderson carefully explained the Chamberlain departure in a speech before the German-English Society.⁸ But the

⁶Royal Institute, Survey, 1937, Vol. 1, p. 617; and Sir Neville Henderson, Failure of a Mission: Berlin, 1937-1939 (New York: Putnam, 1940), p. 7.

⁷Whether they viewed this "appeasement" as an effort to achieve economic cooperation with the dictators or as an attempt to strengthen democratic nations through the creation of more powerful economic ties and thereby furnish an example to the rest of the world did not become entirely clear. At all events, their program, whatever it was, failed to get beyond the stage of discussion. Cf. Royal Institute, Survey, 1937, Vol. 1, p. 63.

⁸Henderson, Failure of a Mission, p. 10.

withdrawal of both Germany and Italy on May 31 from the non-intervention patrol which had finally been established a month earlier to isolate the Spanish struggle from the rest of the world⁹ failed to indicate that appeasement's chief potential beneficiaries understood exactly what he was talking about.

While a new act in the European drama thus opened, the Far East was not so quiet as it seemed.¹⁰ Although Tokyo won much less attention than London, the defeat of the overbearing and unpopular Hayashi government in the elections of April 30 held the seeds of much more immediate trouble for the United States than anything in Europe. Prince Fumimaro Konoye became head of a strongly nationalistic Cabinet on June 4, having accepted the militarists' demand for a program of "national unity."¹¹ And first fruits of the new regime appeared almost at once; for on July 7, the "China Incident," which was to endure and grow until it merged imperceptibly with the second World War, began in a clash between Chinese and Japanese troops at the Marco Polo Bridge just west of Peiping.

⁹Royal Institute, Survey, 1937, Vol. 2, p. 226.

¹⁰Cf. Thomas A. Bisson, America's Far Eastern Policy (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1945), p. 63.

¹¹Royal Institute, Survey, 1937, Vol. 1, pp. 168-69.

II.

Although details of the early fighting remained vague for some time, the general purport of the Japanese move was clear from the beginning. In launching a new drive outside the boundaries of Manchuria, Japan was opening a new chapter in Far Eastern aggression, threatening the interests of every nation that held treaty rights in China, and undermining the entire structure of peace. This much was established in a conversation between Secretary of State Hull and the Japanese chargé d'affaires on July 16,¹² and Hull issued a broad statement of American foreign policy the same day. Asserting that there could be "no serious hostilities anywhere in the world" which would not in "one way or another affect interests or rights or obligations of this country," he enumerated various principles with which the United States faced the world. We advocated the maintenance of peace and the observance of self-restraint, while deprecating the use of force and interference in the domestic affairs of other nations. We believed in the adjustment of differences by negotiation, in the performance of established obligations, in the removal of international trade barriers, and in the limitation and reduction of armaments.

¹²Memorandum of conversation by Hornbeck, July 16, 1937, United States, Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931-1941, 2 vols. (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1943), Vol. 1, pp. 327-28. Cited henceforth as Japan.

At the same time, while endorsing coöperative effort, the United States avoided entangling alliances and other commitments.¹³

Framed in such general terms that it accused Japan of wrongdoing only by suggestion, this prudent utterance harmonized with Hull's belief that the Japanese government served as a kind of permanent arena for a struggle between moderates and extremists--the peace-loving, democratic elements in Japanese life versus the aggressive, militaristic ones--and that to meet a rampage of the militarists with an excessively firm tone would help unite the Japanese nation behind them, tend to confirm their hold upon the seats of power, and hinder the moderates in their struggle to regain control of the government.¹⁴ Whatever strength the pronouncement had lay in its moral force, and the prestige of morality was tarnished. In pure righteousness, it outdid the Stimson policy of 1932. But it was much less outspoken in its omission of direct reference to the non-recognition doctrine, while the proved success of aggression, American neutrality law, and the spreading chaos of European appeasement combined to deprive it of any support it might have gained from attendant circumstances. It bespoke an attitude rather than a policy, and all the good-will in the world

¹³Statement by Hull, July 16, 1937, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 17 (July 17, 1937), pp. 41-42.

¹⁴Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 538.

was unable to make it much more than that.

If the United States could not move forward, however, it could at least decline to withdraw. On August 17, Hull announced that our forces in China were being augmented by a regiment of Marines;¹⁵ and the main outlines of future procedure became clear on September 2 when he informed Ambassador Joseph C. Grew in Tokyo that the United States should avoid becoming involved in the conflict, endeavor to protect American citizens in the threatened areas, and make no direct effort to solidify relations with either Japan or China.¹⁶ So it was to be. Protests against specific acts in violation of American rights would be emphasized by opportune reiteration of principle. Beyond this, events would have to take their course.¹⁷

On September 1, Japanese Foreign Minister Hirota revealed the terms which he had offered Chiang Kai-shek as the price of stopping the incipient war. They included de facto recognition of Manchukuo by the Chinese government, withdrawal of Chinese troops from North China, and cessation of

¹⁵Press release, Aug. 23, 1937, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 17 (Aug. 28, 1937), p. 166.

¹⁶Hull to Grew, Sept. 2, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, pp. 362-63.

¹⁷For Hull's defense of this policy, see his Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 536-37.

anti-Japanese activities throughout the Chinese Republic.¹⁸ Unprepared to assume the role of mediator,¹⁹ the State Department received this intelligence calmly enough, and on September 10 announced without comment that Japan had closed the entire Asiatic coast to Chinese shipping from Chinwangtao southward to Pakhoi; that is, for all practical purposes, from the southern boundary of Manchukuo to the northwestern border of French Indo-China.²⁰ Wishing to avoid trouble in the blockaded zone, President Roosevelt on September 14 directed ships owned by the American government not to carry arms and munitions to either China or Japan and made it clear that other American vessels would engage in such trade at their own risk. The same order announced that the question of applying the neutrality act remained upon a twenty-four hour basis.²¹ So far, the United States had merely taken cognizance of happenings in the Far East.

It was hardly more forthcoming as the League of Nations prepared to consider the Chinese appeal for support against Japan. On September 28, Hull instructed Leland Harrison, the American Minister to Switzerland, to "foster...the

¹⁸Memorandum by Grew, Sept. 1, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 360.

¹⁹As late as April 1938, Hull still shied away from mediation. See Department of State to British Embassy, Apr. 14, 1938, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, pp. 463-64.

²⁰Press release, Sept. 10, 1937, ibid., p. 371.

²¹Statement by the President, Sept. 14, 1937, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 17 (Sept. 18, 1937), p. 227.

view that the entire question should be treated from the viewpoint of general world interest and concern and on the broadest possible basis." The United States did not wish to suggest anything to the League and was unprepared for any kind of joint action. Parallel action might be considered, however. Only in noting that Japan had thus far been less coöperative than China did Hull's instructions waver from a tone of strictest impartiality.²²

The members of the League, especially Great Britain and France, were no more eager to cross swords with Japan than was the United States. On October 6, the Assembly adopted two committee reports which declared Japan guilty of having violated both the Nine-Power Treaty and the Pact of Paris and recommended that parties to the former agreement hold a conference for further study of the issues involved.²³ The United States lost no time in approving the League's decision;²⁴ but when the Japanese Ambassador, Hiroshi Saito, asked Hull on October 7 whether the American government had anything further in mind, the latter replied that nothing

²²Hull to Harrison, Sept. ²⁵1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, pp. 375-77.

²³First report adopted by the League Assembly, Oct. 6, 1937, ibid., p. 394; and second report, ibid., p. 395.

²⁴Press release, Oct. 6, 1937, ibid., p. 397.

was contemplated for the time being.²⁵

Hull's admission, coming when it did, scarcely improved the situation. While he may have been reluctant to anticipate possible decisions of the forthcoming Nine-Power Conference, it was plain that the League's delegation of responsibility to the powers which had guaranteed China's independence and territorial integrity at Washington in 1922, taken in conjunction with the reverberating "quarantine" speech delivered by President Roosevelt in Chicago on October 5, had the effect of drawing this country into the very center of things; and Hull apparently judged it wise to prepare a retreat before retreat became undignified.²⁶ Certainly Roosevelt yielded a good part of the leadership he had appeared to assume at Chicago when, on October 12, his references to the impending Brussels Conference in a "fire-side chat" were less eloquent of condemnation than of compromise.²⁷ Following this, London began playing the same tune;²⁸ Japan refused to attend on the ground that most

²⁵Memorandum by Hornbeck, Oct. 7, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 398.

²⁶Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 551.

²⁷Radio address by the President, Oct. 12, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 401.

²⁸Cf. statement by Lord Plymouth, Oct. 21, 1937, Great Britain, Parliament, House of Lords, The Parliamentary Debates: Official Report, 5th series (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1909-), Vol. 106, c. 1077. Cited henceforth as Parl. Debates: Lords.

satisfactory adjustments could be made through direct negotiations between herself and China;²⁹ and when the Conference finally met on November 3, it was clear that little would be accomplished.

As late as November 16, Hirota complained to Grew that the United States was taking the lead at Brussels and expressed concern over the possibility of economic boycott.³⁰ But he might have spared himself his fears. The address delivered to the Conference by the American delegate, Norman Davis, on November 3 was carefully impartial. And while he stated the willingness of the United States to share common efforts within the scope of treaty provisions, he stressed the fact that his government had no commitments outside these provisions.³¹ Ten days later, Davis publicly noted Japan's failure to attend the Conference but merely expressed a very moderate hope that she might change her mind.³² On November 15, the Conference issued a declaration setting forth the relatively mild belief that no equitable solution was likely

²⁹Reply of the Japanese government to the Belgian government, Oct. 27, 1937, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Documents on International Affairs, ed. by J. W. Wheeler-Bennett and others (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1929-), 1937, p. 704; and Reply of the Japanese government to the Conference, Nov. 12, 1937, ibid., p. 741. Cited henceforth as Documents.

³⁰Memorandum by Grew, Nov. 16, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 413.

³¹Address by Davis, Nov. 3, 1937, ibid., p. 408.

³²Statement by Davis, Nov. 13, 1937, ibid., pp. 409-10.

to come from direct negotiations between the two combatants.³³ This was the sum of its labors and the extent of American participation. Admitting its failure to mediate, the Conference adjourned on November 24.³⁴

In the meanwhile, Japan drove ahead in China. Her troops took Shanghai on November 8; the war was obviously moving southward. She also made progress on the diplomatic front, emerging from relative isolation into explicit psychological alignment with Germany and Italy. This movement had begun a year earlier when, in the Anti-Comintern Pact of November 25, 1936, Japan and Germany had mutually pledged their coöperation in checking the activities of the Third International. Italy closed the triangle by adhering to this agreement on November 6, 1937, and by following her confederates out of the League on December 11.³⁵ The bargain was then sealed by a number of recognitions. Italy recognized Manchukuo on November 29;³⁶ Japan recognized the Franco government of Spain on December 1;³⁷ and Hitler

³³Declaration of the Nine-Power Conference, Nov. 15, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 412.

³⁴Report adopted by the Nine-Power Conference, Nov. 24, 1937, ibid., p. 422.

³⁵Speech by Mussolini, Dec. 11, 1937, Royal Institute, Documents, 1937, p. 290.

³⁶Royal Institute, Survey, 1937, Vol. 1, p. 303.

³⁷Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 373n.

announced Germany's intention to recognize Manchukuo on February 20, 1938.³⁸

Throughout the latter half of 1937, everyone had declined leadership of the democratic powers; and their confused effort to do something without leadership merely exposed their weakness and presented them with a fully-grown Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis. Speaking to the House of Commons on December 21, Foreign Minister Anthony Eden supplied an epitaph for the six months just finished. From the very beginning of this dispute, he said, every nation had realized ...perfectly well that the thought of action of any kind in the Far East must depend on the coöperation of other nations besides those who are actually members of the League at this time.³⁹

The implication was obvious if not altogether justified. It was true that American policy had been less than dashing,⁴⁰ but isolationism and timidity in the United States had met their equivalents abroad. If this country was less disposed to encourage coöperation than at any time since 1932, the

³⁸Royal Institute, Survey, 1938, Vol. 1, p. 570.

³⁹Great Britain, Parliament, House of Commons, The Parliamentary Debates: Official Report, 5th series (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1909-), Vol. 330, c. 1883. Cited henceforth as Parl. Debates: Commons.

⁴⁰For a severe comparison of American policy in 1937 with that in 1932, see A. Whitney Griswold, The Far Eastern Policy of the United States (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938), pp. 461-62.

fact remained that 1937 offered the American government no one with whom to cooperate.⁴¹ As legislative neutrality reached its crest in America, appeasement rose to full flood in Europe. Actually, Europe had commenced abdicating its traditional leadership in the Far East in 1932, when the chances of obtaining a substantial degree of American cooperation had been much better. Now, after its failure in 1937, Europe's old place in Asia was virtually gone; little remained but its property. Henceforth the United States would stand practically alone in the Pacific, gradually assuming leadership of western policy in that section of the world.

III.

By December 1, 1937, the American government was well established in the business of upholding its rights in the Far East through the medium of diplomatic complaint. The protest of that date against interference with the extra-territorial rights of Americans in Manchuria⁴² was typical of several hundred others launched during the next four years. Typical also was the Japanese reply. Knowing that the United States could make no formal approach to the unrecognized government of Manchukuo, the Japanese Foreign Office simply

⁴¹Cf. Viscount Cecil, A Great Experiment: An Autobiography (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1941), p. 295.

⁴²Grew to Hirota, Dec. 1, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 154.

stated that the policy of the government of Manchukuo was a matter with which it had no concern.⁴³ Time and again the United States would lose its way in the folds of just such impenetrable evasion as this, being left with nothing that could be firmly grasped. Trying to cope with an undeclared and unrecognized war which was further complicated by the near presence of at least one unrecognized government was an activity that invited frustration.

On the other hand, there was enough friction in which the issues were perfectly direct and clear to establish unavoidable meeting places. The first important incident of this type was the bombing of the American gunboat Panay by Japanese planes on December 2, 1937, as she moved up the Yangtze River with three Standard Oil ships bearing American refugees. By undermining the official guise of impartiality which the United States government had thus far maintained, the Panay affair opened a new phase of American-Japanese relations.

While there is reason to believe that the Japanese military authorities on the spot, if not the government itself, deliberately manufactured the incident for the purpose of testing American forbearance, Tokyo was certainly not prepared for a breach of relations and saved the amenities by acting promptly. First news of the bombing, together

⁴³Hirota to Grew, Mar. 1, 1938, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 155.

with sweeping apologies, was conveyed to Ambassador Grew by Foreign Minister Hirota, who hurried in person to the American Embassy as soon as he learned of it.⁴⁴ On December 14, some three hours before Roosevelt's demand for formal apologies, guarantees, and suitable monetary damages could be presented in Tokyo, the Japanese Foreign Office stated its readiness to pay compensation and to furnish assurances against similar attacks in the future.⁴⁵ After a brief exchange of views and a repetition of the Japanese offer, the incident was officially closed on December 25 by Washington's acceptance of these regrets and guarantees and a promise of compensation which was duly carried out. Nevertheless, the American note made it clear that the State Department rejected Japan's explanation of the bombing as an unfortunate accident.⁴⁶

A most delicate situation was thus adjusted with surprising speed, but the settlement did not leave things as they had been before. While Japan's readiness to make amends temporarily caused segments of American public

⁴⁴ Joseph C. Grew, Ten Years in Japan (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944), p. 233. Cited henceforth as Ten Years.

⁴⁵ Grew to Hull, Dec. 14, 1937, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 525.

⁴⁶ Hull to Grew, Dec. 25, 1937, ibid, pp. 551-52; and Grew, Ten Years, p. 240. On Apr. 22, 1938, the Japanese government paid the United States an indemnity of \$2,214,007.36.

opinion to regard her with less hostility,⁴⁷ it did not relax underlying tensions. The fact that Japan invited such risks was proof that she had large stakes in view. On the other side, American willingness to accept this settlement without going into the policy which lay behind it must have convinced the Japanese government that the United States was prepared to endure a great deal. The outcome of the Panay affair guaranteed no alteration of Japan's basic course; growing friction was inevitable as long as the "China Incident" continued, and the prospect of its liquidation was becoming more remote each week. Despite his satisfaction with the settlement itself and his abiding confidence in the ability of Japanese liberals to regain enough voice in the government to moderate official policy, even Grew was unable to contemplate the future with "any feeling of serenity." He did not believe that war would come between the United States and Japan through interference with American interests or treaty rights "or the breaking down of principles for which we stand;" but he clearly envisioned the possibility of war through direct attacks upon the United States or through an accumulation of incidents like that of the Panay.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Cf. Quincy Wright and Carl J. Nelson, "American Attitudes Toward China and Japan, 1937-1938," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 3 (Jan. 1939), p. 47.

⁴⁸Grew, Ten Years, p. 240.

During this period, other Japanese activities, not directly related to the Panay affair but partially screened by it, tended to confirm these apprehensions. On December 14, a new pro-Japanese government was set up in the ancient Chinese capital of Peiping. On January 16, 1938, Tokyo announced that it would no longer deal with the Chinese Nationalist government but would plan the establishment of a new regime which could be depended upon for coöperation.⁴⁹ In the face of so ambitious a program, it was abundantly clear that the China affair was more than an incident as far as the Japanese were concerned. Especially when viewed in conjunction with Japan's new European attachments, it warned that the Far Eastern crisis was likely to be more or less permanent.

A frame of events surrounding the Panay incident also made it clear that the United States government planned no general withdrawal from the position it had assumed. A joint resolution providing for a constitutional amendment to submit any declaration of war to popular referendum--the measure which Representative Louis Ludlow of Indiana had been sponsoring energetically since 1934--was on the point of being forced out of committee at the middle of December. Strong letters of disapproval from the President and the

⁴⁹Statement by the Japanese government, Jan. 16, 1938, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 437.

Secretary of State were enough, however, to defeat this move by January 10.⁵⁰ At the same time, Hull carefully defined America's Far Eastern position in a letter to the Senate, pointing out that our interests could not be measured only by the number of resident American citizens, the size of American investments, and the volume of American trade. A more fundamental interest was "that orderly processes in international relationships be maintained."⁵¹ And as reports of further outrages against American citizens during the occupation of Nanking continued to flow in, President Roosevelt on January 28 asked Congress for larger naval grants and suggested that it once more consider measures to equalize the burdens of war and to eliminate profiteering.⁵²

Although it contemplated naval expansion beyond treaty limits for the first time, the presidential request was only a muted rumble; and aside from this, the total American reaction to the Panay affair and concurrent developments had been more cautious than forbidding. Neither public opinion nor government policy was calculated to make Japan review what she was doing. On the other hand, the bombing of the

⁵⁰Roosevelt to Bankhead, Jan. 6, 1938, and Hull to Bankhead, Jan. 8, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 18 (Jan. 15, 1938), pp. 99-100.

⁵¹Hull to Garner, Jan. 8, 1938, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 433.

⁵²Congressional Record, Vol. 83, pp. 1187-88.

Panay and the sack of Nanking were to live on in memory and pave the way for much closer examination of the Far Eastern problem during the next year.

IV.

While the Far East was unquestionably the largest immediate concern of American diplomacy at the end of 1937 and the beginning of 1938, the problems raised by Japan's course in China merely added to the gravity of a situation that was worldwide. If it had ever existed, the moment for treating aggression in detail was long past. Gone also was the basis for treating it in any other way. The collective hesitation of the League had resolved itself into the separate hesitations of states. No nation was disposed to move until it knew the plans of other nations, and no government wished to commit itself very far in one part of the world lest it become so deeply involved as to risk embarrassment in another part. This dilemma confronted the United States as plainly as it confronted every other country; even without isolationism, America would have been hard put to escape the general paralysis.

Whatever happened in Asia, the vast unrest of Europe could never be forgotten. Even if the country had been willing to support decisive action, any move in the Pacific would have had to be undertaken in full knowledge that it might impair the nation's readiness to meet dangers on the Atlantic side. To venture much by itself, therefore, was a

risk which the American government was neither able nor willing to take. The worldwide threat of aggression, if met at all, would have to be met on a worldwide scale;⁵³ and any serious effort in this regard demanded that a new basis for coöperation be laid. Amid the events just narrated, President Roosevelt launched a scheme by which he hoped to provide such a basis.

The first public indication of this move lay in his famed "quarantine" speech, delivered in Chicago on October 5, 1937, as the League of Nations deliberated over the Chinese appeal against Japan. After commenting at some length upon general conditions, he noted that the "epidemic of world lawlessness" was spreading and continued:

When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease...

Most important of all, the will for peace on the part of peace-loving nations must express itself to the end that nations that may be tempted to violate their agreements and the rights of others will desist from such a course. There must be positive endeavors to preserve peace... Therefore, America actively engages in the search for peace.⁵⁴

The phrasing of this pronouncement seemed to contemplate action; its timing suggested that it was not entirely

⁵³Cf. Hull's comment that, after the middle of 1935, no major international problem could be considered solely on its own merits; Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 397.

⁵⁴Address at Chicago, Oct. 5, 1937, Franklin D. Roosevelt, The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, ed. by S. I. Rosenman, 9 vols. (New York: Random House and Macmillan, 1938-41), 1937, pp. 410-11. Cited henceforth as Papers.

unrelated to the Far Eastern problem and decisions being made at Geneva. If such immediate application were intended, however, any useful results it might have had were forestalled, as recorded above, by the decidedly tepid attitude of the American government at the Brussels Conference a month later. Nor was much learned concerning its general application. At a press conference held October 6, the President defeated the correspondents' best efforts to learn what was in his mind. Parrying questions neatly--especially those bearing on the relationship between the "quarantine" idea and the neutrality act--Roosevelt stated only that he had a clue as to what might be done.⁵⁵

This clue had apparently been furnished by Sumner Welles, the Under Secretary of State.⁵⁶ Sometime in October--presumably near the beginning of the month--Welles handed the President a long memorandum urging him to call an Armistice Day meeting of the Washington diplomatic corps at the White House and propose to assembled representatives that their respective governments join the United States in a kind of world peace front which would begin its work by trying to reach agreement on such matters as the essential principles of international conduct, the most effective ways of achieving disarmament, methods of promoting international

⁵⁵Press conference, Oct. 6, 1937, Roosevelt, Papers, 1937, p. 424.

⁵⁶Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 546.

economic well-being, and measures to assure respect for the laws of war. There would be no general conference, at least not at the outset. Instead, the President would set up an executive committee representing ten nations, including the United States. This group would formulate tentative agreements on the above points and submit them to other governments for ratification. The hope which inspired this rather nebulous scheme was that, even if no consensus were obtained on most of the points listed, it would tend to establish a common ground for all nations that opposed the Axis and have a beneficial effect upon public opinion everywhere. Furthermore, if Germany and Italy could be sufficiently embarrassed in Europe, the loss of their moral support might bring Japan to terms in Asia.⁵⁷

Whether Welles' memorandum was actually written before October 5 is not important. The relationship between the "quarantine" passage and the Armistice Day plan is so nearly implicit that there can be little doubt of Roosevelt's having at least its general outlines in mind when he spoke at Chicago. But speech and plan alike caused severe dissension in the President's official household. The opposition was led by Hull, who had believed since the spring of 1936 that any course not based upon rearmament of the democratic powers was doomed to failure.

⁵⁷ Sumner Welles, The Time for Decision, 9th ed. (New York: Harper, 1944), pp. 64-66.

The latter takes credit for having urged delivery of the Chicago speech in the first place, but he gravely disapproved of what the President actually said. Having envisaged a somewhat more generalized endorsement of international coöperation and being given no advance notice of the "quarantine" passage, the Secretary of State had no chance to register his opposition until the words were out. In view of prevailing isolationism, he considered the moment decidedly unripe for so suggestive a declaration; the American public had to be educated more gradually.⁵⁸ He frowned upon the Armistice Day project as "illogical and impossible." Even if it met with initial success, it would have the undesirable result of lulling the democratic nations "into a feeling of tranquillity...at the very moment when their utmost efforts should actually be directed toward arming themselves for self-defense." In any event, it would be futile to launch such a move without first consulting Great Britain and France.⁵⁹

Welles had won the first round, but Hull and those who shared his views won the second; and the big offensive was postponed while the President scouted England. Here the terrain was not good. Since the previous May, Chamberlain's new policy of "realism" and determined good-fellowship with

⁵⁸Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 544-45.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 547; cf. Welles, The Time for Decision, p. 66.

the Axis had been throwing up psychological obstacles to any advance like that contemplated by Roosevelt; and one could hardly deny that American diplomatic activity in the same period was little calculated to change British views. Although Chamberlain had publicly endorsed the "quarantine" speech two days after its delivery, he still contended with mental reservations. There appeared to be "something lacking" in the quarantine analogy. Besides, the United States had not been receptive to his proposal for some kind of joint mediation at the very beginning of the Sino-Japanese dispute.⁶⁰ On December 21, he told the House of Commons that the League was wholly inadequate to its purposes and that the way to salvation lay through personal contacts and friendly discussions.⁶¹ Although he did not deny American good-will toward Britain, he thought it likely to produce nothing but words.⁶²

Accordingly, Roosevelt's overtures, which finally reached London on January 12, 1938, evoked scant enthusiasm. Despite the earnest recommendation of the British Ambassador in Washington, Sir Ronald Lindsay, that the American proposal

⁶⁰ See excerpts from Chamberlain's personal letters in Keith G. Feiling, The Life of Neville Chamberlain (London: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 322, 325. Cited henceforth as Chamberlain.

⁶¹ Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 330, cc. 1810, 1812.

⁶² Feiling, Chamberlain, p. 325.

be accepted without delay,⁶³ Chamberlain replied courteously, but firmly, that he was pressing for the settlement of specific issues with Germany and Italy. At the moment, Great Britain was considering recognition of Italy's sovereignty over Ethiopia in return for a general Mediterranean understanding, and such negotiations as Roosevelt proposed might afford the Italian government an excuse for delay or even a pretext for a break. Therefore, he suggested postponement.⁶⁴

This far, Chamberlain had proceeded without consulting Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, who was then vacationing in southern France. But Eden now returned to London and, on learning what had taken place, expressed his strong disapproval of the Prime Minister's action. He distrusted Chamberlain's policy of appeasement anyhow, and he infinitely preferred coöperation with the United States to making deals with the Axis. He immediately set about repairing what he considered the Prime Minister's blunder.⁶⁵

In the meanwhile, Roosevelt answered Chamberlain's rebuff with a promise to delay activating his plan while Great Britain pursued direct negotiations with Italy but expressed a strong fear that British recognition of the latter's

⁶³Winston S. Churchill, The Gathering Storm (Vol. 1 of The Second World War), (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), pp. 251-52.

⁶⁴Feiling, Chamberlain, p. 336; Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 67-68; and Churchill, The Gathering Storm, p. 252.

⁶⁵Churchill, The Gathering Storm, p. 252.

sovereignty in Ethiopia would alienate public opinion in the United States and encourage Japan to continue her depredations in the Far East. In delivering this message to the British Ambassador, Hull also expressed himself strongly on the proposed recognition.⁶⁶

Faced with this energetic response, Chamberlain, at Eden's insistence, modified his attitude to some extent in two notes sent to Washington on January 21. Here he explained that Great Britain did not intend to give Italy's position in Ethiopia de jure recognition except as part of a wider settlement and that, while he could accept no responsibility for the outcome of the President's proposal, he welcomed American initiative in this regard. But since he made it clear that his approval of Roosevelt's suggestion was limited by a desire to avoid disturbing Germany, Italy, and Japan, he did not leave the President much foundation on which to proceed.⁶⁷ According to Churchill, it was this substantial rejection of the American plan which furnished the actual cause of Eden's resignation a month later.⁶⁸ At all events, Viscount Halifax became Foreign Secretary on February 20; and under his less reluctant direction, negotiations with Italy continued. British policy

⁶⁶Churchill, The Gathering Storm, p. 252-53.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 253.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 265.

toward the Axis was now irrevocably launched upon its new course.⁶⁹ Under these circumstances, Roosevelt had no good opportunity to revive his project.

Thus the grand design came to nothing, but some advance was made during January in a more limited field. Since the previous summer, there had been much disquiet in Washington naval circles, especially in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral James O. Richardson, then Assistant Chief, was among those deeply concerned about war in the Pacific and repeatedly urged his senior, Admiral William D. Leahy, to convince the President that the United States should not risk commitment there without having allies "so bound to us that they cannot leave us in the lurch." He later felt that his verbal exertions had something to do with the mission of Captain Royal E. Ingersoll, Director of the War Plans Division, at the end of the year.⁷⁰

However persuasive Richardson's advice may have been, the Ingersoll mission was directly inspired by Roosevelt himself. Following Italy's adherence to the Anti-Comintern Pact in November, the President was keenly aware of the

⁶⁹Cf. Alan Campbell Johnson, Viscount Halifax: A Biography (New York: Ives Washburn, 1941), p. 450.

⁷⁰Richardson to Stark, Jan. 26, 1940, United States, Congress, Joint Committee on Investigation of Pearl Harbor Attack, Hearings pursuant to S. Con. Res. 27, authorizing investigation of attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941, and events and circumstances relating thereto (79th Cong., 1st sess.), 39 pts. (Washington: Gov't Printing Office, 1946), Ex. 9, pt. 14, p. 924. Cited henceforth as Pearl Harbor Hearings.

possibility that the United States might eventually have to fight a war in two oceans simultaneously and instructed Leahy to draw up a war plan against that contingency. Since it was taken for granted that Britain would also participate in such a conflict, it was judged expedient to discuss the problem of coöperation with British authorities at once.⁷¹

According to Ingersoll's own account, his special assignment was to discuss the question of what the British and American navies could do in the event of war with Japan. Reaching London near the end of December 1937, he was taken first to Anthony Eden. But he was relegated from Foreign Office to Admiralty and finally conducted his talks with Captain Tom Phillips of the War Plans Section. The conferees dealt with a single possibility. Assuming that both Great Britain and the United States were at war with Japan, what would be the distribution of forces and what measures of coöperation could be worked out? Ingersoll found the British exceedingly cautious. Although Germany was not discussed, they were obviously fearful of war in Europe. There was some talk of basing a British force at Singapore while the United States Fleet gathered at Pearl Harbor. There was also a good deal of speculation regarding the attitude of the Dutch, but the latter took no part in the

⁷¹Samuel Eliot Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, 1931-April 1942 (Vol. 3 of History of United States Naval Operations in World War II), (Boston: Little, Brown, 1948), p. 49.

conversations.

Obviously, the contemplated situation was more or less hypothetical for the time being. This, combined with the impossibility of giving political commitments, hindered the formation of any very precise scheme. Nevertheless, a general understanding was achieved which apparently retained some validity until a much more comprehensive plan was agreed upon at the Washington staff conversations in 1941.⁷²

Thus military rapprochement forged ahead of political agreement. In March 1938, a British mission arrived in the United States to buy airplanes. The French placed their first aircraft contract about the same time.⁷³ And on March 31, Great Britain and the United States gave formal notice of their intention to escalate under the London Naval Treaty of 1936, basing this action on the ground that Japan was already exceeding treaty limitations.⁷⁴

⁷² Ingersoll's testimony, Feb. 12, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 9, pp. 4273-76; Richardson to Stark, Jan. 26, 1940, ibid., Ex. 9, pt. 14, p. 924; and Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 49.

⁷³ Edward R. Stettinius Jr., Lend-Lease: Weapon for Victory (New York: Macmillan, 1944), pp. 12-13. Cited henceforth as Lend-Lease.

⁷⁴ Notices of intention to escalate, Mar. 31, 1938, Samuel Shepard Jones and Denys P. Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1939-), 1938-39, pp. 486-87.

V.

After so gloomy a beginning, 1938 held little promise of achievement in the Far East; and American-Japanese relations generally followed their established pattern from February to the end of the year. Principles were enunciated liberally, and the growing volume of American protests included a few signs of growing stiffness. But such developments were more successful in emphasizing the gravity of the problem than in preparing the way for its solution. At best, American policy in the Far East could hope to do no more than slow the Japanese advance.

But even this purely static defense was judged too venturesome by many in the United States, and Hull still found it necessary to justify having done so much rather than to excuse himself for not having done more. Speaking before the National Press Club on March 17, he repeated his now familiar views on foreign policy and upheld the government's determination not to withdraw completely from China. To let our Far Eastern position go by default would merely encourage Japan and "thus contribute to the inevitable spread of anarchy throughout the world."⁷⁵ While there was nothing heroic in such pronouncements, it would have required a much more effective speaker than the Secretary of State to convince the American people that their government

⁷⁵Address by Hull, Mar. 17, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 106, p. 410.

should take stronger action. According to a Gallup survey in January, 70 percent of them favored complete withdrawal from China. In February, 64 percent disapproved of lifting the ban on arms shipments to China in government-owned ships. Their only hint of aggressiveness toward Japan appeared the same month when 70 percent indicated that they did not favor Philippine independence so long as conditions in the Orient got no better.⁷⁶

As time went on, Japan displayed less intention than ever of mending her ways. After especially strong protests in June against the continued occupation of American property in Shanghai and the bombing of Canton, Grew noted the first positive signs of wartime economy and psychology in Japan. Certain Cabinet changes, plus the disappearance from the market of leather articles, rubber golf balls--Grew being an ardent golfer--and other materials convinced him that Japan realized she was "in for a long pull."⁷⁷

The United States took up a small cudgel about the same time. Reviving the moral embargo which had been used so fruitlessly in the Italo-Ethiopian war, the State Department on July 1, 1938, informed all makers and exporters of airplanes and aeronautical equipment that it would regret

⁷⁶Gallup and Robinson, "American Institute of Public Opinion--Surveys 1935-38," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 2 (July 1938), p. 389.

⁷⁷Grew, Ten Years, p. 250.

issuing licenses to authorize shipment of their wares to countries guilty of bombing attacks against civilian populations.⁷⁸ This aspect of the moral embargo was to become an almost permanent feature of American policy and to apply elsewhere at different times; for the moment, its obvious target was Japan. In its discriminatory nature it differed from the impartial embargo of 1935. Roosevelt's use of the neutrality act was also still at variance with earlier habit. Then he had invoked it promptly; now he delayed. His order of September 14, 1937, had merely removed government-owned vessels from the arms trade with China and Japan. Taking advantage of the fact that neither country had declared war and arguing that full prohibition of arms shipments would be a much more serious blow to China than to industrialized Japan, he used all the latitude afforded by the law and refused to call the embargo into being. To do otherwise, he said, would make the United States less neutral than it was already.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Department of State to airplane manufacturers, etc., July 1, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 109, p. 422.

⁷⁹ Press conference, Apr. 21, 1938, Roosevelt, Papers, 1938, p. 287. This claim was not altogether without basis. Up to July 1938, American arms shipments to China were slightly greater than shipments to Japan, except for airplanes. See tables in Francis Deak, "The United States Neutrality Acts: Theory and Practice," International Conciliation, No. 358 (Mar. 1940), p. 10ln. Thus the moral embargo on aircraft struck directly at that aspect of the arms traffic which was, on a comparative basis, of greatest benefit to Japan, while failure to invoke the neutrality act left China free to pursue her advantage. Cf. Hull's comments on this policy in his Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 557.

From July through September, mounting crisis in Europe relegated the Far East to the background of American calculations. After Munich, however, the United States began a somewhat more active defensive. On October 6, Grew lodged a sharp protest with the Japanese Prime Minister regarding violations of the Open Door and demanded measures for the abolition of discriminatory exchange control in China, the discontinuance of special monopolies and preferences which tended to deprive Americans of the right to engage in Chinese trade and industry, and the cessation of interference with American mails, American property rights, and freedom of residence and travel.⁸⁰ After its habit, the Foreign Office met this protest with delayed evasions and counsels of patience.⁸¹ During November, however, Grew began to notice a subtle change in the tone of official Japanese utterances. The observations of Foreign Minister Arita were more direct, less sanctimonious. He no longer intimated that Japan looked to a resurrection of the status quo as soon as military necessity was a thing of the past. Now he suggested that a new status quo was in the making--a new Far Eastern system in which Japan would have certain essential preferences and other powers would have to settle for what was left. The Open Door was to be partly closed.⁸²

⁸⁰Grew to Konoye, Oct. 6, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 19 (Oct. 29, 1938), p. 286.

⁸¹Grew, Ten Years, p. 256.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 270-71.

Military success lay behind the new attitude; all year long the Japanese armies had pressed steadily southward. On November 3, Tokyo announced the fall of Canton and the Wuhan cities, adding that the Chinese Nationalist government was now but a local regime and repeating that its extinction was the objective of Japanese policy.⁸³ On November 18, the Japanese Foreign Office sent its considered reply to the American note of October 6. Referring to the Open Door, this communication stated that

...any attempt to apply to the conditions of today and tomorrow inapplicable ideas and principles of the past neither would contribute toward the establishment of a real peace in East Asia nor solve the immediate issues.

...However, as long as these points are understood, Japan has not the slightest inclination to oppose the participation of the United States and other powers in the great work of reconstructing East Asia along all lines of industry and trade...⁸⁴

Japan had at last come into the open, and the United States met this frank avowal by turning directly to China. Except for our moral embargo and failure to use the neutrality act, the Chinese government had thus far received little but sympathy and diplomatic support; but now Ambassador Nelson T. Johnson was called home from China to discuss what might be done. Financial aid seemed the most likely step for the time being, and the upshot of these

⁸³Statement by the Japanese government, Nov. 3, 1938, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 477.

⁸⁴Arita to Grew, Nov. 18, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 19 (Nov. 19, 1938), pp. 352-53.

conversations was that on December 15 the Export-Import Bank made the Chinese Republic a loan of \$25,000,000. While its proceeds could not be used to buy arms and munitions, they were available for other war supplies; and it was arranged that repayment might be made through the shipment of tung oil to the United States.⁸⁵ Outwardly, of course, this was a simple commercial agreement designed to stimulate foreign trade. Nevertheless, its political overtones could not be denied.

Such lending devices were henceforth to be applied frequently as a method of doing international good without running afoul of the neutrality law until passage of the Lend-Lease Act rendered them more or less superfluous. Always discriminatory, this policy had been in the making for some time. Since 1932, Japan had been unable to borrow from any agency of the United States government; and in 1937, China had been extended a small credit of \$1,500,000. Now the scale of beneficence was enlarged; and by the end of 1941, the United States was to loan China a total of \$171,500,000. Although China remained the chief object of such attentions, other victims of more powerful neighbors eventually received help in the same way.⁸⁶

⁸⁵Press announcement, Dec. 16, 1938, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1938-39, p. 271.

⁸⁶Cf. Williams, "The Coming of Economic Sanctions into American Practice," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 37 (July 1943), pp. 393-94.

On December 22, Prince Konoye, the Japanese Premier, formally announced that a "new order" had come into being: Japan, China, and Manchukuo would henceforth be united in economic coöperation and defense against communism.⁸⁷ Taken in conjunction with the Japanese note of November 18, this was a manifesto which could not be ignored; and the United States on December 30 confirmed its policy of yielding nothing. Referring to Arita's note, the State Department granted its awareness that conditions had changed indeed. But it pointed out that Japan herself was responsible for most of those changes and insisted that the United States could not admit the right of any power to constitute itself "the agent of destiny." Declining to recognize the existence of a "new order," it reserved "all rights as they exist" pending the negotiation of new treaties.⁸⁸

This country's Far Eastern policy was still defensive, but its entrenchments were going steadily deeper as the conflict of its interests with Japanese ambitions grew more irreconcilable. Casting up his accounts at the end of January, Ambassador Grew morosely contemplated the issues which had been drawn in the past two months and wrote:

⁸⁷ Statement by the Japanese Prime Minister, Dec. 22, 1938, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 1, p. 482.

⁸⁸ Grew to Arita, Dec. 30, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 123, pp. 445-47.

Seldom in modern history has a year commenced under more inauspicious circumstances than has 1939... I cannot see that optimism is justified.⁸⁹

VI.

Relations with Japan were never the only problem, however, and usually not even the main one. As suggested above, apprehension regarding the possible effects of European crises tended to impose restraint in the Far East from the beginning. The care with which the American government took soundings in Europe, its habit of outlining foreign policy only in the broadest possible terms, and its evident reluctance to concentrate upon Japan all bore witness to its belief that the greatest danger of war and hence the ultimate threat to American security was to be found in Europe rather than Asia.

But it took more than stagnation of American policy in Asia to produce mobility elsewhere; and for the time being, the United States accomplished even less in Europe than in the Far East. Thanks to our tradition of Asiatic involvement, the administration could avoid surrender in that part of the world without unduly affronting isolationist sentiment at home. But in Europe there was no ready-made position to defend. Even though the country observed European affairs

⁸⁹Grew, Ten Years, p. 273.

with regularly mounting disquietude,⁹⁰ it refused to countenance any but the very smallest advance. Accordingly, the role of the United States in European concerns from Roosevelt's effort to build a peace front at the beginning of 1938 to Germany's absorption of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 was largely one of study and comment.

But mere observation was so difficult that it led to conclusions of only the most general sort. Having lost its power to rise above a series of expedients, Europe now offered little but confusion and uncertainty. While final alignments were reasonably clear, there was room for doubt even on this point; and it was virtually impossible to make confident predictions regarding the stand of given countries on particular issues. Neither American isolationism nor Far Eastern tensions did anything to solve European difficulties, but Europe's chief problem was still Europe itself.

In October 1937, while considering his Armistice Day project, Roosevelt was by no means certain whether the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia were capable of genuine cooperation.⁹¹ In December, he gave Germany up as hopeless. Since 1933, it had been his policy to encourage liberal elements in that country in the belief that

⁹⁰Cf. Philip E. Jacob, "Influences of World Events on U. S. 'Neutrality' Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Mar. 1940), p. 65.

⁹¹Dodd and Dodd (eds.), Ambassador Dodd's Diary, p. 428.

they might gain enough influence to change the course of the Nazi government. His appointment to the Berlin Embassy of Professor William E. Dodd, a distinguished historian with strong liberal sympathies and an old-fashioned German university background, had been made in the hope of establishing cultural rapport between the American way of life and what was best in German civilization.⁹² But any sympathy that was engendered had totally failed to reach the German government, and Dodd had long since resigned himself to the truth that his mission was a failure.⁹³ Anticipating the latter's retirement, Roosevelt had intended to replace him with Joseph E. Davies, a wealthy lawyer prominently identified with the Democratic party since the time of Wilson and Ambassador to Russia since the first of the year. But he told Davies on December 8 that he had changed his mind. It was clear, explained the President, that Germany could not be altered from within. Consequently, Dodd would be followed by a career diplomat whose appointment would have no political implications whatever and who might confine himself to representing the United States in the narrowest

⁹² Dodd and Dodd (eds.), Ambassador Dodd's Diary, p. 3.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 426.

sense.⁹⁴ Dodd, the amateur, was replaced by Hugh Wilson, the professional, later that month.⁹⁵

As custodian of the Russian puzzle from the beginning of 1937 to June 1938, Davies was undoubtedly one of the busiest men in Europe. He toured Russia with great energy, appeared often in the various European capitals, and visited Washington regularly for friendly chats with the President. In February 1937, he had enlarged on the possibility of an understanding between Hitler and Stalin. Canvassing another likelihood from Prague at the beginning of September, he warned Hull that Finland was almost certain to be regarded as a base of German operations in the event of a Nazi attack on Leningrad.⁹⁶ Thus he gained the somewhat unusual distinction of having sponsored two contradictory prophecies which were both to be fulfilled in the same war. Following the latter thought, he pointed out on March 26, 1938, that Litvinov's statement to the press after the German annexation of Austria to the effect that Russia would aid

⁹⁴ Davies, Mission to Moscow, pp. 255-56. In this connection, it is interesting to note the opinion of Hans Gisevius, the anti-Nazi plotter, who states that there was hope for a reversal of German development up to Feb. 1938 but that any assault against Nazi power after the Fritsch crisis of that month "had to be made from outside Germany." See Hans B. Gisevius, To the Bitter End (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1947), p. 267.

⁹⁵ Dodd and Dodd (eds.), Ambassador Dodd's Diary, p. 443.

⁹⁶ Davies, Mission to Moscow, p. 217.

Czechoslovakia against similar aggression was regarded in Moscow as a warning to Poland that the Soviet Union might be compelled to violate her boundaries in the common interest.⁹⁷ By April 1, however, he was alarmed at the growing Russian tendency toward isolation.⁹⁸ And to sum up Soviet-American affairs as he took leave of Moscow early in June, he made the following points: that Russia's position in Japan's rear was important to this country, that the Soviet Union was more friendly to the United States than to any other power, that everything possible should be done to discourage Russian isolationism, and that communism offered no serious threat to the United States.⁹⁹ Although our Ambassador in London, Joseph P. Kennedy, thought he saw reason to believe that Russia's self-interest would not permit her to abandon the democracies regardless of what happened,¹⁰⁰ nothing about eastern Europe seemed completely obvious except that Moscow required dextrous treatment.

The United States met Germany's seizure of Austria in March 1938 with a painstaking frigidity which amounted to non-recognition and implicit disapproval. Replying to

⁹⁷Davies, Mission to Moscow, pp. 292-93.

⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 304-5.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 418.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 440.

Berlin's announcement of the Anschluss, Hull admitted that the United States was compelled to accept the German government's communication as a statement of fact, added that its Legation in Vienna would be replaced by a consulate-general, and requested that Germany assume responsibility for the Austrian debt to the United States.¹⁰¹ If he did not explicitly refuse de jure recognition, neither did he confirm the legality of the change; and the tone of his remarks was nicely calculated to throw a shroud of dubiety over the whole proceeding.¹⁰²

Political reserve was then somewhat emphasized by trade measures. On April 6, President Roosevelt directed the Treasury Department to suspend the commercial treaty between the United States and Austria,¹⁰³ thus excluding Greater Germany from the benefits of the lower import duties hitherto assessed against Austrian goods. This was normal procedure, however, and could not, in itself, be taken as evidence of special irritation.

There was also a quickening in the tempo of official statement. Hull on March 17 spoke strongly against isolationism, urged the necessity of upholding rights and

¹⁰¹See two notes, Wilson to Ribbentrop, Apr. 6, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 18 (Apr. 9, 1938), pp. 465-66.

¹⁰²Cf. Lauterpacht, Recognition in International Law, p. 399.

¹⁰³Roosevelt to Morgenthau, Apr. 6, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 18 (Apr. 9, 1938), p. 474.

principles in all parts of the world, and lauded the benefits of coöperation.¹⁰⁴ Asked for his views a few weeks later on Senator Nye's proposal to repeal the arms embargo for the Spanish loyalists and give the President authority to apply it against the rebels at his own discretion, he carefully explained on May 12 that he could not recommend passage of the bill because of the special circumstances under which the United States was then advancing collective policies in concert with the non-intervention committee.¹⁰⁵ Whatever his argument lacked in realism, this plea of coöperation gave at least verbal support to his thesis of March 17. On June 3,¹⁰⁶ and again on August 16,¹⁰⁷ he spoke in much the same vein.

But Hull avoided specific suggestions; and as Roosevelt failed to elaborate his statements in any large degree throughout the spring and summer, the total effect of these exhortations was modest. Even Hull must have spoken with tongue somewhat in cheek as the cleavage which had appeared

¹⁰⁴Speech by Hull, Mar. 17, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 106, pp. 416-18.

¹⁰⁵Hull to Pittman, May 12, 1938, ibid., No. 104, pp. 119-20.

¹⁰⁶See excerpts from address by Hull, June 3, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 18 (June 4, 1938), p. 646.

¹⁰⁷Radio address by Hull, Aug. 16, 1938, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1938-39, pp. 21-22.

between President and Secretary of State the previous fall in connection with the Armistice Day plan grew more distinct. It was rapidly becoming evident that the term "coöperation" embraced many things and that the only basis for action in this domain was support of appeasement. Although he could waver on particulars, Hull regarded such a policy with general disfavor, as recorded above. On the other hand, Sumner Welles and a coterie of lesser lights in the diplomatic establishment upheld the idea.¹⁰⁸ Reluctantly or otherwise, the President now leaned in the same direction. Despite his warning to the Prime Minister in January, he gradually found merit in Chamberlain's belief that appropriate concessions might loosen Italy's ties with the Axis and thus embraced a hope which he was not to abandon until the late spring of 1940. By April, he was ready to favor the Anglo-Italian rapprochement with his moral support and yielded, over Hull's tacit disapproval, to Chamberlain's request that he bestow a public blessing upon the agreement finally concluded by Great Britain and Italy on April 16.¹⁰⁹

By this treaty, Britain recognized Italy's position in Ethiopia in return for the latter's confirmation of the

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Louis Fischer, Men and Politics (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1941), p. 445; and Robert Bendiner, The Riddle of the State Department (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1942), pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁹ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 581. The request for Roosevelt's support was made on April 14.

territorial status quo in the Mediterranean and her accession to the London Naval Treaty of 1936.¹¹⁰ Gripped by his newly-softened mood, Roosevelt at once announced that the United States believed in discussion of differences and economic appeasement and that, while it did not venture to comment on the political features of the Anglo-Italian accord, it viewed the pact with "sympathetic interest" as "proof of the value of peaceful negotiation."¹¹¹ Chamberlain found this endorsement helpful in persuading the Commons to accept the agreement,¹¹² and a new phase of coöperation was fairly under way. Hull lost no time denying the truth of an article in the Baltimore Evening Sun on May 11 which alleged that he was dissatisfied with the presidential statement,¹¹³ and he added the next day that Roosevelt's words heralded no change in American foreign policy.¹¹⁴ They did embrace a limited change of attitude, however; and in view of the Secretary's

¹¹⁰ Agreement between the United Kingdom and Italy, Apr. 16, 1938, Great Britain, Foreign Office, Treaty Series (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1892-), No. 31 (1938), Cmd. 5726, pp. 8, 29, 30.

¹¹¹ Statement by the President, Apr. 19, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 18 (May 7, 1938), p. 527.

¹¹² Cf. Royal Institute, Survey, 1938, Vol. 1, p. 599.

¹¹³ Statement by Hull, May 11, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 18 (May 14, 1938), p. 575.

¹¹⁴ Statement by Hull, May 12, 1938, ibid., p. 576.

admitted position on the general issue, his assurances gave off a hollow ring.

Lack of confidence in France was another element in the appeasement philosophy which Hull did not share. While Chamberlain prized his government's excellent relations with France, he did not regard them as a source of great strength. French politics were most unstable; and since she was able neither to "keep a secret for more than half an hour, nor a government for more than nine months," France could not be depended upon in a crisis.¹¹⁵ When Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins returned from a session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva in June 1938, she gave the Cabinet her impression that France would collapse easily if the pinch came. The President listened with attention, but Hull disagreed strongly, maintaining that his own information justified an altogether different view.¹¹⁶

This fundamental opposition between President and Secretary of State appeared even more clearly in the fall. As Europe approached the Munich crisis, Hull feared that Roosevelt's enthusiasm for doing something would align the United States completely with the forces of appeasement, leading other nations to believe that it was giving up the

¹¹⁵Quoted in Feiling, Chamberlain, p. 323.

¹¹⁶Frances Perkins, The Roosevelt I Knew (New York: Viking Press, 1946), p. 352.

ship too.¹¹⁷ But his counsel of restraint was only partly effective; for while the President refrained from offering the European governments either detailed advice or his services as arbitrator and thus avoided any direct role in the negotiations, such influence as he did exert was not calculated to discourage the settlement eventually made at Munich.

Apparently fearing that the Prime Minister was losing his hold and stood in need of encouragement, Kennedy reported from London on September 24 that a split seemed to have developed in the British Cabinet between Chamberlain's supporters and those who wanted to stop Hitler immediately. Ambassador Bullitt contributed still further to the sense of urgency when he telephoned from Paris later the same day advising the President to send personal appeals to the heads of all states involved.¹¹⁸ This Roosevelt undertook to do in spite of Hull's conviction that it would have negligible results. Accordingly, messages were dispatched to Berlin, Prague, London, Paris, Warsaw, and Budapest on September 26. That they committed the United States to nothing except the hope for peace suited Hull's views, however, as did Roosevelt's evasion of a French bid to secure American

¹¹⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 591.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 590.

arbitration¹¹⁹ and his failure to approve a suggestion that Chamberlain broadcast a justification of his policy to the United States on September 27.¹²⁰

Beyond this, the President ignored his Secretary's forebodings. Nineteen other countries sent peace appeals to Hitler and Beneš at his suggestion.¹²¹ A special message to Hitler on September 27, pleading for peace but declaring that the United States took no responsibility for ensuing negotiations,¹²² and a hopeful appeal to Mussolini, asking that he intervene with the German Chancellor to procure an amicable settlement,¹²³ rounded out his contribution and, in Hull's opinion, were essential factors in the decision to call the Munich Conference.¹²⁴ That the Secretary of State found little joy in the outcome, however, was indicated by his rather sour observation on September 30 that the Munich agreement had begotten an almost "universal sense of relief" as to "immediate peace results."¹²⁵ He offered no comment

¹¹⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 591-92.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 593.

¹²¹Idem.

¹²²Roosevelt to Hitler, Sept. 27, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 115, p. 429.

¹²³Roosevelt to Phillips, Sept. 27, 1938, ibid., No. 114, p. 428.

¹²⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 595.

¹²⁵Statement by Hull, Sept. 30, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 117, p. 430.

on its long-range aspects. By contrast, Sumner Welles expressed great satisfaction, finding that the moment offered perhaps the best opportunity in two decades to establish "a new world order based upon justice...and law."¹²⁶

Although the American government dabbled in appeasement through most of 1938, its direct relations with Berlin gained little benefit from this policy. On January 14, Hull exchanged bristling opinions with Dieckhoff, the German Ambassador in Washington, over the latter's protest against certain public statements of ex-Ambassador Dodd concerning Hitler.¹²⁷ On July 7, he told Dieckhoff that the United States abhorred "many of the practices of the German Government within their own country."¹²⁸ On September 21, he assured the Canadian Minister that Germany and Japan were each intent on dominating half the world.¹²⁹ And in the course of another talk with Dieckhoff on September 28, at the height of the Munich crisis, he severely criticized German policy.¹³⁰ All this tended to harmonize with the

¹²⁶Radio address by Welles, Oct. 3, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 19 (Oct. 8, 1938), p. 240.

¹²⁷Memorandum of conversation, Jan. 14, 1938, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 103, p. 403.

¹²⁸Memorandum of conversation, July 7, 1938, ibid., No. 110, p. 423.

¹²⁹Memorandum of conversation, Sept. 21, 1938, ibid., No. 111, p. 424.

¹³⁰Memorandum of conversation, Sept. 28, 1938, ibid., No. 116, pp. 429-30.

President's decision of the previous December that the United States would no longer seek to accomplish anything in Berlin through direct action. This growing strain was emphasized in November when Ambassador Hugh Wilson was called home for report and consultation following Hitler's week-long pogrom against the Jews.¹³¹ As it turned out, Wilson's recall was permanent, and our diplomatic relations with Germany were henceforth to be conducted through a chargé d'affaires.

Only in the field of inter-American relations was there any forward progress during the latter part of 1938. Speaking at Kingston, Ontario, on August 18, Roosevelt promised that the United States would not "stand idly by" if Canada were threatened by outside domination other than that represented by the British Empire,¹³² thus forecasting the defensive agreement made with Canada two years later. In December, the Eighth International Conference of American States met at Lima, Peru. On December 24, the Conference adopted a Declaration of the Principles of the Solidarity of America which stated that any threat to the peace, security, or territorial integrity of the Americas was the common concern of all the American republics and that they would consult with a view to the coördination of policy on the

¹³¹Statement by the President, Nov. 15, 1938, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 19 (Nov. 19, 1938), p. 338.

¹³²Address at Queen's University, Aug. 18, 1938, Roosevelt, Papers, 1938, p. 493.

invitation of any one of them. Other resolutions approved at the same time reaffirmed earlier pledges of solidarity,¹³³ and a useful basis was thus laid for inter-American coöperation in time of crisis.

Between the end of 1938 and the resumption of German aggression in March 1939, the United States watched the aftermath of the Munich settlement and found in its rapid disintegration cause to doubt the ultimate security of America and American institutions if appeasement were indefinitely continued.¹³⁴ Public opinion polls indicated that, at the outset, approximately 59 percent of the American people thought well of Munich. By November, however, 92 percent doubted that Hitler wanted no more European territory. In January, 62 percent believed that Germany would be responsible for any European war that broke out; and the next month the same percentage expected Germany and Italy to attack the United States if they could defeat England and France. By March, the proportion favoring a war referendum had sunk to 58 percent--a drop of ten points since October--and no less than 52 percent wished to supply the British and

¹³³ Declaration of Lima, Dec. 24, 1938, and other resolutions adopted by the Conference, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1938-39, pp. 45-48.

¹³⁴ Cf. Jacob, "Influences of World Events on U. S. 'Neutrality' Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Mar. 1940), p. 65.

French with airplanes and war materials in the event of a European war.¹³⁵

As public opinion moved, the administration moved with it. In his message to Congress on January 4, President Roosevelt cautiously suggested repeal of the arms embargo and spoke of methods "short of war" but "stronger than words" to deter aggressors.¹³⁶ Again, however, he refrained from concrete suggestions. Later in the month, he was reported to have told the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations that the American frontier was on the Rhine.¹³⁷ Although this statement represented a principle upon which much of his subsequent action was based and which must have stood close to his inmost convictions at that time, the President beat a hasty retreat when confronted with it, categorically denying the report and embroidering his denial with some reflections on foreign policy that were distinctly isolationist in tone.¹³⁸ Whether he had made such an assertion or not,

¹³⁵-----"American Institute of Public Opinion--Surveys, 1938-1939," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 3 (Oct. 1939), pp. 598-600.

¹³⁶Annual message to Congress, Jan. 4, 1939, Roosevelt, Papers, 1939, pp. 3-4.

¹³⁷This report was substantially corroborated by Senator Logan of Kentucky, an administration stalwart. See Moley, After Seven Years, p. 381.

¹³⁸Press conference, Feb. 3, 1939, Roosevelt, Papers, 1939, p. 111.

his method of spiking the rumor certainly vitiated his theme of January 4 and left popular knowledge of his thoughts as confused as ever. Notwithstanding the growth of his policy, Roosevelt still insisted on balancing one statement against another.

Within this regime of fits and starts, however, certain details were beginning to add up to a trend. It was plain that the government was beginning to count upon the likelihood of war. Its larger-Navy program had been under way for some time; and while the Navy's greatest strength remained concentrated in the Pacific, a significant redeployment began in January 1939 with formation of the Atlantic Squadron.¹³⁹ The President had tentatively urged renewed study of mobilization measures in January 1938. In June, he had approved a law which authorized the placing of educational orders with American war plants.¹⁴⁰ Public opinion, moreover, now leaned strongly to one side in Europe; and the President's recent message to Congress warned that a drive to repeal the arms embargo lay in definite prospect.

VII.

To sum up, American foreign policy between the middle of 1937 and the spring of 1939 was caution mixed with

¹³⁹Samuel Eliot Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, 1939-1943, (Vol. 1. of History of United States Naval Operations in World War II), (Boston: Little, Brown, 1947), p. 14.

¹⁴⁰United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 52, p. 707.

confusion. Official efforts to unite internationalist theory with isolationist fact often resulted in failure to distinguish between a coöperation in defense of law and a coöperation in support of expediency. If there was no general retreat from principles, some of them were given strange new uses to justify deals with Hitler and Mussolini; and there was little advance along practical lines except in the realm of national defense--where the advance was small--and in the domain of inter-American solidarity. All three members of the Axis had fallen noticeably from grace, but not all had fallen the same distance. Direct relations with Germany, the most abandoned of the trio, were worst. Our attitude toward Japan, though stiffening, still embraced a hope that Japanese liberals might recover some influence in their government. Italy was viewed as being especially subject to redemption.

Like the rest of the democratic world, America was irresolute. So far as irresolution sprang from internal causes, it reflected the views of a country still devoted to isolation, passionately eager to avoid war, but increasingly doubtful whether this was possible if war came at all. And in certain details, it was the result of divided counsels in the government itself--where one group insisted that any form of coöperation with Britain and France was worse than useless until substantial rearmament could be substituted for the more direct varieties of appeasement, and another group

was disposed to countenance the existing policies of London and Paris as long as they promised to accomplish anything whatever.

Yet, in spite of this wavering, there was no longer much doubt as to the ultimate position of the United States if the worst happened. America's basic strategy was implicit in the world situation and in the course of the American government over the past two years. Europe was the center of policy; action in the Far East awaited developments between the Rhine and the Urals. The period of waiting was drawing to a close, moreover, as conditions which favored a stronger attitude in both continents came into view. The United States was slowly putting its defenses in order. Committed to a strategy, the administration was now preparing to abandon some of its tactical uncertainties. And as surrender to Germany brought disillusionment in its wake, public opinion was beginning to yield its isolationist shell.

CHAPTER III

DEATH OF THE ARMS EMBARGO

I.

In the years leading up to the second World War, springtime always hastened the pace of international activity. As a catalyzer, however, the spring of 1939 was supreme; for Germany's implacable extinction of Czechoslovakia on March 15 clearly revealed the futility of trying to appease the Nazi government and inaugurated a brisk reversal of policy on all sides.

Speaking in Birmingham on March 17, Neville Chamberlain carefully distinguished between this and Hitler's earlier impositions on his neighbors. The occupation of the Rhineland, of Austria, and of the Sudetenland might be excused on the basis of "racial affinity or of just claims too long resisted." But the seizure of Czechoslovakia, he continued, "seemed to fall into a different category" and to raise the question: "Is this the end of an old adventure, or is it the beginning of a new?"¹ British leadership was manifestly

¹Speech at Birmingham, Mar. 17, 1939, Neville Chamberlain, In Search of Peace (New York: Putnam, 1939), p. 274.

stirring; as Winston Churchill later remarked, this speech brought him "much closer to Mr. Chamberlain."² It also gave diplomacy a new text.

Others stirred too. Coulondre, the French Ambassador in Berlin, wrote to the Quai d'Orsay on March 16 that Germany had at last thrown off her mask,³ adding a few days later that France would have to join Britain in opposing Germany with force.⁴ A similar, if less energetic, view was delivered by Georges Bonnet, the French Foreign Minister, who stated that France and Britain might be accused of "moral complicity" unless they took a firm position.⁵ Even Count Ciano was impressed, pausing in his cynical direction of Italy's foreign affairs long enough to observe that Hitler could never be trusted again since this act had destroyed not the Czechoslovakia of Versailles but the Czechoslovakia of Munich.⁶

²Churchill, The Gathering Storm, p. 348.

³Coulondre to Bonnet, Mar. 16, 1939, France, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Le Livre Jaune Français: Documents Diplomatiques, 1938-1939 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1939), No. 73, p. 94. Cited henceforth as Livre Jaune.

⁴Coulondre to Bonnet, Mar. 19, 1939, ibid., No. 80, p. 111.

⁵Bonnet to Corbin, Mar. 16, 1939, ibid., No. 72, pp. 91-92.

⁶Count Galeazzo Ciano, The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943, ed. by Hugh Gibson (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1946), p. 42. Cited henceforth as Diaries.

While Europe thus digested its realization that Hitler was unable to keep his word, Germany annexed Memel on March 22 and reopened her latent dispute with Poland over the status of Danzig and the Corridor.⁷ But awakening had come, and this threat was faced promptly. On March 31, Chamberlain announced that Great Britain and France would assist Poland to the extent of their ability if she went to war to uphold her independence.⁸ France was already committed to this position by the defensive alliance she had concluded with Poland in 1921. The British guarantee was unilateral, however, and remained so until April 6 when it was made fully reciprocal by a joint declaration of the British and Polish governments.⁹ Nor was this all. For when Italy undertook the military occupation of Albania on April 7, Britain and France hurried to mend their Balkan fences with unilateral guarantees of Rumania and Greece.¹⁰

⁷Cf. Lipski to Beck, Mar. 21, 1939, Poland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Official Documents Concerning Polish-German and Polish-Soviet Relations, 1933-1939 (London: Hutchinson, 1939), No. 61, pp. 61-63. Cited henceforth as Polish White Book.

⁸Statement by Chamberlain, Mar. 31, 1939, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 345, c. 2415.

⁹Cf. Polish-English communiqué, Apr. 6, 1939, Polish White Book, No. 71, p. 74.

¹⁰Statement by Chamberlain, Apr. 13, 1939, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 346, c. 13.

In less than a month, the Munich settlement had been overturned, the hopes that enshrined it all but forgotten, long vistas of new trouble opened up, and a whole set of new policies formally revealed. A breathing-space ensued, the last before the war, as Britain and France opened a four-month contest with Germany for an understanding with Russia--whose ultimate purposes had been the subject of growing speculation since the early part of 1937. But the Kremlin's dismissal of Litvinov and appointment of Viacheslav M. Molotov as Foreign Commissar on May 3 boded no good for the western powers; and while Franco-British efforts continued well into the month of August, their reluctance to accept Soviet terms with respect to the Baltic states and Finland made it a losing battle.¹¹

The official response of the United States to these developments offered some advance over that made a year earlier

¹¹The question of a Soviet-German rapprochement was brought up as early as April 17, 1939, by Merekalov, the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, during a conversation with Baron von Weizsäcker of the German Foreign Office. See Memorandum by Weizsäcker, Apr. 17, 1939, United States, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1948), p. 2. For reflections on the dismissal of Litvinov, see Coulondre to Bonnet, May 7, 1939, Livre Jaune, No. 123, pp. 153-58. Grigore Gafencu, then Rumanian Foreign Minister and later Rumanian Minister to Moscow, has given a particularly astute analysis of the failure of negotiations between Russia and the western powers in his personal account of European international relations during the spring and summer of 1939. See Grigore Gafencu, Last Days of Europe: A Diplomatic Journey in 1939, trans. by E. Fletcher-Allen (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1948), pp. 217-21. A good circumstantial account of this diplomatic struggle written from the historian's viewpoint can be found in Lewis B. Namier, Diplomatic Prelude, 1938-1939 (London: Macmillan, 1948), chapter 5.

at the time of the Anschluss. The exports of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia were immediately classed as German for tariff purposes;¹² and on March 18, a twenty-five percent countervailing duty was imposed against all German goods entering this country. Such duties were authorized by law to redress the balance in cases where governments paid export bounties to their own producers. Although the Treasury Department held that the German barter system amounted by indirection to this very thing, its sudden discovery of the fact clearly grew out of the political scene. This duty, added to the higher tariffs Germany already paid, left her at a serious disadvantage, as compared with other countries, in trade with the United States.¹³

Nor was the American answer confined to economic retaliation. On March 17, Welles denounced the annexation in measured terms;¹⁴ and three days later he steadfastly upheld the doctrine of non-recognition, pointing out that,

¹²Commissioner of Customs to all Collectors of U. S. Customs, Mar. 17, 1939, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 20 (Mar. 18, 1939), p. 200.

¹³Treasury Department to Collectors of Customs, Mar. 18, 1939, ibid., p. 203. Cf. Margaret S. Gordon, Barriers to World Trade: A Study of Recent Commercial Policy (New York: Macmillan, 1941), pp. 328n, 408n. Morgenthau gives Welles credit for the adoption of countervailing duties at this time. Hull opposed them. See Henry Morgenthau Jr., "The Morgenthau Diaries," Colliers Magazine, Vol. 120 (Oct. 18, 1947), pp. 16, 71.

¹⁴Statement by Welles, Mar. 17, 1939, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 20 (Mar. 18, 1939), pp. 199-200.

while German control over the former Czech provinces was manifest, the United States recognized no legal basis for such an arrangement.¹⁵ The American Legation at Prague was closed, but Berlin refused an exequatur to the American consul-general there pending our recognition of German sovereignty over the newly-acquired lands. Although the American consulate-general in the former Czech capital remained open without formal German approval until October 14, 1940,¹⁶ this episode was the nearest thing to a direct clash between Washington and Berlin that had yet appeared.

In the same way, the United States met the Italian seizure of Albania with denunciation and formal withdrawal of its Minister from the occupied territory.¹⁷ Four months later, in July, countervailing duties were imposed against some Italian silk products.¹⁸

The American government did not restrict itself to fishing in waters that had already gone over the dam, however.

¹⁵ Welles to Thomsen, Mar. 20, 1939, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 20 (Mar. 25, 1939), p. 221.

¹⁶ Green H. Hackworth, Digest of International Law, 8 vols. (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1940-44), Vol. 4, pp. 689-90.

¹⁷ Statement by Hull, Apr. 8, 1939, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 20 (Apr. 8, 1939, p. 261; also Press release, June 12, 1939, ibid. (June 17, 1939) p. 527.

¹⁸ Williams, "The Coming of Economic Sanctions into American Practice," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 37 (July 1943), p. 390.

Manifestly stirred by future dangers, President Roosevelt sent Hitler a telegram on April 14 suggesting that the German leader extend non-aggression guarantees to some thirty-one European and Near Eastern states.¹⁹ The Führer did not take kindly to the President's implication that he constituted the main threat to world peace; and in a speech to the Reichstag on April 28, he not only cast derision upon Roosevelt's proposal but also denounced the Polish-German non-aggression pact and the Anglo-German naval agreements of 1935 and 1937 as incompatible with the new encirclement of Germany.²⁰

Thus, while it revealed greater irritation and more explicit concern than in either March or September 1938, American policy at the international level in the spring of 1939 was no more capable than before of slowing events. Our effective participation in European affairs still awaited vast changes at home; and on March 19--just four days after German troops entered Prague--the administration launched its expected drive for repeal of the arms embargo.

¹⁹Roosevelt to Hitler, Apr. 14, 1939, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 128, p. 457.

²⁰Extract from speech by Hitler, Apr. 28, 1939, Great Britain, Foreign Office, Documents concerning German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities between Great Britain and Germany on September 3rd, 1939 (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1939), No. 13, pp. 28-32; also extract in Germany, Foreign Office, Documents on Events Preceding the Outbreak of the War (New York: German Library of Information, 1940), No. 295, pp. 314-17.

II.

This move represented a compromise with necessity on one hand and with opportunity on the other. Except in special cases--such as the Chaco and Spanish conflicts where the mandatory, impartial embargo was expressly suited to its policy--the administration's sporadic efforts to guide the development of special embargo legislation since 1933 had been aimed at securing a law which gave the President wide freedom to prescribe the manner in which the embargo should be applied rather than at doing away with the embargo altogether. But now the administration was convinced that the impartial embargo was worse than no embargo at all; and, realizing the hopelessness of obtaining the flexible kind of statute it needed, it decided to concentrate on getting rid of the one it had.

This decision to work for repeal of the arms embargo had apparently been made in November 1938 following Ambassador Wilson's recall from Berlin.²¹ Roosevelt told Postmaster General James A. Farley in December that revision of the neutrality act was one of the answers to the foreign situation;²² and as recorded above, his message to Congress at the beginning of the year called new attention to the matter. But the opportunity to begin a real offensive was

²¹Cf. Moley, After Seven Years, pp. 379-80.

²²James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story: The Roosevelt Years (New York: Whittlesey House, 1948), p. 163.

not due until spring. A two-year limitation hung over the cash-and-carry provision of the joint resolution of May 1, 1937; and it was to expire on the last day of the coming April. Since the cash-and-carry principle was favored by many isolationists in Congress, its appointed demise offered good bargaining possibilities. Many tacticians on Capitol Hill believed that the isolationists might be persuaded to drop the embargo altogether if, as quid pro quo, all exports to belligerents, including arms and munitions, were placed permanently upon a cash-and-carry basis.

Although it bore no essential relation to a plan made so long in advance, the liquidation of Czechoslovakia was timed almost perfectly to support these designs. Public opinion was always sensitive for brief periods to European crises, and the proportion of Americans favoring the sale of airplanes and war materials to Great Britain and France in the event of hostilities rose from 52 percent in March to 66 percent a month later.²³ Following the occupation of Prague as closely as it did, therefore, the attack on Capitol Hill could expect some endorsement from public uneasiness.

The initial assault was made in the Senate under the generalship of Key Pittman, still chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. Before submitting it to his brother

²³-----"American Institute of Public Opinion--Surveys, 1938-1939," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 3 (Oct. 1939), p. 600.

legislators, however, Pittman unveiled his proposal before a wider audience in a radio speech on March 19. His theme was neutrality. Criticizing the existing law as unjust, if not unneutral, in such cases as the war between Japan and China, he maintained that it also surrendered legal rights for which we had fought in the World War. On the other hand, extension of the cash-and-carry principle to include arms and munitions would enable the United States to act with justice and with as little risk as possible to its neutrality. It was nevertheless clear that he regarded such a measure as an imperfect compromise, for he explicitly refused to commit himself "not to offer further legislation increasing the emergent powers of the President."²⁴ With this warning of renewed solicitations for a discriminatory embargo hanging in the air, Pittman's resolution--entitled the Peace Act of 1939--was brought to the Senate floor the next day and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. By forbidding all American vessels to carry anything whatever to belligerent countries or to enter combat zones designated by the President, it sought to offer the isolationists a reward for giving up the embargo.²⁵

But the Peace Act did less well in committee than its

²⁴Radio address by Pittman, Mar. 19, 1939, printed in Congressional Record, Vol. 84, pp. 2925-26.

²⁵S. J. Res. 97 (76th Cong., 1st sess.), ibid., pp. 2923-24.

sponsors had hoped; and after a time, Pittman advised that the effort be transferred to the House, where administration forces were stronger. So the reins were handed to Representative Sol Bloom of New York, successor to McReynolds as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs;²⁶ and Hull brought the State Department into the open with letters to both houses of Congress urging repeal of the arms embargo and adoption of the changes embodied in the Pittman bill.²⁷ On May 29, Bloom submitted to the House a resolution which differed only in wording and detail from the Senate proposal.²⁸

Everything was smooth at first, and the Bloom resolution was reported from committee on June 17. The ensuing debate was more arduous, however. Friends of repeal upheld the measure as the best way of keeping the United States out of war, but expounded their thesis in a number of different ways. Representative Luther A. Johnson, Democrat, of Texas considered the embargo a threat to peace since, by removing the positive influence of the United States from the world scene, it encouraged other

²⁶Harold B. Hinton, Cordell Hull: A Biography (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1942), p. 337.

²⁷Hull to Bloom and Pittman, May 27, 1939, Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 20 (June 3, 1939), pp. 476-77.

²⁸H. J. Res. 306 (76th Cong., 1st sess.), Congressional Record, Vol. 84, p. 6309.

countries to make war.²⁹ Representative E. V. Izac, Democrat, of California held that the joint resolution of 1937 imposed only a partial embargo and declared that no partial embargo could be truly neutral. Specifically, he was worried about continued shipments to Japan.³⁰ Representative James W. Wadsworth, Republican, of New York argued that peace for the United States lay in its "retention of the right to do what is best for America when the time comes." Having always counseled freedom of action, he opposed the neutrality act just as he had opposed our adherence to the League of Nations.³¹

Enemies of repeal, on the other hand, denounced the Bloom proposal as a certain move toward war. Representative Paul W. Shafer, Republican, of Michigan characterized it as a "war-promotion bill clothed in the robes of neutrality... just what the international bankers, international war-mongers, and war profiteers desire."³² Representative J. M. Vorys, Republican, of Ohio thought it revealed the President's desire "to use the threat of our power to preserve a balance of power in Europe" and went on to declaim

²⁹Congressional Record, Vol. 84, p. 8324.

³⁰Ibid., p. 8234.

³¹Ibid., p. 8159.

³²Ibid., p. 8318.

that "if you threaten enough you get into war."³³ More plaintively, Representative Martin J. Kennedy, Democrat, of New York criticized the bill because the people of his district were "scared to death" that it would lead to war and added: "God knows they have enough to worry about without this problem."³⁴

Congressional views still had a depressingly familiar ring; and public opinion, whatever its state in April, furnished little help in June. Thanks to this circumstance and to carelessness on the part of Democratic leaders who neglected to produce some readily available administration votes at the proper time, Representative Vorys managed to insert an amendment restoring the arms embargo; and Bloom's subsequent efforts to delete this provision were unsuccessful.³⁵ Accordingly, the bill was dropped.³⁶

At this, Pittman undertook to renew the fight in the Senate; but his Committee on Foreign Relations voted on July 11 to postpone further consideration of the matter until the following January.³⁷ Still unwilling to accept

³³Congressional Record, Vol. 84, p. 8151.

³⁴Ibid., Vol. 84, p. 8173.

³⁵House Journal (76th Cong., 1st sess.) p. 767; cf. Hinton, Cordell Hull, pp. 338-39.

³⁶House Journal (76th Cong., 1st sess.) p. 287.

³⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 648.

defeat, President Roosevelt now entered the lists. In a special message on July 14, he transmitted to Congress a lengthy argument written by Hull maintaining that repeal of the embargo would be a clear gain for the cause of peace and genuine neutrality.³⁸ Four days later, on the evening of July 18, he called leading senators from both parties to a meeting at the White House. Here Roosevelt and Hull strove to convince the group that war was imminent, but they achieved nothing. Senatorial attitudes ranged from pessimism to hostility; and in view of impending congressional adjournment, it was decided to postpone further efforts in this domain until the next session.³⁹

III.

While the struggle over neutrality law ran its course in Washington, international tensions continued to grow unceasingly. Europe moved toward avowed war in a state of mind approaching resignation; Japan plunged still deeper into her less formal efforts to build a New Order in eastern Asia; and the United States looked on with a kind of impotent nervousness. Franco's capture of Madrid ended the Spanish civil war on March 28, and the administration's Spanish embargo was lifted April 1.⁴⁰ Thus freed of what

³⁸Message to Congress, July 14, 1939, Roosevelt, Papers, 1939, pp. 382, 384.

³⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 649-51.

⁴⁰Proclamation No. 2327, Apr. 1, 1939, Federal Register, Vol. 4, p. 1403.

was perhaps the most embarrassing single aspect of its foreign policy, the American government was finally doing all that it could, within limits of law and public opinion, to influence events abroad. By this time, however, probably nothing short of direct political commitments to the western powers could have moderated Germany's course; and in the absence of so much as a useful embargo policy, the administration's chances of doing anything in Europe were small indeed. In May, President Roosevelt warned the Russian Ambassador, Constantin Oumansky, that Stalin would only buy trouble in making a deal with Hitler, asserting that Germany would inevitably turn on the Soviet Union as soon as she had disposed of France.⁴¹ Beyond this, little could be undertaken until further developments stirred the nation again.

While the European contest for Russia's favor ground onward, England and Turkey on May 12 pledged effective coöperation in the face of aggressive moves "leading to war in the Mediterranean area;"⁴² France and Turkey made a somewhat parallel declaration on June 23;⁴³ and the

⁴¹Davies, Mission to Moscow, p. 450.

⁴²Statement by Chamberlain, May 12, 1939, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 347, c. 953.

⁴³Christian Science Monitor, June 23, 1939, p. 1, c. 7.

Rome-Berlin Axis was tightened on May 22 by a military alliance impressively dubbed "Pact of Steel." Providing for consultation, economic coördination in time of war, and military assistance by the other when either Italy or Germany became involved in hostilities, this instrument gave the Axis an appearance more monolithic than ever.⁴⁴

In the meanwhile, the Far Eastern situation was left pretty much to this country and Japan. Fully alive to the strength of her position, Japan easily kept the initiative as she moved from one goal to another. But while Hull remained convinced throughout the spring and summer that he should continue to play a waiting game with Tokyo,⁴⁵ Japan's increasing boldness made it appear that a sterner attitude would improve rather than weaken such tactics. So, little by little, he began once more to take up the slack.

As long ago as February 10, the Japanese had seized the large Chinese island of Hainan, thus menacing both the coast of Indo-China and the sea route between Hong Kong and Singapore. This was followed on March 31 by Japan's annexation of the Spratley Islands, a tiny but strategically important group about four hundred miles west of the southern

⁴⁴For text of treaty, see New York Times, May 23, 1939, p. 8, cc. 3-6.

⁴⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 638.

Philippines. The United States Navy had already surveyed much of this area and considered many of its islands and lagoons valuable for certain types of naval operations. Accordingly, Hull protested the Japanese action and declined to recognize its validity.⁴⁶

Presaging a Japanese drive southward just as Europe was feeling the full effects of the Czechoslovak crisis, these aggressive moves had still other repercussions. In January, a portion of the United States Fleet had been transferred to the Atlantic for the purpose of edifying visitors at the New York World's Fair; and the conjunction of this shift with the events just described aroused serious misgivings in London. On March 22, the British Foreign Office stated that recent developments in Europe made it impossible for Britain to fulfill her intentions of transferring a fleet from European waters to Singapore and wondered whether the United States would consider returning its ships to the Pacific. Bullitt supplied further enlightenment from Paris about two weeks later, revealing that the British had contemplated reinforcing Singapore with units from the Mediterranean and had desisted only when France warned that, in such an event, she would have nothing further to do with their joint efforts to construct an anti-Hitler front in eastern Europe. Thus the European

⁴⁶Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 628-29.

and Asiatic situations moved closer together than ever before. Faced by these insistent considerations, Roosevelt ordered the Fleet back into the Pacific on April 15.⁴⁷

Nor was this all. Emboldened by her own successes and Europe's preoccupations, Japan applied still more pressure to foreign interests in China. Between January and July, there was some interference with American rights or a bombing of American property on the average of once every three days.⁴⁸ Other nationalities fared no better. In June, the Japanese blockaded British and French concessions in the Chinese city of Tientsin on the ground that the British were giving asylum to anti-Japanese terrorists.⁴⁹ Embarrassed by her new European commitments, Britain opened negotiations on June 15 and accepted a formula on July 24 which virtually granted belligerent rights to Japanese forces in Chinese areas under their control.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 630. At this same time, our Naval War Plans Division was informed by British naval authorities that Great Britain's responsibilities in the Mediterranean would keep her from sending a battle force to Singapore in accordance with the understanding of Jan. 1938. As a result, the Army and Navy drew up a new war plan (Rainbow No. 1) which did not count on the assistance of a British fleet in the Pacific. See Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 49.

⁴⁸Johnstone, The United States and Japan's New Order, p. 277.

⁴⁹Communiqué of the British Foreign Office, June 16, 1939, The Times (London), June 17, 1939, p. 12, c. 2.

⁵⁰Statement by Chamberlain, July 24, 1939, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 350, c. 994.

Owing to the absence of Ambassador Grew, who had left Japan in May for a five-month vacation in the United States,⁵¹ American representations in Tokyo during this period of stress were even more mechanical than usual. But some advance was made in Washington itself.

Since the beginning of trouble in Asia, the American-Japanese commercial treaty of 1911 had furnished a hindrance to the legal application of economic pressure because of its stipulation that the United States might not forbid any kind of trade with Japan unless similar prohibitions were established for all other countries.⁵² Irritation with the treaty had been growing for some time; and on July 18, Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan, still a leading isolationist, introduced a formal resolution calling for its abrogation.⁵³ The State Department had been exploring the same idea and, without waiting for this move to bear fruit, on July 26 abruptly gave the six-month notice required to denounce the treaty.⁵⁴ This made no

⁵¹Grew, Ten Years, p. 283.

⁵²Art. V., Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the United States and Japan, Feb. 21, 1911, Department of State, Foreign Relations of U. S., 1911, p. 316.

⁵³S. Res. 166 (76th Cong., 1st sess.), Congressional Record, Vol. 84, p. 9341.

⁵⁴Hull to Horinouchi, July 26, 1939, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 189.

difference whatever in the current realities of American-Japanese trade, but it did constitute a warning that American patience was running out and that more drastic economic retaliation might be expected in the future. Here affairs rested while the United States turned eastward again.

Late in the summer, President Roosevelt tried once more to bring American policy up to the level of events in Europe. All direct methods of exerting influence for peace had failed utterly. It was obvious that Europe had passed beyond the stage of sincere discussion and that the thinking of its leaders had already entered a military phase; each side was so bent on tipping the balance of power in its own favor that competition for Russia rather than peace was the main focus of diplomacy. By this time, every major government was so deeply involved in approaching catastrophe that none could pause to review the whole situation. Only an outsider, one who stood relatively apart from immediate issues, could hope to slow the speed of events. Just one man in Europe, Pope Pius XII, enjoyed both the prestige and the detachment necessary to encourage intervention of any kind. For the time being, his relation to the crisis was roughly similar to the President's; and his record indicated that a working alliance between the two leaders might be useful.

— Although the Vatican had originally favored the Axis

because of its stand against communism, both the Nazi government's foreign policy and its treatment of the Church in Germany succeeded in producing a much different view by the spring of 1939.⁵⁵ In an interview with the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Galeazzo Ciano, on March 18, the Pope expressed his concern over Nazi aggression;⁵⁶ and at the beginning of May, he undertook through his diplomatic representatives in Berlin, Warsaw, Paris, London, and Rome to explore the possibilities of avoiding a general war, making it clear to all that the Vatican would not participate directly in any conference that might meet. By the end of June, however, the ineffectiveness of such tactics was clearly realized.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, the Pope had shown his hand. Roosevelt was so impressed by the Vatican's natural advantages as possible mediator and as a source of information--especially on Germany, Italy, and Spain--not ordinarily available to the American government that he considered establishing some kind of relations with the Holy See from the beginning of July. Ambassador William Phillips, in Rome, advised the appointment of a Protestant with full ambassadorial status.

⁵⁵Cf. Camille M. Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War (New York: Dutton, 1944), pp. 107-8.

⁵⁶Ciano, Diaries, pp. 46-47.

⁵⁷Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, pp. 166-71.

Hull agreed that a Protestant should be chosen for service at the Vatican but favored sending him merely as the President's personal representative.⁵⁸ The plan was discussed with Monsignor Ameleto Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, and Cicognani visited Rome in August for conferences with the Pontiff.⁵⁹ Later that month, James A. Farley paused long enough in a brisk tour of Europe for an audience at the Vatican. During their conversation, the Pope outlined his peace-making efforts and expressed an oblique but confident prediction that Roosevelt would run for a third term,⁶⁰ an opinion which was identical with one offered Farley a few weeks earlier by the American Catholic prelate, Cardinal Mundelein, immediately after the latter had lunched with the President. This was the more remarkable in that it was a view which Farley himself did not then share.⁶¹ Whatever lay behind these avowals, it was obvious that fellow-feeling between White House and Vatican was on the increase.

Meanwhile, Germany triumphed over Britain and France in the struggle for Russia. On August 23, a German-Soviet

⁵⁸Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 713.

⁵⁹Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 178.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 181-82; cf. Farley, Jim Farley's Story, p. 194.

⁶¹Farley, Jim Farley's Story, p. 175.

treaty was signed in Moscow providing that neither country would attack, support an attack, or join any grouping of powers directed against the other.⁶² There was also a secret additional protocol setting up spheres of influence in the Baltic states, Poland, and Rumania;⁶³ but the treaty itself was enough to convince the world that Germany's hands were now free and that war could not be delayed much longer.

Nevertheless, it became obvious almost at once that Pope Pius and President Roosevelt, tacitly at least, were concerting their efforts in an eleventh-hour move to avert hostilities. On August 24, Pius broadcasted to the world an urgent plea for peace. At the same time, Roosevelt sent peace appeals to King Victor Emmanuel of Italy, to Hitler, and to the President of Poland. Among other things, he suggested that an American republic be called in as conciliator.⁶⁴ And on August 31, the Pope took up the cue, addressing a definite proposal to Germany, Poland, Great

⁶²Treaty of non-aggression between Germany and the U.S.S.R., Aug. 23, 1939, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 76-77.

⁶³Secret additional protocol, Aug. 23, 1939, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 78.

⁶⁴Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, pp. 183-85; and Roosevelt to Victor Emmanuel, Aug. 23, 1939, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 136, pp. 475-76; Roosevelt to Hitler, Aug. 24, 1939, ibid., No. 137, p. 477; Roosevelt to Moscicki, Aug. 24, 1939, ibid., No. 138, pp. 478-79.

Britain, France, and Italy. In it he called for a fifteen-day truce during which the five governments would hold a general conference to study revision of the Versailles Treaty and work out the basis for a general pact of non-aggression. Representatives of Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United States, and the Vatican might also attend. Although Britain moved at once to support this appeal, it was already too late.⁶⁵ On September 1, German armies marched into Poland. War had started, but the United States had at least opened a new gateway to the heart of European affairs which no amount of fighting was likely to close.

IV.

American fears of European war had brought the arms embargo into being. Yet, by going to war, Europe paved the way for its withdrawal. The record shows that the American people always became most distrustful of their isolationist convictions precisely at the moment when the soundness of those convictions seemed about to undergo a genuine test, and nothing could try the embargo with greater harshness than the very contingency against which the law had been passed. While general esteem for it had declined noticeably in March and April, the effects of this

⁶⁵Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, pp. 186-87.

change had not extended far enough to repeal the embargo in June and July. How long it might have been retained if peace had continued is impossible to say. But realization that Europe had actually gone to war was a sobering thought. Although a Gallup poll reported on September 17 that 82 percent of the American people were confident of an Allied victory, another survey at the end of the month disclosed that 63 percent feared a German attack on the United States if Hitler won in Europe.⁶⁶ Long denied but never forgotten, an old misgiving had once more acquired the touch of reality. Neutral America was not as serene as it had expected to be, and chance aided design in pointing up the moral.

The war became general with the entrance of Great Britain and France on September 3, and President Roosevelt spoke to the country that night. "This nation will remain a neutral nation," he said, "but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well."⁶⁷ By its differences as well as its similarities, this message to the people recalled Woodrow Wilson's plea of August 18, 1914, which had granted that the "utmost variety of sympathy and desire...with regard to the issues and circumstances of

⁶⁶ -----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Mar. 1940), pp. 101-2.

⁶⁷ Fireside chat, Sept. 3, 1939, Roosevelt, Papers, 1939, p. 463.

the conflict" was perfectly natural but adjured the country to "be impartial in thought as well as in action."⁶⁸ In 1914, Wilson had seen that any kind of neutrality would be difficult as clearly as Roosevelt saw it in 1939; but the latter's frank admission that psychological neutrality was now impossible and his failure to suggest that sympathy might flow in more than one direction bespoke a somewhat more vigorous official attitude.

Later the same evening, special radio bulletins announced that the British liner Athenia, bound for Montreal, had been sunk off the Hebrides with 246 Americans aboard. Strictly mindful of precedent, White House secretary Stephen T. Early hastened to assure the country that the Athenia had not been carrying munitions.⁶⁹ On September 4, the New York Times held Germany responsible for the war;⁷⁰ and many other newspapers quickly followed suit.⁷¹ To one of sufficient age and the least disposition for nostalgia, it must have seemed that he had been through it all once

⁶⁸Appeal to the citizens of the Republic, Aug. 18, 1914, James Brown Scott (ed.), President Wilson's Foreign Policy: Messages, Addresses, Papers (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1918), pp. 67-68.

⁶⁹New York Times, Sept. 4, 1939, p. 1, c. 8.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 18, cc. 1-2.

⁷¹Cf. Harold Lavine and James Wechsler, War Propaganda and the United States (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1940), p. 41.

before.

As German armies knifed through Poland during the next three weeks, the American government busily adjusted its relations with a continent at war. The President issued two proclamations on September 5. One set forth the country's neutrality under international law, outlining neutral duties as provided by regular neutrality legislation.⁷²

The second gave force to the joint resolution of May 1, 1937,⁷³ invoking the arms embargo and all its other provisions except the cash-and-carry feature which had expired by limitation at the end of April. The same day, he emphasized our resolution to defend the Western Hemisphere against violations of its neutrality by ordering the Navy to form a neutrality patrol to keep track of all belligerent naval and air craft which approached the shores of the United States or the West Indies.⁷⁴ On September 6, he announced that the agreement concluded with Great Britain on June 23, under which American cotton was to be exchanged for Malayan rubber in an effort to create a stockpile of the latter commodity in the United States, had gone into

⁷²Proclamation No. 2348, Sept. 5, 1939, Federal Register, Vol. 4, p. 3809.

⁷³Proclamation No. 2349, Sept. 5, 1939, ibid., p. 3819.

⁷⁴Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 14.

effect.⁷⁵ And on September 8, he readied himself for later developments by proclaiming a "limited" national emergency, an act which gave him immediate access to a considerable variety of crisis powers.⁷⁶

At the same time, the belligerents proceeded rapidly with their inevitable maritime arrangements; and meditation over the fate of the Athenia had scarcely started before the United States was further reminded of the troubles which beset a trading neutral during a war at sea. France published a contraband list on September 4; Germany and Britain did likewise on September 12 and 13 respectively.⁷⁷ Both sides inaugurated blockade activities almost as soon as the war started; and before it was a week old, Great Britain was flooding the State Department with suggestions regarding the proper attitude toward her contraband control bases and ways in which American shipping could most effectively coöperate with her blockade measures. Hull scented

⁷⁵Press release, Sept. 6, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1939-), Vol. 1 (Sept. 9, 1939), p. 240. For text of agreement, see Department of State, Press Releases, Vol. 20 (June 24, 1939), pp. 547-49.

⁷⁶Proclamation No. 2352, Sept. 8, 1939, Federal Register, Vol. 4, p. 3851. For doctrine of emergency and list of powers, see Koenig, The Presidency and the Crisis, pp. 11-13.

⁷⁷Notice of the French Republic, Sept. 4, 1939, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, pp. 720-21; German law regarding absolute contraband and German announcement regarding conditional contraband, Sept. 12, 1939, ibid., pp. 721-22; United Kingdom proclamation, Sept. 13, 1939, ibid., p. 424.

trouble in all this and, hoping to solve problems as they arose, made arrangements on September 12 for steady consultation with the British on differences arising out of the blockade.⁷⁸

Potential trouble with both sides was already accumulating. An American ship, the S. S. Wacosta, was stopped by a German submarine on September 9, searched, and warned that vessels which did not obey a U-boat's signals would be fired upon.⁷⁹ On September 8, the S. S. Saccarappa was seized by the British and released after being disburdened of her cargo. These were to be only the first of many such incidents.⁸⁰ On September 13, the Norwegian ship Rondo struck a mine in the North Sea off the Dutch coast; and two American passengers were drowned.⁸¹ The second World War was still treading the path of the first.

In part, at least, the neutrality act was designed to keep such incidents at a minimum and thus preclude any

⁷⁸Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 680.

⁷⁹Waterman Steamship Co. to Department of State, Sept. 11, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Sept. 16, 1939), p. 249.

⁸⁰For list of detentions by belligerents, see table, ibid. (Nov. 4, 1939), pp. 461-62.

⁸¹Press release, Sept. 17, 1939, ibid. (Sept. 23, 1939), p. 284.

faltering in the national sense of detachment. If circumstances had been different, this recurrence of maritime troubles might have furnished an argument for strengthening such legislation. But our sense of detachment was not what it had been a few years earlier. As noted above, these years of successful German aggression had undermined the belief that the United States had no special interest in the results of European war. Unless fully supported by this conviction, any kind of impartial embargo sagged badly. As early as September 3, 50 percent of the citizenry thought the arms embargo should be discarded;⁸² and the trend remained highly favorable to repeal during the next six weeks. By September 24, 57 percent stated themselves to be of such a mind, while the proportion rose to 62 percent ten days later.⁸³ From the administration's point of view, it was advisable to strike before the comparative inactivity of winter brought a recession in public uneasiness.

Roosevelt acted without delay. On September 13, he called a special session of Congress for the 21st.⁸⁴ The next day, Hull broke ground for his chief by announcing

⁸²-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4, (Mar. 1940), p. 105.

⁸³Ibid., p. 106.

⁸⁴Proclamation No. 2365, Sept. 13, 1939, Federal Register, Vol. 4, p. 3899.

that the United States had yielded none of its rights under international law in spite of the fact that the neutrality act prevented the exercise of some of them on the domestic level.⁸⁵ Eight days later, Roosevelt went before Congress to ask for repeal of the arms embargo, coupling this proposal with others providing for the reënactment of cash-and-carry and the designation of combat zones. Thus he was able to play up neutrality and largely ignore the question of aiding Britain and France. Under his program, he said, the United States would

...more probably remain at peace than if the law remains as it stands today. I say this because with the repeal of the embargo this Government clearly and definitely will insist that American citizens and American ships keep away from the immediate perils of the actual zones of conflict...⁸⁶

A familiar compromise was being offered once more.

V.

If conditions were now generally more favorable to repeal of the arms embargo than they had been before the war, legislative activity still retained its habitual deliberation; and matters which stood to be directly affected by proposed changes were held more or less in abeyance

⁸⁵Statement by Hull, Sept. 14, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Sept. 16, 1939), p. 245.

⁸⁶Message to Congress, Sept. 21, 1939, Roosevelt, Papers, 1939, p. 518.

during the next six weeks. As a result, American policy in questions of sea-borne commerce was left on a strictly temporary basis; and no effort was made to draw sharp issues with any of the belligerents except in the case of the City of Flint, where very special circumstances were involved. For the rest, American shippers were merely advised of the special dangers in European waters resulting from the war.⁸⁷

Nevertheless, October was filled with alarms and excursions. Discussion of the Athenia's sinking continued through the month, with solemn British avowals that she had carried no munitions ranged against open hints from Berlin that the British had sunk her themselves in order to lay the blame on Germany.⁸⁸ Expanding this type of psychological warfare, Grand Admiral Erich Raeder, Commander-in-Chief of the German Fleet, told the United States military attaché in Berlin on October 5 that the American ship Iroquois, then returning from Ireland with a large number of Americans who had been caught in Europe by the war, was to be sunk as it neared the coast of the United States under circumstances recalling the loss of the Athenia. While it was heavily discounted, this tale aroused enough

⁸⁷Statement by Hull, Oct. 4, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Oct. 7, 1939), p. 343.

⁸⁸Cf. Lothian to Hull, Oct. 30, 1939, ibid. (Nov. 4, 1939), p. 461.

doubt so that a Coast Guard vessel and a number of ships from the neutrality patrol were sent to escort the Iroquois through the latter part of her voyage in what was described as a "purely precautionary measure."⁸⁹

The City of Flint episode was more complicated. An American ship with cargo for the British Isles, the City of Flint was captured October 9 by a German cruiser about twelve hundred miles out of New York. A German crew was put aboard, and the ship entered the port of Tromsø, Norway, on October 21, flying the German flag. After taking on water, she left Tromsø at the order of the Norwegian government and steamed into the Russian harbor of Murmansk two days later. Throughout this odyssey, her American crew remained aboard. As soon as she entered Russian waters, the American Ambassador in Moscow, Laurence A. Steinhardt, approached the Russian Foreign Office with inquiries but was unable to obtain much direct information concerning either the ship or her crew for two or three days. Finally he demanded that the City of Flint be returned to her American crew and allowed to proceed. Pleading the requirements of neutrality the Russians held that the ship would have to leave Murmansk under the same control that had brought her there in the first place.⁹⁰ Still under German auspices,

⁸⁹Press release, Oct. 5, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Oct. 21, 1939), p. 407.

⁹⁰Press release, Oct. 28, 1939, ibid. (Oct. 28, 1939) pp. 431-32; also Steinhardt to Hull, Oct. 27, 1939, ibid., pp. 430-31.

she was released from Soviet waters October 28. So far, American representations had proved abortive. But a few days later the City of Flint was taken into Bergen, Norway, against the orders of the Norwegian government; the German crew was interned; and the ship was turned over to her original master.⁹¹ The whole affair had that peculiarly nebulous quality so characteristic of any discussion of neutral rights and duties. It raised some nice legal points and emphasized the frustrations of neutrality,⁹² but the chief importance of the episode was the further strain it imposed upon our none-too-solid ties with Russia.

In spite of everything the United States could do, American-Soviet relations deteriorated in almost every way throughout the fall of 1939. Moscow's final intentions were vaguer than ever, and immediate policy was summed up in its extension of influence as far west as permitted by the secret additional protocol of August 23, which, as it concerned northern Europe, placed Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and that part of Poland which lay east of the Narew and Vistula rivers within the Soviet sphere of influence, leaving western Poland and Lithuania to Germany.⁹³ This

⁹¹Press release, Nov. 3, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Nov. 4, 1939), p. 458.

⁹²Cf. Charles Cheney Hyde, "The City of Flint," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Jan. 1940), pp. 92, 94-95.

⁹³Secret additional protocol, Aug. 23, 1939, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 78.

work proceeded rapidly in the latter half of September. At the end of the month, Nazi Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop hurried from Berlin to Moscow to conclude another agreement respecting this buffer territory. Under a new protocol signed September 28, Lithuania was transferred to the Russian sphere;⁹⁴ and October was not far advanced before Russian military control of the three Baltic states was as complete, for all practical purposes, as the Soviet hold on eastern Poland.

The United States government watched this process with mixed feelings. Although Russia currently looked very much like an enemy to the democracies, she still loomed as a potential friend. The likelihood that her understanding with Germany was the product of convenience rather than conviction could not be ignored; and political convenience, especially in time of war, is often a transitory thing.⁹⁵ To maintain as good relations with Russia as possible and give her no cause for drawing closer to Germany was of first importance. This was the thought which animated United States policy in this sector during the autumn of 1939. So, notwithstanding Poland's formal declaration of war and our own full application of the neutrality act to the highly similar German-Polish conflict,

⁹⁴Secret supplementary protocol, Sept. 28, 1939, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 107.

⁹⁵Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 702.

President Roosevelt did not choose to recognize the brief hostilities between Russia and Poland in September as a war at all. Such failure to act was permissible, he argued, because the fighting between Poland and Russia was not of a nature calculated to threaten the peace of the United States.⁹⁶ The Soviet Union was thus allowed to retain its legal access to American war materials, a condition which would prove useful if alignments suddenly changed.

Although both countries were still neutral, American policy toward Russia had already become an exercise in higher strategy. Caution remained the watchword through October and November as the United States sedulously avoided everything that smacked of provocation. Even Soviet penetration of the Baltic states could be justified up to a point. Viewing these moves as an effort on Russia's part to bolster her defenses against Germany, the State Department was sympathetic. Since Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were not deprived of their nominal independence, "there was no diplomatic step we felt called upon to take," as Hull later pointed out. On the other hand, continued Russian aggression might needlessly enlarge the war to the great

⁹⁶ Koenig, The Presidency and the Crisis, p. 40. For Hull's comments on this development, see his Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 685.

detriment of still other small powers.⁹⁷ Some limit had to be set; and by October 11, when he wrote to Soviet President Kalinin expressing a hope that Russia would not make unreasonable demands upon Finland,⁹⁸ Roosevelt appears to have chosen the latter country as the point at which to make a stand.

In a similar fashion, Roosevelt played a waiting game with Italy, extending the policy which he had followed in tacit collaboration with Britain since the spring of 1938 and with the Vatican since the latter part of August 1939. In a long talk with Farley on September 13, the President stated his belief that Mussolini might still join either side. Implying that the non-recognition policy which he had "inherited" from Hoover and Stimson had sometimes embarrassed him, he added that Italy's conquest of Ethiopia had been made in "regular fashion" but that he could not extend recognition here without turning again to the problem of Manchukuo. Accordingly, he had tried to enlist Mussolini's patience by having him informed "that time would take care of the situation."⁹⁹

Temporarily at least, Italy's neutrality was the important thing; and it was believed that Pope Pius XII might

⁹⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 701.

⁹⁸Roosevelt to Kalinin, Oct. 11, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Oct. 21, 1939), p. 395.

⁹⁹Farley, Jim Farley's Story, p. 198.

be of some help in this regard. Mussolini's failure to declare war at the outset and his suspected misgivings about Russo-German coöperation were both congenial to Vatican policy. As a result, relations between the Italian government and the Holy See were better, generally speaking, than they had been for some time in the past.¹⁰⁰ Under these circumstances, the diplomatic coöperation of the Pope in any matter touching Italy was a factor not to be ignored. Roosevelt was toying with other projects, too; but he must have had this thought in mind on October 2 when he again raised the question of when to establish relations with the Vatican, pointing out to Hull that such a connection might facilitate dealing with the refugee problem after the war.¹⁰¹

Although the President did not mention His Holiness as a possible ally in bringing the war to an end,¹⁰² there was some talk of a compromise peace during the first week of October. On September 28, Germany and Russia issued a joint declaration calling for an end to hostilities now that the Polish question had been settled by collapse of the Polish state.¹⁰³ Shortly afterward, Washington began

¹⁰⁰Cf. Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 189.

¹⁰¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 713.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 714.

¹⁰³ Declaration of the government of the German Reich and the government of the U.S.S.R., Sept. 28, 1939, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 108.

receiving hints from such diverse sources as Berlin, Bucharest, Brussels, and Helsinki that a general peace move on the part of the United States would be welcome. The question was reviewed in a special meeting of State Department experts on October 8, but it was decided that any such effort would be ill-advised for the time being in view of Germany's huge successes thus far in the war.¹⁰⁴

While Washington continued its gingerly probing of the European situation, Ambassador Joseph C. Grew returned to his post in Tokyo, refreshed by a five-month holiday and numerous talks with State Department officials. Momentarily nonplussed in August by the rapprochement between Germany, her seeming friend, and Russia, her traditional enemy,¹⁰⁵ Japan had appeared about to slacken her pace as the war started. The Konoye government fell; and for a time even Hull thought that the Prince's successor, General Nobuyuki Abe, might do something to alter Japan's course.¹⁰⁶ But as Tokyo gave no further indication of mending its ways it was decided that Grew, on his return, should deliver a public warning in language which could not be misunderstood that the United States was not to be frightened out

¹⁰⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 710-11.

¹⁰⁵For the first reaction of the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, see Memorandum by Weizsäcker, Aug. 22, 1939, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 70.

¹⁰⁶Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 717.

of the Far East. In pursuance of this design, he spoke before a luncheon meeting of the America-Japan Society in Tokyo on October 19, delivering an address which reached most unusual heights of diplomatic frankness. The product of determination, misgiving, and revision, his speech was set up to elucidate particulars as well as principles.¹⁰⁷ In the event, it gave both reasonable coverage, but the development of public opinion was his main theme. Asserting that American foreign policy was always closely bound to American public opinion, he assured his listeners that the determination of the United States government not to acquiesce in Japan's Far Eastern policy was shared by the whole country. He said:

American public opinion with regard to recent and current developments in the Far East is today very nearly unanimous, and that opinion is based not on mere hearsay or on propaganda but on facts.¹⁰⁸

Since the speech was public and delivered in the presence of reporters, this was about as far as the United States could go without resorting to specific threats. But now threats had to be withheld until the European war took more definite shape.

Only in the field of inter-American relations, where it held a virtual monopoly of everything that counted, was the

¹⁰⁷Grew, Ten Years, p. 288.

¹⁰⁸Address by Grew before the America-Japan Society, Oct. 19, 1939, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 22.

United States government able to gain a solid advantage during the first two months of the war. Almost immediately after the German invasion of Poland, a conference of foreign ministers was summoned to meet in Panama in accordance with procedure laid down the previous December in the Declaration of Lima. The most immediate problem now was that of keeping the war as far as possible from the shores of the Americas; but this problem embraced two paramount considerations: the neutrality of the waters surrounding the Western Hemisphere and the fate of territory in the Western Hemisphere owned by foreign powers. Under the leadership of Sumner Welles, the United States delegate, the conference reached decisions on both counts. On October 3, it adopted a resolution against the transfer of sovereignty over American territory from one non-American power to another. The same day, in a statement which became known as the Declaration of Panama, it also established a safety zone in the western Atlantic ranging in width from 300 to 1,000 miles. From this zone, all belligerent action was to be excluded.¹⁰⁹

The latter measure was especially important not only because it capped President Roosevelt's long efforts to establish an effective kind of hemispheric solidarity but

¹⁰⁹Declaration of Panama, Art. XIV of Final Act of Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the American Republics, Oct. 3, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Oct. 7, 1939), pp. 331-33.

also because it furnished the main theoretical basis of his Atlantic policy until well into the crucial months of 1941. Rounding out this framework of exclusion, the President on October 18 used his authority under the joint resolution of May 1, 1937, to prohibit the use of the territorial waters of the United States by the submarines of all belligerent countries.¹¹⁰

VI.

Against this background of emergent policy toward a war in which sides had not yet been fully chosen, the arms embargo died a slow death. Congress got to work briskly enough as it met in special session on September 21. But no shades of the past had, as yet, been fully exorcised; and ground with which everyone was familiar had to be covered all over again. This survey took nearly six weeks.

Delaying not at all, the Senate started with the Bloom resolution which, fitted with crippling amendments, had passed the House in June. Using the presidential recommendations as a basis, the Committee on Foreign Relations drew up a substitute which was formally introduced as an amendment to the House-approved measure on September 29.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰Proclamation No. 2371, Oct. 18, 1939, Federal Register, Vol. 4, p. 4295.

¹¹¹United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Neutrality Act of 1939, to accompany H. J. Res. 306 (76th Cong., 2nd sess.), Report No. 1155 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1939), pp. 10-12.

By early October, the debate had settled down in earnest; and it continued without much change or noticeable abatement until late in the month. Practically every senator and congressman who spoke rang variations on the same theme, vehemently insisting that his sole objective in the present controversy was peace for the United States. Here there was universal agreement. Whatever his attitude toward repeal of the arms embargo, no one proclaimed an enthusiasm for war--even to help the democracies. Differences of opinion related only to method; but this, of course, was the big rub.

Senator Tom Connally, Democrat, of Texas declared that "our objective, and our only objective, is to keep out of this terrible war," going on to inform his colleagues that the measure under consideration "gives the greatest possible assurance of any measure that can be devised by any legislative body."¹¹² Senator E. R. Burke, Democrat, of Nebraska agreed with him but edged a little closer to the point, explaining that repeal of the arms embargo would lessen our chances of involvement by shortening the war and frankly admitting that such a move would favor "the belligerents I want favored, by giving them the chance of coming here with their ships and buying our goods."¹¹³ More

¹¹²Congressional Record, Vol. 85, p. 92.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 290.

oratorically, Senator Robert Wagner, Democrat, of New York refused to believe that the arms embargo "represented the moral judgment of the American people, our indispensable defense against war, or the symbol of our neutrality."¹¹⁴

On the other side, Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, Republican, of Michigan appealed to international law and denounced removal of the embargo as a violation of the principle "that the rules of a neutral cannot be prejudicially altered in the midst of a war."¹¹⁵ Senator W. J. Bulow, Democrat, of South Dakota thought it would lead inevitably to another attempt on our part to settle European "boundary disputes."¹¹⁶ Senator Hiram Johnson, Republican, of California declaimed that "with embargo repeal we are half in and half out of the war."¹¹⁷

Debates in the House added little to the Senate's exposition of the matter. Representative Louis Ludlow,

¹¹⁴Congressional Record, Vol. 85, p. 241.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 95. This argument draws attention to a point that was much exercised in the fall of 1939, but not even authoritative opinion could furnish a consensus. In one poll of international lawyers, Vandenberg's position fared badly. Nevertheless, there were some dissenters here as well. Cf. New York Herald-Tribune, Oct. 25, 1939, p. 28, cc.5-7. For further observations on this subject, see Lawrence Preuss, "Some Effects of Governmental Controls on Neutral Duties," American Society of International Law, Proceedings, 1937, pp. 110-15; and Clyde Eagleton, "The Duty of Impartiality on the Part of a Neutral," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Jan. 1940), pp. 99-104.

¹¹⁶Congressional Record, Vol. 85, p. 315.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 630.

Democrat, of Indiana called the new resolution "a shining example of the interventionist ideology."¹¹⁸ Representative J. W. Ditter, Republican, of Pennsylvania liked the law as it stood because it profited "by our past experiences instead of gambling on future experiments."¹¹⁹ On the other hand, Representative Luther A. Johnson, Democrat, of Texas suggested that, if repeal had succeeded in the spring, war might not have broken out.¹²⁰ And after advising her colleagues to prove their peaceful intentions by first doing away with the arms embargo, Representative Mary Norton, Democrat, of New Jersey incontinently pulled out the stops and hoped that they would then join her in telling "the women of America that this Congress, by its vote, will never consent to send American boys to fight in a European war."¹²¹

In this manner, debate continued through scores of repetitions in the Senate and other scores in the House. For a time, it was by no means clear that congressional views had changed at all over the past few months. But public opinion had advanced rapidly, as noted above, continuing the trend it had assumed with the seizure of

¹¹⁸Congressional Record, Vol. 85, p. 486.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 1304.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 338.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 1192.

Czechoslovakia in March. And this time, public opinion was given a chance to express itself more effectively.

On September 26, five days after Congress met in special session, the Union for Concerted Peace Efforts, an energetic group of prominent internationalists, undertook to form a Non-partisan Committee for Peace through the Revision of the Neutrality Law. The whole purpose of this organization was expressed in its rather cumbersome title; the Non-partisan Committee was restricted to doing what it could to publicize the weaknesses of the embargo clause and to organize sentiment on behalf of the cash-and-carry provision. Because their internationalist views were suspect, its organizers preferred to keep their own names in the background. So William Allen White—prominent Republican from isolationist Kansas and long famous as editor, author, and confidant of the great--was selected as chairman.¹²² A national headquarters was established in New York, and its campaign started without delay. Members of the Union for Concerted Peace Efforts and others who were known to sympathize with the Committee's objective were asked to promote cash-and-carry with their friends, neighbors, and clubs; to organize meetings for discussion of the matter; to circularize local newspapers; and to bombard their senators and congressmen with letters and telegrams.¹²³ In

¹²²Walter Johnson, The Battle Against Isolation (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1944), pp. 31-32.

¹²³Ibid., pp. 42, 46.

this manner, the Non-partisan Committee conducted an active, though brief, campaign through October, always hewing steadily to the administration's thesis that repeal of the arms embargo was intended solely to bulwark our neutrality and decrease the likelihood of our getting into the war.¹²⁴

It is impossible to judge the role of the Non-partisan Committee in the final outcome. The embargo might well have been repealed without its efforts. But Congress is always sensitive to pressure--especially systematic pressure--and in bringing public opinion to bear directly upon those who controlled the decision, it did constitute a kind of temporary pressure group. At all events, the new resolution was passed by the Senate on October 27 by a vote of 63-30.¹²⁵ After some disagreement and conference proceedings, the House likewise accepted it on November 3 by a vote of 273-172.¹²⁶ Whatever the explanation, it is certain that Congress was much closer to the prevailing trend of public opinion in adopting repeal at this time than it had been in rejecting it the previous spring.

The new act went into effect on November 4.¹²⁷ Henceforward, the belligerents could purchase anything they

¹²⁴Walter Johnson, The Battle Against Isolation (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 47.

¹²⁵Senate Journal (76th Cong., 2nd & 3rd sess.), p. 43.

¹²⁶House Journal (76th Cong., 2nd & 3rd sess.), p. 43.

¹²⁷United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 54, pp. 4-12.

desired in the United States; but they had to pay cash on delivery and provide their own transportation. To make this restriction of American shipping even narrower, vessels of United States registry, no matter what their cargo or destination, would henceforth be totally excluded from large areas of the sea about the coastlines of belligerent countries as such areas were designated by the President. In its repeal of the arms embargo, however, the joint resolution of November 4, 1939, was less isolationist than its predecessor; and American neutrality, though still generously hedged with self-imposed restrictions, was about to revive part of an old experiment.

Thus war proved stronger than argument, and an effort which had been launched eight months before was finally crowned with success. In the same way, the stimulus of war was manifest in other aspects of foreign policy. Save for the imposition of countervailing duties against Germany in March, the return of naval units to the Pacific in April, and such hints of stronger economic measures as appeared two months later in our notice of intention to abrogate the commercial treaty with Japan, American foreign policy exhibited no definite change from the spring of 1939 to the beginning of the war. Even then, caution and delay were still its hallmarks; but the frequent confusion of the previous four years rapidly gave way to discernible purpose. The central theme of the period from September to November

was repeal of the arms embargo; and repeal of the arms embargo, though heralded as a return to neutrality, was obviously calculated to provide Great Britain and France with the immediate access to American war production which they so urgently required. Otherwise, the American government sought to provide against a more distant future.

At this secondary level, policy was based on the disturbing realization that the war had not yet assumed a dependable form. So far, it did not embrace even the whole of Europe; and unless it could be restricted to these severe limits, its final outcome would obviously be decided by the great neutrals rather than by the states already committed. Hoping to control these portentous uncertainties, the United States evolved several types of action by the beginning of November. The Soviet Union would be restrained wherever restraint was practicable, but never at risk of driving it further into the arms of Germany. Italian neutrality would be sedulously cultivated. For this and such other purposes as might arise, connections with the Vatican would be broadened. No peace initiative would be undertaken, at least until the Allies' bargaining position improved. For the rest, Japan would be put off with new warnings until this country was more certain of what it faced in Europe.

CHAPTER IV

VENTURE IN NEUTRALITY

I.

By the early part of November 1939, the war in Europe had entered its winter doldrums. The German Army had ceased to move after destroying Poland, and the rest of the conflict was not impressive. Aerial warfare remained lackadaisical; battle at sea was an unexciting routine of blockade, contraband orders, mine explosions, and limited submarine forays; and hostilities on the western front had never extended much beyond patrol activity. Inertia on both sides, combined with talk of a negotiated peace, made the war a much less fearsome thing than it had been in September. Under these circumstances, Americans regained some of their old confidence. Assurance grew with prolongation of the stalemate, and many isolationist notions enjoyed a new popularity.

According to an analysis of public opinion surveys made by Professor Hadley Cantril of Princeton University, fear of the consequences of a possible German victory declined somewhat between September 1939 and April 1940.¹ The

¹Hadley Cantril, "America Faces the War: A Study in Public Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Sept. 1940), chart 3, p. 398.

intensity of such fears usually varied inversely with expectations of Allied victory; but since confidence in Britain and France fell off to about the same extent,² this would seem to indicate that Germany's quiescence since the battle of Poland had augmented popular hope of German moderation in the larger struggle. Reactions to other queries revealed a similar trend. Although American public opinion lost none of its overwhelming preference for Allied victory, the proportion which favored armed intervention--even in prospect of Allied defeat--went down, according to the American Institute of Public Opinion, from 44 percent in September 1939 to 23 percent in February 1940.³ In November, about 59 percent still thought that Congress should not give up the control over foreign policy residing in it by virtue of the neutrality act.⁴ Between December and the end of January, the proportion desiring a war referendum amendment rose from 40 percent to 60 percent.⁵

This abatement of public nervousness as crisis trailed off into relative calm was deceptive, however; for if

²Hadley Cantril, "America Faces the War: A Study in Public Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Sept. 1940), chart 1, p. 396.

³-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (June 1940), p. 360.

⁴Ibid. (Mar. 1940), p. 109.

⁵Ibid. (Mar. 1940), p. 103; and ibid. (June 1940), p. 359.

apathy on the part of the belligerents led to a corresponding apathy in American sentiment, this involved no final conclusion. Fluctuations in popular thought over the last few months predicted with virtual certainty that new German successes would make new inroads upon isolationist belief. While still overwhelmingly reluctant to fight, the American people had admitted--though half unconsciously-- that they might eventually have to choose between intervention and something worse. But the war had not yet rendered so harsh a choice necessary, and it now seemed that the grim decision might be indefinitely postponed. So a role approaching that of the old-time, trading neutral was all that could be essayed for the moment.

In consequence, the basic framework of American policy from November 1939 to the collapse of France in June 1940 was highly reminiscent of the period 1914-1917, being concerned with technical disputes over neutral rights at sea, fruitless efforts to limit or end the war, and attempts to discourage Japanese aggression in the Far East. Behind these resemblances, however, it was also different. In spite of its still powerful isolationism, the country from the beginning sensed a much greater nearness to Europe and its problems than it had in the first World War at any time prior to 1917. Moreover, the government was already working beyond the limits of that old and relatively simple idealism in its effort to assess the other great neutrals as potential friends or enemies.

II.

Using authority conferred upon him by the joint resolution of November 4, President Roosevelt on the same day proclaimed a combat zone extending from the southwestern tip of Norway to the northern coast of Spain and westward to the 20th meridian, thus excluding American ships from the waters surrounding the British Isles, the North Sea, the entrance to the Baltic, and most of the Bay of Biscay. Later, on April 10, 1940, this zone was extended northward to include the waters off the coast of Norway and a generous sector of the Arctic Ocean, closing the Russian ports of Archangel and Murmansk to United States shipping as well as all Norwegian and Finnish harbors. And on June 11, 1940, new combat zones were proclaimed which covered the entire Mediterranean Sea and the southern entrance to the Red Sea.⁶ For the time being, however, the Mediterranean was still open, as were Norway and the northern approaches to Finland and Russia; and American trade with neutral Europe was to go on with as little change as possible. Yet, since goods entering neutral states contiguous to one of the belligerents are always of interest to the other side, American ships engaged in this traffic were permanently confronted

⁶ Proclamation No. 2374, Nov. 4, 1939, Federal Register, Vol. 4, p. 4493; Proclamation No. 2394, Apr. 10, 1940, ibid., Vol. 5, pp. 1399-1400; and Proclamation No. 2410, June 11, 1940, ibid., pp. 2209-10. See also Neutrality Act Zone Map, June 13, 1940, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, p. 682.

by the Allied blockade.

As noted above, Great Britain had bidden vigorously in early September for American coöperation with her blockade system and had joined the United States in arranging for regular meetings of British and American experts to adjust differences as they arose. The largest initial problem grew out of Britain's request that American merchant vessels bound for Europe call voluntarily at the contraband control bases she was setting up to facilitate examination of cargoes. But some of these bases lay inside the combat zone proclaimed on November 4, and this placed the issue in a still different light. Obviously, continued British insistence that American vessels enter certain areas, for whatever purpose, in defiance of American law might soon produce a situation which fell beyond the competence of the joint board of experts. Nevertheless, London called new attention to the Allied system of contraband control on November 9, reserved all its rights in the matter, and thus intimated rather clearly that its program would remain in effect.⁷

Other developments following hard upon the heels of this one plagued the issue still further. Unprepared for a strong submarine campaign when the war broke out and

⁷All the notes involved in this sequence have not been published, but their contents are adequately discussed in Hull to Lothian, Dec. 14, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (Jan. 6, 1940), p. 4.

somewhat indifferent to its value, Hitler had started with an unexpectedly cautious underseas policy, taking special care that neutrals sustained no unnecessary harm. But thanks to the proddings of Grand Admiral Raeder, caution was gradually abandoned until, by the end of the year, all ships found within the combat zone designated by the United States were fair game except fully lighted neutrals.⁸ This gradual intensification of submarine warfare plus the unusual damage wrought in October and November by Germany's lavish use of floating magnetic mines⁹ was bound to provoke retaliation; and on November 27, the Allies formally extended their blockade of German imports to cover exports as well--including German goods exported through neutral countries.¹⁰ This effectively rounded out the process of bringing all neutral trade in European waters squarely

⁸ See Reflections of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, on the outbreak of war, Sept. 3, 1939, United States, Department of the Navy, Office of Naval Intelligence, Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing with the German Navy, 9 vols. (issued in mimeographed form by Office of Public Relations, U. S. Navy, 1946-47), 1939, p. 1; also Conference of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, with the Fuehrer, Sept. 7, 1939, ibid., pp. 3-4; and Annex 1 to Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Dec. 30, 1939, ibid., p. 66. Cited henceforth as Fuehrer Conferences. Cf. Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 9-10.

⁹ Cf. Churchill, The Gathering Storm, pp. 505-8.

¹⁰ Order-in-Council of the United Kingdom, Nov. 27, 1939, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, pp. 705-6.

under British surveillance and multiplied the likelihood of dispute.

On December 8, the United States protested against this latest Order-in-Council, holding that "interference with neutral vessels on the high seas by belligerent powers must be justified upon some recognized belligerent right." In view of the generous limits of the combat zone from which American vessels were excluded by domestic law, the note went on, it was difficult to see how any breach of blockade could arise.¹¹ Hull further pointed out on December 14 that American ships were prohibited by domestic law from entering contraband control bases within the combat zone and interpreted the British note of November 9 to mean that Britain intended to divert American vessels to such bases by force if necessary. Under the circumstances, he added, the United States felt that "accommodation and flexibility" were in order for the British government.¹² On December 25, the British Ministry of Economic Defense conceded that in exceptional circumstances--which it refused to define in advance--individual ships might be exempted, on application, from the order of November 27; but it declined to consider

¹¹Kennedy to Halifax, Dec. 8, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Dec. 9, 1939), p. 651.

¹²Hull to Lothian, Dec. 14, 1939, ibid., Vol. 2 (Jan. 6, 1940), p. 4

any general withdrawal from its position.¹³

Two days later, the United States raised another sore point: the removal from American and foreign ships of United States mails addressed to neutral countries and the censoring of these mails by British officials.¹⁴ London replied on January 17 with what amounted to a refusal to alter this practice either.¹⁵ On January 20, the State Department summed up its grievances in a long note which alleged that contraband control at Gibraltar was needlessly slow and inefficient, that American vessels had been forced into the belligerent port of Marseilles and made to unload, that British censorship of mails had delayed official letters addressed to United States missions abroad, and that Italian ships were receiving preferential treatment at the hands of the British Navy in the Mediterranean area.¹⁶

By this time, each side had largely completed its case. There was little more to say; and since it was obvious that the dispute would never be allowed to provoke

¹³Ministry of Economic Defense, United Kingdom, to U. S. Embassy at London, December 25, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (Jan. 6, 1940), p. 5.

¹⁴Kennedy to Halifax, Dec. 27, 1939, ibid., p. 3.

¹⁵Halifax to Kennedy, Jan. 17, 1940, ibid., (Jan. 27, 1940), pp. 91-93.

¹⁶Aide-mémoire, State Department to Lothian, Jan. 20, 1940, ibid. p. 93.

serious ill-feeling in any event, it gradually tapered off until the events of April and May and Britain's withdrawal of contraband control over American vessels in the Mediterranean on May 24¹⁷ directed energies into more important channels. Throughout their course, these dwindling altercations had been so inconclusive and good-natured that they were plainly more for the record than anything else. A London dispatch published in the New York Times on February 15, 1940, even suggested that Lord Lothian, the British Ambassador in Washington, was emulating Walter Hines Page in reverse, asserting that Lothian regularly discussed the content of British notes with the American State Department in advance of their formal submission to the United States.¹⁸ The true measure of Anglo-American relations during this period is not to be found in the diplomatic struggle over neutral rights but rather in the cooperation made possible by repeal of the arms embargo. For immediately after passage of the joint resolution of November 4, Britain and France had resumed the arms purchases in the United States which had been interrupted by the outbreak of war in September; and on December 6, President Roosevelt had established a liaison committee made up of the Secretary of the

¹⁷See information on detention of American ships by belligerents furnished by Department of State, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, p. 713.

¹⁸New York Times, Feb. 15, 1940, p. 3, cc. 5-6.

Treasury and representatives of the War, Navy, and Treasury departments to aid in securing the latest model weapons, watch over foreign dollar balances, and generally expedite the labors of the British and French purchasing commissions.¹⁹

During the seven-month period between November 1939 and June 1940, the United States found little occasion for direct conflict with Germany on the submarine issue. In view of proposed changes as well as existing law, the outlook for keeping American merchant vessels fully employed was admittedly not good as the war started. Hence a fairly energetic transfer of American-owned ships to foreign registry by sale and other means got under way before the end of September. Thanks to Hull's personal intervention, however, this process was slowed to some extent after passage of the new neutrality act in November--especially in cases where a bona fide transfer of ownership could not be shown to accompany the transfer of registry.²⁰ This limitation of transfer, combined with the relative inactivity of U-boats during the first months of the war, kept the risk of such practices to a minimum. Besides,

¹⁹Stettinius, Lend-Lease, pp. 20-21.

²⁰For data on such transfers between Oct. 26, 1939, and Apr. 30, 1940, see statement of U. S. Maritime Commission, Congressional Record, Vol. 86, Appendix, pp. 2846-49. Cf. John C. DeWilde, "The War and American Shipping," Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. 16 (Apr. 1, 1940), p. 23; and Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 699.

transferred ships sailed under foreign flags, whatever their real ownership; and their fate was not a matter of which the United States government could take official cognizance in any event. Ships which kept their American registry, on the other hand, were prohibited by domestic law from entering the only real danger areas which existed at this time and were virtually as safe as ever from German attack. Apart from the difficulties growing out of the Allied blockade, therefore, the only serious problem raised in the Atlantic had to do with violations of the tremendous neutrality zone established by the Declaration of Panama.

The most spectacular belligerent invasion of this zone centered about the Graf Spee incident. The German pocket battleship Graf Spee, which had been preying on Allied commerce in southern waters almost since the beginning of the war, was intercepted by three British cruisers on December 13 at a point about three hundred miles off Montevideo and well inside the inter-American security belt. The cruisers attacked and pursued a running fight in the direction of the Uruguayan coast, but the battered Nazi vessel was able to hold off her enemies well enough to slip into the port of Montevideo just after midnight. While the British warships lay outside with instructions from London to resume the fight anywhere beyond the three-mile limit should opportunity offer, the German commander landed his dead and wounded and endeavored to obtain an extension of the time he was allowed to remain in port. But the

Uruguayan government was adamant; and as the seventy-two-hour period of grace ran out, the Graf Spee was forced out of her refuge. Since her chances of evading her pursuers appeared negligible, she was blown up about seven miles offshore in accordance with orders from Berlin.²¹

Hostilities had entered forbidden waters, and this provided an opportunity for calling new attention to the extended inviolability claimed for the Western Hemisphere. The United States joined the twenty other American republics in framing a protest against such invasions of their neutrality belt; and the note was transmitted to France, Great Britain, and Germany by the President of Panama.²² But this complaint was founded upon weak grounds at best.

²¹This is based in large part upon the account by Winston Churchill, who was at that time First Lord of the Admiralty and in direct contact with the British ships participating in the Graf Spee affair. See Churchill, The Gathering Storm, pp. 517-26. The commander of the Graf Spee was ordered by Raeder to stay in neutral waters as long as possible but to take no risk of internment by Uruguay. Owing to the friendlier disposition of the Argentine government, he was to attempt to reach Buenos Aires when forced to leave Uruguayan waters in order to escape internment, scuttling his ship if capture appeared unavoidable. See Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Dec. 14, 1939, Fuehrer Conferences, 1939, pp. 60-61. For contemporaneous reports coming to the American State Department, see Press release, Dec. 14, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Dec. 16, 1939), pp. 697-98; and Press release, Dec. 17, 1939, ibid. (Dec. 23, 1939), p. 723. For the Uruguayan government's version of the affair, see Uruguay, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Uruguayan Blue Book: Outline of Events prior to the sinking of the "Admiral Graf Spee" and the internment of the merchant vessel "Tacoma" (London: Hutchinson, 1940).

²²Boyd (President of Panama) to the governments of France, Great Britain, and Germany, Dec. 23, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Dec. 23, 1939), p. 723.

Extension of neutrality over so vast an area of the high seas was not greatly unlike a paper blockade unless the zone could be effectively patrolled, and this condition obviously had not been met.²³ As a result, the combined protest was rejected by Great Britain on January 14, 1940, by France on January 23, and by Germany on February 16.²⁴ Following this, steps were taken to implement the Declaration of Panama by denying port facilities in the Americas to belligerent warships which disregarded the zone.²⁵ This move did not pass beyond the stage of discussion, however; and the inter-American safety zone, like most neutral pretensions, remained more a theory than a fact.

But as events were to prove, the theory of the neutrality zone was its most useful aspect. The impending collapse of the western front in Europe was about to change the whole nature of the Atlantic war. Adjustments in United States naval policy to meet these new conditions would soon make the present actualities of the safety zone

²³Cf. Churchill, The Gathering Storm, pp. 513-14.

²⁴Statement of the British government, Jan. 14, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (Feb. 24, 1940), pp. 199-201; Statement of the French government, Jan. 23, 1940, ibid., pp. 201-3; and Statement of the German government, Feb. 16, 1940, ibid., pp. 203-5.

²⁵Recommendation VII of the Inter-American Neutrality Committee, Apr. 27, 1940, Jones and Myers (eds.) Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, pp. 137-38.

largely irrelevant in any event. Beginning in the summer of 1940, the American government tended more and more to regard the eastern limits of the Western Hemisphere as coinciding roughly with the eastern limits of the inter-American zone and to wage non-belligerent, but unneutral, defense activities of its own within this area. By a logical development, therefore, what was initially conceived as an oversize neutrality belt became a vast defense area in the emerging battle of the Atlantic.

III.

Another significant aspect of American foreign policy at the end of 1939 and the beginning of 1940 centered about the Russo-Finnish war. Lasting from the end of November to the middle of March, this conflict brought to light several of the differences existing between Washington and Moscow. But as forecasted by its actions in September and October, the attitude of the United States government was informed throughout by its vision of future alignments; and Washington never contemplated a definite break with the Soviet Union in either political or commercial affairs. Efforts were made to prevent the spread of hostilities to Finland, and the United States even displayed a marked partiality for the Finnish cause when these efforts failed. But action which tended to drive Russia still further into the German camp or which might hamper later rapprochement with the democracies was studiously avoided.

As noted above, President Roosevelt had asked the Russians in early October to be moderate in their prospective demands on Finland, thus seeming to abandon some of the detachment with which the United States had watched Russian activities in Poland and the Baltic states during the previous month. On November 29, three days after the frontier clash on the Karelian Isthmus which launched the war, Hull followed this initiative by offering American mediation;²⁶ and Ambassador Steinhardt talked with Molotov on December 1 in a futile attempt to gain acceptance of such a plan.²⁷ The same day, Roosevelt publicly deplored the fact that the use of force was spreading and that "wanton disregard for law" was "still on the march."²⁸

Completely unmoved, the Soviet Union on December 1 recognized the "Finnish People's Government," a purely artificial creation which had been organized at Moscow's bidding by one Otto Kuusinen, a Finnish communist who had lived in Russia for twenty years.²⁹ Holding that she was merely

²⁶Statement by Hull, Nov. 29, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Dec. 2, 1939), p. 609.

²⁷David J. Dallin, Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy, 1939-1942, trans. by Leon Denman (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1942), p. 143. Cited henceforth as Soviet Foreign Policy.

²⁸Statement by the President, Dec. 1, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Dec. 2, 1939), p. 609.

²⁹Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 134.

supporting this regime against the "illegal" regular government, Russia avoided a declaration of war.³⁰ The American government took prompt advantage of this fiction and once again refrained from invoking its neutrality law in a situation where Russia was concerned. As a result, Finland was not placed under the disabilities of cash-and-carry. But neither was Russia. In theory at least, American shipping was still as free to enter Soviet ports as those located in Finland. This resembled the policy observed toward hostilities in China for the past two and one half years, but here it was even subtler. As Hull later noted,

...we still wanted to refrain from making Russia a legal belligerent. I could not but feel that the basic antagonisms between Communist Russia and Nazi Germany were so deep and Hitler's ambition so boundless, that eventually Russia would come over to the side of the Allies. We had to be careful not to push her in the other direction.³¹

Within the limits of these hopes, official dissatisfaction with Soviet policy could be revealed in many lesser ways, however. Since 1933, the United States had patiently borne the vexatious restrictions placed upon the activity and movement of its consular officials in Russia. Now it began to retaliate in kind. Acting on instructions, Steinhardt refused a laissez-passer to a new Russian vice-consul headed for New York. Accordingly, the Russian's baggage was subjected to customs investigation as he entered

³⁰Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 133.

³¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 707.

the United States. Soviet Ambassador Oumansky immediately protested this invasion of customary privilege, arguing that most-favored-nation treatment was proper in such cases and that Russia imposed no greater disabilities upon American consular officials than upon the equivalent representatives of any other government. But Hull stood firm on the principle of an even-handed reciprocity, and Roosevelt backed him up. In a memorandum of December 22, he advised the Secretary of State to match every Russian annoyance with its equivalent and to inform Oumansky that, in view of Russia's present attitude, "the President honestly wonders whether the Soviet Government considers it worthwhile to continue diplomatic relations."³²

In the midst of this verbal fencing, Roosevelt called new attention to the moral embargo which he had erected in July 1938 against countries guilty of bombing civilians. Japan had been the target then; but since Russia was being widely accused of employing the same freedom in her air attacks on Finnish cities, the new application of his remarks was inescapable. He mentioned the subject generally in a brief statement on December 2,³³ and the State Department on December 15 formally expressed the hope that no one would apply for licenses to export aircraft, aeronautical

³²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 708-9.

³³Statement by the President, Dec. 2, 1939, Roosevelt, Papers, 1939, p. 589.

equipment, aerial bombs, or torpedoes to such countries.³⁴ As it applied to Russia, this moral embargo was to last more than a year.³⁵ The State Department further announced on December 20 that it was halting the "delivery to certain countries of plans, plants, manufacturing rights, or technical information required for the production of high quality aviation gasoline."³⁶ This last move appears to have been directed primarily against Japan, however.

Finland, on the other hand, received highly preferential treatment. On December 13, the Export-Import Bank granted the Finns a loan of \$10,000,000 for the purchase of surplus agricultural supplies in this country.³⁷ First used to aid China, the discriminatory loan was being employed again as a weapon of policy. According to William C. Bullitt, Russia's expulsion from the League of Nations on December 14 was due, at least in part, to Roosevelt's influence.³⁸ Seven days later, the United States Navy

³⁴Department of State to Aircraft Manufacturers, etc., Dec. 15, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Dec. 16, 1939), p. 685.

³⁵Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 177.

³⁶Press release, Dec. 20, 1939, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 1 (Dec. 23, 1939), p. 714.

³⁷See table of loans granted by Export-Import Bank, 1939-1940, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, p. 554.

³⁸William C. Bullitt, "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," Life, Vol. 25 (Aug. 30, 1948), p. 91.

undertook to sell Finland forty-four planes;³⁹ and the Finnish government at the same time was enabled to buy a small quantity of arms in this country. Turning again to the loan policy, President Roosevelt on January 16, 1940, personally urged the Vice-President and the Speaker of the House that Finland should be given new credits through the Export-Import Bank;⁴⁰ and he clearly pointed out in a public address on February 10 that 98 percent of the American people sympathized whole-heartedly with Finland in her existing difficulties.⁴¹ The truth of this last remark was not doubted in Moscow, for the Russian government had been so disturbed by anti-Soviet feeling in the United States that it had removed its pavilion from the New York World's Fair shortly after the war started.⁴² Congressional sentiment was almost equally strong. On February 7, 1940, a member of the House proposed an amendment to the State Department supply bill withdrawing all financial support from the American Embassy in Moscow.⁴³ This move was

³⁹New York Times, Dec. 19, 1939, p. 1. cc. 3-4.

⁴⁰Roosevelt to Garner and Bankhead, Jan. 16, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (Jan. 20, 1940), p. 55.

⁴¹Speech by the President, Feb. 10, 1940, Roosevelt, Papers, 1940, p. 92.

⁴²Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 117.

⁴³Congressional Record, Vol. 86, p. 1173.

obviously designed to force a severance of diplomatic relations with Russia. But even more remarkable than the making of such a proposal was the reception accorded it, for the measure so struck legislative fancies that it was defeated by only three votes after the administration exerted pressure to that end.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Congress responded to the President's financial suggestions; and with its assent, new credits of \$20,000,000 were granted Finland on March 2.⁴⁵

But whatever value these moves had as gestures of moral support, they could not enable the Finns to stand indefinitely against the overwhelming numbers of Soviet Russia. Neither could anything else. By the beginning of February, Russia was using some thirty infantry divisions on the Karelian front as well as considerable artillery and armor. It was clear that not even the expeditionary force which Great Britain and France contemplated sending to Finland would be enough to turn the tide of battle.⁴⁶ Besides, this would have merged the northern war with the greater struggle; and war between the Allies and the Soviet Union

⁴⁴Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 179.

⁴⁵See Act to provide for increasing the lending authority of the Export-Import Bank, Mar. 2, 1940, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, p. 392.

⁴⁶Cf. John H. Wuorinen, (ed.), Finland and World War II, 1939-1944 (New York: Ronald Press, 1948), pp. 70-72.

would have constituted a serious blow to the Russian policy of the United States. Accordingly, Washington supported new peace efforts in Moscow at the beginning of March.⁴⁷ The American role in these negotiations was not as great as it might have been in an earlier settlement if Hull's offer of mediation had been accepted in December; but the new peace move succeeded because Finnish resistance was weakening rapidly, because Russia had obtained her immediate objectives, and because neither country desired involvement in the European war.⁴⁸ For much the same reason, other countries--notably Sweden--also did what they could to facilitate negotiations.⁴⁹ As a result, Finland accepted terms which seriously undermined her strategic position and truncated her industrial area but failed to destroy her independence. A treaty of peace was signed at Moscow on March 12,⁵⁰ and Russo-American relations thus escaped new perplexities.

⁴⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 742.

⁴⁸Wuorinen (ed.), Finland and World War II, pp. 72-73.

⁴⁹Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, pp. 184-85; and Wuorinen (ed.), Finland and World War II, pp. 74-77.

⁵⁰Treaty of peace between the U.S.S.R. and Finland, Mar. 12, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (Apr. 27, 1940), pp. 453-55.

IV.

As this smaller northern war got under way, the United States government resumed its search for means of influencing the greater one. At the same time, it continued its review of Italy's place in the scheme of things and its study of closer relations between White House and Vatican; for these three questions seemed more intimately connected than ever by December 1939.

The necessary links were supplied by Italy as Mussolini continued to parade his reserve toward the Russo-German non-aggression pact. In November and December, Italian newspapers mounted a sustained attack against bolshevism; and in the latter month, the Duce even sent Finland a small contingent of Italian planes.⁵¹ Nor was this mere window-dressing, as Mussolini himself revealed in a personal letter to Hitler written January 4, 1940.⁵² It was also believed that the Italian nation foresaw much greater benefits in continued neutrality than in war on any terms. Mussolini did much to encourage such a feeling among the Italian people throughout the autumn,⁵³ and Ciano gave evidence of

⁵¹Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, pp. 201-2.

⁵²Mussolini to Hitler, Jan 4, 1940, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, Les Lettres Secrètes Échangées par Hitler et Mussolini, with introd. by André François-Poncet (Paris: Éditions du Pavois, 1946), pp. 55-66. Cited henceforth as Lettres Secrètes.

⁵³Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 204.

official coolness toward both Germany and the war in a speech to the Chamber of Deputies on December 15. Accusing Hitler of trickery, the Foreign Minister complained that Germany, when signing the Pact of Steel in May, had guaranteed not to provoke a war before 1943. He also revealed that, while he had known of German plans for an understanding with Russia, Berlin had not kept him abreast of negotiations and that the actual terms of the treaty differed greatly from what he had been led to expect.⁵⁴ In addition to this, the American State Department heard new echoes of the peace talk which had been in the air since October, receiving word from the French Foreign Office on December 14 that Mussolini was about to launch a move for general pacification.⁵⁵

These were only straws in the wind. But they did form a kind of pattern, and the design was supplemented by the trend of relations between the Italian government and the Holy See. As noted above, Mussolini's neutrality and his anti-communism had attracted favorable notice from the Vatican ever since the outbreak of the war; and the whole direction of his policy in November and December strengthened him still further in papal esteem. By the end of the year, relations between the Vatican and Rome were so cordial

⁵⁴Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, pp. 204-5.

⁵⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 712-13.

that the Pope exchanged visits with the Italian King and Queen in late December.⁵⁶ This made it plainer than ever that any effort to keep Mussolini from entering the war--or, better still, to ascertain the basis of a compromise peace using the Italian dictator as middleman--stood to profit from the Holy See's coöperation. Thus all three projects drew together as the holiday season approached.

Striking while the iron was hot, Roosevelt first of all made arrangements for systematic communication with the Pope and his Secretary of State. Even if larger hopes should fail to materialize, this would give him regular access to one of the best information centers in the world. The United States had maintained no formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican since 1868, and it was certain that their reestablishment would cause alarm in the more strongly Protestant sections of the country. So, although the President had considered returning to the old system by appointing a regular ambassador, he now took Hull's advice and elected to send a personal representative with the rank of ambassador. For this post he selected Myron C. Taylor, an Episcopalian and former chairman of the Board of United States Steel, a man who was thoroughly at home in Europe and who had maintained a home in Florence for many years.⁵⁷

⁵⁶Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 206.

⁵⁷See Taylor's own account in introduction to Myron C. Taylor (ed.), Wartime Correspondence between President Roosevelt and Pope Pius XII (New York: Macmillan, 1947), pp. 3-4. Cited henceforth as Roosevelt and Pius XII.

To disarm criticism still further, his decision was made public in a Christmas letter to the Pope which was released simultaneously with almost identical letters to the president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and to the president of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America urging a close association between government and organized religion for dealing with the great problems lying ahead.⁵⁸ Pope Pius expressed his satisfaction with the President's move in his Christmas Eve message to the College of Cardinals⁵⁹ and sent Roosevelt his formal agreement to receive Taylor on January 7.⁶⁰

Roosevelt now laid plans for more direct action, hinging them about a tour of European capitals by Sumner Welles, the Under-Secretary of State. The latter would visit Rome, Berlin, Paris, and London in an effort to learn how the different governments felt about the possibility of an early peace. In specifying the limits of the mission, the President emphasized that Welles would carry no offers or proposals from the United States and that he, Roosevelt, was interested in hearing nothing but genuine peace formulas.

⁵⁸See notes concerning letters to George A. Buttrick and Cyrus Adler in Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, p. 367.

⁵⁹Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 207.

⁶⁰Pius XII to Roosevelt, Jan. 7, 1940, Taylor (ed.), Roosevelt and Pius XII, pp. 21-23.

Expedients likely to result in an armed truce did not attract him. Considering Russia's attitude over the last few months, the President did not feel that anything could be accomplished in Moscow. Italy, however, was different.⁶¹ Italy, in fact, was to be the focus of the whole effort.

The governments concerned were sounded on their attitudes toward such a mission. All except Germany gave a warm response--though Britain and France were not certain that the United States did not intend to boost appeasement once more--and even Berlin agreed to receive Welles, albeit somewhat coldly.⁶² Welles sailed for Naples just before the middle of February. His itinerary called for talks in Rome, Berlin, Paris, London, and Paris, followed by a second visit to Rome. Whether by chance or design, Taylor sailed for Italy on the same liner to take up his duties at the Holy See.⁶³

On February 26, after a talk with Ciano at the Chigi Palace, Welles had an interview with Mussolini. Although Ciano was favorably impressed by the American envoy, Mussolini felt otherwise and gave Welles little real encouragement.⁶⁴ In Berlin, Welles found the going even

⁶¹Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 73-74.

⁶²Ibid., p. 74.

⁶³Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 207.

⁶⁴Ciano, Diaries, p. 212; Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 78, 87-88.

harder. After conversations with Ribbentrop, Goering, and Hitler, he left the German capital on March 3 with a distinct impression that the Nazi leaders were thinking in terms of speedy victory and had largely abandoned notions of compromise.⁶⁵ While he was cordially received in both Paris and London, British and French leaders were equally barren of suggestions for bringing the war to an end.⁶⁶ As a result, Welles returned to Rome on March 16 with little to offer.

In the meanwhile, Taylor had been promptly received by the Pope; and the two reached an understanding for concerted action by the United States and the Holy See to preserve Italian neutrality.⁶⁷ But Italy was subjected to new German pressure almost at once. In view of the imminence of the spring campaign, and apparently worried by what Welles might yet accomplish on his return to Rome, Ribbentrop paid the Italian capital a hurried visit on March 10 and 11. He talked with speed and plausibility; for when the German

⁶⁵Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 119-20. Cf. Fuehrer's directions for the conference with Mr. Sumner Welles, Feb. 29, 1940, in "German Documents on Sumner Welles Mission, 1940," Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 14 (Mar. 24, 1946), pp. 459-60; and Memorandum of conversation between Goering and Welles at Karin Hall, Mar. 3, 1940, ibid., pp. 460-66.

⁶⁶Cf. Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 123-24, 130-31.

⁶⁷Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 208. Taylor puts the matter less bluntly but says substantially the same thing. See explanatory note in Taylor (ed.), Roosevelt and Pius XII, p. 27.

Foreign Minister left, Mussolini had committed himself to enter the war at Germany's side, stipulating only that he must choose the date of entry to suit his own convenience.⁶⁸ As a kind of gesture, Ribbentrop also called on the Pope and the Cardinal Secretary of State, submitting a long peace offer which would have left Germany the dominant power on the continent. But the offer, as was doubtless expected, gained no support from the Vatican. Far from pressing it, the German Foreign Office even denied that such a proposal had been made.⁶⁹

Italy's place in the war now appeared to be settled. But in spite of his commitment to Ribbentrop, Mussolini was still plagued by indecision; and the former was hardly out of Rome before the Duce expressed new misgivings about the spring offensive, indicating to Ciano that he would try to moderate Hitler's intentions on this point at his forthcoming meeting with the German leader, which was scheduled to take place on March 18 at the Brenner Pass.⁷⁰

Welles talked with Mussolini again on March 16. Still dubious of his own brashness, the Italian dictator appeared more conciliatory than in their first interview. Welles

⁶⁸Ciano, Diaries, p. 219.

⁶⁹Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, pp. 209-10.

⁷⁰Ciano, Diaries, p. 220.

spoke of his conversations with Allied leaders and indicated that France and Britain were not unalterably opposed to compromise if adequate guarantees of security could be offered them.⁷¹ Listening attentively, Mussolini replied that Hitler would have to be convinced of their willingness to negotiate in realistic terms before he could be induced to put off his spring offensive, and asked for permission to convey Welles' assurances to the German leader. Welles demurred at taking any such initiative on behalf of the United States. As soon as the interview was completed, he informed the President by long-distance telephone of Mussolini's request and pointed out that to authorize such a course would be to encourage the view that Roosevelt "was participating in the determination of such political bases for a negotiated peace as Hitler might be willing to offer." The President concurred, and the desired authorization was not given.⁷² Peace hopes were obviously faltering, and an interview with the Pope further convinced Welles that the most to be sought was the possibility of keeping Italy out of the war.⁷³ As a result, he started home with

⁷¹Ciano, Diaries, p. 222; cf. Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 134-35.

⁷²Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 139, 140-41.

⁷³Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 214; cf. Welles, The Time for Decision, p. 142.

no gain except Ciano's agreement to sponsor further communication between the Duce and Roosevelt as circumstances might advise.⁷⁴

A genuine peace move had not materialized, and the die had even been cast against Italian neutrality. It was plain, nevertheless, that Mussolini still contended with hesitations. Efforts to keep him from moving further into the German camp would not cease for another two months.

V.

While the United States had always kept many checks upon its Far Eastern policy for the sake of greater freedom to act in Europe, the full measure of this subordination became evident only with the war itself. The dubious position of the other great neutrals represented a future military problem for the United States, and Japan was regarded as perhaps the most dubious of the lot. Until the country was prepared materially, as well as psychologically, for effective military action, it was necessary to deal with this problem at the diplomatic level under constant realization that diplomacy can never run too far ahead of military readiness. Diplomacy might eventually have to take action which the existing military position did not justify; but if such risks had to be taken, they would be taken in Europe

⁷⁴Welles, The Time for Decision, pp. 144-45.

first.

Public opinion, on the other hand, was following an opposite course. It had reached its height of pusillanimity so far as Japan was concerned during and immediately after the Panay crisis. Since then, its desire for stronger measures, especially in the economic sphere, had grown rapidly. By August 29, 1939, the American Institute of Public Opinion was able to report that 82 percent of those consulted wished to prohibit the sale of all war materials to Japan.⁷⁵ In other words, a discriminatory embargo against Japan enjoyed overwhelming popular support at a time when mere repeal of the arms embargo was the most advanced step public opinion would consider in thinking of Europe. Clearly enough, the sentimental lure of neutrality disappeared much faster in one sector than in the other. While the administration's European policy moved just ahead of public opinion, generally speaking, its Asiatic policy lagged somewhere behind; and if Roosevelt was condemned as too venturesome on the one hand, he was criticized as too circumspect on the other.

Japan remained unwontedly quiet through the first six months of the war, restricting herself to that policy of small annoyances she understood so well. Hull attributed this to uncertainty regarding the next move of Russia and

⁷⁵ -----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Mar. 1940), p. 115.

the United States.⁷⁶ But uncertainty in Tokyo was fully matched by uncertainty in Washington. Grew's public warning of October 19 was given no significant additions, and the State Department vouchsafed no word of its plans for dealing with American-Japanese trade after the January expiration of the commercial treaty of 1911.

Hoping to capitalize on the known trends of public opinion, at least one organization made a strenuous effort at the beginning of the year to counteract what it regarded as official lethargy. Under the chairmanship of Henry L. Stimson, former Secretary of State and an old hand at Far Eastern problems, the American Committee for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression entered new and stronger demands for measures to curb Japan. A long letter from Stimson was printed in the New York Times on January 11, vehemently calling for anti-Japanese embargo legislation.⁷⁷ Stimson's argument was reprinted, distributed widely, and given all possible publicity.

But the administration would not allow its hand to be forced. For six months, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations had had in its possession two bills of the type Stimson desired. One of them, which had been introduced by Senator Louis B. Schwellenbach, Democrat, of Washington, lay

⁷⁶Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 730.

⁷⁷New York Times, Jan. 11, 1940, p. 4, cc. 2-6.

in the common tradition of special embargo laws. By making it mandatory for the President to embargo the shipment of any goods which could be used by the importing nation to infringe the sovereignty, the independence, or the territorial or administrative integrity of any nation whose sovereignty the United States was bound by treaty to respect,⁷⁸ this bill exactly covered the relationship of the United States to the Sino-Japanese conflict. That this measure gained no help from the administration is not surprising, since its mandatory character would have forced a complete change of policy. The other bill was different, however. It had been introduced by Key Pittman, the administration's chief spokesman on foreign policy in the Senate, and would have accorded the President discretionary authority to impose an embargo against any nation which, having signed the Nine-Power Treaty, had neglected its obligations or in any way threatened the lives or property of American citizens in China.⁷⁹ Considering its sponsor, this resolution had undoubtedly started with the general approval of President and Secretary of State. Since it could be invoked or not as the executive chose, it might have been useful as a club to brandish over Japanese heads.

⁷⁸S. J. Res. 143, June 1, 1939 (76th Cong., 1st sess.), Congressional Record, Vol. 84, p. 6473.

⁷⁹S. J. Res. 123, Apr. 27, 1939, ibid., p. 4821.

But apparently no effort was made to take the bill out of committee, and it thus became evident that the administration contemplated no further threats for the time being.

Setting the Stimson group at defiance, the government did nothing as the American-Japanese commercial treaty expired on January 26. Adolph Berle, the Assistant Secretary of State, merely notified the Japanese Ambassador that trade relations between their respective countries would remain on a day-to-day basis and that future commercial understandings would depend upon future developments.⁸⁰ Recent extensions of the moral embargo applied to Japan as well as Russia, of course; and the United States, in March, granted China another loan of \$20,000,000 in a move which Tokyo denounced as having the effect of a moral embargo.⁸¹ But so far, Japan was being treated no more harshly than the Soviet Union; and the imagination could not be stretched far enough to regard Japan as a potential ally.

As spring began, Japan started moving once more. Hoping to give the New Order a greater touch of reality, Tokyo inaugurated what was characterized as a "New Chinese National Government" on March 30. Nanking was chosen as its capital and the notorious political adventurer, Wang Ching-wei, as its head. At the same time, the northern

⁸⁰ Hull to Grew, Jan. 23, 1940, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 196.

⁸¹ Grew to Hull, Mar. 24, 1940, ibid., p. 59.

provinces of Hopei, Shansi, and Shantung were accorded semi-independence under a "political affairs commissioner;" and Inner Mongolia was placed under the direct rule of the Japanese Kwantung Army. Hull promptly declined to recognize these changes,⁸² but he would go no further than that. Rumors were already current that Japan was planning aggressions much farther to the south than heretofore. Hull took cognizance of these reports and, on April 17, strongly deprecated any change in the status quo of the Dutch East Indies.⁸³ Verbal resistance was still the order of the day; but as French and British disasters in Europe rapidly augmented Japan's chances of success in an attempt to gain footholds in lands beyond the southern limits of China, Washington ordered a significant redeployment of the United States Fleet.

This move took place in May when, without warning, the Fleet's base was shifted from the California coast to Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu in the Hawaiian group. Fleet units had carried out maneuvers and other operations in the Hawaiian area for years, but now the home port was moved westward a distance of more than two thousand miles. While directing maneuvers in Hawaiian waters, Admiral

⁸²Statement by Hull, Mar. 30, 1940, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 60.

⁸³Statement by Hull, Apr. 17, 1940, ibid., p. 282.

James O. Richardson, the Fleet's Commander-in-Chief, was suddenly instructed on May 7 to inform the press that the Fleet would remain in Hawaii for further exercises.⁸⁴ The whole thing appears to have resulted from inspiration, and Richardson understood at the time that the change was only temporary.⁸⁵ His efforts to have the Fleet returned to the California coast on the ground that better training and provisioning facilities were available there proved abortive, however; and the transfer rapidly hardened into permanance.⁸⁶ Whatever this move signified in other respects, it was clear that the Fleet's main strength now lay much closer to the flank of any possible Japanese drive into the Indies.

The new importance of Pearl Harbor would finally become a large item in Japan's calculations, but its immediate effect was negligible. Japan's course through the first half of June betrayed no special fear of American reactions. That Tokyo had recognized the advisability of better relations with Moscow became apparent on June 9 in a Soviet-Japanese agreement covering the disputed frontier

⁸⁴ Richardson's testimony, Nov. 19, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 1, p. 260.

⁸⁵ Richardson's testimony, Nov. 19, 1945, ibid., p. 262.

⁸⁶ Richardson's testimony, Nov. 19, 1945, ibid., pp. 265-66.

of Mongolia.⁸⁷ And taking swift advantage of Great Britain's preoccupation with Hitler's vast spring offensive, Japan submitted new demands regarding the British concession at Tientsin. Britain yielded on June 19, agreeing that Japanese officials might unite with concession police in checking anti-Japanese activities and that the virtually worthless North China currency issued under Japanese sponsorship for use in the occupied provinces might circulate within the concession on an equal basis with Chinese national currency. To make her surrender even more humiliating, Britain also turned over to the Japanese a quantity of silver held on deposit from China's legal government.⁸⁸

VI.

This act of abasement was prompted by the threatened ruin of the British homeland rather than by any weakness in British character, and the United States partook of these fears in such a degree that its neutrality would soon lose all but academic interest. The government led the way. But the nation required less guidance than might have been expected, for the currents of popular feeling observed in the spring and again in the fall of 1939 quickened

⁸⁷Bulletin of International News, Vol. 17 (June 15, 1940), p. 753.

⁸⁸Statement by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, June 19, 1940, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 362, cc. 141-42.

tremendously as the shadows of complete German triumph grew longer.

To a considerable extent, American neutrality had always been illusive. Even when seeking to deny it, the American people were deeply aware of having much more in common with Great Britain and France than with Germany. While they distrusted many Allied policies, occasionally suspected Allied intentions, and sometimes made fun of Allied statesmen, they hated Hitler and feared the ways of dictatorship. At the very worst, the United States was faced by a choice between two evils; and few were in doubt as to which was the greater. At best, this sympathy involved recognition of cultural and strategic unities grown in out of a long past. No true dilemma ever existed, and this greatly simplified the work of those in charge of public enlightenment.

Thanks to their extended broodings over the first World War, Americans were propaganda-conscious in the highest degree. Owing to the basic likeness between Anglo-French and American viewpoints, the Allies could employ subtlety with assurance; but pro-German instruction required such a fundamental distortion of cherished beliefs that it was clearly recognizable as propaganda if it made its point at all. The British and French had only to lift minor obstacles from a stream that already flowed strongly in their direction; the Germans had to stem the whole current. Moreover, persistence of American neutrality--

the Allies' worse fear--was Germany's best hope; and as events were to prove, her very successes on the battlefield could destroy it. Under these circumstances, the Germans labored to little purpose.⁸⁹ The Allies did much better.

Through the winter of 1939-1940, the British and French alike developed systematic campaigns for American enlightenment; but the former, not unnaturally, carried the main burden. The progressive development of their central themes can be illustrated from the speeches of Lord Lothian, the British Ambassador in Washington.

On October 25, 1939, Lothian addressed The Pilgrims-- a society which, together with its counterpart in London, sought to promote Anglo-American fellow-feeling. Examining the history of the Monroe Doctrine, he pointed out that its success through the nineteenth century had rested squarely upon friendly British sea power. World peace, he continued, now required some such basis of Anglo-American coöperation.⁹⁰ The present war, he argued, was not imperialistic. It was a conflict between dissimilar ways of life. India and the dominions, all of which should know British

⁸⁹For an interesting survey of German propoganda efforts in the United States, see Lavine and Wechsler, War Propaganda and the United States, chapters 7 and 8.

⁹⁰Speech to The Pilgrims of the United States, Oct. 25, 1939, Royal Institute of International Affairs, The American Speeches of Lord Lothian, July 1939 to December 1940 (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1941), pp. 11-15.

imperialism quite well, had recognized this truth at once and joined the mother country of their own free will.⁹¹

Although he did not say it, his obvious conclusion was that the United States could do no less than bear this in mind.

Fittingly enough, education was his theme on November 14 when he spoke at a dinner celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Barnard College. The existing situation, Lothian declared, had grown out of the democratic failure to solve three great problems: unemployment, maldistribution of wealth, and war. In the peace to follow, education would have to aid in the solution of these problems by doing two things: teach the individual to understand and enjoy his life and offer him a preparation for leadership. To this future Britain had already contributed greatly by making both secondary and university education available to all classes.⁹²

This talk of a peaceful, sane, and more abundant future did no more than skirt the edges of immediate war issues; but most Americans could understand and sympathize with every word. Without much change or addition, Lothian developed such themes until the middle of May 1940--filling out a picture of common ideals, historic strategic unity,

⁹¹Speech to The Pilgrims of the United States, Oct. 25, 1939, Royal Institute of International Affairs, The American Speeches of Lord Lothian, July 1939 to December 1940 (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1941), pp. 16-17.

⁹²Speech at dinner celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Barnard College, Nov. 14, 1939, ibid., pp. 37-39.

the un-American, un-English character of totalitarianism, and hope for a better world. Not until the entire western front collapsed did he use any form of insistence. Then, on June 4, he issued a direct warning that Hitler's main objective was possession of the British Fleet and that, if Hitler succeeded, this great historic protection of the United States would be gone.⁹³ But in June, many Americans were saying the same thing.

Being almost superfluous, British propaganda was effective because it interfered so little with natural processes. Since there were plenty of Americans willing to assume the task of convincing themselves and each other, the British wisely permitted natives to take the lead. Persuasion from domestic sources was not so likely to be dubbed propaganda and thus could take full advantage of the fact that the main difference between propagandist and auditor lay not so much in basic conviction as in foresight and in willingness to come to grips with what was clearly foreseen.⁹⁴ Of especially great assistance to the British point of view was President

⁹³Speech at the annual luncheon of the Columbia University alumni, June 4, 1940, Royal Institute, The American Speeches of Lord Lothian, pp. 100-1.

⁹⁴Cf. Lavine and Wechsler, War Propaganda and the United States, p. 88.

Roosevelt himself.⁹⁵

The tone of the latter's fireside chat on the day Britain entered the war has been mentioned. Its text was followed religiously by the whole administration. Indeed, the content and general manner of numerous official statements on war issues showed clearly that psychological neutrality was not only regarded as impossible but, even more, was viewed as positively undesirable.⁹⁶ On the other hand, American sensitivity to any hint of physical involvement was frankly recognized; and, as noted, official arguments throughout the debate on repeal of the arms embargo stressed a return to traditional concepts of neutrality rather than aid to the Allies. The presidential message to Congress in January, however, outlined a dreary picture of what the future might hold if "the vast and powerful military systems" currently at large were not destroyed.⁹⁷ On March 16, Roosevelt looked beyond the war again and called for a "moral peace" in an international broadcast made on behalf of the Christian Foreign Service

⁹⁵As Lavine and Wechsler rightly point out, "in the American political process the president is inevitably the nation's most active and significant propagandist." War Propaganda and the United States, p. 47.

⁹⁶Cf. ibid., p. 63.

⁹⁷Annual message to Congress, Jan. 3, 1940, Roosevelt, Papers, 1940, p. 4.

Convocation.⁹⁸ London established still greater rapport with America by hastily stating its full concurrence with the President's views.⁹⁹

Large numbers of individuals and groups with no official connections whatever labored to similar effect. Only a few can be mentioned here. Extremely important in keeping sympathy moving toward the Allies were the various relief organizations set up by Americans under such titles as "Bundles for Britain" and "Le Paquet au Front."¹⁰⁰ So were the activities of such old-line internationalists as Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler and James T. Shotwell.¹⁰¹ A useful part of the general effort was a spirited attack on revisionism and an attempt to show that the Peace of Versailles was not as bad as it had been represented.¹⁰² As a further example of what was going on, Walter Millis--undoubtedly the most popular of between-war debunkers--

⁹⁸Radio address, Mar. 16, 1940, Roosevelt, Papers, 1940, p. 103.

⁹⁹Cf. statement by Chamberlain, Mar. 19, 1940, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 358, cc. 1843-44.

¹⁰⁰Cf. Lavine and Wechsler, War Propaganda and the United States, p. 112.

¹⁰¹Ibid., pp. 72, 83.

¹⁰²For example, see James T. Shotwell, What Germany Forgot (New York: Macmillan, 1940), pp. 2, 84, 93; and Ellsworth Barnard, "War and the Verities," Harpers Magazine, Vol. 180 (Jan. 1940), p. 117.

took back much of what he had said about Great Britain and France, publicly deprecating the lessons many had drawn from his Road to War and explaining that the new conflict involved an entirely different situation.¹⁰³

As Hitler's spring offensive started in April 1940, an important new pressure group was formed by William Allen White and Clark Eichelberger who, like White, had been instrumental in the work of the Non-partisan Committee for Peace through Revision of the Neutrality Act the previous fall. The new organization was called the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, and its purpose was to encourage the view that neutral usages should be openly discarded in favor of a policy of extending every aid to Great Britain and France that could possibly be given without actually going to war.¹⁰⁴ By June, its campaign was in full swing.¹⁰⁵

This continual watering of roots that were already healthy bore fruit in connection with the events of April, May, and June. The logic of the rapid German invasion of Denmark and Norway on April 9, the German drive into the

¹⁰³ New York Herald-Tribune, Feb. 14, 1940, p. 5, cc. 3-6.

¹⁰⁴ Johnson, The Battle Against Isolation, p. 64.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 81.

Low Countries on May 10, and the complete disintegration of the western front in the weeks that followed was incapable. Nor did the United States government encourage any disposition to escape it. The time for circumlocution and mellow reassurances designed to keep the immediacy of crisis in the background was past, and the administration made no effort to conceal a swiftly mounting alarm as it met successive Allied reverses with dramatic counter-measures.

President Roosevelt immediately denounced the German seizure of Denmark and Norway in scathing terms.¹⁰⁶ To keep the Nazis from gaining control of new resources in the United States, he froze the assets of those countries on April 10.¹⁰⁷ Events had given Denmark's Atlantic possessions, Iceland and Greenland, an enhanced strategic importance. Replying to Iceland's own proposal, the State Department at the middle of April agreed to establish direct relations with the Icelandic government.¹⁰⁸ On May 1, it went a step further and announced the opening of a

¹⁰⁶ Statement by the President, Apr. 13, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (Apr. 13, 1940), p. 373.

¹⁰⁷ Executive Order No. 8389, Apr. 10, 1940, Federal Register, Vol. 4, p. 1400.

¹⁰⁸ Press release, Apr. 16, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (Apr. 20, 1940), p. 414.

provisional consulate in Greenland.¹⁰⁹ Shortly afterward, the British assumed temporary charge of the main problem by placing Iceland under military occupation.¹¹⁰ The German invasion of Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands called forth new denunciations and new freezing orders.¹¹¹

From the middle of May, attention shifted to the fate of British and French armies trying to stem the German advance. On the 15th, German forces crossed the Meuse near Mézières just inside the French border; and by the 19th the Nazis had opened a broad gap in the Maginot Line's northern extension, reaching St. Quentin and Rehel. General Maxime Weygand succeeded Gamelin as French Commander-in-Chief, but the Germans continued almost unhindered. By the end of the month, the British evacuation at Dunkirk was under way. This city fell on June 3, and it was evident not only that France stood on the brink of collapse but that the whole Allied cause was in imminent danger.¹¹²

Throughout this period of mounting crisis, Roosevelt maintained his efforts to keep Italy from entering the war.

¹⁰⁹Press release, May 1, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (May 4, 1940), p. 473.

¹¹⁰Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 57.

¹¹¹Executive Order No. 8405, May 10, 1940, Federal Register, Vol. 5, p. 1678.

¹¹²The French government considered the possibility of surrender as early as May 25. See William L. Langer, Our Vichy Gamble (New York: Knopf, 1947), p. 16.

Taylor cabled from Rome on April 20 that the Pope was about to address a neutrality appeal to Mussolini and that Cardinal Maglione, the papal Secretary of State, urged the President to do likewise. Bullitt entered a similar plea from Paris. Roosevelt was hesitant, but Taylor repeated his suggestion on April 26.¹¹³ This time the President acted, sending Mussolini an appeal on the 29th which asked the Italian dictator to exert his influence for a just and stable peace.¹¹⁴ Mussolini chose to believe that Roosevelt's message contained an implied threat¹¹⁵ and held out little hope of neutrality in a conversation with Ambassador Phillips on May 1.¹¹⁶ His written answer to Roosevelt the next day suggesting that the President confine himself to American affairs was even colder.¹¹⁷ But apparently Mussolini had not yet abandoned all his hesitations. According to Ciano, he did not actually choose a time for

¹¹³Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 777-78; and Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 11. The Pope actually made his appeal in a letter to Mussolini on April 24; see explanatory note in Taylor (ed.), Roosevelt and Pius XII, p. 27.

¹¹⁴Roosevelt to Mussolini, Apr. 29, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 151, p. 520.

¹¹⁵Cf. Mussolini to Hitler, May 2, 1940, Hitler and Mussolini, Lettres Secrètes, p. 63.

¹¹⁶Phillips to Hull, May 1, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 152, pp. 520-21.

¹¹⁷Mussolini to Roosevelt, May 2, 1940, ibid., No. 153, p. 522.

entering the war until between May 10 and May 13.¹¹⁸

But this date was soon reached; and at the same time, a serious rift between Rome and the Vatican was produced by the condemnation of Germany and pledge of moral support which the Pope issued to Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands on May 10.¹¹⁹

Mussolini was growing more unapproachable by the day. Nevertheless, Roosevelt appealed to him a second time on May 14, again without effect.¹²⁰

By May 25, Britain and France were prepared to deal with the Italian on his own terms, asking Roosevelt to inform Mussolini that, in return for Italy's abstinence from the war, they would agree to satisfy her territorial grievances at the end of the conflict and admit her to the peace conference as a full participant. Under the circumstances, Roosevelt preferred not to assume the role of agent;¹²¹ but on May 26, he formally offered Mussolini the benefit of his influence to obtain from the British and French what he

¹¹⁸ Ciano, Diaries, pp. 247, 249.

¹¹⁹ Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 225.

¹²⁰ Ciano, Diaries, p. 250; also Roosevelt to Mussolini, May 14, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 155, p. 526.

¹²¹ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 782.

desired.¹²² However, Mussolini was now determined to take part in a war which he believed could not possibly last much longer. His refusal to consider this overture¹²³ elicited the most threatening note Roosevelt had yet sent, one which called pointed attention to American support of the democracies.¹²⁴ But this availed nothing. Ciano told Phillips on May 31 that the die was cast and that Mussolini preferred not to receive "any further pressure."¹²⁵ The Foreign Minister's statement ended Roosevelt's labors with Mussolini and prepared the way for his angry "stab in the back" speech of June 10,¹²⁶ the day Italy declared war on the Allies.

The formation of a new British Cabinet under Winston Churchill on May 11 greatly strengthened the bonds between Washington and London. Although Roosevelt had finally supported many aspects of Chamberlain's policy, especially its Italian phases, he always remained slightly distrustful of British intentions as long as Chamberlain stood at the helm; but he took a most favorable view of Churchill's long

¹²²Roosevelt to Mussolini, May 26, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 159, pp. 536-37; cf. Ciano, Diaries, p. 255.

¹²³Phillips to Hull, May 27, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 160, p. 538.

¹²⁴Hull to Phillips, May 30, 1940, ibid., No. 161, p. 539.

¹²⁵Phillips to Hull, June 1, 1940, ibid., No. 164, p. 544; cf. Ciano, Diaries, p. 258.

¹²⁶Address by the President at Charlottesville, Va., June 10, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 165, p. 548.

opposition to appeasement of Germany.¹²⁷ Under the code name POTUS (President of the United States), he had been in regular communication with the pugnacious British statesman (designated in these exchanges as "Naval Person") since the latter's resumption of his old duties as First Lord of the Admiralty in September 1939.¹²⁸ Now that Churchill was Prime Minister, close understanding rapidly gave way to explicit cooperation.

This trend became visible almost at once. As early as May 16, Churchill sent Roosevelt an agitated cable requesting the lease of forty or fifty destroyers and several hundred war planes, diplomatic support for his efforts to secure naval bases and other concessions from the aloof government of Eire, and a formal proclamation of American non-belligerency.¹²⁹ Whatever he thought of its ultimate wisdom, the President was manifestly unable to grant such an appeal for the time being. Churchill himself must have understood this much. But Roosevelt made it clear that the United States government was prepared to assume increasingly heavy obligations with respect to the British Empire when he informed the Prime Minister on May

¹²⁷Cf. Farley, Jim Farley's Story, p. 199.

¹²⁸Churchill, The Gathering Storm, pp. 440-41.

¹²⁹Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History (New York: Harper, 1948), p. 141.

26 that, if the British Fleet withdrew to Canada following a German invasion of the British Isles, the United States would undertake to defend all British possessions in the Western Hemisphere.¹³⁰ At the same time, London and Washington drew together in their efforts to obtain assurance that the French Navy would not fall into German hands.

These endeavors were plagued by infinite complications. As the second naval force in Europe, her Fleet was one of the few good bargaining points still held by France; and the French government was determined to retain control of this formidable instrument as long as possible. On the other hand, Britain and the United States could not offer much in return for the guarantees they desired. Britain had virtually nothing to spare after Dunkirk. The United States was not in much better case despite its promise of more planes in May.¹³¹ Since neither was capable of stopping the Germans anyhow, there was little disposition in either government to risk what they did have for the sake of empty gestures. But the French government was approaching hysteria and kept insisting that the impossible be done. Faced by a situation which offered no immediate hope of rescue, it could appreciate no point of view but its own.

¹³⁰Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 772.

¹³¹Ibid., p. 776.

On May 18, for example, Bullitt had to explain to Alexis Leger of the French Foreign Office the futility of urging Roosevelt to ask Congress for an immediate declaration of war.¹³² It was felt necessary on May 30 to reject the Ambassador's own suggestion that part of the Atlantic Squadron be sent into the Mediterranean.¹³³ At the request of the French Premier, Paul Reynaud, Roosevelt did ask the British government to support France's last struggles by throwing units of the Royal Air Force across the Channel, but he accepted the inevitable refusal without pressing Churchill to change his mind.¹³⁴ Despite the certainty that no immediate aid would be forthcoming, Reynaud's pleas continued. So did Roosevelt's promises regarding an indefinite future.¹³⁵

Nevertheless, the question of the French Navy and the closely related one of French colonies bore so vitally upon the total situation that both the United States and Great Britain maintained their efforts to keep France from pulling out of the war long after there was any hope of

¹³²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 767-68.

¹³³For text of Hull's rejection, see Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 15-16.

¹³⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 774.

¹³⁵Cf. Roosevelt to Reynaud, June 13, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 167, p. 550.

staving off military collapse in France itself. Reynaud's impulse to retire to North Africa with government and Fleet and continue the war from there was the focal point of these exertions. If carried out, this project would solve both problems, at least temporarily. From June 11 to June 13, Churchill himself visited French leaders at Tours where the government had momentarily established itself to escape the imminent fall of Paris. But he was unable to secure a definite promise on this point or any other.¹³⁶ Turning to another solution, the British Cabinet three days later offered to release France from her engagement not to conclude a separate peace on condition that her Fleet be removed to British ports in advance of the armistice.¹³⁷

Washington supported these efforts as well as it could. Convinced that Reynaud had no thought of surrender, Bullitt did not follow the French government into the provinces. Although Hull opposed this course,¹³⁸ Roosevelt approved the Ambassador's desire to remain in Paris to help smooth the details of German occupation; and Anthony J. Drexel Biddle, whose position as Ambassador to Poland had become a sinecure, followed Reynaud to Tours and thence

¹³⁶Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 25-26.

¹³⁷For text of British telegrams of June 16, see ibid., pp. 36-37.

¹³⁸Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 790.

to Bordeaux as Bullitt's deputy.¹³⁹ Whether Bullitt, even with his greater experience in French affairs, could have prevented surrender now appears doubtful. But it is certain that Biddle did not succeed. Reynaud mentioned the definite possibility of an armistice in a message to Roosevelt on June 14¹⁴⁰ and told Biddle the next morning that only an immediate declaration of war by the United States would make it possible for France to continue hostilities from North Africa.¹⁴¹ Roosevelt answered on June 15, explaining that he could give no military commitments but urging that France continue her resistance in prospect of greater supplies from the United States.¹⁴² Realizing that an armistice was now inevitable, Biddle again raised the question of the Fleet and was told on June 16 that France would not give it up under any circumstances.¹⁴³ Considering well-known divisions in the French government, this promise was not wholly reassuring. But it was all that could be obtained at the moment of surrender.

¹³⁹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 21-22.

¹⁴⁰Reynaud to Roosevelt, June 14, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 168, p. 552.

¹⁴¹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 29.

¹⁴²Roosevelt to Reynaud, June 15, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 169, p. 553.

¹⁴³Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 35-36.

The French problem was only beginning for Britain and the United States alike.

Whatever the collateral issues, however, the war had finally established a direct and immediate relationship between the British cause and American interests, creating an urgency which could not be met within the framework of neutral inhibitions. On June 5, the White House announced that surplus Army matériel of first World War vintage--including some 500,000 rifles, 80,000 machine guns, and considerable quantities of field artillery, bombs, and ammunition--was being sold to Great Britain and France. Since these were government stocks, their sale fell under a different customary ruling than the private transactions with foreign governments hitherto permitted. To sell these articles directly threatened the formal neutrality of the United States. But even though the administration paid lip service to this question by arranging for United States Steel to handle the transfer,¹⁴⁴ its real meaning was plainly evident. The unneutral proclamation desired by Churchill had not been issued, and the government would continue for several months to worry about the forms of legality. Nevertheless, the United States had now openly taken the position that international law offered no refuge from a world at war and had begun charting its course

¹⁴⁴Stettinius, Lend-Lease, p. 26.

through that nebulous zone between neutrality and full participation which, for want of a better term, is called non-belligerency.¹⁴⁵

To all appearances, public opinion was significantly abreast of these developments. According to Professor Cantril's digest of regular and special surveys, the proportion favoring greater aid to the Allies than was being rendered under cash-and-carry rose from less than 20 percent in early March to nearly 80 percent by the middle of June.¹⁴⁶ In May, the Gallup organization reported that 62 percent thought the United States would be involved in the European war before it ended.¹⁴⁷ On June 14, 19 percent were sufficiently exercised to state that they would vote for a declaration of war within two weeks if given the opportunity.¹⁴⁸ If anything, the change in public opinion was even greater than the change in government policy. Nor did this change lack explanation, for by July 7 only 32 percent of those interviewed still felt certain

¹⁴⁵For a brief discussion of this concept, see Lawrence Preuss, "The Concepts of Neutrality and Non-Belligerency," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 218 (Nov. 1941), p. 106.

¹⁴⁶Cantril, "America Faces the War: A Study in Public Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Sept. 1940), chart 2, p. 397.

¹⁴⁷-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 5 (Sept. 1941), p. 476.

¹⁴⁸-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Dec. 1940), p. 714.

of British victory.¹⁴⁹

VII.

Thus the great divide was crossed in the midst of Allied disaster and two related uncertainties: disposition of the French Fleet and England's ability to survive. Notwithstanding the arguments of its supporters, repeal of the arms embargo had never had much to do with American neutrality. The additional resources which it made available to Great Britain and France might conceivably have helped them prolong the stalemate and obtain a compromise peace or even, less conceivably, to win the war and impose a settlement of their own choosing. That was its only real objective, and that was the objective it failed to reach.

While the stalemate lasted, the United States continued to practice the forms of neutrality with a good deal of vigor. But all the time it was moving toward the Allies in spirit and away from Germany. The logic of the situation determined this trend; propaganda--of which there was a good deal--merely enhanced it. Apparently hopeful of securing Mussolini's coöperation, President Roosevelt explored the possibilities of a compromise peace in February and March. Working in coöperation with the Holy See on one hand and with the British and French governments on the other, he

¹⁴⁹-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Dec. 1940), p. 711. On this general shift in public opinion, see also Jerome S. Bruner, Mandate from the People (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944), pp. 20-26.

exerted himself in May to win Italy's neutrality. But when this failed, he ranged himself strongly on the Allied side, rapidly developing his connections with the British government as France went down in defeat. Otherwise, the United States moved with exceeding care. Relations with Russia were subjected to great strain during the war in Finland, but a definite break was avoided. Japan was kept under strict observation, and the commercial treaty was allowed to lapse. But the only new threat posed by the United States was the basing of its Fleet at Pearl Harbor in May.

By the middle of June, our experiment in neutrality was finished. In view of what had happened in Europe, the necessity of keeping any aggressive foreign power from gaining control of either the eastern Atlantic or the western Pacific could now be expounded wholly in terms of national defense and without resort to the suspect formulas of internationalism. With this incubus removed, non-belligerency was the next step.

CHAPTER V

TACTICS OF THE NON-BELLIGERENT

I.

Even before the actual fall of France, the United States had rounded a decisive turning-point in the closely related spheres of policy and public opinion. But the formation of a new French government under Marshal Henri Philippe Pétain, the aged hero of Verdun, on the night of June 16 brought matters to a yet sharper head; and its decision to request armistice terms without delay threw Washington into a rash of generally well-directed, if somewhat hurried, activity centered about the three problems most in need of immediate consideration: the future of Europe's overseas colonies, especially those in the Western Hemisphere; our own military sufficiency; and the still undetermined fate of the French Navy.

So far, nothing had been done to implement the resolution taken by the American republics at Panama in October 1939 declaring their uniform opposition to transfer of American territory from one non-American power to another. Keenly aware that this statement of principle now required a means of execution, the Secretary of State at once summoned a conference of foreign ministers to assemble in Havana on

July 21.¹ During the interim, however, the American government acted vigorously by itself. On July 18, following passage of a congressional resolution to this effect,² Hull notified the European belligerents that the United States would neither recognize nor acquiesce in any changes affecting the sovereignty of American territory.³ Although Germany demurred in a somewhat lordly fashion,⁴ this aspect of things was stabilized as well as it could be for the moment.

As a matter of course, all French assets in this country were frozen on June 17;⁵ and arrangements were hastily made for British assumption of all French arms contracts in this country.⁶ The same day, Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, asked Congress to provide \$4,000,000,000 for a two-ocean Navy.⁷ This was followed by significant

¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 791-92, 816.

²H. J. Res. 556 (76th Cong., 3rd sess.), Congressional Record, Vol. 86, p. 8559.

³Kirk to Ribbentrop, etc., June 18, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 2 (June 22, 1940), pp. 681-82.

⁴See statement by Hull, July 5, 1940, ibid., Vol. 3 (July 6, 1940), p. 3.

⁵Executive Order No. 8446, June 17, 1940, Federal Register, Vol. 5, p. 2279.

⁶Stettinius, Lend-Lease, p. 32.

⁷Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 27.

alterations in the President's official household. The excessive caution of Charles Edison, acting Secretary of the Navy, and Harry Woodring, Secretary of War, had in recent weeks strengthened Roosevelt's conviction that a Cabinet change was necessary. Both had opposed the sale of Army and Navy planes and certain other materials to the Allies, and neither evinced a firm sympathy toward his general policies. As a result, he filled these positions on July 20 with two leading Republicans who had long been at odds with much of their party on questions of foreign affairs--choosing Frank Knox, the Chicago publisher, as Secretary of the Navy and Henry L. Stimson as Secretary of War.⁸ Thus he assured a more vigorous administration of these vitally important offices and, at the same time, introduced a strong element of bipartisanship at the policy-making level.

Most insistent worries still bore upon the French Navy, however. France's retirement from the war ended all hope of its further coöperation with the British Fleet; immobilization of French sea power was now the highest objective to be sought. This was no small matter; for if they could add the French Fleet to the naval strength they already possessed, Germany and Italy could easily destroy Britain's position in the Mediterranean and challenge her control of the eastern

⁸For the background of this affair, see Farley, Jim Farley's Story, pp. 212-13, 241; Harold L. Ickes, "My Twelve Years with F.D.R.," Saturday Evening Post, Vol. 220, (June 5, 1948), p. 92; Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service: In Peace and War (New York: Harper, 1948), pp. 323-24.

Atlantic. And regardless of the promises France had already given, it was obvious that the future of her Navy was immediately dependent upon the armistice terms being arranged with Germany and Italy.

Accordingly, Hull on June 17 instructed Biddle to give the new Minister of Marine, Admiral Jean Darlan, the most forthright warning of which he was capable, pointing out that neglect to insure the Fleet's safety before the armistice would "fatally impair the preservation of the French Empire and the eventual restoration of French independence and autonomy. "Furthermore," he declared,

should the French Government fail to take these steps and permit the French Fleet to be surrendered to Germany, the French Government will permanently lose the friendship and goodwill of the Government of the United States.⁹

This cold manifesto was delivered the next day, whereupon, after some consideration, Foreign Minister Paul Baudoin guaranteed that France would accept no armistice agreement which included surrender of her Fleet. In the event such action was demanded, however, he could not promise that the Fleet would be sent to British ports; "it might be sent overseas or sunk."¹⁰

With this, Washington had to be content. As things turned out, Hitler rejected Mussolini's plan for taking over

⁹Hull to Biddle, June 17, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 170, p. 553.

¹⁰Biddle to Hull, June 18, 1940, ibid., No. 171, p. 554.

the French Navy. He evidently believed that he did not need the Fleet for bringing England to terms, that such a demand would invite strong objections on France's part, and that French intransigence would only delay Great Britain's capitulation.¹¹ Accordingly, the armistice merely stipulated that all French warships except those released for duty in the colonies should be laid up in home ports under German and Italian control, while Germany promised that she would make no attempt to use them for war purposes.¹² Nor did Hitler insist on the occupation of North Africa, apparently for similar reasons.

From the French point of view, at least, these terms, while stern enough, were less harsh than might have been expected. Hence armistice agreements were signed with Germany on June 22 and with Italy on June 24. Neither Great Britain nor the United States felt heavily reassured concerning the ultimate safety of the French Fleet, however; and both governments protested, arguing that only Germany's word stood between the ships and their outright appropriation as

¹¹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 48-49. Cf. Conference of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, with the Fuhrer, June 20, 1940, Fuhrer Conferences, 1940, Vol. 1, p. 54.

¹²See Art. VIII of the armistice terms in Albert Kammerer, La Vérité sur l'Armistice (Paris: Editions Medias, 1944), Annex 21, p. 326. That there were no secret clauses appears from evidence offered at Pétain's trial in 1945. See France, Haute Cour de Justice, Le Procès du Maréchal Pétain, 2 vols. (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1945), Vol. 1, pp. 28, 85.

soon as they entered ports under German control. But these gained nothing except a repetition of old assurances.¹³

Taking action on her own account, Britain on July 3 seized all French ships in British harbors, immobilized the French squadron at Alexandria, and--after the admiral in command refused to be disarmed--largely destroyed or disabled that part of the Fleet which lay at Mers-el-Kébir, near Oran. While it brought prompt severance of relations between London and the Pétain government, this process reduced French naval power to less threatening dimensions. Since neither blandishments nor force could accomplish anything more, both Britain and the United States had to accept conditions as they now stood.¹⁴

Nor was the situation altogether bad, as Churchill himself later admitted.¹⁵ Neither France, her Fleet, nor her overseas empire was being forced to render Germany direct and immediate aid. Besides, it was known that many Frenchmen who still held responsible positions in the government were unalterably opposed to any form of wilful collaboration with Germany. Even Pétain, for all his authoritarian views, was suspected of no aversion to playing a double game with Hitler. Among those holding such an opinion was ex-Ambassador

¹³Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 56-57.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 58-59.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 65.

Bullitt, whose information was as good as anyone's. If judiciously exploited, these footholds might be widened in many ways. Quickly swallowing its disappointment, the United States chose to maintain ordinary diplomatic relations with the Vichy government.¹⁶

II.

Nevertheless, the situation was still most critical. The debacle in France had repercussions everywhere, and its immediate effects in Asia went far beyond those Japanese successes with the British at Tientsin which have already been noted. As early as June 17, Japan made demands upon France concerning Indo-China. Three days later, the Pétain government was compelled to accept a formula recognizing her "special needs" in China, together with a system of inspection which gave Japan substantial control of all traffic through Indo-China.¹⁷ But Tokyo was far from satisfied. On June 25, the Japanese War Minister, Shunroku Hata, issued a formal statement calling attention to the favorable development of international affairs. With visible exultation, he added: "We should not miss the present opportunity or we

¹⁶Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 76-77; cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 805.

¹⁷See announcement of the Japanese Foreign Office, June 20, 1940, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1939-40, pp. 270-71.

shall be blamed by posterity."¹⁸ At the same time, Japan turned again upon Great Britain, demanding on June 24 that all movements of supplies to Chiang Kai-shek through Burma and Hong Kong be stopped.¹⁹

London applied to Washington for comfort. On June 27, Lothian told Hull that Britain was no longer in a position to follow her accustomed policy of yielding to Japan in small matters like that of the Tientsin concession while opposing Tokyo's demands for recognition of the New Order in China. His government believed, Lothian continued, that it would have to seek a general agreement with Japan on Pacific questions unless the United States exerted new pressure in the Far East either by prohibiting American-Japanese trade or by sending a portion of its Fleet to Singapore. Hull offered little guidance. He stated that the United States was bringing economic pressure to bear as fast as it deemed advisable and that the Atlantic situation forbade diversion of American naval power to the Far East. With regard to Lothian's alternative, he added somewhat vaguely that the United States had no objection to larger dealings between

¹⁸ Statement by the Japanese War Minister, Contemporary Japan, Vol. 9 (Aug. 1940), p. 1067. Cf. Tojo's statements before the International Military Tribunal in Tokyo, New York Times, Jan. 6, 1948, p. 28, c. 4.

¹⁹ Statement by Churchill, July 18, 1940, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 363, c. 399.

London and Tokyo provided that the interests of China and the East Indies were not sacrificed.²⁰

Confronted with this response, Great Britain had little choice but to surrender once more; and she agreed on July 17 to halt all shipments to China through Burma and Hong Kong of arms, munitions, gasoline, trucks, and railway equipment for a period of three months. In making this formidable concession, Churchill expressed hope that some method of settling the Sino-Japanese conflict would be discovered before the agreement lapsed.²¹ To sweeten the pill still more, the Prime Minister called attention to Britain's willingness "to negotiate with the Chinese Government after the conclusion of peace" for the discontinuance of her special privileges in China.²² It was a brave effort to minimize a damaging confession of weakness, but it impressed no one.²³ Nothing could disguise Britain's predicament. As though to emphasize its distress even more, London announced on August 9 that all of the few British troops still left in China, including about 1650 men stationed at Shanghai, would be

²⁰Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 896-98.

²¹Statement by Churchill, July 18, 1940, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 363, cc. 399-400.

²²Ibid., c. 400.

²³Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 900.

withdrawn for service elsewhere.²⁴

These successes in foreign policy were accompanied by changes on Japan's domestic front. Prince Konoye formed his second war Cabinet July 16, this time on the basis of avowed totalitarian principles. Even more indicative of future plans was his choice of Yosuke Matsuoka as Foreign Minister. An energetic talker who seldom used volubility to conceal thought, Matsuoka was known as a leader of the Japanese facists, a confirmed devotee of expansion, and an advocate of still closer relations with the European Axis. That he would be the strong man of the Konoye government was taken for granted, and on August 1 he dispelled any lingering doubts as to the scope of his policy by announcing that henceforth Japan would bend her efforts to perfecting the "chain of co-prosperity of Greater East Asia." As the official gloss explained, the term "Greater East Asia" embraced French Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies in addition to Manchukuo, China, and Japan herself.²⁵ Having formally altered the geography of the New Order, the Konoye government rapidly completed its task of creating a single-party state and faced its new opportunities in earnest.

Throughout the spring and early summer of 1940, the United States had continued its fruitless protests against

²⁴Johnstone, The United States and Japan's New Order, p. 90.

²⁵Contemporary Japan, Vol. 9 (Sept. 1940), p. 1084.

Japanese violations of American rights in China.²⁶ Grew observed on July 2 that his conversations with Foreign Minister Arita had done little more than keep the door open for still more conversations, adding gloomily: "The vicious circle is complete, and how to break it is a puzzle which taxes imagination."²⁷ Nor was he greatly reassured when Matsuoka asked him on July 26 to inform Roosevelt that Japan's interest in world peace had not diminished, especially as the Foreign Minister added that the basis of peace must be "adaptation to the development and change" which was so characteristic of the contemporary world.²⁸ This demand for acquiescence in Japanese policy was not even half concealed, and Grew remarked on August 1:

The German military machine and system and their brilliant successes have gone to the Japanese head like strong wine.²⁹

Although it was certainly perturbed, Washington remained as bland as Tokyo during July and the early part of August. Behind this facade, however, an important change in American policy was taking place. On July 2, President Roosevelt signed a new bill ostensibly designed to promote national defense but possessed of far-reaching implications for

²⁶Grew, Ten Years, p. 317.

²⁷Ibid., p. 321.

²⁸Ibid., p. 323.

²⁹Ibid., p. 325.

American foreign policy. Vastly enlarging the President's authority over exports, it gave him the undisputed power to ban completely or to place under licensing control the export of any commodity deemed essential to the defense of the United States.³⁰ In form, at least, this act was not an amendment to the neutrality law. But its provision for licensing control had the effect of giving the President all the discretionary embargo authority he could have wished.

As recently as June 27, Hull had discouraged British hopes for the application of new economic measures to Japan. But the dangerous trend revealed by the Burma Road agreement and by changes within Japan itself speedily convinced Roosevelt that too extended a quiescence might lose everything. Armed with new powers, he set about fulfilling the threat implied by denunciation of the commercial treaty of 1911 and announced on July 26 that exports of petroleum, aviation gasoline, tetraethyl lead, and certain types of scrap steel--all highly essential to Japan's war effort--would be immediately placed under licensing control.³¹ This drew a quick protest from the Japanese Ambassador; but reading a lesson from Tokyo's own book, the State Department coolly insisted that export controls were being imposed

³⁰ Sec. 6, ch. 508 (76th Cong., 3rd sess.), United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 54, p. 714.

³¹ Proclamation No. 2417, July 26, 1940, Federal Register, Vol. 5, p. 2677.

solely in the interests of national defense and were not directed against Japan or any other nation.³² In the months that followed, similar controls were extended to a great number of commodities; and economic discrimination against Japan became more and more severe.

This showed how the American government was reacting to Britain's obvious need for assistance in the Far East, but otherwise the United States continued to hold Asiatic developments at arm's length. Speaking of French and British concessions to Japan, Hull remarked on July 16 that such actions as the prospective closing of the Burma Road and the recent submission of traffic through Indo-China to Japanese control raised what the United States considered "unwarranted ...obstacles to world trade."³³ He did not dwell on the strategic implications of these moves, and the tone in which he spoke revealed no more irritation with Japan for making the demands than with Great Britain and France for yielding to them. Similarly when Japan in August claimed naval and air bases in Indo-China and the right to move troops through the country, Hull merely remarked that any change in the status of Indo-China would have an "unfortunate" effect on American public opinion.³⁴

³²Welles to Horinouchi, Aug. 9, 1940, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 219-20.

³³Press release, July 16, 1940, ibid., p. 101.

³⁴Statement by Hull, Sept. 4, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 3 (Sept. 7, 1940), p. 197.

III.

The shock produced by France's collapse had not even begun to subside when new changes within that stricken country raised new problems in dealing with her government. On June 24, Pierre Laval--an ex-Foreign Minister and a seasoned advocate of collaboration with Germany--entered the Pétain government as a Minister of State. From this vantage point, he continued his efforts to give France a wholly authoritarian regime. So far, at least, Laval's views were congenial to many other prominent Frenchmen, notably Pétain himself and General Maxime Weygand, who had served as Commander-in-Chief during the last stages of resistance to Germany; and Laval gained impressive victories without delay. On July 10, the French parliament voted itself out of existence; President Lebrun was removed from office; and Pétain became Chief of State.³⁵ At the same time, certain aspects of the armistice agreement were clarified. Germany refused to let the French government return to Paris and made it clear that Pétain's authority would not extend beyond the limits of unoccupied France. So the new regime was established provisionally at Vichy to set about doing what it could with the truncated nation war had left it.³⁶

By this time, it was evident that the post-armistice

³⁵Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 72-73.

³⁶Ibid., p. 74.

government of France was going to be neither as liberal nor as independent as might have been hoped. Doubt prevailed regarding its next step, for there were many indications that its policies were being oriented away from Great Britain and the United States. Although Pétain showed no enthusiasm for entering the war against Britain he was by no means sympathetic to the British cause--especially since the British attack at Mers-el-Kébir--and Laval, whose star was constantly rising, made no secret of his hopes. At the end of July, he told Robert D. Murphy, counselor of the American Embassy at Vichy, that he desired Britain's speedy collapse and expected that France would be given an important role in the federation of European states which Hitler meant to establish.³⁷ With the tide apparently running against those in the French government who opposed any collaboration with Germany beyond the terms of the armistice, it was clear that a method of guiding Vichy's impulses was not to be had for the asking.

Spain's attitude rendered the situation even more grim. Though by no means a full partner, General Franco had long been known as an approving connoisseur of Axis enterprises. A German-Spanish pact of friendship, signed March 31, 1939, and ratified on November 29 of the same year, now pledged Spain to the most benevolent type of neutrality in conflicts

³⁷Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 83.

between Germany and her foes, while a variety of secret agreements subjected the Spanish press and police to a considerable degree of German influence.³⁸ Besides this, Franco could hardly ignore the community of interest established by Axis help in the days of his own rebellion, especially as these ties were now so boldly underlined by the opportunities and threats inherent in Germany's new grasp on western Europe. Nor did he try to ignore them. His rising pugnacity came into the open with Italy's declaration of war on France. He declared Spain to be in a state of non-belligerency on June 12 and had Spanish troops take over the international zone at Tangier in Morocco on June 14. Whatever they meant, such acts as these did not rule out the imminent possibility of Spain's entering the war at the side of the Axis.³⁹

A means of attacking the Spanish problem had already been found, however. Spain was a poor country at best, and her necessity had been especially great since the civil war. Her ability to fight was sadly limited by economics; indeed, her very existence depended upon her ability to import foodstuffs, oil, and other essentials. Particularly since the outbreak of war, Germany and Italy had been able to spare little in the way of raw materials; and the Allies soon

³⁸ Herbert Feis, The Spanish Story: Franco and the Nations at War (New York: Knopf, 1948), p. 4.

³⁹ Sir Samuel Hoare (Viscount Templewood), Complacent Dictator (New York: Knopf, 1947), pp. 30, 34.

began to exploit their advantage in this respect. As early as January 1940, France sought to place a check-rein on her southern neighbor in the form of a trade agreement whose operation was understood to be contingent upon the maintenance of Spanish neutrality. Great Britain followed this lead on March 18 with a commercial pact of her own that was similar in purpose if not in form.⁴⁰ The events of May and June altered the situation considerably, however; and hoping to retain some influence at Madrid through a wider application of economic inducements and compulsions, the British government dispatched a new Ambassador to Spain as German armies raced across France, choosing for the mission Sir Samuel Hoare, an ex-Foreign Secretary who had been noted in the middle 1930's for his disposition to compromise with the dictatorships. But one interview with the Spanish leader was enough to convince Hoare that Franco expected Britain's speedy defeat and had little interest in what the British might do for him. When the Caudillo on July 18 laid public claim to Gibraltar, this impression was inescapable.⁴¹ It appeared that German victories were gaining a larger influence over Franco's plans than his own economic shortages, and this begot almost as much concern in Washington as in London.

⁴⁰Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 23-24.

⁴¹Hoare, Complacent Dictator, pp. 30-31.

American policy toward Spain since the war's beginning had been largely independent. In August 1939, the Export-Import Bank agreed to finance the shipment of 250,000 bales of cotton to Spain over a ten-month period; but the government made no attempt to guide regular trade between Spain and the United States. Official inertia, anti-Franco sentiment in the country at large, and uncertainty regarding the fate of American interests in the Spanish telephone system prevented any effort on the part of the United States to supplement French and British policy until the spring of 1940.⁴² But finally, in response to Spanish overtures, the State Department elected to open talks bearing on the provision of a substantial credit to alleviate Spain's dollar shortage.⁴³ Before this offer could be conveyed to Madrid, however, France surrendered; and Franco displayed little interest in the prospect of American aid when our Ambassador, Alexander Weddell, finally got a chance to talk with him on June 22. Reviewing all that could be learned, the staff of the American Embassy in Madrid agreed two days later that Spanish intervention at the side of Germany and Italy was more likely than not.⁴⁴ This was the situation at the end of June.

⁴²Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 25.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 30-31.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 34-35.

While it was no certitude in either case, the possibility of collaboration with Germany thus lay close to the surface in both France and Spain; and news that Hitler was planning to exploit this situation to launch an attack on Gibraltar in the near future bespoke such a threat to France's African possessions that the United States on August 6 decided to reopen its consulate at Dakar in French West Africa. Because it stood so close to South America, Dakar was an essential consideration in any scheme of hemispheric defense. The importance of having an American official on the scene was regarded as so urgent that the State Department sent off Consul Thomas C. Wasson without even pausing to ask Vichy for an exequatur. Governor Pierre Boisson received Wasson cordially enough, however; and the consular office, which had been closed ten years earlier, was functioning again by October 1.⁴⁵ It can hardly be argued that the presence of one American consul in French West Africa was in any way decisive through the weeks that followed; but the fact remains that Boisson subsequently opposed every German attempt to gain a foothold in France's African possessions, and the move adumbrated a policy which the United States was to apply in North Africa with conspicuous success during the next two or three years.

⁴⁵Thomas C. Wasson, "The Mystery of Dakar," American Foreign Service Journal, Vol. 20 (Apr. 1943), p. 170.

IV.

The prospect of a German drive to the south, with or without French and Spanish assistance, was only one aspect of the Atlantic situation, however. Equally important was the submarine. Germany's newly-won control of France's entire west coast enabled her to base U-boats on French ports and to maintain an intensive submarine campaign much farther into the Atlantic than had been possible from German ports on the North Sea or in the Baltic.⁴⁶ Except for Spain and Portugal, the combat zone now recognized by the United States embraced the entire coast of Europe as well as the entrance to the Mediterranean.⁴⁷ Within its limits, German submarines could operate at will without risk of sinking American ships. Still alive to such an advantage, Germany on August 17 extended her submarine operations to the full limits of this zone in the area surrounding the British Isles.⁴⁸ Britain retaliated on August 21 with a blockade

⁴⁶ Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 22-23.

⁴⁷ Proclamation No. 2394, Apr. 10, 1940, Federal Register, Vol. 5, pp. 1399-1400; and Proclamation No. 2410, June 11, 1940, ibid., pp. 2209-10.

⁴⁸ Wagner's testimony, May 13, 1946, International Military Tribunal, The Trial of German Major War Criminals: Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal sitting at Nuremberg, Germany, 17 pts. to date (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1947-1948), pt. 13, p. 344.

of Europe's entire Atlantic coast.⁴⁹ British losses in transatlantic convoys, negligible until after the fall of France, now increased sharply.⁵⁰

Obviously the real battle of the Atlantic was taking shape, with France, Spain, North Africa, West Africa, and the submarine playing heavily in the calculations of both sides. All, moreover, seemed to be running against Britain, threatening her lifelines at every point. To make matters worse, Hitler launched his effort to bomb England into submission at the end of the first week in August. All this, of course, was almost as much an American as it was a British problem.

Having thrown off the trammels of strict neutrality at the beginning of June, the Roosevelt administration now faced the question of how and to what extent it should develop the policy of aid to Britain forecasted by the practical operation of the cash-and-carry system and impressively confirmed by the arms transfer. The relationship between British survival and American security had been accepted, and that Britain needed war materials in constantly growing volume if she were to survive at all could not be doubted. But whether the thought of actual military coöperation should be tied in with such day-to-day support of a potential ally

⁴⁹Headnote, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, p. 503.

⁵⁰Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 23.

was another question. An answer was soon found, however. On June 11 and again on June 24, Lord Lothian approached Hull with proposals for British-American staff conversations.⁵¹ And by the end of the month, Washington decided to act on these suggestions.⁵² Henceforward, British-American gregariousness assumed a twofold character in which immediate aid, steadily expanding in volume and variety, was coupled with the elaboration of strategic and tactical understandings against the day when the United States might find itself actually engaged in hostilities. One process rested on the concept of aid short of war; one was based on realization that such aid might prove inadequate. But each complemented the other so handily that the two became almost indistinguishable in practice and could not always be separated even in theory.

One of the acts which straddled both categories was the famed destroyer deal; for if the acquisition of fifty destroyers strengthened Britain's immediate hold upon Atlantic sea lanes, the possession of a string of island bases ranging from Newfoundland to British Guiana did much to condition later United States naval policy.

This transaction had gotten under way before the fall

⁵¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 796-97.

⁵²Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 39.

of France, originating in Churchill's request of May 16 that Britain be granted the lease of forty or fifty American destroyers. Although it was decided in principle by July 24 that Britain should have the ships--⁵³some two hundred of which were available from the first World War--the whole question was surrounded by legal doubt. As recently as June 28, Congress had passed a law declaring that no property of the American government should be delivered to foreign countries unless the Chief of Staff or the Chief of Naval Operations certified that it was surplus to the needs of the service involved.⁵⁴ Considering the tangled situation abroad and the touchiness of public and congressional opinion at home, determination of the circumstances under which a given article might be regarded as surplus was a delicate business indeed. Neutrality statutes gave birth to further doubts and led directly to the question of whether the deal might be consummated by executive agreement without reference to the Senate.

In the course of negotiations, it had been suggested that the destroyer transfer be tied in with a grant to the United States of long-term leases to areas in Britain's Western Hemisphere possessions for development as American

⁵³ Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 34.

⁵⁴ United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 54, p. 681.

naval and air bases.⁵⁵ The project was submitted to Attorney General Robert H. Jackson in these terms. His rather involved opinion was delivered August 27.

Rigidly confining himself to domestic law, Jackson pointed out that an act of March 3, 1883, imposed certain restrictions upon the authority of the Secretary of the Navy to dispose of naval vessels unless the President directed otherwise.⁵⁶ Finding that the act of June 28, 1940, represented the only attempt to limit the President's authority in this regard, and taking cognizance of the bases which the nation stood to gain by way of exchange, he argued that the fifty destroyers in question might be declared surplus by the Chief of Naval Operations if, in his judgment,

...the consummation of the transaction does not impair or weaken the total defense of the United States, and certainly so where the consummation of the arrangement will strengthen the total defensive position of the nation.⁵⁷

Having produced a common-sense formula under which the fifty ships might be declared surplus, Jackson then turned to our regular neutrality legislation and found that the act of June 15, 1917, made it unlawful to supply belligerents

⁵⁵The first direct proposal to this effect appears to have come from the British. Cf. Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 356; and Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 832-33.

⁵⁶Opinion of the Attorney General, Aug. 27, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 3 (Sept. 7, 1940), p. 204.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 205.

with "any vessel, built, armed, or equipped as a vessel of war" so long as the United States was neutral. Reading this in connection with the preceding section of the same act, which authorized the President to detain any armed vessel until satisfied that it would not engage in hostile operations before reaching another neutral or a belligerent port, the Attorney General concluded that this statute applied only to vessels specifically built to the order of a belligerent government and thus had no bearing whatever upon the fifty old destroyers. Illustrating his point with a quotation from Oppenheim, he advised the President that the transfer was perfectly legal and that it might be handled as an executive agreement.⁵⁸

Since Jackson studiously avoided all questions of international law, it was the sort of opinion which international lawyers could, and did, attack with gusto. Professor Herbert W. Briggs of Cornell University seriously questioned the Attorney General's interpretation of domestic law, pointing out that Jackson actually held the act of June 15, 1917, to countenance a violation of international law.⁵⁹ Professor Edwin M. Borchard of the Yale Law School complained that the

⁵⁸Opinion of the Attorney General, Aug. 27, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 3 (Sept. 7, 1940), pp. 206-7.

⁵⁹Herbert W. Briggs, "Neglected Aspects of the Destroyer Deal," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940), pp. 586-87.

opinion was "apparently designed to justify breaches of neutrality or acts of war, perhaps with the hope that they will not result in a state of war," and remarked that it would be interesting to observe the outcome of such a policy.⁶⁰ Although he personally favored the deal and believed the opinion generally satisfactory with regard to domestic law, Professor Quincy Wright of the University of Chicago returned to his old theme with the feeling that Germany's and Italy's violations of the Pact of Paris left this country free to impose sanctions against them and hence justified the act under international law.⁶¹

Whatever the weaknesses in Jackson's argument, the main issue was the destroyer deal itself. In retrospect, the wisdom of the transaction can hardly be doubted; and the Attorney General's opinion must be regarded as an adequate, if somewhat imperfect, attempt to carry a necessary policy through a maze of legal hesitations which had become largely unreal. Although he was not specifically referring to the destroyer transfer, perhaps the clearest summation of the position which the United States had reached at this time was rendered by Professor Charles G. Fenwick. Agreeing

⁶⁰ Edwin M. Borchard, "The Attorney General's Opinion on the Exchange of Destroyers for Naval Bases," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940), p. 697.

⁶¹ Quincy Wright, "The Transfer of Destroyers to Great Britain," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940), p. 688.

that the United States was no longer neutral in the "normal, technical sense of the term," he added:

It is engaged in defending the fundamental principles of international law upon which the rights and duties of neutrals rest...⁶²

Negotiations between London and Washington had continued in the meanwhile, and delivery of Jackson's opinion found the understanding virtually complete. Since its reciprocal aspect helped justify the transfer before domestic law and domestic opinion alike, Roosevelt stubbornly resisted Churchill's wish to treat the exchange of destroyers and bases as a pair of separate and unrelated gifts, one going in either direction. This threatened to be a stumbling block for a time.⁶³ But compromise prevailed; and the destroyers were finally rendered in exchange for bases in the Bahamas, Jamaica, Antigua, St. Lucia, Trinidad, and British Guiana, while the Newfoundland and Bermuda concessions were accepted by the United States as a free gift. This arrangement was formalized in an exchange of notes on September 2⁶⁴ and announced to Congress the next day. The first eight

⁶² Charles G. Fenwick, "Neutrality on the Defensive," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940), p. 699.

⁶³ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 835-37; cf. Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 358.

⁶⁴ Lothian to Hull and Hull to Lothian, Sept. 2, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 3 (Sept. 7, 1940), pp. 199-200.

destroyers were delivered to British crews at Halifax, Nova Scotia, on September 6.⁶⁵

Everything considered, reactions in Berlin and Rome were unimpressive. According to Ciano, Hitler was annoyed, Mussolini indifferent.⁶⁶ On September 6, Germany intensified her warfare on British shipping;⁶⁷ but this would doubtless have come anyway as complement to the vast air assault then being delivered against the British Isles. And although Ribbentrop told Ciano on September 22 that Hitler contemplated breaking diplomatic relations with the United States, he made it clear that such action was not imminent.⁶⁸

Talks bearing upon the long-range aspects of British-American coöperation got under way as the destroyer-naval base exchange matured. Rear Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, was ordered on July 12 to prepare to visit London as a special naval observer for "exploratory conversations" with the British Chiefs of Staff. At the same time, Major General George V. Strong, Assistant Chief of Staff, and Major General D. C. Emmons were assigned like

⁶⁵Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 34.

⁶⁶Ciano, Diaries, p. 290. For other German reactions to these developments, see Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Sept. 7, 1940, Fuehrer Conferences, 1940, Vol. 2, pp. 19-20.

⁶⁷Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 34.

⁶⁸Ciano, Diaries, p. 294.

missions on behalf of the Army and the Army Air Force respectively, while General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, opened conversations with a British general in Washington.⁶⁹ The Ingersoll mission had given the naval problem a kind of introductory survey in January 1938. Now all phases of possible joint action were to be discussed, although naval cooperation would remain the dominant keynote of such talks until after Pearl Harbor.

Ghormley, Strong, and Emmons reached London on August 15. The battle of Britain was yet in its first stages, the final outcome still shrouded in doubt. Since it would be of questionable wisdom to frame an ambitious program for filling the islands with war supplies if those islands seemed about to fall into Germany's hands, a first concern of the mission was to assess Britain's immediate chances of survival. With the aid of various military underlings and civilian observers who conducted related investigations at the same time, the experts soon decided that Britain could hold out--a strong factor in this conclusion being the insistence of Lieutenant Colonel Carl W. Spaatz, who was destined for a meteoric rise in his branch of the service, that the Royal Air Force would not lose control of the air over the British Isles.⁷⁰ This judgment was amply confirmed

⁶⁹Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 40.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 40. Additional details are supplied in Winant's somewhat jumbled account. See John G. Winant, Letter from Grosvenor Square: An Account of a Stewardship (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1947), pp. 48-50.

during the weeks that followed, and by autumn the planners were surveying much more distant horizons. Meanwhile, President Roosevelt started to redeem a pledge made two years earlier. Meeting Prime Minister W. L. MacKenzie King at Ogdensburg, New York, on August 18, he put his signature to an agreement providing for a joint United States-Canadian defense board.⁷¹ Considering this, the budding destroyer deal, and other projects already on the fire, Winston Churchill hardly overstated the case two days later when he spoke of the United States and the British Empire as being "somewhat mixed up together...for mutual and general advantage."⁷²

Other plans for national defense and coöperation moved on apace. On July 10, Roosevelt asked Congress to provide equipment for two million men.⁷³ Nine days later, the bill providing for a two-ocean Navy became law, authorizing 1,325,000 tons of new fighting ship construction.⁷⁴ On August 21, the United States government created the Joint Aircraft Committee for allocating airplane production in this country, the board being so named because it gave seats

⁷¹Joint statement by President Roosevelt and MacKenzie King, Aug. 18, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 3 (Sept. 7, 1940), pp. 199-200.

⁷²Statement by Churchill, Aug. 20, 1940, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 364, c. 1171.

⁷³Message of the President, July 10, 1940, Congressional Record, Vol. 86, pp. 9399-9400.

⁷⁴United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 54, p. 779.

to two British representatives.⁷⁵ The National Guard was mustered into federal service on August 28, and the Selective Service Act was signed on September 16.

In the meanwhile, the American foreign ministers in conference at Havana made formal arrangements on July 30 for the provisional administration of European colonies in the Americas, ordaining that a special committee representing the American nations would assume control of any such territory threatened by change of sovereignty and providing that any republic might act independently in this regard if the emergency did not brook delay.⁷⁶ The French island of Martinique in the West Indies constituted the only immediate threat in this category. Its governor, Admiral Robert, was a Vichy sympathizer; and his importance was greatly enhanced by the fact that he had several French warships under his immediate command and custody of some \$245,000,000 in gold bullion which was the property of the French government. While the situation was not regarded as urgent enough to warrant invoking the Havana scheme for provisional government at that time, Washington dispatched Rear Admiral John W. Greenslade to Martinique in August to obtain from Robert guarantees concerning the uses to which ships and gold might

⁷⁵ Stettinius, Lend-Lease, p. 50.

⁷⁶ Act of Havana, Art. XX of Final Act of Second Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, July 30, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 3 (Aug. 24, 1940), pp. 138-39.

be put. Greenslade was only partly successful, however; and the problem of Martinique remained for later treatment.⁷⁷

V.

As Germany moved from one success to another in western Europe during the spring and summer of 1940, Russia quietly digested her gains in the east and north. Having taken what she could from Poland and Finland and having placed the Baltic republics under military occupation, she now prepared to extinguish the three latter states completely by incorporating them into the Soviet Union. While this move was not congenial to German interests, the German Foreign Office chose to remain friendly, if noncommittal, when Russian troops in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were reinforced in June; and it maintained the same calm when Moscow opened special negotiations with those states to secure the formation of new governments which could be counted upon to acquiesce in Russian designs.⁷⁸ German diplomacy revealed somewhat greater alarm, however, when Molotov on June 23 told Count Schulenburg, the German Ambassador, that the question of Bessarabia demanded speedy settlement and that Russia would have to proceed by force if Rumania declined to

⁷⁷Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 103.

⁷⁸Weizsäcker to all German Missions, June 17, 1940, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 154.

hand over the territory peaceably.⁷⁹ But the Axis still wanted quiet in eastern Europe; and on its prompting, Rumania acceded to Moscow's demands for Bessarabia and northern Bukovina. To stabilize the Balkans even more, Germany and Italy then sponsored a further partition of Rumania--in which Bulgaria obtained southern Dobrudja and Hungary annexed a large part of Transylvania--and guaranteed what was left of that truncated kingdom.⁸⁰ These arrangements were completed in August, but they hardly rendered the peace less uneasy. The mutual toleration of Germany and Russia was stretched thin; neither written agreements nor wartime expediency had yet settled the future of eastern Europe's buffer states.

Pending the revival of Balkan disputes, however, Russia went calmly ahead with her northern program. The annexation process began with the resignation of the Lithuanian government on June 15. It was completed during the first eight days of August when Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia became the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth "fraternal republics" of the Soviet Union.⁸¹

None of this was calculated to reduce the frigidity

⁷⁹Schulenburg to Ribbentrop, June 23, 1940, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 155

⁸⁰Cf. Ribbentrop to Schulenburg, Aug. 31, 1940, ibid., pp. 178-80.

⁸¹Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, pp. 250-251.

existing between Washington and Moscow. In June, the State Department rejected Soviet protests over the cancellation of Russian orders for machine tools and other materials in the United States;⁸² and later the same month Hull declined to join Britain in an attempted rapprochement with the Soviet Union.⁸³ As the Baltic states lost their independence, the American government promptly froze whatever assets they possessed in this country⁸⁴ and refused to accept the annexation as legally valid.⁸⁵ Moscow overlooked nothing. In a speech delivered August 1, Molotov gruffly remarked that he did not intend to dwell upon Soviet relations with the United States "if only for the reason that there is nothing good to be said on this matter."⁸⁶ While he permitted himself no reference to a definite break, it was evident that relations between the two countries could not grow much worse without raising that threat. Nor did the Foreign Commissar's recognition of somewhat improved relations with Japan mitigate his

⁸²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 807.

⁸³Ibid., p. 811

⁸⁴Executive Order No. 8484, July 15, 1940, Federal Register, Vol. 5, p. 2586.

⁸⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 811.

⁸⁶Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 330.

chilling appraisal of the United States, especially as he attributed that improvement to French weakness in the Far East and Japan's resulting orientation southward.⁸⁷ American-Soviet relations had now reached the lowest ebb they were to achieve between August 1939 and the end of the war. As evidence of his belief that no conciliatory gesture on Washington's part would be worthwhile for the time being, Hull in September declined to act on a British request that he aid London's campaign for better relations with Moscow by releasing the impounded funds of the Baltic countries.⁸⁸

Nevertheless, the American government did not relinquish its policy of keeping the Russian door open. In mid-summer, Hull authorized Welles to conduct a series of conversations with Oumansky to ascertain whether some basis for agreement did not exist, hidden though it be;⁸⁹ and the State Department in August vigorously opposed efforts to set up Baltic governments-in-exile. In September, Ambassador Steinhardt returned to Moscow, having been absent since May. And as Japan moved toward an outright military alliance with the European Axis during the latter part of that month, Soviet-American relations enjoyed a distinct improvement. This amelioration was so rapid that, despite the moral

⁸⁷Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 336.

⁸⁸Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 811.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 812.

embargo, several American tankers were dispatched to Vladivostok in October with cargoes of aviation gasoline; and a number of licenses were granted for the shipment of machinery previously bought.⁹⁰

In the meanwhile, Japan showed no intention of relaxing her new demands on French Indo-China. Finding no prospect of change, Grew on September 12 reached an important decision and sent the State Department what he called his "green light" telegram, "perhaps the most significant message sent to Washington in all the eight years of my mission to Japan." Previously he had hoped that the Japanese government would ultimately listen to reason if nothing more than reason and such relatively mild sanctions as the moral embargo and the gasoline embargo were used against it. Now he recommended that economic measures be greatly intensified.⁹¹

While this piece of advice was being digested, France yielded to the occupation of northern Indo-China by Japanese troops on September 22.⁹² Reverting at once to its familiar policy of discriminatory loans, the United States on September 25 agreed to buy \$30,000,000 worth of tungsten from China and

⁹⁰Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, pp. 330-31.

⁹¹Grew, Ten Years, p. 334; and Grew to Hull, Sept. 12, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 182, p. 572.

⁹²Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 78.

loaned the Chinese government \$25,000,000 for currency stabilization.⁹³ The next day, Roosevelt announced an embargo on the export of all scrap iron and steel except to other parts of the Western Hemisphere and to Great Britain.⁹⁴ Scheduled to take effect October 16, this appeared to be about what Grew had in mind.

Thus the tentative beginnings of easier relations with the Soviet Union coincided exactly with a stiffening attitude toward Japan and the German-Japanese rapprochement. That the diplomatic climate was changing had become quite evident, and the most unmistakable sign of this change was the conclusion in Berlin of the Tripartite Pact on September 27. Providing that the three signatories--Germany, Italy, and Japan--would assist one another by all political, economic, and military means should any one of them be attacked by a power not then involved in the European war or the Sino-Japanese conflict,⁹⁵ this treaty became one of the pivotal facts in all the diplomatic maneuvers and military calculations of the following year and a quarter.

⁹³Press release of Federal Loan Agency, Sept. 25, 1940, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 222.

⁹⁴White House press release, Sept. 26, 1940, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 3 (Sept. 28, 1940), p. 250.

⁹⁵Art. III, Three-Power Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan, Sept. 27, 1940, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, pp. 304-5.

As a fairly reliable indication that Germany was digging in for a much longer war than she had expected during the summer, the Tripartite Pact had a double bearing. While it did not mention this country explicitly, the treaty was obviously directed against the United States; it symbolized Germany's growing appreciation of Japan's value as a Pacific counterweight to American activity in the Atlantic. And by directly relating the course of all three Axis governments to the moves of the United States in either sphere, it lightened the shadow which had partly obscured Japan's position on the Asiatic wing of the Axis ever since the Russo-German non-aggression pact of August 1939 and vanquished any doubts that might still have existed regarding the strategic unity of the various questions with which American policy had to deal.

It likewise held implications for the Soviet government. Ribbentrop and Ciano seem to have been privately agreed that the Pact should bring some restraint into Russian activity in eastern Europe.⁹⁶ And even though Moscow's initial distrust of this alliance between Germany and Japan--already associated in the Anti-Comintern Pact--was largely overcome by Ribbentrop's prompt assurance that it was directed

⁹⁶ In his diary, under date of September 19, 1940, Ciano makes the following statement concerning his own and Ribbentrop's view of the proposed treaty: "He [Ribbentrop] thinks that such a move will have a double advantage: against Russia and against America, which, under the threat of the Japanese fleet, will not dare to move. I express a contrary opinion. The anti-Russian guarantee is very good, but the anti-American sentiment is less appropriate, because Washington will increasingly favor the English." See Ciano, Diaries, p. 293.

exclusively against the United States⁹⁷ and by his subsequent efforts to secure Russia's adherence to the treaty,⁹⁸ one effect of this procedure was to place the latter in a position where she either had to join the Axis front or make it clear that she meant to follow a relatively independent course.

VI.

With the signing of the Tripartite Pact, the first phase of America's non-belligerency came to an end. Launched in haste during the collapse of France, it had begun more as a series of determined expedients than as a unified policy. But in the three and one-half months which had elapsed since the French request for an armistice, a number of reasonable certainties had been extracted from the situation. The French Fleet was still not quite in German hands. Both western Africa and Gibraltar were still intact. Neither Pétain nor Franco had yet been drawn into outright collaboration with Germany. Since invasion of the British Isles had not developed as promised, they seemed likely to hold out through the winter at least. Material aid was being extended to Britain as fast as possible, and long-range staff conversations were already afoot in both London and Washington.

⁹⁷Ribbentrop to Schulenburg, Sept. 25, 1940, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 195.

⁹⁸See below, chapter 6.

Now the Tripartite Pact had explicitly drawn Far Eastern happenings into the orbit of European events, and Russia's failure to adhere to this treaty was about to place her in a semi-detached position which offered some hope that she might be cultivated against both Japan in the Far East and Germany in Europe. With the situation thus clarified and the pressure of time somewhat lessened, American policy could henceforth follow a more considered and orderly design.

According to one observer with special sources of information, President Roosevelt conferred with Hull and Welles in his bedroom the morning after the Tripartite Pact was signed, deciding then and there upon a basic war strategy which treated the Atlantic and Pacific as parts of a related whole and gave priority to the Atlantic.⁹⁹ Thus the drift of American policy over the past three years was authoritatively confirmed, and substance was given to Count Ciano's gloomiest meditations on the three-power alliance. On hearing it proposed for the first time, Ciano had objected that so close an association of Germany, Italy, and Japan would merely increase American aid to Britain.¹⁰⁰ Nor did the formalities in Berlin cheer him up. "One thing alone is

⁹⁹Forrest Davis and Ernest K. Lindley, How War Came (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1942), pp. 154-58.

¹⁰⁰Ciano, Diaries, p. 293.

certain," he told his diary after signing the treaty on Italy's behalf, "one thing alone is certain: that the war will be long."¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹Ciano, Diaries, p. 296.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNFOLDING OF STRETEGY

I.

With the developments set forth in the last chapter, the American government sloughed off the major hesitations of public opinion for the first time; and United States foreign policy began responding directly to the needs of the international crisis. Public opinion remained, however, still holding firmly to most of its established beliefs. Its growth since the war's begining enabled a probable majority of the American people to countenance as essential to our own defense most of the activities publicly undertaken by the administration; but it gave no sign that it thought of defense as going much beyond conscription, the building of a two-ocean Navy, the destroyer transfer, and continued sale of war materials to Great Britain on a cash-and-carry basis. Certainly it did not regard intervention as falling within the scope of the defense program, and it was deeply sensitive to any hint that non-belligerency stood very close to full participation. Public opinion still had to be nurtured with the greatest care.

Thus the adjustment of American policy to world events

through the summer and fall of 1940 was especially remarkable in that it took place amid the brooding uncertainties of a presidential election. As if this were not bad enough, the third-term issue raised an additional complication, forcing President Roosevelt to use the crisis abroad as the reason for defying tradition while he knew all the time that he might defeat his own ends if he played up its gravity to an extent which created the belief that his policies were leading toward war. All this prevented any genuine elucidation of the new drift in American foreign policy until voting day was safely past.

So far as election tactics were concerned, American foreign policy in the autumn of 1940 resembled the familiar iceberg. Enough appeared above the surface to reveal location and direction of progress, but what existed underneath could only be surmised. There was much ground for warnings and guesses, however. Incipient efforts to formulate a detailed world strategy in military and naval conversations with Great Britain were necessarily secret; but the public policy of aid to Britain, especially as manifested in the arms transfer and the destroyer deal, had so many obvious corollaries that something of the kind could almost be taken for granted. This gave the Republicans their opportunity. Declaring himself heartily in favor of the administration's public policy, Republican candidate Wendell Willkie divided his criticism between the methods by which Roosevelt carried out that policy and the President's probable taste for secret

understandings with foreign powers which were calculated to draw the United States into war.¹

These insinuations were necessarily vague, but they were not implausible enough to be dismissed without a reply. In the waning days of the campaign, Roosevelt finally cast off his reserve and delivered a series of nine major speeches, largely to rebut Willkie's imputations concerning his foreign policy. Faced by misgivings of defeat, he made no effort in these talks to appraise the situation realistically. Instead, he dispensed a shower of heartening generalities which in tone, if not in exact word, encouraged his listeners to believe that everything was well in hand. Altogether too much has been made of these assurances given under the stress of an election whose outcome the President considered doubtful, but the fact remains that his words fell far short of his convictions as formulated in policy at that time.²

Thus official utterance left the full boundaries of American foreign policy exceedingly vague throughout the autumn, generally allowing public understanding of what was being done to approximate the public view of what ought to be done. This was unfortunate because an old confusion still troubled the American mind. The fatalism and wishful thinking which lay at its root were strikingly revealed by Gallup

¹For a convenient survey of Willkie's speaking tactics, see Beard, American Foreign Policy in the Making, pp. 298-312.

²Cf. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 189-92.

polls taken in September and October when just over two-thirds of the population thought the United States would eventually take part in the European war³ but less than one-fifth considered it desirable to enter hostilities at once.⁴ The irresolution to which this feeling gave birth was reflected in November when the same opinion which had overwhelmingly favored aid to Britain for many months past divided evenly on the question of whether it was more important for the United States to remain out of the war or to help England win it.⁵ The government's policy decisions had already answered this question; but in declining to reveal and explain its answer, the administration appeared to suggest that the question itself was out of order. If public confusion remained virtually intact, the popular mind was not solely responsible for this phenomenon.

The President's reelection in the face of the third-term issue was certainly a great personal triumph, but that it represented a popular mandate for his conduct of foreign affairs is not so clear. Since he polled less than 54 percent of the total national vote, the mandate was not overwhelming in any event.⁶ And while questions of war and

³-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 5 (Sept. 1941), p. 476.

⁴Ibid. (Mar. 1941), p. 159.

⁵Ibid. (Mar. 1941), p. 159.

⁶Cf. Edgar E. Robinson, They Voted For Roosevelt: The Presidential Vote, 1932-1944 (Stanford University: Stanford Univ. Press, 1947), p. 22; and Thomas A. Bailey, The Man in the Street: The Impact of American Public Opinion on Foreign Policy (New York: MacMillan, 1948), p. 97.

peace furnished the dominant interest of the campaign, both the general reluctance to face the ultimate realities of the world situation and Roosevelt's own failure to expound these realities in his speeches as he viewed them in formulating policy make it impossible to say just how much of that election victory represented conscious endorsement of his foreign policy and how much of it simple faith in his ability as leader.

That the President's campaign statements laid up a considerable store of future embarrassment is plain enough, but it is a moot question whether a less equivocal discussion of policy would have jeopardized the election and impaired or destroyed his ability to carry on. There is no doubt that such a course would have entailed considerable risk; for as organized pressure groups multiplied through the summer of 1940, public opinion was subjected to a new stimulation which was increasingly hostile to any suggestion that the United States might eventually have to consider the possibility of fighting in Europe. By fall, the agitation was in full swing; and leadership of the non-interventionist school had passed from the relatively moderate older groups to such newly founded and virulent organizations as the abortive No Foreign War Committee and the more notorious Committee to Defend America First.⁷ Despite its energetic

⁷John W. Masland, "Pressure Groups and American Foreign Policy," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 6 (Spring 1942), p. 116; and Johnson, The Battle Against Isolation, pp. 161-63.

support of such measures as the arms transfer and the destroyer deal, even the highly reputable Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies remained steadfast in its program of aid short of war.⁸ Not until the Fight for Freedom Committee was set up in April 1941 did the counsel of intervention receive any organized support.⁹ Thus nearly every circumstance expounded the necessity of caution in public statement, at least until after the election.

Owing to these circumstances, it was probably inevitable that expediency should be given such a large role in shaping words just as America's non-belligerency was taking definite form. But the essence of policy is rarely verbal, and the same considerations did not extend to deeds. In the meanwhile, the government's preparations for what lay ahead continued without much hindrance.

II.

Since coöperation at sea was the obvious starting point in the framing of a joint operational strategy, the main burden of the staff conversations in London was assumed at the outset by representatives of the American and British navies. Vice Admiral Ghormley remained in London for the balance of the year, keeping a sharp lookout over British

⁸Johnson, The Battle Against Isolation, pp. 182-83.

⁹Ibid., p. 223.

survival power and holding frequent conferences with a special committee of the British Admiralty headed by Sir Sidney Bailey. By October, Ghormley was able to reiterate his opinion that England would not succumb to German attacks and to report substantial agreement concerning the outlines of future naval coöperation between the two countries. The question of whether or not a portion of the United States Fleet should be based at Singapore in the event of a Pacific war constituted the main stumbling block.¹⁰ Britain was eager to have American warships operating from her great Far Eastern base; the United States was reluctant to send its forces so far afield and uncertain as to what obligations the British might accept in return.¹¹ On the other hand, the conferees saw eye-to-eye in Atlantic questions. Here the initial tasks of the United States Navy would be escort-of-convoy and anti-submarine warfare.¹²

With these preliminaries disposed of, Admiral Stark turned to the civilian heads of the government for authorization to proceed further. While Roosevelt had apparently settled the war's broad strategic pattern in his own mind as early as the end of September, only formal decisions at

¹⁰Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 41.

¹¹Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, pp. 49-50; also Stark to Hart, Nov. 12, 1940, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 109, pt. 16, pp. 2448-49.

¹²Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 41.

the political level could serve as basis for a detailed allocation of forces and a usable plan of operations. In a memorandum handed to Secretary Knox on November 12, Stark emphasized the importance of formalizing such decisions at once, making it clear that, among various alternatives, he favored combining a strong hemispheric defense with an offensive strategy in the Atlantic and a defensive strategy in the Pacific.¹³ His recommendations were authoritatively ratified before the end of the month, and Stark lost no time in directing Ghormley to arrange for large-scale staff conversations in Washington early in 1941. Feeling that British notions regarding Singapore were calculated to saddle the United States Navy with unwarranted burdens, he stated that anyone sent by London

...should have instructions to discuss concepts based on equality of considerations for both the United States and the British Commonwealth, and to explore realistically the various fields of war cooperation.¹⁴

Both the invitation and its attached conditions were promptly accepted by the British Admiralty.¹⁵

The Navy's preoccupation with escort duty grew steadily in the meanwhile, for this was solidly founded in Britain's need. As noted earlier, her shipping problem had remained

¹³Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 42-43.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁵Idem.

well in hand during the first months of the war but had grown more serious with the basing of U-boats on French ports in the summer of 1940. It became particularly urgent in November and December when the Germans adopted a new submarine tactic--the highly efficient "wolf-pack" method. Instead of hunting singly, U-boats now attacked convoys in large groups, systematically dogging their courses for days at a time and running up tremendous scores in the process.¹⁶ A greater number of escort vessels and a more intensive anti-submarine warfare constituted the most obvious remedy, and by the year's end the assumption of such duties by American warships seemed more than ever the logical first step if the United States should come to actual blows with Germany.

At Stark's direction, the Naval War Plans Division had for some time been working on preliminary plans for American naval activity in the event of war. A draft providing for transoceanic escort duty and the establishment of American bases in the United Kingdom was completed in December. By January 14, 1941, Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner, director of the War Plans Division, was able to assure Stark that the United States Navy could inaugurate an escort service between North America and Scotland as early as the beginning of April if preparations were started without delay.¹⁷ It was quite

¹⁶Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 25.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 44-45.

obvious that weighty political considerations stood between a plan designed for use in time of war and its realization in time of official peace, but it was equally obvious that some form of escort duty could not be indefinitely postponed if the policy of aiding Britain were to be effectively carried out. Having accepted the full implications of this policy, the Navy was merely drawing in outline the essential bridge between staff talks and belligerent action.

III.

Still mindful of his new discouragement with affairs in Tokyo, Ambassador Grew paused long enough on October 1 to re-view his estimate of diplomatic trends. First he agreed heartily that every available means should be used to keep the Pacific free of hostilities "until the issue of the European war has been decided." Then he ratified his "green light" telegram of September 12, saying:

This cannot be done, in my view, nor can our interests any longer receive their full and proper protection, merely by expressing our disapproval and carefully placing it on record.¹⁸

As though it were echoing this endorsement of action, the State Department on October 8 advised American citizens to leave China, Japan, Manchukuo, Hong Kong, Korea, Formosa, and French Indo-China;¹⁹ the War Department announced that

¹⁸Grew, Ten Years, p. 338.

¹⁹Department of State radio bulletin, Oct. 8, 1940, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 114.

an anti-aircraft regiment of the California National Guard was being sent to Hawaii; and the Navy Department let it be known a day later that personnel allotments of the United States Fleet in the Pacific were being increased to full war-time strength.²⁰ On October 9, Grew was called away from the semi-annual golf tournament of the American Club by an urgent summons from the Japanese Foreign Office only to find that Matsuoka was somewhat unnerved by the prospective evacuation of Americans from the Far East and by press rumors that the United States was about to extend its embargo measures. Grew's annoyance at missing his game was more than drowned in satisfaction. As he complacently observed that night, he had often suggested that a move to recall Americans from the Orient "would have a powerful effect on Japanese consciousness."²¹ He had long believed that the Japanese government could be shaken, and this proved it.

This stiffening of American policy, which had begun with announcement of the embargo on scrap iron and steel at the end of September, had much more behind it than Grew's advice, however. As early as August 26, Lothian asked Hull whether the United States would help restrain hostile action on Japan's part if Great Britain chose to reopen the Burma Road.

²⁰Cf. Johnstone, The United States and Japan's New Order, pp. 316-17.

²¹Grew, Ten Years, pp. 346-47.

Hull was cautious and promised nothing. When Lothian returned to the subject on September 30, Hull again refused to give definite commitments.²² But on October 8, the very day chosen by the American government to advise the withdrawal of its nationals from the Far East, Great Britain abandoned her long retreat in the Orient with a notification that traffic over the Burma Road would be resumed October 18;²³ and the conjunction of this announcement with newsworthy moves by the United States suggested clearly that British-American coöperation was spreading from the Atlantic and western Europe into the Far East. In the early part of October, Hull conducted several talks with Hugh Casey, the Australian Minister in Washington, bearing on the forces which could be made available in the Orient if Japan elected to attack.²⁴ Still more evidence that the American government stood behind London's display of energy was furnished by Secretary Knox during an October conversation with Admiral Richardson, who had journeyed from Hawaii to Washington for the purpose of learning more about the future prospects of the Fleet. According to Knox, President Roosevelt contemplated rather extensive action if Japan based any new aggression on the reopening of the Burma Road.

²²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 911.

²³Statement by Churchill, Oct. 8, 1940, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 365, c. 301.

²⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 912.

This action included the reinforcement of the Asiatic Fleet, a complete embargo on trade with Japan, and an effort to stop all commerce between Japan and the entire Western Hemisphere by means of a kind of blockade extending from Honolulu to the Philippines, with a second line of patrol craft between Samoa and Singapore. Needless to say, the Admiral found these designs somewhat impracticable.²⁵

But Richardson was always a harsh judge of naval policy. He could not forget the shortcomings of Pearl Harbor as a base for the Pacific Fleet, and his main objective in Washington was to have the Fleet brought back to the Pacific coast. His professional misgivings encountered scant sympathy, however. During an interview at the White House, he was told by Roosevelt that the Fleet was being kept in Hawaii to exercise a restraining influence on Japan; and when Richardson expressed doubt that the Fleet, in its existing state of unreadiness, could have much effect to that end, the President assured him that the maneuver was worthwhile regardless of what he believed.²⁶ The occasion was not a total loss, however; for Roosevelt unbent enough to deliver some views on the general Pacific situation. He considered war with Japan inevitable. He thought the United States would not fight if the Japanese attacked Thailand, the Isthmus of

²⁵Richardson to Hart, Oct. 16, 1940, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 11, pt. 14, pp. 1006-7.

²⁶Richardson's testimony, Nov. 19, 1945, ibid., pt. 1, pp. 265-66.

Kra, or the Dutch East Indies. He doubted that we would fight even if the Philippines were invaded, but predicted that "sooner or later they would make a mistake and we would enter the war."²⁷ Assembling these revelations as he departed from Washington, Richardson was convinced not only that American policy was stiffening but that it was stiffening altogether too fast.²⁸

While the Admiral's fears were premature, it was nevertheless clear that the government's recent moves in the Pacific embraced a definite program. According to Hull, he and Roosevelt decided about the middle of October to continue exerting economic pressure against Japan without going far enough to provoke a demand for war among Japanese militarists, to cultivate Tokyo's awareness of our strength in the Pacific, and to discourage all hope that we would not fight if necessary.²⁹

Whether or not Japan was intimidated by the visible signs of this attitude is impossible to say, but she undertook no more large aggressions during the rest of the year. Instead, she confined herself to maintaining the positions she had already gained and to such minor ill-works as encouraging

²⁷ Richardson's testimony, Nov. 19, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 1, p. 266.

²⁸ Richardson to Stark, Oct. 22, 1940, ibid., Ex. 9, pt. 14, pp. 963-64.

²⁹ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 911-12.

Thailand's frontier dispute with Indo-China and formally recognizing the Chinese regime of her own puppet, Wang Ching-wei. But Grew had no illusions that Japan was turning over a new leaf. He smelled danger in Tokyo's connivings with the Siamese,³⁰ and he offered the final dilemma in a personal letter to the President on December 14:

It seems to me to be increasingly clear that we are bound to have a showdown someday, and the principal question at issue is whether it is to our advantage to have the showdown sooner or to have it later.³¹

This was a pertinent query, but the answer was already in hand. Following closely upon the alarms of October, the strategic decisions made by the government in November had confirmed Asia's second priority. While the particulars of the diplomatic resistance envisaged by Hull and Roosevelt would necessarily emerge from circumstance, the United States had elected to have its showdown with Japan as much later as possible.

IV.

As it affected southwestern Europe, Gibraltar, and French North Africa, the diplomatic situation remained in constant flux between the summer of 1940 and the spring of 1941. Neither Vichy nor Madrid plunged into collaboration

³⁰Grew, Ten Years, pp. 354-55.

³¹Grew to Roosevelt, Dec. 14, 1940, ibid., p. 359.

with the Axis; there were no overt moves against Gibraltar, North Africa, or the Atlantic islands; London and Washington continued their program of uniting diplomacy with economics. But the scales were always too evenly weighted for comfort, and hope alternated with fear at dazzling speeds.

Somewhat disconcerted by Franco's coolness toward its offer of a trade agreement at the end of June 1940 and fearful that he was about to enter the war, the American government set about limiting Spanish oil supplies. At first, there was some disposition to tie this in with the order of July 26 directed against Japan. But subtler methods were eventually preferred; and the objective was reached through the withdrawal of American tankers from trade with Spain, delays engineered by the Treasury Department, and undertakings by oil companies not to exceed customary volumes.³² Before these arrangements were completed, however, Franco's ardor for immediate war began to cool; and when Madrid on August 6 yielded to our standing demands on behalf of American interests in the Spanish telephone system, Ambassador Weddell informed the Spanish government that it might have all the oil which it could transport and which the British would allow to pass their blockade.³³ Hoare, the British Ambassador in Spain, manned the breach without delay.

³²Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 39, 45.

³³Ibid., p. 49.

As British and Spanish experts drew up an extended supply program which would keep Spain alive without allowing her to provision the Axis, Britain offered to countenance the importation of more oil if Spain would relax her limitations on its domestic use. But the Spanish government replied that a dollar shortage kept it from taking advantage of this opportunity, and here the matter rested. Although British and American policies were now openly linked, Washington did not echo London's enthusiasm for the joint program and refused to expedite it with dollar credits.³⁴ The net result of these developments was a considerable decline in the volume of American oil exports to Spain through the rest of the year.³⁵

At this juncture, the United States was much less disposed than Britain to rely heavily upon the psychological effect created in Spain by Anglo-American economic help and the prospect of its withdrawal in the event of poor behavior. The American State Department, Hull especially, wanted advance payment for any favors extended; and this attitude was not restricted to the oil problem. On September 7, Spain requested a \$100,000,000 loan for general purchases in this country.³⁶ After lengthy discussion, the plea was tabled for the nonce, although it was agreed that some direct relief

³⁴Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 51

³⁵Ibid., p. 46.

³⁶Ibid., p. 56.

might be provided out of a \$50,000,000 fund recently appropriated by Congress for such uses.³⁷ Weddell received instructions to say that the United States would consider methods of aid in return for a promise by Franco not to enter the war,³⁸ and Hull rejected the Ambassador's entreaties for greater flexibility. Accordingly, Weddell communicated this message to Colonel Juan Beigbeder, the Foreign Minister, on September 30. Beigbeder's anti-Axis views were well known, and he told Weddell that Spain would not enter the war unless attacked. But he made it clear that no such announcement could be made publicly.³⁹ Somewhat reassured, the United States was just preparing to revive the loan project when Hitler took up his long-awaited diplomatic offensive against Vichy and Madrid.⁴⁰

Since there had never been any illusions concerning the Axis desire to secure a commanding position in the western Mediterranean and French North Africa or the readiness of powerful circles in both the French and Spanish governments to lend such designs a hand, it was obvious that Hitler's own procrastination was the main cause for delay in realizing these ambitions. But apparently having concluded that Britain

³⁷Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 57.

³⁸Ibid., p. 58.

³⁹Ibid., p. 60. For an estimate of Beigbeder, see Hoare, Complacent Dictator, p. 33.

⁴⁰Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 62.

was less vulnerable to direct assault than he had at first imagined, Hitler was now prepared to deal with the Empire's Mediterranean flank. His initial objective was Gibraltar.⁴¹

The groundwork for collaboration had already been laid. Now Foreign Minister at Vichy, Pierre Laval had been in active communication with German authorities for weeks,⁴² and Madrid had been discussing terms with Berlin since the early part of June.⁴³ When the pro-British Beigbeder was suddenly ousted from the Spanish Foreign Office on October 17 to be replaced by Serrano Suñer, Franco's brother-in-law and one of the most outspoken advocates of collaboration with Germany in all Spain, it became evident that connivance was about to enter a new phase.⁴⁴

Now that he had decided to act, Hitler personally assumed the burden of negotiations. On October 22, he talked with Laval at Montoire and arranged for a conversation with Pétain

⁴¹Record of conversation between Ribbentrop and Mussolini, Sept. 19, 1940, International Military Tribunal, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, 11 vols. (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1946-1948), Vol. 4, p. 477; cf. Ciano, Diaries, p. 293.

⁴²Cf. Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 84.

⁴³Memorandum by Stöhrer, Aug. 8, 1940, United States, Department of State, The Spanish Government and the Axis: Official German Documents (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1946), No. 1, p. 3.

⁴⁴Cf. Hoare, Complacent Dictator, p. 33.

two days later.⁴⁵ In the meanwhile, he sped onward to Hendaye near the Spanish border for a meeting with Franco on the 23rd. His biggest task here would be to moderate the price demanded for Spain's acquiescence, for the Caudillo's wants had been notably immodest from the beginning. Franco had already made it clear that he required large donations of grain, oil, and military supplies; special troops and weapons for reducing Gibraltar; and title to such French possessions as Morocco and Oran.⁴⁶

In a series of alternating monologues which continued for hours, the two dictators reviewed the situation. While he affirmed his spiritual ties with the Axis, Franco spoke eloquently of Spain's needs. Britain was in a position to make things very difficult, since both the United States and Argentina took orders from London as far as their economic policies were concerned; and Hitler knew what that meant. The Führer clucked sympathetically and launched into a disquisition of his own. German military power was great. England would have been defeated by this time except for bad weather, but her end was nonetheless certain. American military power would grow slowly, and the United States was being held in check by the Tripartite Pact in any event. The

⁴⁵Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 90.

⁴⁶Memorandum of conversation between Hitler and Ciano, Sept. 28, 1940, Department of State, The Spanish Government and the Axis, No. 6, p. 17; cf. Ciano, Diaries, p. 296.

main danger to be feared was occupation of the Azores, Canaries, and Cape Verde Islands by the Americans and the British and loss of France's colonial empire to DeGaulle, Britain, or the United States. The latter danger was especially great if any partition of Africa were attempted at the present time. There was much more, but Franco remained unshaken. And his price, in Hitler's view, was greater than his usefulness.⁴⁷

Somewhat chastened, Hitler saw Pétain and Laval together at Montoire on the 24th, but again he failed to pin anything down. Pétain and Franco had revealed themselves as having much in common: whatever their shortcomings, they were both much more devoted to national than to German interests and given to moving slowly. Although agreements of a sort were formulated at both Hendaye and Montoire, they went little beyond the affirmation of principle. Neither provided any real basis for action.⁴⁸

But the fact that Hitler's trip to the Spanish border was another false alarm did not become immediately apparent,

⁴⁷Record of conversation between Hitler and Franco, Oct. 23, 1940, Department of State, The Spanish Government and the Axis, No. 8, pp. 21-25. This record, however, is incomplete. For additional details, see Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 94-95; and Carlton J. H. Hayes, Wartime Mission in Spain, 1942-1945 (New York: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 64-65.

⁴⁸Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 96; and Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 96-97.

for neither Vichy nor Madrid gave up its trading of views with Berlin. Through November and into December, Laval continued his efforts to widen the opening made at Montoire;⁴⁹ and on November 11 Serrano Suñer placed his signature on a revision of the Hendaye protocol⁵⁰ which, in Hitler's view, provided such a definite basis for action that the Führer immediately ordered the German High Command to prepare for the assault on Gibraltar.⁵¹ But his promises had been too niggardly to render his hold on Spain secure, and Laval's ascendancy in the French government was less complete than he thought. On November 18 at Berchtesgaden, he told Serrano Suñer that Franco should ready himself to enter the war in January or February; but this announcement drew nothing from the Spanish Foreign Minister except a storm of protests and evasions.⁵² A week later, Franco himself pressed for more time and for less elusive assurances regarding Spain's territorial claims and other demands.⁵³ The German Ambassador in Madrid was able to report at the end of the month

⁴⁹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 108.

⁵⁰Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 111-12.

⁵¹Directive No. 108, Nov. 12, 1940, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. 6. pp. 957-59.

⁵²Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 115-16.

⁵³Ibid., p. 117.

that the Spanish government would not object to German preparations for attacking Gibraltar so long as no date was set for Spain's entrance into hostilities.⁵⁴ Annoyed but still hopeful, Hitler wrote to Mussolini on December 5 that Franco would have to be brought into the war as soon as possible. Time was growing shorter every day, and he wanted Germany's complete forces to be ready for the assault on the British Isles by April.⁵⁵

But his hope for a speedy decision in either Vichy or Madrid was blasted by the middle of the month. He sought to apply new pressure in the Spanish capital through Admiral Canaris, Chief of German Naval Intelligence. The latter saw Franco on December 7 and told him that German troops desired to enter Spain January 10 for the purpose of undertaking the attack on Gibraltar in concert with Spanish forces. But the Caudillo refused even to consider such a plan; the hazards were too great. Spain suffered from military and civilian shortages of every description. Even though Gibraltar fell quickly, Britain and the United States would immediately seize Madeira, the Azores, the Canaries, and the Cape Verde Islands. Whatever happened, the war was not likely to be short; and Germany would find Spain, in her weakened condition, more a hindrance than a help. Under such adverse

⁵⁴Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 118.

⁵⁵Hitler to Mussolini, Dec. 5, 1940, Hitler and Mussolini, Lettres Secrètes, p. 100.

circumstances, it was manifest that Spain could not enter the war at this time. Nor was it yet possible to name a later date. Franco could only suggest that Hitler verify his words by sending a German economist to Spain for a first-hand impression.⁵⁶

After this, it was clear that nothing could be done with Spain for the time being unless German tactics were thoroughly revamped. And to make matters worse, Pétain signified France's withdrawal to a more independent position by dismissing Laval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 13.⁵⁷ Having lost both props at the same time, Hitler abruptly turned his back on the west and prepared to deal with his eastern problems.

In view of the Montoire-Hendaye conversations, the American State Department changed its mind about reviving the Spanish loan project and decided to make no offers in this regard until the outcome was less uncertain.⁵⁸ The possibility of Red Cross shipments remained, however; and Weddell was instructed on November 8 to explain that not even these could be justified unless Franco announced publicly that he would not help the Axis.⁵⁹ But the Spanish

⁵⁶Stöhrer to Ribbentrop, Dec. 12, 1940, Department of State, The Spanish Government and the Axis, No. 11, pp. 26-28.

⁵⁷Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 109.

⁵⁸Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 65.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 101.

government thought it necessary to be as coy with Washington as with Berlin. The most that Weddell could extract from Serrano Suñer four days later was a private declaration that Spain would resist any effort by German or Italian troops to cross her border. On October 19, Demetrio Carceller, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, added that, while Spain and the Axis had differences, no public statement like that desired by the United States could be made as long as German troops were encamped on Spain's very frontiers.⁶⁰

Urged by London to reconsider the instructions of November 8, Roosevelt now conceded that a formal private declaration of Spain's neutral intentions might take the place of a public one.⁶¹ Franco made a somewhat equivocal reply to this message on November 29.⁶² After weighing the Caudillo's latest statement with some care, Washington again veered toward the loan project.⁶³ But the State Department could not rid itself of misgivings; and by the end of the year, it had resumed its old insistence that Franco must commit himself openly before he could expect new favors from the United

⁶⁰Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 102.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 104.

⁶²Ibid., p. 104-5.

⁶³Ibid., p. 106.

States.⁶⁴

If the Montoire-Hendaye episode further slackened the leisurely gait of our Spanish policy, it had a somewhat different effect upon American relations with France. Although the United States had carefully maintained its diplomatic connections with the Pétain government, it had thus far employed them only to observe developments in France and to issue warnings based upon its observations. But the events of late October reëmphasized the strength of collaborationist tendencies at Vichy; and during the last two months of the year, Washington began to evolve a definite policy for minimizing those dangers as far as possible. Since the problem here was not unlike the problem in Spain, it was only natural that its key should likewise be sought in economics. The great difference was that, for Spain, the only avenue of approach lay through Madrid, where pro-Axis feeling was strongest. But the road to France began in North Africa, where the possibility of independent action was much greater than at Vichy.

The idea of driving an economic wedge into this strategically important area had been under review since August.⁶⁵ In September, Great Britain had intimated that she would welcome American coöperation in setting up a special trade

⁶⁴Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 107.

⁶⁵Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 106.

with Morocco.⁶⁶ But despite the fact that some highly tentative conversations had been carried on with Emmanuel Monick, secretary-general of the French administration in that country, the State Department postponed taking any real initiative.⁶⁷ At the beginning of October, however, General Maxime Weygand was given wide powers to arrange for the defense of North and West Africa as delegate-general of the Vichy government.⁶⁸ The establishment of such an authority in Africa clarified the situation a good deal; and when A. G. Reed, manager of the Socony-Vacuum Oil Company in Morocco, reached Washington on October 25 with Monick's commission to promote serious talks regarding a trade agreement with North Africa, the project entered a more active phase.⁶⁹

Although the State Department was still slow in rising to the bait, it was impressed by Reed's belief that Weygand meant to keep Germany from absorbing the territory under his control. New proposals by Monick reached Washington through the American chargé d'affaires at Vichy early in November; and it was decided to open discussions with both Weygand and

⁶⁶Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 105.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 106.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 104.)

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 106.

Monick through our consuls in Algiers and Tangier, respectively.⁷⁰ To obtain a broad view of local conditions, the State Department sent Robert D. Murphy, counselor of our Embassy at Vichy, into North and West Africa on a tour of investigation.⁷¹

In the meanwhile, other aspects of our relations with France were achieving greater stability. Admiral Greenslade paid his second visit to Martinique in November, rumbled a few threats, and extracted a promise from Admiral Robert that none of the ships under the latter's command would leave port without a ninety-six-hour notice to the American government. For its own part, the United States agreed to supply the island with food, taking payment from French assets held in this country.⁷² There were also favorable developments at Vichy itself. Striving to calm fears aroused by the Montoire conversations, Pétain renewed his old assurances against collaboration with marked vehemence in November⁷³ and followed through by dismissing Laval, as previously noted. Since the anti-British influence of Admiral Darlan remained unimpaired, this was not regarded as a fundamental change in Vichy's attitude. It was encouraging,

⁷⁰Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 107.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 107-8.

⁷²Ibid., p. 104.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 98, 101.

nevertheless; and Washington went ahead with its plans for filling the vacant ambassadorship to France, choosing for this ticklish assignment Admiral William D. Leahy, a former Chief of Naval Operations and a man who was well-schooled in political missions.⁷⁴

But the American government revealed no indication of softening too fast. It entered no protest when the British on December 10 declined to countenance relief shipments for the benefit of unoccupied France;⁷⁵ and Leahy's instructions, drafted ten days later, made it clear that Washington had no intention of moderating its stand against any form of connivance between French and German officials, especially where the French Fleet was concerned.⁷⁶

Notwithstanding British distrust of Pétain, the official American attitude toward Vichy and unoccupied France generally was congenial enough to the views of Downing Street. But the status of the North African project was not so clear. In mid-December, it became apparent that, in spite of Britain's own Moroccan trade and her September overtures to Washington in this regard, she was by no means eager to open her blockade to an independent exchange of goods between North Africa and the United States. This whimsy begot a

⁷⁴Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 117-18.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 127.

⁷⁶Roosevelt to Leahy, Dec. 20, 1940, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 192, pp. 496-99.

vigorous reaction from the American State Department,⁷⁷ but the issue was to be a fruitful source of disagreement for months to come.

Thus the year ended in some confusion regarding France and Spain. Open collaboration had not materialized in either country, but the air was still heavy with its threat. Although Great Britain and the United States had embarked upon what might be described as a common effort to stabilize the western Mediterranean through the use of economic pressures and inducements, Spain was Britain's chief interest, while the United States leaned increasingly toward an endeavor to solve the problem of French North Africa. If Britain's Spanish policy was hampered by American reluctance to supply Franco with dollar credits, her own use of the blockade threatened to slow the functioning of any trade agreement which the United States might conclude with Vichy representatives in North Africa. Both governments blew hot and both blew cold, but they were not doing it in unison.

V.

Early in January 1941, the Japanese government appointed a new Ambassador to the United States. Its selection of Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura for this vital post boded well on

⁷⁷Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 130. Britain had drawn Morocco into a triangular trade arrangement which also included Spain and Portugal by an accord signed Nov. 29, 1940; see Hoare, Complacent Dictator, p. 81.

the surface. Belonging to the moderate wing of the Japanese Navy, Nomura had had previous experience in this country and had enjoyed long acquaintanceship with numerous Americans both in the United States and at home. By those who knew him, he was considered as "western" in his patterns of thought as a Japanese is likely to become. Among his American acquaintances of long standing was Captain Ellis M. Zacharias, a seasoned veteran of Naval Intelligence then stationed in Honolulu. When Nomura paused briefly in that city en route to the United States, Zacharias paid him a visit and ascertained that the new Ambassador had not lost his respect for American power. Quite positively, the latter made known his belief that war with the United States would mean the end of the Japanese Empire.⁷⁸

Grew had likewise taken Nomura's appointment as a favorable omen,⁷⁹ but the fact that Japanese policy was still under the direction of Foreign Minister Matsuoka prevented any great optimism. At Nomura's farewell luncheon on January 18, the American Ambassador expressed to Matsuoka the hope that Nomura would be able to improve relations between the United States and Japan. But not even the amenities of the occasion prevented Matsuoka from turning away with the short remark: "They certainly couldn't be worse."⁸⁰

⁷⁸Ellis M. Zacharias, Secret Missions: The Story of an Intelligence Officer (New York: Putnam, 1946), p. 227.

⁷⁹Grew, Ten Years, p. 350.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 336.

Thus the year began under poor auspices, but that the United States government contemplated no departure from the course settled upon the previous October Grew learned from the President himself. Replying on January 21 to the Ambassador's foreboding epistle of December 14, Roosevelt made it clear that basic strategy had already been determined and revealed by implication that Japan had been assigned second place. "I believe," he wrote,

...that the fundamental proposition is that we must recognize that the hostilities in Europe, in Africa, and in Asia are all parts of a single world conflict... Our strategy of self-defense must be a global strategy which takes account of every front and takes advantage of every opportunity to contribute to our total security.⁸¹

Except for an offer to mediate the border dispute which she had been fomenting between Thailand and Indo-China, the conclusion of an armistice at the beginning of February,⁸² and the signing of a peace treaty under Japanese auspices on March 11 which accorded Thailand nearly twenty-two thousand square miles of Indo-Chinese territory,⁸³ Japan remained outwardly quiescent during the first three months of the year. But the calm was deceptive, and rumor ran wild.

Post-war investigation has disclosed that the Japanese

⁸¹Roosevelt to Grew, Jan. 21, 1941, Ten Years, pp. 361-62.

⁸²Headnote, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, p. 294.

⁸³Joint communiqué by Japan, France, and Thailand, Tokyo, Mar. 11, 1941, ibid., pp. 294-95.

began thinking seriously of an attack on the United States Pacific Fleet at its Pearl Harbor base as early as January 1941; and Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Fleet, is reported to have stated about February 1 that Japan could have no hope of winning a war with the United States unless the American Fleet in Hawaii could be destroyed at the outset.⁸⁴ Presumably such an opinion at this time fell under the head of naval planning and, like projects being formulated in our own Naval War Plans Division, was regarded as an expedient to be used only if diplomacy failed and the necessary political decision for war were taken. Nevertheless, rumor could not be stifled; and even before rumor came into the open, American naval experts achieved a curious meeting of the minds with Japanese strategists on the subject of Pearl Harbor.

A letter from Knox to Stimson written on January 24 observed that a war with Japan might easily begin with a surprise attack on the Hawaiian base. A copy of this communication was dispatched to Richardson.⁸⁵ The next day, a joint estimate of the situation prepared by Richardson and Rear

⁸⁴United States, Congress, Joint Committee on Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack, Investigation of Pearl Harbor attack, report pursuant to S. Con. Res. 27, to investigate attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and events and circumstances relating thereto (79th Cong., 2nd sess.), S. Doc. 244 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1946), p. 53. Cited henceforth as Pearl Harbor Report.

⁸⁵Knox to Stimson, Jan. 24, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 10, pt. 14, pp. 1000-02.

Admiral Husband E. Kimmel--who was about to succeed the former as Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet--echoed the Secretary's fear.⁸⁶ On January 27, Grew transmitted a report which had come to him from the Peruvian Minister in Tokyo. Somewhat incredulously, this functionary had told Grew that he had received information from many sources alleging that Japan was actually planning such an attack.⁸⁷ But Naval Intelligence considered that this particular alarm had gone far enough, and attached to Kimmel's copy of the message from Tokyo was the following omniscient reassurance:

The Division of Naval Intelligence places no credence in these rumors. Furthermore, based on known data regarding the present disposition and employment of Japanese Naval and Army forces, no move against Pearl Harbor appears imminent or planned in the foreseeable future.⁸⁸

Again, however, on February 18, Kimmel indicated in a letter to Stark that the thought of a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor lay in the forefront of his mind.⁸⁹

Notwithstanding the optimism dispensed by Naval Intelligence, a war of nerves had been fairly started; and the next contribution to Washington's alarm was furnished by London. On February 7, the British Embassy reported

⁸⁶Pearl Harbor Report, p. 75.

⁸⁷Grew to Hull, Jan. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 15, pt. 14, p. 1042.

⁸⁸Stark to Kimmel, Feb. 1, 1941, ibid., p. 1044.

⁸⁹Kimmel to Stark, Feb. 18, 1941, ibid., Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2228.

confidential information from its own Foreign Office that the staff of the Japanese Embassy in London was preparing to leave before the middle of the month.⁹⁰ Numerous "straws in the wind" which tended to credit such a story were listed in an explanatory aide-mémoire submitted later the same day.⁹¹ The exact background of this disturbing tale has never emerged from obscurity, but that the British government did not make it up from whole cloth may be taken for granted. So isolated a cause fails to explain the unrest which spread in all directions during the first half of February, enveloping Tokyo as well as London and Washington. When Otto Tolischus, the American newspaperman, reached the Japanese capital on February 11 to begin a tour of duty, he found that city in the throes of a genuine war scare;⁹² and in view of Britain's existing military weakness, verbal machinations from London could hardly have produced this effect at such a distance. Nevertheless, war strains had left the British government somewhat jumpy, and it made as much of the opportunity as it possibly could.

Concluding at the outset that Japan would move southward

⁹⁰Memorandum of conversation, Feb. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 158, pt. 19, pp. 3442-43.

⁹¹Aide-mémoire, British Embassy to State Department, Feb. 7, 1941, ibid., p. 3444.

⁹²Otto D. Tolischus, Tokyo Record (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1943), p. 7.

if she moved at all, Roosevelt hurriedly considered means of using the Pacific Fleet as a deterrent. Presumably it was discharging this function at Hawaii, but its restraining force might obviously be greater if part of its strength were moved closer to the expected line of Japanese advance. Apparently the President considered a number of projects involving Australia, Singapore, and the Dutch East Indies but discarded them as uninviting from the standpoint of domestic politics. By February 10, however, he was thinking of sending three or four cruisers plus a carrier and a squadron of destroyers on a visit to the Philippines.⁹³ Stark objected strongly to this plan, explaining that if any doubt were cast on the permanence of the move it could have little value as a bluff, while if no such doubt were permitted to escape, the force's eventual withdrawal would look very much like a retreat. If a special force had to enter the southwestern Pacific at all, he preferred sending it directly to the East Indies, where it could rely on the support of Dutch naval units and hold a position which was generally less vulnerable to attack.⁹⁴

Apprehensions continued to mount when Churchill on February 15 predicted an early attack on Dutch possessions in the Indies, adding that such an eventuality would have serious

⁹³Stark to Kimmel, Feb. 10, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2148.

⁹⁴Memorandum by Stark for the President, Feb. 11, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2150.

repercussions on the Atlantic war since it would constrain Britain to shift forces from the Mediterranean and the Near East into the Pacific.⁹⁵ But the Former Naval Person called it all off a few days later. On February 20, he informed Roosevelt that fear of the United States had apparently dissuaded Japan from any immediate ventures and added that Matsuoka was about to liquidate this change of plan by visiting Moscow, Berlin, and Rome.⁹⁶ The war scare subsided almost as quickly as it had begun.

Nomura reached Washington in the very middle of the February alarm. President Roosevelt received him on the 14th, but no serious discussion was attempted. After brief remarks concerning the unhappy state of American-Japanese relations, the President merely suggested that the Ambassador might want to talk things over with Hull.⁹⁷ Nor did anything new materialize on March 8 in the course of Nomura's first extended interview with the Secretary of State.⁹⁸ But there was, from the American viewpoint at least, no

⁹⁵Churchill to Roosevelt, Feb. 15, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 158, pt. 19, p. 3452.

⁹⁶Memorandum for the President, Feb. 22, 1941, ibid., p. 3454.

⁹⁷Memorandum by Hull, Feb. 14, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 388.

⁹⁸Cf. Memorandum by Hull, Mar. 8, 1941, ibid., pp. 391-92.

reason for haste. On the contrary, delay in seeking conclusions with Japan had been the admitted policy of the United States for years; and while it had been somewhat less timid in its dealings with Japan in recent months, the American government had followed this policy more consciously than ever since the previous October. As will be seen presently, the State Department already had a large knowledge of German designs for attacking Russia in the late spring of 1941. Since this prospect virtually destroyed any real likelihood of a Russo-Japanese understanding--if, indeed, such a likelihood had ever existed--Hull now felt even more certain of the value of procrastination tempered by firmness.⁹⁹ He was aware, moreover, that new Japanese proposals for a Pacific settlement were being framed and was content to wait until these were offered him.

This last development had started unfolding well in advance of Nomura's arrival in the United States. Near the end of January, two American missionaries--Bishop James Edward Walsh, Superior General of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society at Maryknoll, New York, and one Father Drought--had returned from Japan with the opinion that moderate elements could oust the militarists from control of the Japanese government and effect a marked reversal of Japanese policy if they were assured that the United States would accept an

⁹⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 969.

arrangement of Oriental affairs which guaranteed Japan her security. Through Postmaster General Frank C. Walker, himself a prominent Catholic, Bishop Walsh and Father Drought obtained an interview with Roosevelt and Hull. The two priests revealed that they were already in contact with individuals on the staff of the Japanese Embassy in Washington and stated their belief that Tokyo might recognize the Open Door in China if Japan could be assured of similar treatment throughout the Far East. Both President and Secretary of State heard them out with some scepticism but agreed that Bishop Walsh and Father Drought should proceed with their conversations at the Japanese Embassy in an effort to obtain some proposals in writing. It was understood, however, that they would carry on this work as private individuals; the United States government would take no official cognizance of the talks until after Nomura's arrival.¹⁰⁰ As it turned out, they were destined to produce no concrete result until the beginning of April. In the meanwhile, both sides limited their formal exchanges to generalities.

VI.

Even during the period of Hitler's concentration upon the affairs of the western Mediterranean, his problems in the east were not ignored. Attention shifted increasingly to the Balkan area. From the summer of 1940, the Balkans had

¹⁰⁰ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 984-85.

stood out as the focus of burgeoning differences between Germany and the Soviet Union; and it was here that Germany's eastern policy was most active during the greater part of the autumn. As noted earlier, German pressure had helped force Rumania to yield to Russian demands for Bessarabia and the Bukovina in July. But in spite of this and the further dismemberment of that country which Berlin had sponsored in August, the Rumanian government did not forsake its new orientation toward Germany. During the September crisis which followed the award of southern Dobrudja to Bulgaria and a portion of Transylvania to Hungary, King Carol was forced to leave the country; and Rumania fell under an authoritarian regime headed by the pro-Nazi General Ion Antonescu. With the latter's permission, German troops began to occupy Rumania in October.¹⁰¹ Hitler's principal objective was still that of keeping the Balkans quiet, for unrest in that area not only lessened its usefulness to Germany as a source of food and raw materials but also gave both the British and the Russians an opportunity to fish in troubled waters. Aiming at still greater stability, Germany exerted pressure upon the nations beyond her southeastern frontier to adhere to the Tripartite Pact. Hungary, Rumania, and Slovakia submitted in the latter part of November.

But a new source of trouble had opened in the meanwhile.

¹⁰¹Cf. Ribbentrop to Tippleskirch (German chargé in Moscow), Oct. 9, 1940, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 206.

Annoyed by the German occupation of Rumania without Italian participation, Mussolini decided to proceed immediately with the invasion of Greece.¹⁰² His offensive started October 28 and ran into difficulties almost at once as the Greeks put up a much stouter resistance than anyone had anticipated. Now it was Hitler's turn to be annoyed; with the greatest irresponsibility, Rome was upsetting his careful arrangements for peace in the Balkans. In a letter to Mussolini written on November 20, he complained bitterly that he had not been adequately informed of Italian designs until it was too late and suggested that further operations against Greece be deferred to a more favorable time.¹⁰³

But it was already evident that Balkan tranquillity was not the whole key to the Russian situation. During the second week of November, Molotov finally accepted an invitation to confer with German leaders in Berlin. This visit produced a good deal of conversation bearing upon the points at issue between the two countries but no worthwhile results.¹⁰⁴ Berlin did not give up at once, however, and proposed a broad agreement between Germany, Italy, and Japan on the one hand

¹⁰²Ciano, Diaries, p. 300.

¹⁰³Hitler to Mussolini, Nov. 20, 1940, Hitler and Mussolini, Lettres Secrètes, p. 82.

¹⁰⁴Cf. Memorandum of conversation between Molotov and Ribbentrop, Nov. 13, 1940, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 254.

and Russia on the other which called for mutual non-aggression, recognition of spheres of influence, and economic coöperation.¹⁰⁵ But Russia wanted more than any member of the Axis was prepared to give. On November 26, Molotov refused to consider the German proposal unless German troops were withdrawn from Finland and demanded that Bulgaria be placed within the Soviet sphere of influence, that Russia be permitted to establish a military and naval base within range of the Bosphorus, that the area between Russia's southern boundary and the Persian Gulf be recognized as the legitimate prey of Soviet ambition, and that Japan renounce her coal and oil rights in northern Sakhalin.¹⁰⁶ With this, it was obvious that Germany's hope of drawing Russia into close collaboration with the Tripartite Pact would come to nothing, and Hitler commenced listening to the other side of the record.

What he heard was by no means uncongenial. His position was admittedly a good deal stronger than it had been in August 1939, and negotiation with his eastern neighbor seemed proportionately less essential. With the collapse of his efforts in mid-December to gain French and Spanish coöperation for a move against Gibraltar and North Africa, therefore,

¹⁰⁵See undated draft of agreement between the states of the Three-Power Pact and the Soviet Union, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 256

¹⁰⁶Schulenburg to Ribbentrop, Nov. 26, 1940, ibid., pp. 258-59.

Hitler embraced the solution offered by a Russian war. Tentative plans for invading the Soviet Union had been under consideration for some time; and on December 18, he ordered the German High Command to finish its preparations for attack by May 15, 1941.¹⁰⁷

German confidence was great, but German progress had slowed noticeably since the middle of the year. The British had stood firm in growing rather than diminishing strength. Neither France nor Spain had succumbed to the Führer's blandishments. And now, just as the invasion of Russia was being ordained, the Italian offensive in Greece failed miserably, while the British swiftly ejected Mussolini's armies from the positions they had assumed in western Egypt at the conclusion of Marshal Rodolfo Graziani's successful drive during the month of September.

On the last day of the year, Hitler indited another long epistle to his partner in Rome, revealing some--but not all--of his thoughts. Generally speaking, he was still optimistic. Only one final effort, he thought, would be required to crush England. France and Spain, to be sure, had played him false. Laval's dismissal he attributed to Weygand's influence, while Spain's refusal to collaborate betrayed Franco's own stupidity. There was not much hope,

¹⁰⁷ Directive No. 21, Dec. 18, 1940, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 261.

however, that the latter would change his mind.¹⁰⁸ The problem of Russia was growing daily; her machinations, for example, were at the bottom of unrest in the Balkans. The Soviets, he concluded, would bear watching; but he did not expect any Russian initiative against Italy and Germany as long as Stalin lived. The situation in North Africa was unfortunate but by no means fatal. At all events, it could not be retrieved for the time being. Summer would be upon them before German help could arrive, and German armor was not properly equipped for operations in such temperatures.¹⁰⁹ Although he did not say it, it was clear that everything was being packed in mothballs until after the Russian campaign. On this matter, Hitler did not choose to be communicative.

German intentions were no secret to the United States, however. As luck would have it, the American commercial attaché in Berlin, Sam E. Woods, enjoyed a connection with an anti-Nazi German who was in a position to know what was afoot. Through special arrangements, the two met frequently in a Berlin motion-picture theater where the German dropped notes in Woods' pocket. In this way, the American government learned that conferences reviewing plans to attack

¹⁰⁸ Hitler to Mussolini, Dec. 31, 1940, Hitler and Mussolini, Lettres Secrètes, pp. 104-7.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 109-110.

Russia had been under way since August; and news of the decisions made in December reached Hull the next month. Eventually, Woods even learned the main outlines of the German strategic plan. Suspecting that the German government had planted these reports for reasons of its own, Hull sent them to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for analysis. But the experts considered them probably authentic.¹¹⁰ This offered hope that our policy of restraint toward the Soviet Union was about to pay large dividends and raised the question of what might be done to hasten such an outcome.

An obvious recourse was to give Moscow fair warning of what portended and show our willingness to overlook Russia's habitually bumptious attitude by permitting a more generous flow of American exports to the Soviet Union. As soon as the State Department was convinced of the truth of reports from Berlin, Welles told Oumansky what he knew regarding German plans. The Russian Ambassador betrayed neither surprise nor gratitude on receiving this information and did not even trouble himself to ask for details. Apparently he did transmit the report to his government, however.¹¹¹ About the same time, January 21, the moral embargo which had prevailed against the Soviet Union since December 1939 was lifted.¹¹²

¹¹⁰Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 967-68.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 968; and Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 332.

¹¹²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 969.

This further increased the trade with Russia which had been carried on under the licensing system since October 1940. It also raised new differences with London, for the British government took as sour a view of this commerce as it was still taking of the North African trade contemplated by the United States. On February 5, Lord Halifax--who, as a consequence of Lord Lothian's death, had just been appointed British Ambassador to the United States--stated his government's conviction that substantial amounts of goods were passing through Russia to Germany. Hull replied that American exports to the Soviet Union were carefully regulated on a weekly basis and that he did not believe their volume had increased enough to provide cause for alarm. Explaining American policy in more detail, he added that Russia was sensitive in such matters and argued that the stiff bargains which Moscow had extracted from Berlin indirectly strengthened the democratic cause. "Our purpose," he concluded,

is to give less occasion for Soviet officials to feel unkindly toward this Government, especially in the event of some pivotal development where the slightest influence might tip the scales at Moscow against us in a most damaging and far-reaching way.¹¹³

Five days later, Hull answered another protest in substantially the same way.¹¹⁴ Since no British blockade lay athwart the sea route to Vladivostok, the American government felt

¹¹³Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 970-71.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 971.

free to ignore such misgivings without further argument and to sink yet deeper into its long preoccupation with Russian sensibilities.

Aid to Britain was still the most arresting facet of United States policy, however, and one which gave Berlin increasing concern as its preparations for the new spring offensive moved forward.¹¹⁵ In a conference held February 4, 1941, the German High Command agreed that American aid to Britain was fast becoming effective and pointed out that Japan and the Tripartite Pact held the key to the problem. A Japanese drive into Malaya and the Indies would at least divert American war materials from Britain to the Pacific; and if it led the United States to enter hostilities at Britain's side, this would be more than offset by Japan's consequent declaration of war.¹¹⁶ With these notions firmly in mind, Ribbentrop proceeded on February 13 to take soundings from Hiroshi Oshima, the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin.

Starting with an effort to explain away the Russian pact of August 1939 and Germany's failure to bring England to terms in the summer of 1940, the Foreign Minister spent some time reaching the point. But finally it came out, hedged with the customary verbiage. While Hitler manifestly had the situation well in hand, said Ribbentrop, Japanese

¹¹⁵Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Feb. 4, 1941, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, Vol. 1, p. 9.

¹¹⁶Annex 1 to above report, ibid., pp. 17-18.

coöperation would greatly speed the inevitable victory. Above all, Japan should not delay with opportunity knocking in this fashion. Under existing circumstances, a major drive against Britain in the Far East would have decisive results for the whole conflict; and Japan would quickly secure that Asiatic predominance which she could never achieve except by war. The surprise of Japanese intervention, coupled with its own lack of preparedness, would discourage action by the United States. And even if Washington did choose to send its Fleet beyond Hawaii, Japan could dispose of it without trouble. The Tripartite Pact had been important to German success in Europe and equally so to Japanese success in the Far East. This was a tie that could not be ignored; Japan had to bear in mind that realization of her imperial idea was contingent upon German victory. Oshima heard him out with becoming humility, but it was obvious that his enthusiasm did not burn as brightly as the speaker's.¹¹⁷

While winter thus moved on toward spring, Washington did nothing to advance its Spanish policy. On the other hand, considerable progress was made in negotiations for a trade agreement with North Africa.

Having completed his first-hand investigations, Murphy

¹¹⁷ Extract from report of conference between Ribbentrop and Oshima, Feb. 13, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 165, pt. 19, pp. 3644-47.

submitted an optimistic report on January 17.¹¹⁸ In the meanwhile, it appeared that Vichy was being subjected to heavy pressure for the reinstatement of Laval as Foreign Minister; and Washington became impatient to get on with the understanding before something happened.¹¹⁹ This led to further discussions with the British, but their views on the shipment of American goods to North Africa remained substantially unchanged. While they offered no serious objections to trade with Morocco--where, indeed, they were still plying a commerce of their own--Algeria and Tunisia were different matters. They placed smaller faith than the United States in Weygand's dependability and hinted that they did not understand how adequate safeguards against re-export could be established.¹²⁰ Striving to gain an immediate benefit of some kind, the British on February 7 offered to sanction the proposed agreement if its operation were made contingent upon the release of British and neutral shipping held in Moroccan ports; but Hull declined this suggestion.¹²¹ A few days later, however, the Gordian knot was cut and London was advised that we intended to go ahead with the program regardless of British objections. At the same time, Murphy was directed

¹¹⁸Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 129.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 134.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 132.

¹²¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 950.

to return to Algiers and begin definite negotiations.¹²²

Since the ground had been thoroughly prepared, understanding was achieved quickly. The Murphy-Weygand Agreement was initialed in Algiers on February 26 and accepted in both Vichy and Washington during the next two weeks.¹²³ That its terms were favorable to our interests could hardly be denied. It not only promised the Weygand regime numerous civilian commodities which would make its hold on the local populations much more secure; but by providing for the establishment of American control officers in the chief North African cities, it also guaranteed the United States government an unusual opportunity to maintain a close watch over developments in that area. Nevertheless, Britain continued to frown darkly. By the middle of March, the British government was suggesting, in effect, that the Murphy-Weygand Agreement either be discarded completely or extended to unoccupied France on a much larger scale and in return for sweeping guarantees against collaboration of any sort. But Washington declined both alternatives--Hull told Halifax on March 15 that he disagreed in principle with the idea of requiring a quid pro quo in these dealings with France--¹²⁴ and the prospect of friction remained.¹²⁵

¹²²Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 134.

¹²³Ibid., p. 135.

¹²⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 954.

¹²⁵Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 139.

VII.

But the doubts which troubled limited sectors of Anglo-American policy hardly touched its direct application to the war. Building upon foundations laid in the second half of 1940, the relationship of the two countries entered an important new phase in the opening months of 1941.

With the election safely behind him, President Roosevelt obviously felt much less hampered in the domain of public statement. Although he still dealt with one thing at a time, he turned generally from denial to affirmation and stated on November 8 that half of America's war production would be allocated to Great Britain.¹²⁶ Whether this announcement was meant to be statistically accurate is not important; but taken in conjunction with the known fact that American war production was entering a period of tremendous growth, his words certainly emphasized the vast extent of future aid to Britain and helped prepare the ground for consideration of her ability to pay for what she got.

Although the administration had carefully refrained from laboring the point, it had always been obvious that the cash-and-carry program offered no complete solution to the problem of supplying Great Britain and other countries if the war lasted very long. Since loans were ruled out by law--and apparently by public sentiment as well--it was clear that

¹²⁶Press conference, Nov. 8, 1940, Roosevelt, Papers, 1940, p. 563.

even a belligerent nation favored by the United States could profit from its access to American factories only as long as it possessed enough dollar exchange to cover its purchases. Thus far, war expenditures had dissipated Britain's supply of dollars much faster than she could replenish it through exports and services; and whatever the wealth of the British Empire, a prospective dollar shortage compelled her by December 1940 to impose serious restrictions upon her buying practices in the United States.¹²⁷ Feeling that the government had already reached the limit of feasible action through the direct transfer of Army and Navy surpluses, many authorities were convinced that another solution must be found.¹²⁸ How far this belief had progressed before the election is impossible to say. But it is certain that British finances gave the State Department serious concern during most of November. Returning to Washington from a visit to England on November 23, Lord Lothian added to the sense of urgency by pointing out that his government was near the end of its cash resources;¹²⁹ but the matter was apparently brought to a head by Winston Churchill's letter of December 7.

¹²⁷Cf. Stettinius, Lend-Lease, p. 60.

¹²⁸Cf. Morgenthau, "The Morgenthau Diaries," Colliers Magazine, Vol. 120 (Oct. 18, 1947), p. 72.

¹²⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, pp. 871-72.

At this time, Roosevelt was placidly enjoying a Caribbean voyage aboard the cruiser Tuscaloosa; and the Churchill letter was delivered to him by seaplane on December 9. The Prime Minister took advantage of the opportunity to discuss a number of things, including freedom of the seas, escort duty by United States naval and air forces, and the stubborn neutrality of Eire;¹³⁰ but his real message concerned finances. Despite the best will in the world, he said, Britain would soon run out of cash for her American purchases; and he ventured the opinion that it would "be wrong in principle and mutually disadvantageous in effect" for Great Britain, after waging the common fight, to emerge from the war "stripped to the bone."¹³¹ Roosevelt considered the matter for several days; and before the cruise was finished, he expounded the main outlines of Lend-Lease to his traveling companion, Harry L. Hopkins.¹³² According to Morgenthau, the idea was the President's own, conceived in one of those "brilliant flashes" which now and again amazed his subordinates, and a much more direct solution than anyone had expected.¹³³ Without further ado, the Treasury Department set to work on details.¹³⁴

¹³⁰Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 921.

¹³¹Extract of letter from Churchill to Roosevelt, Dec. 7, 1940, Morgenthau, "The Morgenthau Diaries," Colliers Magazine, Vol. 120 (Oct. 18, 1947), p. 72.

¹³²Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 224.

¹³³Morgenthau, "The Morgenthau Diaries," Colliers Magazine, Vol. 120 (Oct. 18, 1947), p. 74.

¹³⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 873.

Roosevelt gave the Lend-Lease project its public launching in a press conference held December 17, immediately after his return to Washington. Sketching a deep background, he began his discourse with a lecture on the economic lessons of the first World War, observing reflectively that no major war had ever "been lost through lack of money." He next pointed out that British war contracts were a positive aid to the defense of the United States because they stimulated war production and created new manufacturing facilities. Coming then to the heart of his discourse, he proposed that the United States take over British orders, turn them into American orders, and lease the materials so obtained--or sell them on mortgage--to countries resisting aggression. This procedure was justified, he stated, by the argument that such articles "would be more useful to the defense of the United States if they were used in Great Britain than if they were kept in storage here." He was striving, he explained, "to eliminate the dollar sign."¹³⁵

In the more polished phrases of his annual message, the President explained his desires to Congress on January 6. Emphasizing that he did not recommend a loan, he stated that he was thinking of arrangements which would enable certain countries to obtain war materials from the United States within the framework of our own defense program. He intimated

¹³⁵Press conference, Dec. 17, 1940, Roosevelt, Papers, 1940, pp. 605-7.

that payment in kind would be forthcoming at the end of the war and assured his listeners that the United States would pay no heed to aggressors' complaints even if they chose to regard our conduct as a breach of international law.¹³⁶ As drafted by Treasury experts during the first week in January,¹³⁷ the Lend-Lease bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 10.¹³⁸

Meanwhile, steps were taken to ensure that neither British penury nor congressional delay might interrupt the aid program. To sustain manufacturing processes, the British were advised on December 18 to place new orders for about three billion dollars worth of war materials despite their lack of resources with which to pay;¹³⁹ Roosevelt portrayed the United States as the "arsenal of democracy" in a fireside chat on December 29;¹⁴⁰ and Harry Hopkins departed for London to discuss plans with British authorities on January 7.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶Annual message of the President to the Congress, Jan. 6, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, pp. 29-30.

¹³⁷Morgenthau, "The Morgenthau Diaries," Colliers Magazine, Vol. 120 (Oct. 18, 1947), p. 74.

¹³⁸H. R. 1776 (77th Cong., 1st sess.), Congressional Record, Vol. 87, p. 121.

¹³⁹Davis and Lindley, How War Came, p. 120.

¹⁴⁰Fireside chat, Dec. 29, 1940, Roosevelt, Papers, 1940, p. 743.

¹⁴¹Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 230-31.

In England, Hopkins had a busy time inspecting war damage, receiving estimates of Great Britain's war potential, and carrying on discussions with such men as Churchill, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, and Lord Halifax--who had just been appointed British Ambassador to the United States. He found that their confidence was grim rather than buoyant. Churchill was preoccupied with questions of supply; the Prime Minister did not believe that the war would ever reach a stage which demanded the employment of great numbers of men in mass combat.¹⁴² Eden, on the other hand, expressed greatest concern about Japan. This was just before the February war scare already described, and the Foreign Minister nourished a conviction that Japan was about to attack British possessions in the Far East with German encouragement. He insisted that Britain had to know what the United States planned to do if Japan attacked Singapore or the Dutch East Indies; but Hopkins, of course, was unable to tell him.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, Hopkins' assurances regarding the Lend-Lease program boosted morale; and he left England with the promise that he would arrange at once for the repair of British warships in American yards.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²Excerpt from Hopkins to Roosevelt, Jan. 10, 1941, quoted in Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 238-39.

¹⁴³Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 259.

¹⁴⁴Davis and Lindley, How War Came, p. 184.

In the meanwhile, preparations for staff conversations in Washington were completed, and the talks got under way on January 29.¹⁴⁵ American naval units in the Atlantic were formally organized as the Atlantic Fleet on February 1, being placed under the command of Admiral Ernest J. King.¹⁴⁶ Throughout that month, the Navy's preoccupation with the Atlantic sea lanes continued. A special support force designed for escort duty was officially constituted on March 1;¹⁴⁷ and it was obvious that, as soon as this force was put to its intended use, war and non-belligerency would commence to overlap.

Such a development lay very close to the center of American fears. But no matter what its hazards in domestic politics, American participation in convoy work was the inevitable concomitant of Lend-Lease. The whole project would be reduced to absurdity if materials supplied at our own expense were permitted to go to the bottom without even reaching the British Isles. With the adoption of Lend-Lease, it would no longer be a question of whether the United States Navy should be used in this way but rather a question of when such action might become absolutely necessary. Considering

¹⁴⁵Report of United States-British staff conversations, Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, p. 1487.

¹⁴⁶Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 51.

¹⁴⁷Idem.

Britain's difficulties, this time would not be long in coming.

While airing his views to newspapermen in December, President Roosevelt had shrugged off the problem of delivery as a mere detail: "...you don't have to send an American flag and an American crew on an American vessel."¹⁴⁸ As presented to Congress, moreover, the bill itself made no reference to convoys, one way or the other. But that the administration was thinking of them is proved by the Navy's organization of a support force on March 1, and Stimson put the issue squarely before the President as early as January 22. In a memorandum regarding the Lend-Lease bill submitted on that date, he said:

In matériel the assistance rendered by this bill during the coming six months will be insignificant... It is my belief that consideration should be given to measures which will at the same time secure the life line of British supplies across the Atlantic and relieve the convoy duty units of her fleet which are sorely needed elsewhere.¹⁴⁹

While Roosevelt evidently shared the Secretary's belief, he refrained from any open espousal of convoys. In this he was probably wise, for Congress was so alert to the issue and so opposed to the whole convoy idea that the Lend-Lease Act, as finally passed on March 11, 1941, categorically stated that it did not authorize or permit convoy activities by the United States Navy or the operation of any American

¹⁴⁸ Press conference, Dec. 17, 1940, Roosevelt, Papers, 1940, p. 610.

¹⁴⁹ Memorandum by Stimson, Jan. 22, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 179, pt. 20, p. 4280.

ship in a combat zone forbidden to it by the neutrality act of 1939.¹⁵⁰ But even so, the Act was a formidable instrument representing a great advance in American policy. For Lend-Lease not only disposed of inter-Allied financial problems at a stroke. As a continuing and ever-expanding program of aid, it formed a much more decisive break with neutrality than any previous single action having definite beginning and recognizable end.

By the middle of March 1941, therefore, the United States had definitely assumed its place in the world crisis. Nothing short of an immediate declaration of war could have rendered its alignments more clear; and as they were confirmed in strategic understandings at the military level, wide diplomatic coöperation, and unprecedented subsidies, these ties were gaining the strength of a formal alliance. Thanks to the Tripartite Pact and to well-founded expectations of a German attack on the Soviet Union, the United States was now warming toward Russia as fast as it could. It was also embarked upon a long-term program to gain advantage through its unbroken relations with France. These two policies, combined with American slowness in Spain, revealed the chief differences between Great Britain and the United States. For in spite of recurring British alarms about Japan, the two

¹⁵⁰Sec. 3 (d), ch. 11 (77th Cong., 1st sess.), United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 55, p. 32.

governments were united in the belief that action in the Pacific should be restricted to maintaining the status quo while they pressed for a decision on the other side of the world.

CHAPTER VII

PLANS, EXPEDIENTS, AND BATTLE AT SEA

I.

The British-American staff conversations which had opened in Washington on January 29, 1941, lasted throughout the debate on Lend-Lease and continued into the final week of March. The exact course of this two-month discussion can only be surmised. But the conferees reached substantial agreement by March 27 and on that date finished a long report which embodied their main conclusions and recommendations.

This document carefully avoided the question of an Anglo-American alliance. Its preamble left no doubt that the talks were conducted wholly at strategic and operational levels by ranking military and naval officers without authority, on either side, to discuss binding political commitments, and that all decisions were subject to later confirmation by the civilian heads of the two governments.¹ As expressed in the report, the purpose of the conversations was

¹Report of United States-British staff conversations, Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, p. 1488.

To determine the best methods by which the armed forces of the United States and British Commonwealth, with its present Allies, could defeat Germany and the powers allied with her, should the United States be compelled to resort to war.²

In pursuance of this objective, the military and naval experts were to seek

To reach agreements concerning the methods and nature of Military Coöperation between the two nations, including the allocation of the principal areas of responsibility, the major lines of the military strategy to be pursued by both nations, the strength of the forces which each may be able to commit, and the determination of satisfactory command arrangements both as to supreme Military control, and as to unity of field command in cases of strategic and tactical joint operations.³

They achieved harmony on all the main points. It was ordained that coöperation should begin with continuous study of planning and the exchange of intelligence data and technical information. To facilitate this commerce in knowledge, the United States and Great Britain agreed to establish military and naval missions in London and Washington respectively.⁴ Joint planning was to continue through these same agencies until the United States entered the war; then they were scheduled to yield their functions to a more formally constituted body known as the Supreme War

²Report of United States-British staff conversations, Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, p. 1487.

³Ibid., p. 1488.

⁴Ibid., p. 1494; and Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 49.

Council.⁵ Even more significant of growing unity was the joint basic war plan drawn up by the conferees and annexed to the report.

Commonly known as ABC--1, the short title of the entire report, this plan set forth the strategy of British-American coöperation in a worldwide conflict. Taking account of potential as well as existing belligerents, it assumed that if the United States went to war against Germany and Italy hostilities with Japan would soon follow. The plan recognized, of course, that such an enlargement of the war would not diminish Britain's need for American supplies; direct material aid was to continue in as great a volume as possible.⁶ Otherwise, however, major roles were assigned on a geographical basis; and to this end, the plan divided the world into a number of broad zones.

For obvious reasons, the western Atlantic (north of 25 degrees South Latitude and west of 30 degrees West Longitude) and the eastern Pacific (east of 140 degrees East Longitude, except north of 30 degrees North Latitude where this zone reached the Asiatic coast) were designated as

⁵The Supreme War Council became the Combined Chiefs of Staff in January 1942. Although this body is not specifically mentioned in either the basic report or any of its various annexes as they appear among the exhibits of the Pearl Harbor investigating committee, Professor Morison, who had full and reliable sources of information, states that it was provided for in the staff agreement. See Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 48.

⁶United States-British Commonwealth Joint Basic War Plan (Annex 3 to Report), Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, p. 1504; and Report, p. 1489.

areas of American responsibility.⁷ British areas included the United Kingdom and home waters, the eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and India (which embraced India itself and the Indian Ocean from 92 degrees East Longitude westward to the coast of Africa).⁸ Between the Indian area and the Pacific area lay a third operational region comprising the Far Eastern area (southeastern Asia, the Netherlands Indies, and the Philippines) and the Australia and New Zealand area. By implication at least, this was made a region of joint responsibility where each nation with substantial interests (Great Britain, the United States, The Netherlands, Australia, and New Zealand) would deal primarily with the defense of its own territory but would, in addition cooperate with the others in the defense of the entire region under the strategic control of the British.⁹

Of course, responsibility was not exclusive in any zone; it was understood that joint action should be employed whenever it became necessary or feasible.¹⁰ But to render

⁷United States-British Commonwealth Joint Basic War Plan, Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, pp. 1504, 1505, 1511.

⁸Ibid., pp. 1504, 1531.

⁹Ibid., pp. 1515-20.

¹⁰Report of United States-British staff conversations, Mar. 27, 1941, ibid., p. 1493.

the major responsibility as exact as possible, specific tasks were assigned for each area; and the plan even attempted to estimate the forces which would be available for carrying them out. Only where it concerned the Far Eastern sector was the agreement notably vague, and it had been realized for some time that this was where the problem of coöperation would be greatest. During his informal conversations in London the previous autumn, as noted above, Rear Admiral Ghormley had reported certain differences arising out of British insistence that a portion of the United States Pacific Fleet be based on Singapore. It was soon to appear that British and American views were still far apart on this and a number of related matters. Another obstacle to the formulation of more detailed plans for the defense of this region was lack of knowledge concerning other Far Eastern powers. China, of course, was not expected to do anything outside her own borders; but the Dutch had worthwhile naval and air forces in the Indies, and consultation with representatives of the Netherlands government was obviously necessary before proceeding further.

When all was said and done, however, the Far East was admittedly secondary. Following concepts already in use, discussion had started with the belief that the Atlantic and European areas should be treated as the decisive theater in the impending conflict and had clung throughout to the assumption that the United States would bring its principal

effort to bear in this part of the world.¹¹ Although its Pacific Fleet was assigned such formidable tasks as establishing control over the Caroline and Marshall Islands and diverting Japanese land forces from any move against the Malay Barrier, the main duty of the United States lay on the other side of the American continent. For the war's early stages, at least, its role here was conceived as primarily naval, involving support of the Anglo-American position in the western Atlantic. Accordingly, its forces were to devote themselves to the kind of tasks for which they were already being prepared. They were to protect the sea communications of the associated powers by escorting, covering, and patrolling, and by destroying the raiding forces of the enemy. They were to break up Axis sea communications by capturing or destroying vessels which traded directly or indirectly with the enemy. They were to defend the territory of the associated governments in the Western Hemisphere and prevent the extension of enemy power into this area. Finally, they were to prepare for the occupation of the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands.¹²

The Washington report encountered some delay in gaining

¹¹Report of United States-British staff conversations, Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, p. 1491. For additional reflections on this decision, see Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 48-49.

¹²Report of United States-British staff conversations, Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, p. 1506.—

acceptance at the political level. But it served as foundation for a new Army-Navy basic war plan which was drawn up in the course of the next month; and along with this plan--known as Rainbow No. 5--it was approved by the Secretary of the Navy on May 28 and by the Secretary of War on June 2.¹³ President Roosevelt declined to express any kind of official sanction for the time being on the ground that the master war plan which constituted the heart of the report had not yet been finally accepted by the British government.¹⁴ Nevertheless, he was obviously well satisfied with arrangements; and even though many of them could not go into effect until this country entered the war, the exact relationship between tasks assigned to American naval forces in the Atlantic and the preparations which these forces had been undergoing since the autumn of 1940 made it perfectly clear that the United States Navy could begin many of its duties in this area without waiting for either the outbreak of hostilities or presidential approval of ABC--1.

The Navy's preparations to aid in the defense of the Atlantic sea lanes continued without abatement through

¹³Report of United States-British staff conversations, Mar. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 49, pt. 15, p. 1485; and Kimmel's testimony, Jan. 15, 1946, ibid., pt. 6, p. 2502. For the Navy's section of this plan, see W.P.L.--46, Navy Basic War Plan--Rainbow No. 5, ibid., Ex. 129, pt. 18, pp. 2880-2941. Also Stark's letter promulgating it, Chief of Naval Operations to Distribution List for W.P.L.--46, May 26, 1941, ibid., Ex. 129, pt. 18, p. 2877.

¹⁴Gerow's testimony, Dec. 5, 1945, ibid., pt. 3, p. 995.

March and April. The special patrol force which had been constituted on March 1 and placed under the command of Rear Admiral Arthur LeR. Bristol, Jr., immediately began serious training in anti-submarine warfare.¹⁵ At the same time, Bristol's chief of staff, Captain Louis Denfeld, hurried to the British Isles in search of bases at which the European end of an American escort system could be anchored. He chose two pairs of bases suited to the needs of destroyers and naval aircraft--Gare Loch and Loch Ryan in western Scotland and Londonderry and Lough Erne in Northern Ireland.¹⁶ On March 20, Knox informed the President that the United States Navy was almost ready to begin escorting transatlantic convoys between North America and Great Britain, explaining that he contemplated sending 27 destroyers and 4 squadrons of Catalina flying boats to the Irish bases about the middle of September, together with some 15,000 American troops.¹⁷

In the meanwhile, Britain's transport difficulties grew steadily worse. By the end of March, her losses since the beginning of the war totaled 923 merchant ships of nearly 4,000,000 tons, while non-British losses--many of which had a direct bearing upon the amount of cargo space available

¹⁵Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 54.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 54.

to Britain--accounted for nearly 600 more ships and upwards of 2,000,000 additional tons.¹⁸ A modicum of satisfaction could be derived from the sinking of five submarines by units of the Royal Navy in March; but toward the end of the month, U-boats commenced operating much farther west than heretofore in order to strike east-bound convoys after their Canadian escorts had turned back and before their British escorts were met.¹⁹ This move was announced on March 26 by an order of the German government which proclaimed a new operational zone in the North Atlantic extending from the latitude of southern France to a northern limit well beyond the Arctic Circle and westward to the three-mile limit of Greenland. Within its boundaries, all vessels faced the threat of destruction.²⁰ The danger posed by this enlarged zone of operations became evident almost at once, for 10 ships of a 22-ship convoy were sunk on the night of April 3 by a German "wolf-pack" in the neighborhood of 28 degrees West.²¹

Such an extension of U-boat warfare was of more than

¹⁸See tabulation of British Admiralty, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, p. 613.

¹⁹Cf. Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 56.

²⁰German government notice of zone of operations, Mar. 26, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, p. 504.

²¹Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 56.

indirect concern to Washington. Following concepts laid down in the Declaration of Panama, the American government had come to define the 26th meridian as the dividing line between the Eastern and Western hemispheres.²² Since the new German operational zone extended as far west as the 38th meridian in the neighborhood of Greenland, it was clear that Nazi submarines were now prowling in waters whose exemption from belligerent activity the United States regarded as essential to its own interests and that a sizable area had been opened to direct conflict between this country and Germany. When this thought was added to growing worry over the magnitude of British shipping losses, Atlantic problems assumed a new urgency. Reviewing their many aspects on April 4, Stark wrote to Admiral Kimmel at Pearl Harbor:

The situation is obviously critical in the Atlantic. In my opinion, it is hopeless except as we take strong measures to save it.²³

Such measures were not long in coming. In fact, they had already started. On March 30, the United States government took protective custody of sixty-five Axis and Axis-controlled vessels in American ports after finding evidence that they were being sabotaged by their crews.²⁴ On April

²²Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2292.

²³Stark to Kimmel, Apr. 4, 1941, ibid., Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2150.

²⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 927. See also Hull to Colonna, Apr. 3, 1941, United States, Department of State, United States and Italy, 1936-1946: Documentary Record (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1946), pp. 24-25. Cited henceforth as United States and Italy.

7, Stark ordered the transfer of two destroyer squadrons from the Pacific to the Atlantic Fleet in addition to the battleships Idaho, Mississippi, and New Mexico; the carrier Yorktown; and the light cruisers Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Savannah, and Nashville.²⁵ Two days later, the United States assumed a temporary protectorate over Greenland by virtue of a somewhat informal agreement with Henrik de Kauffmann, the Danish Minister in Washington, and coldly rejected Copenhagen's prompt disavowal of this act.²⁶ Likewise on April 9, ten Coast Guard cutters equipped for escort duty were transferred to the British.²⁷ On April 10, President Roosevelt asked Congress for authority to requisition any foreign vessel in American waters whose services were deemed essential to our own defense.²⁸ The same day, he noted the continued withdrawal of Italian forces in North Africa and opened the Red Sea to American shipping

²⁵Stark to Kimmel, Apr. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 11, p. 5503; and Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 57.

²⁶For text of agreement, see Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 4 (Apr. 12, 1941), pp. 445-47; also Kauffmann to Hull, Apr. 13, 1941, ibid. (Apr. 19, 1941), pp. 470-71; and Hull to Kauffman, Apr. 14, 1941, ibid., p. 471. Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 935, 938-39.

²⁷Davis and Lindley, How War Came, p. 187; and Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 36.

²⁸Message of the President to Congress, Apr. 10, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, p. 630.

by proclaiming the abolition of the combat zone about its southern end.²⁹ A new operation plan issued to the Atlantic Fleet by Admiral King on April 18 confirmed the 26th meridian as the eastern boundary of the Western Hemisphere, announcing that this included all of Greenland, "all of the islands of the Azores, the whole of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Bahama Islands, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico."

The plan continued as follows:

Entrance into the Western Hemisphere by naval ships or aircraft of the belligerents other than those powers having sovereignty over territory in the Western Hemisphere is to be viewed as possibly actuated by an unfriendly interest toward shipping or territory in the Western Hemisphere.³⁰

This last was a partial answer to the German notice of March 26, and Roosevelt filled it out almost immediately. On April 21, he issued an order directing ships of the Atlantic Fleet to "trail" all German and Italian merchant ships, naval vessels, and aircraft that were encountered within the limits of the Western Hemisphere as defined by Admiral King and to broadcast their movements in plain language every four hours.³¹ Since British ships and planes were the most obvious beneficiaries of such a practice, it was clear that the United States was drawing close to

²⁹Proclamation No. 2474, Apr. 10, 1941, Federal Register, Vol. 6, pp. 1905-6.

³⁰Quoted in Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 61.

³¹Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, pp. 2292-93.

belligerent action. As a matter of fact, the first direct clash between German and American naval units had already taken place. For on April 10, while cruising off the coast of Iceland, the United States destroyer Niblack had noted the approach of a submarine by means of its sound equipment. And although the submarine, presumably German, had withdrawn when the Niblack dropped depth charges, this incident revealed the plain shape of things to come.³²

II.

The pilgrimage of the Japanese Foreign Minister to Moscow, Berlin, and Rome which Churchill had predicted in calling off the February war scare finally began in March; and as Matsuoka rolled westward over the endless distances of the Trans-Siberian Railway, preparations were made to receive him in Berlin. German plans for embroiling Japan in a Far Eastern war to relieve British and American pressure in the Atlantic were still bubbling yeastily, and on March 18, Hitler reviewed the situation once more in a conference with Admiral Raeder, Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. The latter felt that Japan should be pressed to attack Singapore without delay and made no secret of his concern over reports from Tokyo that such a move could not be undertaken before German troops landed in England--a

³²Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 57.

fairly remote prospect considering Berlin's plans for an eastern campaign. Since he believed that fear of Russia also had much to do with Japanese reluctance to project a drive into Malaya and the Indies, Raeder advised the Führer to tell Matsuoka of his plans for attacking the Soviet Union.³³ What Hitler thought of this counsel is not recorded. But Matsuoka's visit did afford a good opportunity to renew arguments used on Oshima a few weeks earlier; and when the Japanese Foreign Minister reached Berlin after a brief pause in the Russian capital and a meeting with Stalin, both Hitler and Ribbentrop were chafing for action.

Discussion began on March 27 with an interview between Matsuoka and Ribbentrop. Although it was no small triumph to outdo his visitor in point of loquacity, the German Foreign Minister was himself a vigorous talker and, as usual, carried the brunt of the conversation. Opening with his customary lecture on German strength and enemy weakness, Ribbentrop recited statistics on the size of the Wehrmacht, assured his auditor that submarine warfare in the Atlantic would soon be greatly intensified, and stated that German forces now in Tripoli under General Erwin Rommel had turned the tide of Italian defeat in North Africa. Most of the Balkan countries now adhered to the Tripartite Pact, while Spain was very close to it--at least in spirit--and Turkey

³³Report by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, pp. 32-33.

was being sounded on the possibility of joining likewise.³⁴ As he had done with Oshima in February, Ribbentrop next tried to explain away the non-aggression pact with Russia, adding in strict confidence that Germany's relations with the Soviet Union, while correct, were no longer very friendly. Russia, he declared, was doing many things, especially in the Balkans, that were inimical to German interests; if she ever presented a direct threat, the Führer would crush her without mercy.³⁵

Swinging round again to the British, Ribbentrop expressed the view that Churchill would have yielded long ago had it not been for Roosevelt's encouragement to go on fighting. Germany was uncertain whether the United States really intended to enter the war and knew that American aid to Britain would remain ineffective for some time to come. Nevertheless, the United States was furnishing the hope which kept England from pulling out of the war; and the primary goal of the Tripartite Pact was to scare America into a change of course before its aid did become effective. The capture of Singapore by Japan, he concluded, would probably accomplish this end. It would be a serious blow to England; it would so embarrass Roosevelt's foreign policy

³⁴Memorandum of conversation between Matsuoka and Ribbentrop, Mar. 27, 1941, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 281-84.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 284-85.

as virtually to rule out the likelihood of American retaliation; and it would immediately place Japan in a position to consummate her New Order in the Far East.³⁶

This session ended before Matsuoka could offer any comments, but the attack was resumed in the afternoon by the Führer himself. After virtually duplicating Ribbentrop's monologue, Hitler--not unnaturally--presented the same conclusion.³⁷ Availing himself of his first good opportunity to speak, Matsuoka expressed his general agreement with the day's theme but added that he was not yet complete master of the situation at home. There was much opposition in Japan, especially from intellectual circles and even from the Imperial Family itself, to a definite break with Great Britain and the United States. He would do his best to propagate his own views and those of the Führer after his return, but he could make no pledge on behalf of his government for the time being.³⁸

Toward the end of the interview, Matsuoka alluded to his recent conversation with Stalin. He indicated that he had urged the advantages of Russian participation with Germany and Japan in a common front against the Anglo-Saxon powers and that Stalin had promised him an answer on his

³⁶Memorandum of conversation between Matsuoka and Ribbentrop, Mar. 27, 1941, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 286-88.

³⁷Memorandum of conversation between Hitler and Matsuoka, Mar. 27, 1941, ibid., p. 292.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 294-95.

return journey.³⁹ This news begot scant enthusiasm from his hosts either that day or the next; for after he had slept on the possibility of a Soviet-Japanese rapprochement, Ribbentrop essayed to change Matsuoka's orientation with an assurance that Japan need not hesitate to attack Singapore out of fear of leaving her own rear unprotected. If Russia offered any threatening moves against Japan, Germany would strike her at once.⁴⁰ But an understanding with Moscow lay close to Matsuoka's heart, and he soon revealed that either a non-aggression treaty or a neutrality pact was in the wind. The other counseled him against such a step, "since this probably would not altogether fit the framework of the present situation."⁴¹ On second thought, however, the Nazi Foreign Minister seems to have regarded his own advice as too precipitate; and he explained to Matsuoka on March 29 that Germany did not necessarily disapprove of a simple neutrality pact between Japan and the Soviet Union. He even hinted that such an arrangement might help Japan get about her main task, which was the reduction of Singapore.⁴²

³⁹Memorandum of conversation between Hitler and Matsuoka, Mar. 27, 1941, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 297.

⁴⁰Memorandum of conversation between Matsuoka and Ribbentrop, Mar. 28, 1941, ibid., p. 299.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 302.

⁴²Memorandum of conversation between Matsuoka and Ribbentrop, Mar. 29, 1941, ibid., p. 309.

There were further conversations in the German capital both before and after Matsuoka's side trip to Rome. But these led nowhere. Notwithstanding Hitler's assurance that Germany would immediately come to Japan's aid if aggression in the south led to war with the United States, and despite the Führer's proffer of his own exalted advice concerning the best method of reducing Singapore,⁴³ a definite Japanese move was still far in abeyance when Matsuoka left Berlin on April 4. Everything considered, the apostle of change in Asia had not done badly at the shrine of Europe's new order. By almost any reckoning, he had yielded less than he had gained; for as payment on a multitude of half promises which committed him to nothing, he had obtained Berlin's reluctant clearance for his proposed understanding with Moscow.

Although his subsequent negotiations in the Russian capital dragged on for more than a week, he managed by April 13 to conclude a neutrality pact which, outwardly at least, seemed to guarantee Japan's rear against hostile Soviet action even if she did embark upon a Pacific war.⁴⁴

⁴³Memorandum of conversation between Matsuoka and Ribbentrop, Mar. 29, 1941, Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 309.

⁴⁴Neutrality Pact between Japan and the Soviet Union, April 13, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, pp. 291-2.

Lacking detailed knowledge of the Berlin talks, Washington could not assess the full bearing of this move upon the current state of German-Japanese relations. But its implications as between Japan and Russia were so obvious that it was not a development which the United States could view with any complacency.

Meanwhile, the unofficial talks which Bishop Walsh and Father Drought had been commissioned to pursue at the Japanese Embassy came to a head; and a new set of proposals was conveyed to Hull through Postmaster General Walker on April 9.⁴⁵ These were more accommodating, on the whole, than might have been expected. At least, they seemed to contemplate a broad settlement of the many points in dispute between the United States and Japan. To begin, the United States would request Chiang Kai-shek to negotiate peace with Japan on the basis of guaranteed Chinese independence, the withdrawal of Japanese troops from China, no indemnities or territorial changes, recognition of Manchukuo, and the "coalescence" of Wang Ching-wei's regime with the Chinese Nationalist government. In addition, Japan was to pledge that there would be "no large-scale concentrated immigration of Japanese into Chinese territory" and that the Open Door would be resumed. If the Chinese declined such a settlement, the United States, on the other hand, would

⁴⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 991.

discontinue aid to China. So far as non-Chinese issues were concerned, Japan would undertake not to execute her commitments under the Tripartite Pact unless one of the parties to that agreement were aggressively attacked by a power not then involved in the European war; the United States would promise to abstain from any "aggressive alliance" designed to assist one nation against another; and both governments would guarantee the independence of the Philippines.⁴⁶

The great difficulty with this project was that it did not as yet have Tokyo's endorsement; it was as unofficial on the Japanese side as on the American. But Nomura admitted that he had helped frame the proposals and indicated his willingness to seek his government's approval.⁴⁷ Although Hull was not completely satisfied, he agreed a week later that the document might constitute a suitable basis for opening discussions provided that it were supplemented by guarantees on the following points: (1) respect for the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of all nations, (2) non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, (3) support of the principle of equal commercial opportunity for all nations, and (4) preservation of the status quo in the Pacific. Nomura accepted Hull's additions

⁴⁶Proposals presented to the Department of State on Apr. 9, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 398-402.

⁴⁷Memorandum by Hull, Apr. 14, 1941, ibid., p. 403.

and referred the whole to Tokyo.⁴⁸

The next move was Japan's, and this was uncertain at best. Ambassador Steinhardt had seen Matsuoka during the latter's stay in Moscow, and he cabled the State Department a summary of his conversation on April 11. According to Matsuoka, Japan recognized no obligation to fight the United States unless the United States declared war on Germany. For the rest, he did not think Germany would seize the initiative by declaring war on the United States; but if such a contingency did arise, he hoped that the American government would allow Japan to clarify her intentions before taking any action in the Pacific.⁴⁹ Set against the known terms of the Tripartite Pact, Matsuoka's recent conversations in Berlin and Rome, his infant neutrality agreement with Russia, and the likelihood of a much more conciliatory offer to settle the China Incident than had previously been vouchsafed, these statements revealed nothing of Japanese policy and left the current vagueness of Japanese designs as impenetrable as ever. But it was fitting to remember that the draft of April 9, even if accepted by Tokyo, would constitute no more than a talking point. Nor was there any way to foretell the scope of Japanese activity in the meanwhile. Under these circumstances,

⁴⁸Memorandum by Hull, Apr. 16, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 407.

⁴⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 993.

the need for reserve was plain; and Hull awaited Tokyo's reaction to its Ambassador's proposal in no very trusting frame of mind.

It is impossible to say how accurately Japanese intentions at this moment were comprehended in Berlin; but notwithstanding Matsuoka's coyness at the beginning of April, the German government now appeared hopeful that Japan meant to go through with the attack on Singapore. Hitler told the impatient Raeder on April 20 that the Russo-Japanese pact had been concluded with his acquiescence. He added that the agreement had special value because it restrained any aggressive designs which Japan might harbor with respect to Vladivostok and left her perfectly free to deal with the problem of southern Asia. Moreover, he claimed that he had assurances from both Matsuoka and Oshima that Japan would be prepared to strike southward in May.⁵⁰ As though in confirmation of the Führer's words, Japan was already pushing new demands against Vichy for economic concessions in Indo-China. France yielded again on May 6, signing agreements which permitted Japanese capital to take part in the development of Indo-Chinese agricultural, mining, and hydraulic enterprises; gave Japanese business firms a larger share in the handling of exports and imports, and

⁵⁰ Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Apr. 20, 1941, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, p. 53.

provided for the establishment of Japanese schools in Indo-China.⁵¹

This foretold no moderation of Japanese policy. Neither did the official revision of the draft proposals of April 9, which Nomura finally submitted on May 12. As far as China was concerned, the only major addition to the suggested peace terms was a stipulation for a Sino-Japanese agreement covering joint defense against communism; but other changes were more significant. Tokyo demanded that resumption of normal trade relations between Japan and the United States be included in the settlement, that Japanese immigration into this country on a non-discriminatory basis be considered, and insisted that the Japanese government must reaffirm its obligations under the Tripartite Pact.⁵² Two days later, Matsuoka gave further evidence that Japan was not turning over a new leaf when he informed Grew that he and Konoye were determined to use only peaceful methods of carrying out Japan's southward advance "unless circumstances render this impossible."⁵³

In Hull's view, the official Japanese proposals of May

⁵¹For comment on this treaty, see Virginia Thompson, "The Japan-Indochina Trade Pact," Far Eastern Survey, Vol. 10 (June 2, 1941), pp. 116-18.

⁵²Draft proposal presented by Nomura, May 12, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 420-25.

⁵³Hull's testimony, Nov. 23, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 2, p. 419.

12 contained some obvious traps. On May 16, he refused any pledge to discontinue aid to China even if Chiang Kai-shek did reject the suggested terms and insisted that the clause calling for joint Sino-Japanese action against communism should be altered to require nothing more than "parallel measures of defense against subversive activities from external sources."⁵⁴ He likewise disclaimed all thought of limiting American aid to Britain and made it plain that current negotiations would make little progress toward a Pacific settlement unless Japan agreed that her obligations to Germany and Italy under the Tripartite Pact involved no duty to restrict American freedom of action in this respect.⁵⁵

Thus it became clear at the outset that Japan and the United States were about as far from agreement as ever. But the Japanese proposals of May 12 and the American reply of May 16 did succeed in giving discussion a new impetus and at least the appearance of a new framework, providing the basis for a long series of talks between Hull and Nomura which, with only one major interruption, was to last until October. And through it all, the Tripartite Pact was to figure increasingly as the primary stumbling block--for Japan's reluctance to disavow her obligations under that

⁵⁴Hull's Draft Suggestion B, May 16, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 433. His refusal to consider stopping American aid to China was implicit in the omission of such a provision from this draft suggestion.

⁵⁵Oral statement by Hull, May 16, 1941, ibid., pp. 429, 432; also Draft Suggestion A, May 16, 1941, ibid., pp. 432-33.

instrument flowed as strongly as Hull's insistence that nothing else could be done until this fundamental point was settled.

Thus another issue was drawn in the spring of 1941. And although it did little immediate good, the United States from this moment forward enjoyed a peculiar advantage over its opponent. For American cryptographers had broken the Japanese diplomatic code (as well as the code used in broadcasting ship movements), and a regular monitoring system was established in the early part of May.⁵⁶ Owing to the persistence with which the secret was kept, the Japanese government had no cause to take alarm and change either code; and henceforth the State Department had almost complete access to messages passing between the Japanese Foreign Office and its missions abroad. With singular fitness, the process by which Japanese messages were intercepted, decoded, and distributed to key officials in the American government became known as "Magic".

III.

Thanks to Great Britain's sympathetic relations with Turkey and to the manifest ambitions of both Germany and Russia, the Balkan Peninsula had constituted an area of vast strategic importance since the beginning of the war--while the transfers of Rumanian territory to Russia and Hungary in

⁵⁶Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 998.

the summer of 1940, the Italian invasion of Greece a few weeks later, and the rapid extension of German influence through the Balkans generally had greatly heightened its original significance. As a result, the United States government had been taking a much more direct interest in Balkan affairs since the end of the year.

At the direction of the President, Colonel William J. Donovan visited the numerous Balkan capitals during the month of January 1941 in search of first-hand knowledge of local conditions. Long a prominent attorney in Buffalo, New York, famed as an infantry commander in the first World War, and soon to become known as head of the Office of Strategic Services, he pursued his investigations with considerable energy and skill. Since neither Greece, Bulgaria, nor Yugoslavia had fallen completely into the toils of the Tripartite Pact, these three countries were of greatest interest to Washington. In Athens and Sofia, Donovan called attention to the wish of his government to assist all nations that opposed Germany.⁵⁷ But Yugoslavia was the most important of the trio, and he chose Belgrade as the focal point of his efforts.

President Roosevelt had already assured the Yugoslav Minister to the United States, Constantin Fotitch, that Yugoslavia would receive help under the pending Lend-Lease

⁵⁷Davis and Lindley, How War Came, p. 199.

bill if she chose to hold out against the Axis; and Fotitch was doing everything he could to direct such a choice from Washington.⁵⁸ But Donovan found that German pressure on Yugoslavia to sign the Tripartite Pact was very great. The Regent, Prince Paul, expressed himself as sympathetic to Britain, while both Dragisha Cvetkovich, the Premier, and Alexander Cincar-Markovitch, the Foreign Minister, professed similar feelings. But it was obvious that their fear of Germany outweighed their love for the democratic cause and that they could be expected to yield when the final pinch came. However, General Dušan Simovich, commander of the Yugoslav Air Force, told Donovan that arrangements had already been made by various officers of the Army and Air Corps to overthrow the Regency if it succumbed to Germany.⁵⁹ Not greatly reassured, the State Department continued its efforts to stiffen Paul's resolution through the American Minister in Belgrade, Arthur Bliss Lane.

Lane considered a Yugoslav-Bulgar-Turkish understanding the best hope of keeping Germany from dominating the entire peninsula and suggested on January 25 that Hull urge those three governments to adopt a joint defense policy. Hull rejected this advice on January 29, however, and a week later declined Halifax's request that he support British

⁵⁸Davis and Lindley, How War Came, pp. 200-201.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 201.

efforts to promote talks between Yugoslavia and Turkey.⁶⁰ By this time, German troops were moving into Bulgaria. Lane cabled on February 8 that Prince Paul was not disposed to resist German pressure much longer. But Hull was still cautious--and seemingly not very hopeful in any event. In notes to the Bulgarian, Turkish, and Yugoslav governments, he merely called attention to the American policy of aiding democracies and emphasized his belief that Britain would win the war.⁶¹ Lane continued to send disturbing reports, and Roosevelt took a hand by authorizing him on February 22 to tell Paul that American sympathy was greatest for countries that did not yield to aggression without a struggle. After considering this message and its implied threat that Yugoslav-American friendship would suffer permanent damage if he gave in too easily, the Regent promised Lane that he would make no deals with Hitler.⁶²

But resistance to Germany was crumbling swiftly everywhere north of Greece, and Bulgaria adhered to the Tripartite Pact on March 1. As German forces in that country started moving toward the Greek border with the plain intention of retrieving the Italian military debacle of the winter just past, Washington learned that Turkey contemplated

⁶⁰Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 928.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 928-29; and Hull to Lane, Feb. 9, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 197, p. 619.

⁶²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 930-31.

no military action regardless of what happened in Greece and that the policy of Yugoslavia was uncertain at best. Greece alone was disposed to stand firm. London announced that she would receive full British aid to oppose a German invasion; and seizing on this last point, Hull assured Halifax on March 3 that the United States would supply the Greeks with war materials to the limit of its ability.⁶³

Roosevelt froze Bulgarian credits on March 4, and Hull instructed Lane the next day to continue his efforts with Yugoslav leaders. On March 10, Churchill suggested that British and American diplomats in Moscow, Ankara, and Belgrade join forces in an attempt to work out a scheme for Balkan resistance; he particularly wanted to secure a Russian promise to assist Turkey, But Hull was more pessimistic than ever; a British guarantee of military aid to Yugoslavia and Turkey was the only further move he considered worthwhile.⁶⁴

In plain truth, the immediate military situation was hopeless. With vast forces poised to strike, Germany was destined to take control of the Balkans regardless of what any other country (with the possible exception of Russia) said or did. By March 15, Prince Paul's mood to resist was obviously petering out. Considering his surrender inevitable,

⁶³Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 931.

⁶⁴Idem.

President Roosevelt froze Yugoslav credits on March 24. The Yugoslav government adhered to the Tripartite Pact the next day.⁶⁵

The prediction which General Simovich had made to Donovan in January was speedily fulfilled. The Regency was overthrown on March 27; Simovich formed a new ministry at once; and Yugoslav troops were deployed along the frontiers in anticipation of the Nazi attack. The United States government officially applauded this move, assured King Peter of military supplies, and exerted such influence as it possessed to discourage Bulgarian, Rumanian, and Hungarian participation in German designs.⁶⁶ But German power, being on the spot, reduced these moves to futility. Nazi troops invaded Yugoslavia on April 6 and received that nation's unconditional surrender twelve days later. In the meanwhile, German armies also moved into Greece. The Anglo-Greek forces proved unable to stand against them, and the entire Balkan Peninsula rested in Hitler's palm by the end of the month.

Under the impetus of these happenings, relations between the United States and the Soviet Union continued their improvement to the middle of April. Although Moscow was fully as cautious as Washington, its Balkan program

⁶⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 932.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 933. Cf. Hull to Earle, Apr. 5, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 203, p. 638.

achieved general harmony with American views throughout the late winter and early spring. Russian diplomacy was especially active in Yugoslavia; and while the Soviet government avoided giving any direct promise of military aid, it did conclude a treaty of friendship and non-aggression with the regime of General Simovich on April 6 which won Hull's approval.⁶⁷ All this was posted to Russia's credit. It seemed to bear out our government's knowledge of the impending rupture between Germany and the Soviet Union; and although American exports to Russia failed to achieve even the restricted volumes of the corresponding period of 1940,⁶⁸ they were now highly specialized in such commodities as machine tools and aviation gasoline and still sufficiently generous to elicit repeated grumblings from London.⁶⁹

But Soviet policy was never an open book, and Moscow still evinced no particular solicitude for American

⁶⁷Statement by Hull, Apr. 6, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 204, pp. 638-39. For an illuminating estimate of Russian policy in this connection, see Grigore Gafencu, Prelude to the Russian Campaign: From the Moscow Pact (August 21st 1939) to the opening of hostilities in Russia (June 22nd 1941), trans. by E. Fletcher-Allen (London: Frederick Muller, 1945), pp. 139-50. An ex-Foreign Minister of Rumania, Gafencu was at this time Rumanian Minister in Moscow.

⁶⁸Cf. statistics in Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, Appendix, p. 427.

⁶⁹Cf. statement by British Minister of Economic Warfare in the House of Commons, Mar. 25, 1941, Parl. Debates: Commons, Vol. 370, c. 406.

feelings in its direct relations with Washington. When Oumansky told Welles on March 20 that he had been instructed by his government to seek confirmation of the latter's January warning about the Nazi plan to attack Russia,⁷⁰ it appeared that Soviet leaders might be on the verge of treating American counsel with more respect than had been their habit. Since Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka was then in the early stages of his European pilgrimage, Welles seized the opportunity to express his belief that Matsuoka's chief objective was a non-aggression pact with Russia and advised Oumansky that the American government felt Russia should decline to enter any type of understanding with Japan, keeping her rather in a state of prolonged uncertainty.⁷¹ But Russia, like Japan, was most interested in protecting her own rear; and Welles' counsel was ignored. After the Russo-Japanese neutrality pact was announced on April 13, therefore, relations between Washington and Moscow turned perceptibly colder.

The effect was heightened by Russia's generally exacting attitude in matters of supply and by Oumansky's personal behavior. Notwithstanding the gradual betterment of Russo-American trade relations since the fall of 1940, this question had produced nothing but dissatisfaction in Moscow

⁷⁰Memorandum by Welles, Mar. 20, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 202, p. 638.

⁷¹Davis and Lindley, How War Came, p. 216.

and annoyance in Washington. The Soviet government persistently demanded scarce materials in much greater quantity than the United States felt it could grant without slighting its commitments to Britain; Soviet policy was not clear enough in any event to encourage special efforts on our part; and Oumansky's rough-hewn disdain for tact merely emphasized the querulousness of his superiors. Since the previous summer, Welles had handled most of these increasingly unpleasant contacts with the Russian Ambassador. On May 14, however, Oumansky obtained an interview with Hull, took advantage of the opportunity to display vast ill-humor concerning the twenty-two fruitless interviews he had had with the Under Secretary during the past eight or nine months, and accused the American government of hostility toward both his country and himself. Hull denied the charge, explaining that the United States, in view of its other obligations, could no longer maintain full commercial relations with neutral countries.⁷²

Oumansky refused to understand, however; and Washington fell into an attitude of reserve which, according to Hull, embraced a determination to make no approaches to Russia, to exact a quid pro quo for every concession, and to act generally on the principle that good relations were no more important to us than to the Soviet Union.⁷³ Russian

⁷²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 971-72.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 972-73.

diplomacy, even then, did not operate well under such conditions; and the new coolness was not dissipated until Nazi armies stood on Russian soil.

IV.

In her campaign to solidify economic relations with Spain, Great Britain continued to move well ahead of the United States throughout the spring of 1941, adopting a more liberal blockade policy with respect to the Franco government, granting it a sizable sterling credit in April, and laboring in other ways to satisfy Spanish needs. Britain urged the American government to do likewise. But Washington still distrusted Franco, and its procrastination remained intact.⁷⁴ While study of the problem continued, however, Weddell was instructed to make it clear that Washington was determined to continue its policy of aiding Germany's foes regardless of the cost. After delivering this message to Serrano Suñer on April 19, the American Ambassador went on to complain of the Spanish press, intimating strongly that it drew its chief inspiration from German sources.⁷⁵

But such procedure seemed relatively barren, and Weddell advised his superiors that more constructive action

⁷⁴Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 130-31.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 132-33.

was desirable. As a result, he was given permission on April 29 to approach Franco again, informing the Caudillo that the United States was prepared to consider new arrangements for supplying Spain with goods--chiefly agricultural--of which it had a surplus. He was to make no promises regarding scarce articles, however; and he was to exact an assurance that Spain would remain out of the war. But this move hinged upon direct contact with Franco, and contact with Franco proved out of the question. Owing Weddell a grudge for his sharp comments of April 19 and hoping to drive Spain into fuller collaboration with Germany through pure inertia since more active measures had failed, Serrano Suñer now kept the American Ambassador from obtaining an interview with the Caudillo. Franco was apparently content to let the American negotiations rest for the time being, and this state of affairs was to last for six months.⁷⁶

Thus the United States maintained its familiar attitude of reserve toward Spain, while Britain insisted on pushing ahead. In the same way, both countries adhered to established policy regarding Vichy France and North Africa; for it was the American government which pushed ahead in this sector during the spring of 1941 and the British government which continued to hold back.

⁷⁶ Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 133-34.

As noted in the last chapter, Washington had acquiesced readily enough in December 1940 when Great Britain had refused to countenance any plan for regular shipments of food to unoccupied France. But when the budding of the Murphy-Weygand Agreement carried our North African policy into a more active phase, the State Department raised the question once more; and Churchill finally agreed on March 29 that relief cargoes under Red Cross auspices would be allowed to pass the blockade.⁷⁷ The point remained a sore one, however. New difficulties were raised almost at once, and Hull explained to Lord Halifax on April 8 that the whole success of our North African program depended upon Pétain's retention of power at Vichy. His idea was that hunger in unoccupied France would merely tend to undermine the Marshal's authority. Since Britain had come by gradual stages to accept the Murphy-Weygand Agreement, this ended the matter for the time being.⁷⁸ In consequence, two American food ships loaded with concentrated milk and vitamins reached Marseilles before the end of the month; and small additional shipments followed in May.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the British made it clear that they did not view the North African accord as a model for United States policy toward

⁷⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 955.

⁷⁸Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 140-41.

⁷⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 957; Davis and Lindley, How War Came, pp. 194-97.

unoccupied France.⁸⁰ This being understood, attention commenced to center upon more pressing topics.

By the middle of April, reports of new proposals for collaboration between the Vichy government and Germany began to arouse old fears--especially that of German infiltration into North Africa. Discussing this threat with Halifax on April 19, Hull outlined possible counter-measures for British consideration. These included protests by Great Britain and the United States, British or American seizure of Dakar or Casablanca, and an effort to persuade Weygand to request military aid from the outside.⁸¹ Developing this line of thought, the British on April 29 requested that we urge Vichy to permit the French Fleet to join their own naval forces in opposing any German effort to send an army across the Mediterranean. At the same time, they wanted American naval units to visit Dakar and Casablanca. But Hull, in spite of his conversation with Halifax ten days earlier, now thought London was moving too fast. If such a request were transmitted to Vichy, he argued, the Germans would undoubtedly hear of it; and this might precipitate the very action which was feared. Since the appearance of American warships at Dakar and Casablanca would be equally provocative, the British suggestion was

⁸⁰Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 140.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 143.

turned down on both counts.⁸²

Nevertheless, it was obvious that some action was needed. Thanks in part to the withdrawal of British troops from the Libyan front for the purpose of resisting the Nazi invasion of Greece, Rommel and his Germans during the past two or three weeks had begun to fulfill Ribbentrop's boast to Matsuoka by forcing the British to disgorge their African gains of the previous winter and to retire once more inside the borders of Egypt. Britain's Near Eastern position was deteriorating in other ways as well, and the prospect of a deal between France and her conquerors loomed nearer by the day.

Ever since Laval's expulsion from the French government in December 1940, his collaborator's mantle had rested on the shoulders of his personal foe, Admiral Jean Darlan, who was now Vice-Premier as well as Minister of Marine. Thus far, Darlan's efforts to negotiate with Germany had achieved little success; but on May 3 he was invited to confer in Paris with Otto Abetz, Hitler's chief representative in occupied France. This time he managed to strike a bargain. Britain's other difficulties had recently been augmented by a revolt in Iraq. To help the Germans exploit this situation, Darlan promised them the use of a Syrian airfield and undertook to provide the rebels with supplies from French military stores in Syria. He likewise contracted

⁸²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 957.

for a number of lesser adjustments in both Syria and North Africa. His quid pro quo was to be the rearming of six French destroyers and seven torpedo boats, changes in regulations governing traffic between occupied and unoccupied France, and a reduction in the costs of German occupation.⁸³ This understanding, it is true, provided for no actual German advance into North Africa. But no one regarded the accord as complete in itself. It was obviously just the opening play for much larger stakes than the destruction of British authority in Iraq, and Admiral Leahy reported from Vichy that even Pétain understood the seriousness of German designs but considered himself powerless to head them off.⁸⁴

That the old soldier's pessimism was well-founded received further confirmation when Darlan journeyed to Berchtesgaden for discussions with Hitler himself on May 11 and 12.⁸⁵ Once more, the United States government used all the verbal pressure of which it was capable. On May 13, Leahy handed Pétain a vigorous protest against any concessions to Germany beyond the terms of the armistice agreement;⁸⁶ and two days later Roosevelt went over the

⁸³Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 148-49.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 144.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 150.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 151.

Marshal's head with a direct appeal to the French people to uphold the democratic cause.⁸⁷ But as tension continued to mount throughout the following week, Leahy decided that verbal efforts were no longer equal to the task at hand and advised Washington to consider the advisability of landing 250,000 troops in North Africa at once to help Weygand resist a possible German invasion.⁸⁸ This notion was impracticable on several grounds. Even if public opinion in the United States had been prepared to countenance such adventures, not enough trained men were available. Furthermore, there was no certainty that either Pétain or Weygand would approve such a move.⁸⁹ On the other hand, it was possible to exert pressure by calling off the Murphy-Weygand Agreement altogether. As might have been expected, the British government plainly favored this action. But the State Department concluded that nothing could be lost by going ahead with the North African accord, and Welles so informed Halifax on May 23.⁹⁰ At this juncture, direct relations between Washington and Vichy entered another period of waiting.

⁸⁷Statement by the President, May 15, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 4 (May 17, 1941), p. 584.

⁸⁸Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 153.

⁸⁹Idem.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 154-55.

V.

Owing to the special difficulties involved in making arrangements for a joint defense of southeastern Asia and the southwestern Pacific, it had been decided as early as the fall of 1940 that any detailed plans for military and naval coöperation in this area would have to be charted on the spot.⁹¹ Admiral Thomas C. Hart, who commanded the United States Asiatic Fleet based at Manila, was therefore authorized to conduct local talks on behalf of the American government. He opened tentative conversations with British officials at Singapore in November 1940 and with Dutch authorities at Batavia in January 1941. Naval officers representing all three powers held another conference at the former city in February,⁹² but it was obvious that not much could be done here until the higher-level staff discussions then proceeding in Washington had assigned the Far East a definite place in the larger scheme of things. As expected, ABC--1 did little to solve the immediate problems of the Far Eastern commanders. The strategic priority given to the Atlantic and European theaters severely limited the forces available for operations in the Asiatic sector; and while this area was covered by a general framework of command arrangements, little was offered in the way of

⁹¹Turner's testimony, Dec. 20, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 4, p. 1929.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 1931-32.

tactical guidance. The task which ultimately confronted Hart and the others, therefore, was essentially that of filling in the outlines of the joint basic war plan as it related to the Far East--a design which permitted considerable local freedom within tight general restrictions. To this end, formal staff talks were held in Singapore by American, British and Dutch representatives between April 21 and April 27.

In spite of their non-political character, these discussions largely revolved about the question of how far Japan should be allowed to go before counter-measures were taken by the associated powers--and this, like any attempt to define the casus belli, was fundamentally a political matter. After some consideration, it was agreed that military and naval counter-measures would become necessary if Japanese forces moved into Portuguese Timor, New Caledonia, the Loyalty Islands, or into any part of Thailand west of 100 degrees East Longitude or south of 10 degrees North Latitude. Even more important was the view that the three powers ought to take action if a large number of Japanese warships, or a convoy of merchant vessels escorted by warships, were found on a course which seemed plainly directed at the Philippine Islands, the east coast of the Isthmus of Kra, or the east coast of Malaya--or if such a force crossed the parallel of 6 degrees North Latitude between the Malay Peninsula and the Philippines, a line running from the Gulf of Davao to Weigeo Island, or the Equator

east of Weigeo.⁹³ It can be easily seen that the Malay Barrier was regarded as the principal line to be maintained. But even though the British were accorded general strategic control in this sector (as under ABC--1), its actual defense was entrusted almost completely to American and Dutch forces.⁹⁴ This last point remained a troubled one, and it would soon become evident that plans for coöperation in the Far East had not yet achieved a form which satisfied Washington.

This source of discontent remained temporarily in the background, however; for transportation difficulties between North America and the British Isles, added to rumors of German plans to invade North Africa and to occupy the Azores and the Canary Islands as well as Spain and Portugal, kept the Atlantic in its familiar position as the truly significant area of coöperation throughout the spring of 1941. Indeed, the situation here was so tense that the United States in late April seriously considered the further transfer into the Atlantic of 3 battleships, 4 light cruisers, and 2 destroyer squadrons--an idea which drew

⁹³Report of American-Dutch-British conversations, Singapore, April 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 50, pt. 15, p. 1564.

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 1569-70. See also the proposed distribution of forces in the Far Eastern area, ibid., Appendix 1, pp. 1580-82.

immediate applause from the British Chiefs of Staff.⁹⁵ It was at this same time, moreover, that Churchill, distracted by new rumors of Franco-German collaboration on the one hand and by British defeats in Libya on the other, informed Roosevelt that he regarded the Spanish situation as hopeless, Gibraltar as doomed to be captured or immobilized, and Great Britain as unable to continue the fight beyond August unless the United States entered the war as a full partner.⁹⁶

As it turned out, these fears proved much exaggerated. But Washington was only less concerned than London and soon found itself giving effect to numerous provisions of ABC--1 a good deal earlier than that agreement had originally contemplated. In May, the British government began preparations to occupy Grand Canary and the Cape Verde Islands and requested American help in keeping the Germans out of the Azores.⁹⁷ In consequence, Roosevelt directed Stark on May 22 to prepare a 25,000-man expedition for seizing the latter islands and allowed him only thirty days to complete the task.⁹⁸ About the same time, plans were made to occupy the

⁹⁵Turner to Danckwerts, Apr. 25, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 158, pt. 19, p. 3457; and Danckwerts to Turner, Apr. 28, 1941, ibid., p. 3458.

⁹⁶Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 145.

⁹⁷Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 66.

⁹⁸Stark's testimony, Dec. 31, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2113.

French West Indian island of Martinique--which was still in the grip of Vichyite Admiral Robert--if Pétain yielded entirely to German pressure.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, following other plans laid down in the Washington report, the United States Army and Navy observers in London organized full-scale military and naval missions and embarked upon their program of continuous consultation with the British Chiefs of Staff.¹⁰⁰

In spite of preparations being made by the Navy for future escort duty, the question of American-escorted convoys was held in abeyance for the time being. Stimson and Knox, the most aggressive members of the Cabinet, had agreed on March 24, 1941, that convoying ought to begin very soon. However, Roosevelt was still reluctant to act without congressional sanction; and he decided on April 10 that it was not yet practicable to ask for the necessary authority.¹⁰¹ Stimson, particularly, regarded his caution as excessive and told the President in round terms that he could expect no spontaneous demand for convoys; he had to

⁹⁹Stark's testimony, Jan. 4, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2310.

¹⁰⁰Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 55.

¹⁰¹Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, pp. 367-68. According to the American Institute of Public Opinion, the proportion of Americans who favored sending American convoys to Great Britain rose from 41 percent in April to 52 percent at the end of May. -----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 5 (Winter 1941), p. 485.

seek popular support for the measure by explaining to the country just why it was necessary for the United States Navy to take part in such operations. But Roosevelt considered gentler methods less dangerous and contented himself with the "trailing" order of April 21 and with the approval of such trial balloons as a speech delivered by Stimson on May 6 in which the Secretary of War vigorously advocated using American warships to protect merchant vessels on their way to the British Isles.¹⁰²

But no amount of reticence at the White House could disguise the fact that the Atlantic war was drawing closer to home. The brief but spectacular foray of the German battleship Bismarck into the North Atlantic during the final days of May aroused much anxiety in this country, and German naval policy assumed a more menacing aspect in the ZamZam and Robin Moor incidents. On May 21, Henry S. Waterman, the United States consul at Bordeaux, reported the landing of 140 American survivors from the Egyptian steamer ZamZam, which had been captured and sunk by a German warship in the South Atlantic a few days before.¹⁰³ One day later, the American freighter Robin Moor was torpedoed, shelled, and sunk by a German submarine while en route from

¹⁰²Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, pp. 369-70.

¹⁰³Press release, May 21, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 4 (May 24, 1941), p. 636.

New York to Capetown.¹⁰⁴ Neither incident was calculated to sweeten our relations with Germany, and both testified to the growing unrestraint of U-boat warfare.

Thus May ended with British and American fortunes manifestly on the downgrade. Despite their elaboration of a useful joint strategy for global war, the tide of German success was running high on every front. Britain's toe-hold in the Balkans had entirely disappeared; her very lifeline was threatened by a German-sponsored rebellion in Iraq, the presence of Rommel's victorious forces in Egypt, and prospective coöperation by France, Spain, and Germany to drive her from Gibraltar and take full control of the western Mediterranean. Against this danger, the United States was searching desperately for expedients--throwing its patrol forces deeper into the Atlantic war, planning to seize the Azores and possibly Martinique, and making a grim bid for retention of its influence in North Africa by pushing ahead with the Murphy-Weygand accord regardless of everything. Only with respect to the assumption of escort duty by the United States Navy did the administration hold back, for it was even trying to open new discussions with Spain by the first part of May. The European situation appeared to be slipping completely from Washington's grasp. Nor did conditions in Asia hold a much better promise.

¹⁰⁴ See report of U. S. consul at Pernambuco, Brazil, June 12, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol 4 (June 14, 1941), pp. 716-17.

The launching of new talks regarding a Pacific settlement had been accompanied by no essential change in Japanese policy. Instead, Japan had exacted new economic concessions from Indo-China, while Matsuoka's neutrality pact with Russia seemed to give her additional confidence for an early military excursion to the south. The brightest spot on any horizon was prospective war between Germany and the Soviet Union. But pending that development, even our relations with Russia--which had seemed generally on the mend since the fall of 1940--had again taken a turn for the worse.

VIII.

UNLIMITED EMERGENCY

I.

Up to the spring of 1941, the crisis proclamation issued by President Roosevelt on September 8, 1939, had never been amended; and the United States continued to exist in the presence of what was officially described as a "limited national emergency." Since it involved no abridgement of the President's right to use all the emergency powers belonging to his office, this limitation had no legal meaning whatever.¹ But it constituted the avowed framework of public policy; and considered in this sense, it offered a type of reassurance which events had rendered obsolete. While the administration had done much to emphasize the growing threat to national security as the course of the war turned from bad to worse, its statements on foreign affairs had generally tended to uphold this concept of limited emergency; and however adequate such a concept might have been in the fall of 1939, it no longer portrayed the real gravity of things in the spring of 1941.

Cf. Koenig, The Presidency and the Crisis, p. 13.

Some authoritative clarification of the international situation, especially as it related to the battle of the Atlantic, was manifestly in order; and although Roosevelt still refused to demand such forthright measures as a grant of authority to institute American convoys between this country and the British Isles, his speech of May 27 represented a long step forward in the domain of war psychology.

Delivered as a "fireside chat," this address constituted a reasonably detailed lecture upon the war situation as a whole. The President surveyed the course of our relations with Germany and Italy on the one hand and with Japan on the other, charted the growth of uneasiness and then of anger in the United States, admired the expansion of American production, and reaffirmed our determination to see the crisis through in accordance with our belief in the fundamental rightness of the democratic cause.² Conditions in the Atlantic, however, were the largest single focus of his remarks; and he dealt in fairly specific terms with the main worries confronting the American government in this area--namely, the problem of delivering Lend-Lease supplies to Great Britain and the dangers which would accrue from seizure by Germany of the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands.

His words left no room for doubt that the growing effectiveness of German submarine warfare had reduced Britain's control over her transatlantic supply lines to a questionable

²Radio address by the President, May 27, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 210, pp. 663-65.

minimum at best, and he made it plain that he considered the defense of these lines as vital to American security as it was to that of the United Kingdom. For reasons discussed in the last chapter, he did not broach the question of American convoys ~~or the~~ closely related one of American escorts for British convoys, nor did he furnish details regarding the measures already taken in support of Britain's efforts in the Atlantic. But he hinted at both in the clearest statement he had yet made concerning the Atlantic war. "Our patrols are helping now," he said,

to insure delivery of the needed supplies to Britain. All additional measures necessary to deliver the goods will be taken. Any and all further methods or combinations of methods, which can or should be utilized, are being devised by our military and naval technicians, who, with me, will work out and put into effect such new and additional safeguards as may be needed.³

In a similar manner--and for reasons that were equally obvious--the President said nothing of American and British plans to occupy the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands. But his discussion of their strategic importance carried an urgency which was nicely calculated to prepare the country for just such a move as was then in contemplation. These islands, he stated,

...if occupied or controlled by Germany, would directly endanger the freedom of the Atlantic and our own physical safety. Under German domination, they would become bases for submarines, warships, and airplanes raiding the waters which lie immediately off our coasts and attacking the shipping in the South Atlantic. They would provide a springboard for actual attack against the integrity of Brazil and

³Radio address by the President, May 27, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 210, pp. 669-70.

her neighboring republics.⁴

The conclusion which the President drew from his assessment of these problems and the other dangers he had outlined was that the United States now faced a crisis of the most serious type, and he brought his remarks to a close by proclaiming the existence of an "unlimited national emergency."⁵ This was the real crux of the message; for while Roosevelt had fallen far short of giving the nation a complete statement of American policy in terms of what had already been done and what was being planned for the future, he had said enough to confirm public apprehension regarding the drift of affairs; and his positive assurance that the United States had entered a phase of unlimited emergency could not fail to inaugurate a new epoch in American non-belligerency at the level of public consciousness.⁶ From

⁴Radio address by the President, May 27, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 210, p. 668.

⁵Ibid., p. 672; and Proclamation No. 2487, May 27, 1941, Federal Register, Vol. 6, p. 2617.

⁶The results obtained by public opinion polls in answer to specific questions cannot, of course, show more than one aspect of this change. But it is significant that public opinion surveys taken immediately or soon after the "unlimited emergency" speech reflect a generally sharpened appreciation of the dangers confronting the United States. For example, a Fortune poll taken in early June shows a substantial increase in the number of people who believed that this country would eventually send its Army, Navy, and Air Force to Europe. -----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 5 (Fall 1941), p. 487. And the American Institute of Public Opinion discovered that the proportion favoring the use of the United States Navy for escorting convoys to Britain rose from 52 percent to 55 percent immediately after the President's speech. Ibid., p. 485.

this day forward, moreover, it was obvious that the administration was ready to proceed under somewhat lighter cover and maintain a more consistent effort to carry public opinion along with it.

II.

Owing in part to Weddell's inability to establish direct contact with Franco and in part to the growing remoteness of the entire Spanish government as the day approached for Germany's invasion of Russia, United States policy remained at an absolute standstill from April until mid-summer of 1941. Considering Madrid's somewhat hostile attitude⁷ and what was known of efforts by Hitler and Darlan to produce a measure of collaboration between Germany and Vichy France which would give the former virtually undisputed control over the western Mediterranean and North Africa, Franco was suspected of studying Spain's position in relation to these designs with a view to entering the game himself if the Hitler-Darlan schemes progressed far enough. As opportunities arose, therefore, the American government exerted what moral pressure it could.⁸

Despite Washington's lack of faith in the Caudillo, however, there was no abrupt change in our commercial relations with Spain. Except for certain vital materials and

⁷Cf. Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 134-36.

⁸Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 940-41.

articles that were scarce even in the United States, the American government had permitted Spain from the beginning to import whatever she desired from this country, the only general restrictions being those imposed by the British blockade and her own ability to pay for what she wanted. In appearance, at least, this policy was continued. But thanks to the exigencies of our own defense program and the demands of Lend-Lease, most of the things Spain desired were subject to export control by the spring of 1941; and owing to its ingrained distrust of Madrid, the State Department became progressively less eager to clear these and other obstacles out of the way where shipments to Spain were concerned. In this fashion, a good deal of economic pressure was quietly applied while Washington awaited the outcome of the Hitler-Darlan negotiations and the beginning of Germany's war with Russia.⁹

This period was an anxious one; for up to the end of May, there was no clear evidence that American representations at Vichy would succeed in foiling Darlan's plans. In a radio address delivered May 23, the Vice-Premier vehemently reasserted his determination to proceed with the agreements which had been outlined in his talks with Abetz and Hitler earlier that month.¹⁰ A few days after this

⁹Cf. Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 138.

¹⁰Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 156.

announcement, he journeyed once more to Paris and on May 27 and 28 affixed his signature to three protocols dealing, respectively, with Syria and Iraq, with North Africa, and with French West and Equatorial Africa.

Bearing out Darlan's prior agreement with Abetz, the first provided that France would release three-quarters of her Syrian military stocks to the Iraqi rebels; aid to the limit of her ability in the servicing of German and Italian planes which crossed Syria on their way to Iraq; permit Germany to use Syrian ports, roads, and railways for the movement of troops to Iraq; instruct the rebels how to use the French arms turned over to them; and transmit to the German High Command all the information that could be obtained regarding the strength and disposition of British forces in Iraq.¹¹ In the North African protocol, France agreed to let Germany use the Tunisian port of Bizerte and the railroad from Bizerte to Gabès for the reinforcement and supply of her troops in Libya, to furnish transports and convoy protection for the voyage across the Mediterranean, and to sell the Germans a quantity of French trucks and guns.¹² Under the third agreement, Dakar was to become a supply base for German submarines, warships, and planes.¹³

¹¹Accord relatif à la Syrie et à Irak, May 27, 1941, Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, Appendix 2, p. 402.

¹²Accord relatif à l'Afrique du Nord, May 27, 1941, ibid., Appendix 2, pp. 404-5.

¹³Projet d'Accord relatif à l'Afrique Occidentale et Equatoriale, May 28, 1941, ibid., Appendix 2, pp. 407-8.

In return for these large concessions, the Germans promised some vague changes in political and economic arrangements and agreed to a slight strengthening of French military forces in the areas covered by the three protocols.¹⁴

The Paris accords justified all the fears which had tormented London and Washington throughout the preceding month; if they had been carried into effect, it is obvious that they would have canceled every gain achieved by the United States and Great Britain in France, Spain, and North Africa since June 1940 and, at the same time, would have destroyed the main safeguards of Britain's Mediterranean position. But in approving these concessions, Darlan reckoned without his own government; and the reception given his handiwork at Vichy was fortunately less cordial than he had expected.

As usual, Pétain held the balance between those members of the French government who opposed collaboration and those who favored it. That he had at least countenanced the Vice-Premier's efforts to deal with Germany may be taken for granted; but when the terms actually obtained by Darlan became known in Vichy, he listened to warnings that the protocols, if accepted, would mean trouble with both the United States and Great Britain and agreed, readily enough,

¹⁴ See above agreements, Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 404, 406-7, 408-9; and Protocole Complémentaire, May 28, 1941, ibid., Appendix 2, p. 412.

to seek the advice of General Weygand and Pierre Boisson, Governor of West Africa. Accordingly, these dignitaries were summoned to Vichy.¹⁵

There followed several days of argument. Weygand and Boisson led the opposition to Darlan from the first; and their efforts were seconded by Admiral Leahy who, on being informed of the Paris agreements, threatened Pétain, indirectly at least, with a severance of diplomatic relations. For his part, Weygand expressed fear that acceptance of the accords would provoke uprisings in France and North Africa alike, while both he and Boisson declined to sanction German operations in their respective bailiwicks. This was enough to stem the collaborationist tide, and Darlan's proposals were rejected on June 6.¹⁶

Since Germany was then preparing to attack Russia in scarcely more than two weeks, Berlin had no immediate opportunity to follow up its designs on France and North Africa. As at the time of Laval's dismissal the previous December, Hitler's eastern problem caused him to turn his back on France at the crucial moment; and Vichy's defiance of his wishes again went unchallenged. Thanks to Darlan's conversations with Abetz at the beginning of May, the Syrian agreement had already been partially carried out.

¹⁵Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 157.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 158-59.

But her preoccupation with Russia kept Germany from fully exploiting this opportunity as well. British and Free French forces entered Syria on June 8, and Vichy's rule in that country was ended on July 12.¹⁷ As a consequence, Britain's hold on the Mediterranean and the Middle East remained as secure as it had been at any time since the fall of France.

Even though another move toward collaboration had failed, the general threat had not been dissipated; and periodic rumors of further German designs upon North Africa kept the State Department on the anxious seat throughout the summer.¹⁸ But it could breathe with relative ease pending revival of something like the Paris protocols. Meanwhile, it went ahead with its established policy toward unoccupied France and the other areas under Vichy control, stubbornly resisting all demands that it transfer its official support to the Free French movement and putting the Murphy-Weygand accord into effect as rapidly as possible.¹⁹ By July 1, two tankers had been sent to North African ports; and the American vice-consuls who had been stationed in North African cities under the terms of

¹⁷Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 160.

¹⁸Cf. ibid., pp. 182-85.

¹⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 961.

that agreement were beginning to supply Washington with a constant stream of information regarding military and political developments in the area.²⁰ Considering this as well as Weygand's successful opposition to Darlan's proposals in June, it was difficult to argue that our Vichy policy, so far as it concerned North Africa at least, was not yielding dividends.

III.

The American people were not the only ones who discovered food for thought in President Roosevelt's "unlimited emergency" speech. As their owner, Portugal fully understood the role which the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands might play in the battle of the Atlantic and knew that their fate hung upon the slenderest of threads. While German designs constituted the fundamental threat to Portuguese sovereignty over the islands, a preventive occupation by Great Britain or the United States was hardly less likely; and they could not be defended in either case. Caught, as it were, between the upper and the nether millstones of wartime politics and grand strategy, the Portuguese government could do nothing but snatch at every opportunity to reassert its position and then await the turn of events. Accordingly, it took quick umbrage at Roosevelt's statements of May 27 and submitted a request for clarification

²⁰Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 180.

three days later. Her dignity somewhat ruffled, Portugal gingerly explained that the President's direct references to her Atlantic possessions, especially when viewed in the context of his general thesis, did not signify the most honorable intentions on the part of the American government and declared her reluctance to admit that the United States would be more justified than any other nation in undertaking to violate Portuguese territory.²¹

Considering that preparations to do this very thing had been under way for more than a week, Hull must have felt temporarily at a loss. But his embarrassment was relieved a few days later by a change in Anglo-American plans. Intelligence reports from Germany and Spain had convinced Churchill that the invasion of Russia was to begin very shortly and that Franco had refused to agree to the occupation of his country by German troops. At the same time, moreover, Darlan's Paris protocols were being rejected at Vichy. Thus the Prime Minister's recent despair quickly gave way to optimism. Roosevelt shared his new confidence and agreed that immediate anxiety concerning the Atlantic possessions of Spain and Portugal had been relieved. By the same token, the prospective necessity of getting supplies to Russia enhanced the importance of the northern convoy route; and it was decided that the American troops

²¹Bianchi to Hull, May 30, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, pp. 426-27.

being groomed for occupation of the Azores should be dispatched to Iceland instead.²² The Azores plan was not dropped entirely; but its postponement enabled Hull, with only a minimum of disingenuousness, to inform the Portuguese Minister on June 10 that the islands had been mentioned "solely in terms of their potential value from the point of view of attack against this hemisphere."²³

Temporarily relieved of their southern project, Washington and London were free once more to concentrate upon the defense of British supply lines; and renewed pre-occupation with shipping difficulties in the North Atlantic was soon accompanied by still another change in plans. This one bore directly upon the convoy problem.

As already explained, the United States Navy had been making intensive preparations for transatlantic escort duty since the beginning of the year. Indeed, these preparations had advanced so rapidly that bases in Scotland and Northern Ireland were chosen before the end of March; and the service was expected to be in operation by early fall. However, the idea of having American escorts accompany their charges all the way to the British Isles had always encountered opposition. Since the beginning of the war, the British and the Canadians had used a system whereby

²²Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 67.

²³Hull to Bianchi, June 10, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1940-41, pp. 428-29.

escort groups based on either side of the Atlantic operated only as far east or west as the vicinity of Iceland and there traded convoys, as it were, for the return trip. Considerations of economy in the use of men and equipment advised the United States merely to join the established system. But President Roosevelt, up to this moment, had carefully preserved a distinction between merchant convoys and troop convoys and had declined every suggestion that American warships be permitted to assume responsibility for the latter. Since troopships were moving regularly from Canada to the British Isles, it was clear that American escorts would have to be selective in their choice of convoy material if they participated in British-Canadian operations. An independent system was the only answer, therefore; and preparations had been made accordingly. But now, about the middle of June, Roosevelt abruptly changed his tune and agreed that American escorts might take part in the British-Canadian service. As a result, plans for transatlantic operations were abandoned; and it was arranged that United States escort vessels should confine themselves to that part of the convoy route which lay between North America and Iceland.²⁴

New designs were shaping up, but the time for action had not quite arrived. Although it might not have been fully appreciated at the time, the month which followed

²⁴Cf. Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 54-55.

Roosevelt's "unlimited emergency" speech, as viewed in retrospect, was preëminently a month of waiting--a time of clearly foreseen but still pending events which threatened to change the whole shape of the war. Until the second week in June, Hitler's designs on France, Spain, North Africa, and the Atlantic islands kept deeds in suspense. Through the next fortnight, his plans for Russia held the imagination. During such an interim, contingencies may be studied, expedients drafted, and old policies fulfilled. But unless one holds the initiative, new departures seem ill-advised until the future reveals itself with more exactitude; and the initiative still rested with Berlin.

But if advances in our Atlantic policy were confined to changing plans and agreements for future action during most of June, it was still possible to emphasize our solidarity with Great Britain and our precarious relations with Italy and Germany in a number of ways. On May 29, arrangements were made for the training of British fliers in the United States.²⁵ By an executive order dated June 6, Roosevelt authorized the Maritime Commission to commandeer idle foreign merchant ships in American ports.²⁶ As long ago as February, the American consulates in Palermo and

²⁵New York Times, May 30, 1941, p. 5, c. 1.

²⁶Executive Order No. 8771, June 6, 1941, Federal Register, Vol. 6, p. 2759.

Naples had been closed at the request of the Italian government; and the United States had retaliated in March by closing the Italian consulates in Detroit and Newark.²⁷ In April, the State Department had requested the withdrawal of the Italian naval attaché, Admiral Alberto Lais, from the Italian Embassy in Washington on the ground that he had been implicated in the sabotaging of Axis ships in American ports--whereupon Italy had demanded the recall of the military attaché from our Embassy in Rome.²⁸ Now this policy of diplomatic irritation was brought to its logical conclusion. On June 14, the American assets of Germany and Italy were impounded;²⁹ and the State Department ordered their consular staffs from the country on June 16 and June 20, respectively.³⁰

At the same time, Roosevelt decided to make the Robin Moor incident a vital public issue; and to give his remarks all the emphasis he possibly could, he delivered them in the form of a message to Congress on June 20. He did not mention convoys, nor did he request legislation of any kind.

²⁷Hull to Colonna, Mar. 5, 1941, Department of State, United States and Italy, pp. 22-23.

²⁸Hull to Colonna, Apr. 2, 1941, ibid., pp. 23-24; and Press release, Apr. 9, 1941, ibid., pp. 25-26.

²⁹Executive Order No. 8785, June 14, 1941, Federal Register, Vol. 6, p. 2898.

³⁰Welles to Thomsen, June 16, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 4 (June 21, 1941), p. 743; and Welles to Colonna, June 20, 1941, idem.

But he strongly reaffirmed the American government's determination not to withdraw from the battle of the Atlantic, denounced the sinking of the Robin Moor as an episode in Germany's "declared...policy of frightfulness and intimidation," and assured his listeners that he would demand of the German government "full reparation for the losses and damages suffered by American nationals."³¹ On June 24, the German chargé d'affaires in Washington declined to transmit a copy of this speech to Berlin as requested by the State Department;³² and it was obvious that our relations with Germany were now taut indeed.

IV.

As indicated in the last chapter, the American government had been much less than satisfied with the Japanese proposals of May 12. From the day Nomura presented them, Roosevelt and Hull had agreed that they constituted no more than a bare foundation for talks leading to a settlement of differences between Japan and the United States. That Tokyo's offer required broadening was obvious.³³ But Hull's

³¹Message of the President to Congress, June 20, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 212, p. 675.

³²Thomsen to Welles, June 24, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 8, 1941), pp. 363-64.

³³Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1001; cf. ibid., 1009.

counter-proposals of May 16 had defined the changes which he regarded as an essential preliminary to serious negotiations, and it was decided to go ahead with exploratory talks in the hope that Japan might agree to revise her basic program in accordance with the Secretary's demands.

Supported by two advisers--Colonel Hideo Iwakuro, of the Japanese Army, and one Tadao Wikawa, an official of the Coöperative Bank of Japan-- Nomura was received in Hull's apartment the evening of May 20. At the very outset, Nomura assured his host that the offer which he had transmitted on May 12 enjoyed the support of all branches of the Japanese government and declared that rejection of this offer by the United States would damage his prestige in Tokyo. Then he began to enlarge upon the stubbornness of words and explained that, in view of the principles enunciated by both countries, he felt that agreement could be achieved readily enough if there were not too much haggling over verbal formulas.

Of course, this optimistic pronouncement totally ignored the objections which Hull had stated on May 16; and the Secretary lost no time in alluding to the vagueness of Japanese proposals for liquidating the China affair. At this juncture, Iwakuro entered the conversation to declare that he viewed the Chinese problem as incidental to the main points at issue between the United States and Japan and went on to make it clear that the Japanese Army contemplated no settlement with China providing for the withdrawal of all

troops from the latter's territory. Central and southern China might be evacuated over a period of years, but this movement would not extend to Inner Mongolia and adjoining parts of northern China.³⁴ Thus the essential crookedness of the Japanese peace offer became apparent almost at once. Even Nomura, who was as moderate as any Japanese holding an important official position and who certainly did not lack the will, was unable to allay the suspicion which had been created in Hull's mind; for a week later, after confessing that he was not privy to the exact views of the Japanese Army in this matter, he was forced to substantiate Iwakuro's declaration by admitting that some troops would remain permanently in China to cooperate with local authorities in measures of defense against communism. Revealing his government's hand still further, he added that Chiang Kai-shek would be compelled to accept these terms if American aid to China were suspended in accordance with his proposals of May 12.³⁵ So far, the Japanese Ambassador had furnished no evidence that Tokyo was in any way responsive to Hull's note of May 16.

After studying his initial objections in the light of

³⁴Memorandum by Ballantine, May 20, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 434-35; and Hull Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1005.

³⁵Memorandum by Ballantine, May 28, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 441-43.

his talks with Nomura over the past week, the Secretary of State attempted once more to clarify American views. Selecting Japan's adherence to the Tripartite Pact and the withdrawal of her troops from China as the main issues, Hull gave the Ambassador a revised draft of his earlier proposals on May 31. In it he suggested that Japan undertake to construe her obligations to Germany and Italy in such a way that her relations with the United States would not be affected if the latter became involved in war "through acts of self-defense."³⁶ He was prepared to concede that Japan should arrange to evacuate China through direct negotiations with the Chinese government but insisted that troop withdrawals be carried out as rapidly as possible. He also proposed that Tokyo's plan for a joint defense against communism be subjected to further discussion.³⁷

Except for details of phraseology, Nomura approved these terms on June 2.³⁸ But the exception was important. Nomura had already expressed his concern regarding verbal difficulties; and after several days of listening to Japanese views on phraseology, State Department officials

³⁶American draft proposal, May 31, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 447.

³⁷Idem.; and Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1010.

³⁸Memorandum by Hull, June 2, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 454-55.

could appreciate the force of his observations. The Japanese, it was evident, held vagueness at a premium. They betrayed an unshakable dislike for any commitment that could not be interpreted in half a dozen ways, and nothing was accomplished through the next two weeks.³⁹ As though she were determined to make the impasse utterly clear, Japan submitted a further draft proposal on June 15 which reaffirmed her adherence to the Tripartite Pact without qualification.⁴⁰

Hull must have been sorely tried. But whatever their chance of success, he was resolved to continue the negotiations as long as possible. So he hewed firmly to the line and issued another statement of the American position on June 21. It contained little that was new. Carefully reviewing what had transpired since May 12, this note again isolated the Tripartite Pact and the China question as the areas of most serious disagreement,⁴¹ specified the items which would have to be settled in connection with the latter problem,⁴² and suggested an exchange of letters whereby Japan would interpret the Three-Power Treaty in the sense

³⁹Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1008.

⁴⁰Draft document received from associates of the Japanese Ambassador, June 15, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 475.

⁴¹Cf. Oral statement by Hull, June 21, 1941, ibid., p. 485.

⁴²American draft proposal, June 21, 1941, ibid., p. 488.

desired by the United States.⁴³ On handing this document to Nomura, Hull once more expressed his belief that agreement on other points would be futile so long as Japan remained committed to the active support of Germany.⁴⁴

Having made no progress whatever in five weeks, negotiations between Washington and Tokyo thus closed another circle. But a new one would soon be opened. For Japan stood at least as close to events in eastern Europe as did the United States, and these were about to create an upheaval which would bring international affairs under a new dispensation.

V.

The great change began on June 22 with Germany's long-awaited invasion of Russia. As noted above, our relations with Moscow had been on a steady downgrade since the middle of April; indeed, Soviet credits in this country had been frozen as recently as June 14.⁴⁵ But notwithstanding the joint coolness with which they had observed Russian policy in recent weeks--and to a considerable extent since the beginning of the war--both Great Britain and the United

⁴³American draft proposal, June 21, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 488. See also suggested exchange of letters between the Secretary of State and the Japanese Ambassador, ibid., Annex 3, p. 490.

⁴⁴Oral statement by Hull, June 21, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 485.

⁴⁵Executive Order No. 8785, June 14, 1941, Federal Register, Vol. 6, p. 2898.

States were prepared to seek Russian friendship and had already agreed to launch such an effort as soon as the German armies moved.⁴⁶

Therefore, Winston Churchill at once declared himself for the Soviet Union in its struggle with Germany and extended a promise of British aid.⁴⁷ The next day, June 23, Sumner Welles echoed the Prime Minister in a statement which welcomed Russia as collaborator in putting an end to the Nazi dictatorship. "In the opinion of this Government," Welles said,

any defense against Hitlerism, any rallying of the forces opposing Hitlerism, from whatever sources these forces may spring, will hasten the eventual downfall of the present German leaders, and will therefore redound to the benefit of our own defense and security.⁴⁸

While this argument smacked more of an attack on the German than an endorsement of the Russian cause, its practical bearing was clear enough. Following Welles' lead, Roosevelt gave Moscow a promise of American support on June 24,⁴⁹ made it clear one day later that he did not propose to invoke the neutrality act against Russia,⁵⁰ and promptly

⁴⁶Winant, Letter from Grosvenor Square, p. 203.

⁴⁷Radio speech, June 22, 1941, Winston S. Churchill, The Unrelenting Struggle, comp. by Charles Eade (Boston: Little, Brown, 1942), pp. 172-74.

⁴⁸Statement by Welles, June 23, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin Vol. 4 (June 28, 1941), p. 755.

⁴⁹New York Times, June 25, 1941, p. 1, c. 3.

⁵⁰Ibid., June 26, 1941, p. 1, c. 5.

released Soviet funds.⁵¹ On June 30, Oumansky started negotiations in Washington with a view to obtaining large quantities of war materials for his government.⁵² A British military mission was sent to Moscow about the same time.⁵³ At the beginning of July, a Soviet mission headed by General Philip Golikov reached London,⁵⁴ and Golikov was explaining his needs in Washington by the end of the month.⁵⁵ Acting on his own initiative, the President in the meanwhile had set up a special supply committee to act under the direction of the State Department; and this group authorized the shipment to Russia of \$9,000,000 worth of material by the end of July.⁵⁶

As far as the European problems of Great Britain and the United States were concerned, Germany's invasion of Russia furnished a great solvent. Almost overnight, the main lines of Anglo-American policy toward the Soviet Union.

⁵¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 973.

⁵²Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 391.

⁵³Ibid., p. 389.

⁵⁴Idem.

⁵⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 974.

⁵⁶John R. Deane, The Strange Alliance: The Story of Our Efforts at Wartime Cooperation with Russia (New York: Viking Press, 1947), pp. 87-88. Cited henceforth as The Strange Alliance.

became clear and definite. Gone were the alternately cold and warm periods in Russo-American relations; gone was British discontent with Russo-American trade; and if either Washington or London still cherished misgivings about the ultimate objectives of Russian policy, these fears could be swallowed up in the overriding demands of military necessity.

Germany's Russian campaign was likewise advantageous to Britain's position in the Mediterranean and the eastern Atlantic. Ever since the fall of France, German machinations at Vichy and Madrid had kept both London and Washington in an almost constant state of nerves. But now--even though the threat to Gibraltar, North Africa, and the Atlantic islands of Spain and Portugal could not be entirely forgotten--it was plain that the danger of a German move to the south or southwest, or, indeed, against the British Isles themselves, would stand at a minimum as long as Hitler remained seriously occupied on the Russian front.

Our gains in the Pacific were less clear, however; for the initial effect of the Russo-German war was to place new burdens upon our already complicated relations with Japan. As long ago as June 10, a friendly member of the Japanese Diet had informed Grew that Berlin was exerting strong pressure on his government to seize the Dutch East Indies.⁵⁷ And Roosevelt had so little confidence in the sincerity of Tokyo's efforts to hammer out a worthwhile agreement with

⁵⁷Grew, Ten Years, p. 392.

the United States that Admiral Kimmel was able to persuade him about this same time to abandon his plan for the further transfer of 3 battleships, 4 cruisers, 1 carrier, and 2 destroyer squadrons into the Atlantic.⁵⁸

Thus the American government knew that Japan was still looking southward; and when the German invasion of Russia gave Tokyo double assurance against an attack from the rear, there was adequate ground for concern lest the Japanese choose this moment for launching their heralded drive into the Indies. But another prospect--and one which was equally disturbing--raised its head at the same time. While Russia was in no position to violate her neutrality agreement of April 13, the same disability did not apply to Japan. And considering the dim view which British and American experts were then taking of Russia's survival power, it appeared likely that if a Japanese attack from the east were added to the German invasion from the west the Soviet Union would speedily collapse.

As early as June 22, Hull asked Nomura directly whether Japan were not seeking to liquidate her venture in China merely to free herself for participation in the European war; and although Nomura promptly denied it, the Secretary was not convinced.⁵⁹ Nor were his suspicions unfounded.

⁵⁸Kimmel's testimony, Jan. 15, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 6, p. 2505.

⁵⁹Memorandum by Ballantine, June 22, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 493.

Throughout the last week of June, the Japanese government seriously considered the advisability of attacking Russia at once. Matsuoka, particularly, favored such a course.⁶⁰ But an Imperial Conference held on July 2 decided against it for the time being. While the Russian project was not abandoned, the Conference agreed that a southward advance should constitute the first order of business and that Japan should begin this effort by consolidating her position in Thailand and Indo-China. An attack on the Soviet Union might be considered later if the Russo-German war developed favorably. For the rest, the Japanese Foreign Office should continue its endeavors to placate the United States and Great Britain by diplomatic means. But if diplomacy broke down, Japan would fulfill her obligations under the Tripartite Pact.⁶¹

Thanks to "Magic," the State Department learned the substance of these decisions by July 8.⁶² But Roosevelt's misgivings on this score would brook no delay; and at his direction, Hull invited the Japanese government on July 4 to deny that it planned to go to war with Russia.⁶³ Tokyo's

⁶⁰Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, pt. 20, p. 3993.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 4019.

⁶²Matsuoka to Nomura, July 2, 1941, ibid., Ex. 1, pt. 12, pp. 1-2.

⁶³Hull to Konoye, July 4, 1941 (delivered by Grew on July 6), Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 502-3.

reply, which came four days later, stated insouciantly that Japan had not yet considered the possibility of attacking the Soviet Union and then turned the question by asking whether the United States meant to intervene in the European war.⁶⁴ Inclosed, however, was a statement given by Matsuoka to the Soviet Ambassador in Tokyo on July 2 to the effect that, while Japan hoped to maintain good relations with Russia, this desire was tempered by a resolve not to promote misunderstandings with her allies, and that the future policy of the Japanese government would largely depend upon future developments.⁶⁵ This was less than reassuring at best--especially so as further reports of Japanese plans for eventual action against Russia continued to be received.⁶⁶

To make the situation still more nebulous, the regular negotiations between Hull and Nomura had been completely sidetracked since June 22; and there was no way to predict the form they would assume when Japan chose to reopen them.

⁶⁴Statement of Matsuoka to Grew, July 8, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 503-4.

⁶⁵Oral statement by Matsuoka to the Russian Ambassador, July 2, 1941, ibid., p. 504.

⁶⁶Cf. reports from Chungking in Minister of Communications to Hu Shih (Chinese Ambassador in Washington), July 8, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 159, pt. 19, p. 3497; and in Chiang Kai-shek to Hu Shih, July 8, 1941, ibid., p. 3496.

Not even the shape of future Anglo-American naval coöperation in the Pacific was clear at this moment, for Marshall and Stark chose July 3 as the date for rejecting the plans drawn up in April at the Singapore staff conversations. Arguing that the report contained political decisions which could not be dealt with in a military agreement, that it accorded the British powers of strategic command which were altogether too broad, that it failed to appreciate the strategic significance of holding the Dutch East Indies, and that it assigned to American and Dutch forces an excessive share of the responsibility for defending British positions in Malaya, the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations directed the Army and Navy observers in London to inform the British Chiefs of Staff that they were unable to approve the report and that new plans would have to be formulated.⁶⁷

There was little doubt concerning our policy in the Atlantic, however. The beginning of hostilities between Germany and Russia convinced Stark that the time for direct action had arrived; and with the approval of Secretary Knox, he lost no time in carrying his arguments to the President. As he later expressed it, the Chief of Naval Operations told Roosevelt that we should "seize the psychological opportunity presented by the Russo-German clash" to proclaim the

⁶⁷Chief of Naval Operations and Chief of Staff to Special Naval Observer and Special Army Observer, London, July 3, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 65, pt. 15, pp. 1677-79.

immediate assumption of escort duty by the United States Navy. Admitting that "such a declaration followed by immediate action on our part" would be likely to involve this country in war, he went on to say that he regarded "every day of delay in our getting into the war as dangerous" and emphasized his belief "that much more delay might be fatal to British survival."⁶⁸ Not all of Stark's advice proved acceptable, but the occupation of Iceland by American troops was about to smooth the way for some of his recommendations.

As early as December 1940, the Icelandic government had suggested the possibility of such an occupation in a direct exchange of views with the United States.⁶⁹ But British troops had been stationed in Iceland since May of the same year, and the actual project took shape under British sponsorship. When the occupation of Iceland was substituted for the Azores plan in early June 1941, Churchill offered to make the necessary arrangements with Icelandic officials, undertaking to obtain a formal request for American protection.⁷⁰

In anticipation of this request, the First Marine Brigade was moved to Argentia, Newfoundland--the western

⁶⁸Stark to Cook, July 31, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2175.

⁶⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 946.

⁷⁰Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 67.

terminus of the North Atlantic convoy route--on June 22.⁷¹ But the Icelandic Premier, Herman Jónasson, proved unexpectedly reluctant to send Washington the desired invitation; and the Marines sailed from Argentia on July 1 without knowing just how cordial their welcome might be.⁷² All difficulties were avoided, however. Jónasson extended a proper invitation on July 7;⁷³ the American convoy entered the harbor of Reykjavik that evening;⁷⁴ and the occupation was announced in Washington the same day.⁷⁵ To save appearances, the exchange of notes which constituted the formal agreement between Iceland and the United States was dated July 1;⁷⁶ but the somewhat unorthodox circumstances under which the objective had been gained did not alter its significance. Now that American forces held territory in an acknowledged zone of operations, the assumption of new duties by the Atlantic Fleet could be expected momentarily.

⁷¹Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 75.

⁷²Ibid., p. 74-75.

⁷³Ibid., p. 74.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 77.

⁷⁵Message of the President to Congress, July 7, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (July 12, 1941), pp. 15-16.

⁷⁶Jónasson to Roosevelt, July 1, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1941-42, pp. 454-56; and Roosevelt to Jónasson, July 1, 1941, ibid., pp. 456-57.

VI.

Events had moved slowly during most of June. By the end of the first week in July, however, it was clear that a good deal had transpired since the latter part of May. In his "unlimited emergency" speech of May 27, President Roosevelt had delivered by far the gravest appraisal of the international situation he had yet made public. He had likewise called attention to certain lines of further activity that were being seriously considered. From the beginning, the Azores expedition had been more or less dependent upon the probability of a German drive into Spain, Portugal, or North Africa. Therefore, as soon as this danger was minimized by Vichy's rejection of Darlan's Paris protocols and by the certainty that Hitler was on the verge of attacking Russia, the North Atlantic convoy route once more became the focus of Anglo-American unity; the occupation of Iceland was substituted for the Azores project; and the United States agreed to forego the transatlantic escort service it had been planning in order to assume responsibility for the western half of the British-Canadian system.

In the meanwhile, Hull's new series of talks with Japan made no progress whatever. Although Nomura insisted that he had been commissioned to seek a genuine agreement, Japan's unbending adherence to the Tripartite Pact, her reluctance to come to grips with a fair solution to the Chinese problem, and her new activities in Indo-China led

Hull to believe that she was preparing new deviltry behind the scenes. He became convinced of this in late June and early July following the outbreak of the Russo-German war. But Tokyo's answer to his question on this point was evasive, and he could do nothing but wait for the Japanese reaction to his proposals of June 21.

On the other hand, the break between Germany and Russia was seized promptly. The difficulties which both had experienced in recent dealings with Moscow were thrown into the background as the United States and Great Britain made a concerted bid for Soviet understanding. And while preparations to render material aid got under way in London and Washington, the occupation of Iceland by American troops heralded new advances in American naval policy.

CHAPTER IX

COMPLETION OF STRATEGY

I.

To the extent that it confronted the United States with new threats of Japanese aggression in the Far East, the outbreak of hostilities between Germany and the Soviet Union yielded distinct advantages to German policy. But it had another effect which Berlin may not have anticipated. While the general tendency of Matsuoka's diplomacy over the past year had been to emphasize the principle of Axis solidarity on every possible occasion, Japan's esteem for the practical manifestations of unity had never been great except where her own plans were directly involved; and the Russo-German war rendered her more independent of her European allies just as a renewed desire for independence was taking hold of her government. This change was centered in the decisions made by the Imperial Conference on July 2.

Grew caught some overtones of a modified policy from his vantage point in Tokyo even before the results of the Conference were known with any certainty. In an appraisal of the situation written July 6, he noted Japan's growing awareness that the Tripartite Pact involved her in "certain avoidable risks." Taking this as his basic premise, he

went on to observe that the Japanese government was becoming somewhat disturbed over Germany's frank expectation that she would be given special privileges in China after the New Order was set up, expressed the opinion that Japan was no longer sure of her own future in a German-dominated world, and reached the following conclusion:

I would not go so far as to say that there has been a complete collapse of Japanese confidence in German good faith, but I do not think that that confidence is today sufficiently robust to justify any initiatives tending to serve German interests more closely than the interests of Japan herself.¹

German interests, or at least German desires, were at stake in the deliberations of the Imperial Conference; for the German government was thoroughly in accord with those who favored a Japanese attack on the Soviet Union.² While both Hitler and Ribbentrop had exercised their greatest eloquence on Matsuoka only three months before in an effort to persuade him that Japan should waste no time in launching a heavy assault upon the British position in southeastern Asia, Germany had begun exerting pressure in Tokyo for a drive against Russia as soon as her own invasion got under way.

It did not require much of an eye, however, to see that Japan was well fixed to reject this plea for gratuitous

¹Grew, Ten Years, p. 402.

²Ibid., p. 409; cf. Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 48. Also see Memorandum by Amai (Japanese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs), Aug. 19, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 132-A, pt. 18, p. 2948.

assistance. Russia's preoccupation with defense of her European territory not only broadened Japan's freedom of action; it also lessened the immediate value she placed upon German support. By the same token, it was evident that German policy would be virtually immobilized as long as the new conflict lasted; and this appeared to give Japan a number of months during which she could hope to advance and consolidate her program for eastern Asia without fear that Germany would be able to present effective demands for her own inclusion in the New Order.

Of course, the principal decision made by the Imperial Conference shelved the Russian project in favor of a drive to the south; and while such a move was by no means opposed to German interests, it was less immediately helpful than a Japanese invasion of Siberia would have been. Whatever this meant in other respects, it meant that any benefits which Germany derived from her connection with Japan would be incidental to the advancement of Japanese policy itself--that Japan, in effect, was preparing to work out her own destiny while both Germany and Russia had their backs turned.

Despite Grew's shrewd analysis of the principle involved, however, much of this became clear only in retrospect; and it could have exerted little influence over relations between Japan and the United States even if it had been completely understood at the time. While the lack of any Japanese move toward Siberia was helpful in itself,

Japan was still bent upon a course of aggression which could only intensify her differences with this country. That the trend of Matsuoka's labors over the past year had been interrupted, at least temporarily, remained an issue between Berlin and Tokyo. If it solved one of the problems confronting Washington, it also increased the size of another. Being unacquainted with the exact focus of German desires at the time, moreover, the American government was not even certain that Japan's contemplated movement southward represented an independent decision.³ Nor did Japan furnish any evidence on this point. Whatever her private differences with Germany, she was not prepared to abandon her Axis connections before the world; and she continued to speak the language of the Tripartite Pact in her talks with the United States. Therefore, the outbreak of war between Russia and Germany served only to interrupt our negotiations with Japan. And as the question of whether Japan meant to attack Russia was submerged in the threat offered by her perfectly evident designs upon southeastern Asia, these negotiations were resumed in the presence of even greater strains than before.

The interruption was prolonged for another three weeks, however. Since June 21, the United States government had been awaiting Tokyo's reactions to Hull's proposals of that

³Cf. Grew's comments on this point in Ten Years, pp. 402-3; also Welles' statements to Nomura on July 23, in which he attributed Japan's unbroken success in gaining concessions in Indo-China to "pressure brought to bear upon the Vichy Government by Berlin." See Memorandum by Welles, July 23, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 524.

date; but no reply was forthcoming even after Matsuoka lost his battle for immediate war with Russia. As a matter of fact, the intransigent Foreign Minister was finding himself more at odds with his colleagues every day. He promptly opened a new dispute regarding the manner in which the American note should be answered; efforts to reconcile these differences failed completely; and Konoye reorganized his Cabinet on July 16.⁴ While the only important change was the substitution of Admiral Teijiro Toyoda, a relative moderate, for the troublesome Matsuoka, this event occasioned still more delay in the resumption of serious talks with the United States; and no real answer to Hull's proposals was ever delivered.

Meanwhile, the Secretary of State retired to White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, for a badly needed rest;⁵ and Nomura did what he could to keep the postponement from assuming a look of finality. In an interview with two of Hull's subordinates on July 15, he adverted once more to the Tripartite Pact, explaining that while Japan was not obligated to fight if the United States "should become involved in the European war through acts of self-defense," she "could not give a blank check" for anything we might choose to call by such a name, but would have to judge

⁴Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, pt. 20, pp. 3996-7.

⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1012.

events on their merits "in the light of actual circumstances."⁶ Three days later, he assured Welles that Matsuoka had had no advance knowledge of German intentions to attack Russia and observed that he had telegraphed the new Foreign Minister for fresh instructions regarding his talks with Hull.⁷ But he apparently realized that he was getting nowhere with the State Department; and changing to another tack, he undertook to discuss Japan's problems with Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner, head of the Navy's War Plans Division. Approaching the latter in the spirit of one naval officer talking to another, Nomura insisted that Japan, like the United States, must be free to take necessary measures for her own defense; and after pointing out that American export restrictions were steadily undermining Japanese economy, he advised Turner that Japanese troops would occupy the remainder of Indo-China within the next few days.⁸ Although the State Department hardly needed further evidence on this point,⁹ such an admission by the Japanese Ambassador removed

⁶Memorandum by Ballantine, July 15, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 509.

⁷Memorandum by Welles, July 18, 1941, ibid., pp. 515-16.

⁸Turner to Stark, July 21, 1941, ibid., pp. 517-18.

⁹At Vichy, Darlan had positively informed Admiral Leahy on July 16 that Japan was about to "occupy bases in Indo-China with the purpose of projecting military operations to the southward." See text of Leahy's telegram, July 16, 1941, in Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 177.

all possible doubt. It was clear that relations between Washington and Tokyo were about to enter the most crucial phase they had yet seen.

II.

But if the United States faced a new Eastern crisis in a role which was still limited to observation and protest, it held fast to its initiative in the Atlantic. The stationing of American Marines on Icelandic soil begot no direct counter-measures from Germany, and Hitler seemed content to let matters rest for the time being. Indeed, he told Grand Admiral Raeder as much on July 9. The Admiral, considerably exercised by the implications of Roosevelt's latest move, observed that the American occupation of Iceland might be considered an act of war and suggested that German naval forces be accorded greater liberty of action in dealing with United States ships. But Hitler's responsibilities on the eastern front made him cautious. After explaining at some length that he wanted to avoid further trouble with the United States for another month or two, he made it clear that Raeder would have to be content with existing instructions.¹⁰

There was no attempt, however, to deny the validity of the Admiral's worries. Anyone who gave the matter second

¹⁰Conference of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, with the Fuehrer, July 9, 1941, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, Vol. 2, p. 3.

thought could understand that the occupation of Iceland by American troops involved a good deal more than simple defense of that island. So long as United States Marines were stationed there, it was obvious that they would have to be supplied by American ships and that these ships would have to be protected by naval units while en route to their destination. It was also clear that the responsibilities of the Atlantic Fleet would have to be extended into an area lying somewhat beyond the 26th meridian, which constituted the easternmost limit of American patrol activity as prescribed in the "trailing" order of April 21.

Moreover, considering the extensive and semi-belligerent patrol operations in which United States naval forces had been engaged since that time, it was inevitable that public doubts should be raised on the home front concerning the exact functions of the Atlantic Fleet.¹¹ The popular columnist, Joseph W. Alsop, reported as early as June 9 that an American destroyer had recently attacked a German U-boat not far off the coast of Greenland.¹² A fortnight later, two other columnists--Drew Pearson and Robert S.

¹¹For a detailed summary of this discussion in Congress and the public press between March and July 1941, see Charles A. Beard, President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941: A Study in Appearances and Realities (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1948), chapter 3.

¹²United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on Naval Affairs, Investigation of charges that American naval vessels are convoying ships or have destroyed German naval vessels; preliminary report (77th Cong., 1st. sess.), Report No. 617 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1941), p. 2.

Allen--asserted that American naval units had already taken part in convoy operations.¹³ This was enough to arouse the isolationist wrath of Senator Burton K. Wheeler; and on June 30 that gentleman introduced a Senate resolution calling for an investigation of the above charges.¹⁴ His motion was dropped after preliminary hearings, but not until both Secretary Knox and Admiral Stark had been subjected to questioning.

Needless to say, they told very little. Knox admitted the general truth of Alsop's story about the encounter off the coast of Greenland but stated, reasonably enough, that the destroyer had employed depth charges only in self-defense.¹⁵ Both he and Stark denied that American warships had escorted a single merchant vessel since the beginning of the war except in the case of the Iroquois, which, laden with homecoming Americans, had been guarded from somewhere off the Grand Banks in the fall of 1939 as a measure of precaution against a rumored plot to destroy her.¹⁶ At the same time, both men categorically refused to discuss what the Navy was actually doing in the Atlantic or to reveal the extent of its cooperation with the ships of other powers.¹⁷

¹³Senate, Committee on Naval Affairs, Investigation of charges, etc. p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 7.

Since this concluded the inquisition, the Navy's top representatives had managed to preserve secrecy without resorting to falsehood.

They were interviewed just in time, however; for on July 11--the very day that Knox and Stark appeared before the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs--Roosevelt carried the occupation of Iceland to its logical conclusion by giving orders that the Atlantic Fleet should be directed to escort convoys of American and Icelandic ships between the United States and Iceland. Nor was this the whole extent of his move, for the Navy was likewise ordered to protect vessels of other nationalities desiring to join convoys of this type.¹⁸ That the United States had assumed a broad partnership in the Atlantic war could no longer be doubted.

The presidential directive was implemented through two orders to the Fleet. Admiral King's Operation Plan No. 5, issued July 15, ordered the Fleet to "support the defense of Iceland" and to "capture or destroy vessels engaged in support of sea and air operations directed against Western Hemisphere territory, or United States or Iceland flag shipping." The directive specified that the occasion for action would arise from the presence of "potentially hostile vessels...actually within sight or sound contact of such shipping or of its escort."¹⁹ And on July 19, King

¹⁸Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2294.

¹⁹Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 78.

promulgated his Operation Plan No. 6, which decreed the formation of a special task force (designated Task Force 1) ...to escort convoys of United States and Iceland flag shipping, including shipping of any nationality which may join such United States or Iceland flag convoys, between United States ports or bases, and Iceland.²⁰

At the same time, a number of Canadian and Free French destroyers and corvettes were assigned to aid the new task force in its duties.²¹ Until further arrangements could be made, however, the provision which allowed foreign ships to join Iceland-bound convoys was suspended.²²

In the midst of these developments, Hitler thought better of the Spartan restraint he had lately imposed upon Raeder as far as American shipping was concerned; and on July 18, he authorized U-boat commanders to sink our merchant vessels anywhere inside their original zone of operations. It was made abundantly clear, however, that this directive did not refer to the current zone of operations (which touched the three-mile limit of Greenland) but only to the earlier one--which corresponded roughly to the combat zone recognized by the United States government off the western coast of Europe and which did not include the

²⁰ Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 78.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 78-79.

²² Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2295.

sea route between the United States and Iceland.²³ What the German Navy gained, therefore, was more a concession in principle than one in fact.

As our own Navy plunged ever deeper into the Atlantic war, the new friendship among the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union continued to expand under the brilliant glow of understanding furnished by recognition of a common enemy. Moscow waxed almost genial as its emissaries were received by London and Washington in an atmosphere of solicitous helpfulness; and ex-Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov--that enduring and lonely symbol of his government's presumed regard for collective action in the late 1930's--was hastily dredged up from the limbo to which he had been consigned and placed on the radio July 8 to return the greetings of Churchill and Roosevelt.²⁴ The British Ambassador in Moscow, Sir Stafford Cripps, had opened negotiations with Stalin during the interim; and what amounted to a treaty of alliance between Great Britain and the Soviet Union was signed in the Russian capital on July 12. By this accord, the two governments undertook to give each other full assistance and support in the "present war against Hitlerite Germany" and promised further that

²³Extract from German naval file, July 18, 1941, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. 6, No. C-118, p. 916.

²⁴Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 389.

neither would consider "an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement."²⁵ In the meanwhile, Harry Hopkins--whose significance as presidential adviser and personal representative was growing by the day--had left Washington for England in search of new ideas as to how the American government could best exploit this situation to the advantage of all three countries.

Hopkins was deep in his second series of conferences with Churchill before the Russo-German war was a month old, and it soon appeared that all was not calm beneath the surface of Anglo-Russian relations in spite of the many external signs of amity. Russia's danger was great, but already she was talking of peace terms and showing a larger interest in post-war political concessions than in British offers of immediate aid. Nevertheless, Churchill viewed the eastern war with growing confidence and was beginning to hope that the Soviet armies might be able to continue their resistance until winter at least. His most pressing anxiety seemed to be the vast amount of battle experience which Hitler's legions were gaining from their endeavors on the Russian front.²⁶ Whatever the future might hold, the

²⁵Agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics providing for joint action in the war against Germany (with protocol), Moscow, July 12, 1941, Great Britain, Foreign Office, Treaty Series, No. 31 (1941), Cmd. 6304.

²⁶Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 309, 311.

principal objective now was to help the Russians stave off immediate defeat; and it was not even suggested that the United States and Great Britain refuse to make good their announced policy of extending all possible aid to the Soviet Union. Until a better knowledge of Russia's needs, desires, and prospects could be obtained, however, it was impossible to enter the subject in detail.

On the other hand, there was much to discuss in connection with the Atlantic war and related aspects of Anglo-American coöperation. Returning to England on June 20 after a flying visit to Washington, John G. Winant, the American Ambassador to Great Britain, had carried Roosevelt's assurance that the zone covered by United States naval patrols in the Atlantic would soon be extended;²⁷ and Hopkins was now able to show Churchill a penciled line on a map torn from The National Geographic which gave the Prime Minister a more accurate notion of what the President had in mind. Since April, as noted above, regular American patrol vessels had been allowed to operate as far into the Atlantic as the 26th meridian--which American policy still defined as the eastern limit of the Western Hemisphere. But Hopkins' map indicated that Roosevelt proposed to redefine this boundary in such a way that the dividing line swung sharply eastward at a point about two hundred miles southwest of Iceland and

²⁷Winant, Letter from Grosvenor Square, p. 203.

did not turn north again until it reached a point about two hundred miles southeast of that vital outpost.²⁸ Since Hopkins kept few notes of his conversations with Churchill on this trip, further details of their talks on Atlantic problems are not known.²⁹ It is known, however, that the President's emissary had been forbidden to discuss any kind of post-war economic or territorial arrangements with the Prime Minister and directed to say nothing about the possible entry of the United States into the war.³⁰ Perhaps the most troublesome problem on his agenda was the investigation of rumors that the British were using articles received under Lend-Lease to build up their export trade in South America and elsewhere.³¹ The matter was ultimately left to Winant for solution; and it led him into a series of disagreeable negotiations with Anthony Eden which lasted until September 10, when the latter promised on behalf of the British government that Lend-Lease goods would not be used in foreign trade and that items of domestic production similar to those received under Lend-Lease would not be employed for developing new markets or for extending British

²⁸Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 311. A photostatic copy of the map carried by Hopkins appears on p. 310.

²⁹Ibid., p. 313.

³⁰Ibid., p. 311.

³¹Ibid., p. 313.

trade to the detriment of American exporters.³²

Otherwise, Hopkins' main conversational themes related to Britain's position in the Middle East and to arrangements for a personal conference between Roosevelt and Churchill. On the former point, Hopkins stated his government's feeling that the British were spending too much of their substance in a possibly futile effort to maintain their traditional hold on the Middle East.³³ It was clear, however, that this criticism was based on strategy, not anti-imperialism; and after some consideration, Churchill rejected it. Although more than half of Great Britain's war production over the past eight months had been sent to Egypt and nearby areas, he believed that the strategic importance of this region justified such expenditures of men and matériel and left no doubt that the British government would continue its policy of reinforcing the Middle East.³⁴ Agreement on the latter point was much easier. At least since the beginning of the year, both Roosevelt and

³²Winant, Letter from Grosvenor Square, pp. 149-50; also British White Paper, Sept. 10, 1941, United States, Office of Lend-Lease Administration, Third Report to Congress on Lend-Lease Operations (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1941), Appendix 5, pp. 45-47.

³³See memorandum of Hopkins' statement on this point in Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 314-15. The similar views expressed by General Lee and General Chaney, other American representatives at this conference, are summarized on pp. 315-16.

³⁴Ibid., p. 316.

Churchill had been looking forward to a personal encounter;³⁵ and a reassessment of Anglo-American strategy at the very highest level seemed particularly desirable now in view of Russia's entry into the war. When Hopkins reached London, the question was already settled in principle; and he had no difficulty completing arrangements for a meeting at sea off Argentia, Newfoundland, to occur between August 10 and August 15. This led directly into the next stage of Hopkins' odyssey--his sudden trip to Moscow at the end of July.

Presumably there had been no discussion of such a project before Hopkins left Washington,³⁶ but that the idea should take form during his conversations with Churchill was only natural. Even these preliminary talks in London had been frustrated to some extent by British and American ignorance of Russia's attitude, prospects, and needs; and one of the main tasks faced by the President and Prime Minister in their forthcoming conference was to review the world situation in the light of these very items. At all events, Hopkins saw that Britain and the United States would continue to work at a serious disadvantage until they had a more intimate acquaintance with the situation in Russia than could be obtained through regular diplomatic

³⁵See text of Hopkins' undated personal letter to Roosevelt written from London in January 1941, Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 243.

³⁶Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 318.

channels and decided, as his talks with Churchill drew to a close, that he was the man to establish the necessary personal contact with Stalin.³⁷ After Churchill approved of the idea and volunteered to make arrangements for transportation from the British Isles to Russia, Hopkins cabled Roosevelt for the necessary authorization. This was the evening of July 25.³⁸ The President concurred with enthusiasm the next day,³⁹ and Welles cabled Hopkins a message for transmission to the Soviet dictator in Roosevelt's name.⁴⁰ On the night of July 27, Hopkins left Invergordon, Scotland, aboard a Catalina flying boat of the Royal Air Force Coastal Command. While exceedingly uncomfortable to one of his tender health, the trip passed without special incident;⁴¹ and Hopkins was able to have his first interview with Stalin at the Kremlin on the evening of July 30.

His host appeared both friendly and confident and

³⁷According to Sherwood's reading, the idea was probably Hopkins' own; Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 317. Winant, however, takes at least partial credit for the inspiration; Letter from Grosvenor Square, p. 207.

³⁸For text of this cablegram, see Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 317-18.

³⁹Roosevelt to Hopkins, July 26, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 179, pt. 20, p. 4373.

⁴⁰For text of this message, see Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 321-22.

⁴¹Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 323-25.

opened his remarks by denouncing Germany's lack of moral standards in appropriate terms. Then, at Hopkins' request, he began to list Russia's immediate and long-range needs. In the first category, he mentioned antiaircraft guns, large-caliber machine guns, and rifles for the use of the Soviet Army. His chief requirements for a long war were high-octane gasoline, aluminum for aircraft construction, and the other items which Oumansky and Golikov had already requested in Washington. As though to remind him that the United States could act promptly, Hopkins called his attention to the 200 fighting planes, Curtiss P-40's, which had already been promised to Russia, 140 from the British Isles and 60 directly from the United States. He then took up the problem of delivery. Owing to the extreme distances involved and to the possibility of interference on the part of Japan, Stalin disliked the route offered by Vladivostok and the Trans-Siberian Railway. Neither could he say much for the route through Iran from the Persian Gulf; its capacity was too limited. On the whole, the route through the North Atlantic, the Arctic Ocean, and the White Sea leading to Archangel and Murmansk seemed to offer the best possibilities.⁴²

Later that evening, Hopkins discussed supply with representatives of the Red Army;⁴³ and the next day he

⁴²Hopkins' record of this conversation is given in Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 327-30.

⁴³Ibid., p. 330.

exchanged views with Sir Stafford Cripps in regard to the impending conference between Roosevelt and Churchill. He and Cripps agreed that the two leaders ought to send Stalin a joint message from their meeting-place, and the latter gave Hopkins a suggested draft for such a communication to take back with him.⁴⁴ That afternoon, Hopkins talked with Molotov, explaining that Roosevelt did not wish to offer threats which could not be supported by force if necessary but that the United States would be unable "to look with complacency" upon the occupation of any part of Siberia by Japan. He also expressed his view--based no doubt on the contents of intercepted messages from Tokyo to Japanese diplomatic missions abroad--that Japan was watching the progress of the Russo-German war with the possible intention of attacking from the rear if developments were unfavorable to the Soviet Union.⁴⁵ Molotov agreed that Japan was not to be trusted and suggested, with some indirection, that a warning on this score from the United States might help keep Tokyo in check. Hopkins offered to convey this hint to Roosevelt; and after the other had expressed his hope that American aid to China would be able to make good the deficiency caused by the inevitable slackening of Russian aid to that stricken country, the interview came to

⁴⁴ Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 331.

⁴⁵ Excerpt from Steinhardt's record of this conversation, ibid., p. 331.

an end on a note of great friendliness.⁴⁶

That evening, July 31, Hopkins enjoyed a second and much longer discussion with the Russian leader. On this occasion, Maxim Litvinov served as interpreter. At Hopkins' request, Stalin began with a detailed analysis of the war situation. While he admitted that Germany had launched her attack with a marked superiority in men, tanks, planes, and various other types of matériel, he believed that the tactics of the Red Army were proving successful and expressed the view that Germany did not now have enough troops to maintain offensive warfare over the whole front and guard her extended lines of communication at the same time. After further discussion of these and related matters, he repeated his request for antiaircraft guns, machine guns, and aluminum.⁴⁷

Hopkins thereupon pointed out that American aid could not possibly reach the Soviet Union in great volume before winter and observed, in this connection, that his own government was making plans for a long war. He added that the United States--and possibly Great Britain as well--would be unwilling to send any heavy munitions to Russia until the three powers had had an opportunity to discuss

⁴⁶Hopkins' record of conversation with Molotov, July 31, 1941, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 331-33.

⁴⁷See Part I of Hopkins' record of his conversation with Stalin, July 31, 1941, Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 333-40.

the relative strategic importance of each of the several theaters involved. Believing it unwise to hold such a conference until the outcome of the current phase of operations on the Russian front was less doubtful, Hopkins suggested delay. Stalin seemed amenable to the conference idea, said that he would be glad to receive British and American representatives in Moscow, and even offered to supply American authorities with the designs of Soviet tanks, planes, and guns. Since his host had already told him that he thought the Russian front would be stabilized by the beginning of October, Hopkins proposed that the conference meet in the Soviet capital between October 1 and October 15.⁴⁸

During the remainder of the interview, Stalin dealt frankly with the possible entry of the United States into the war. Couching his words in the form of a personal message to Roosevelt, he stated his belief that Hitler's greatest weaknesses were to be found in the hatred of his subject populations and in the low morale of the German Army and German people. In view of this, he thought a declaration of war by the United States would encourage resistance on the one hand and smash Germany's fighting spirit on the other. In this connection, he was prepared to welcome American troops, under their own command, on any

⁴⁸ See Part II of Hopkins' record of his conversation with Stalin, July 31, 1941, Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 341-42.

part of the Russian front. Replying that he could discuss nothing but matters of supply, Hopkins said that our entry into the war would be decided largely "by Hitler himself and his encroachment upon our fundamental interests."⁴⁹

Hopkins left this meeting greatly impressed by Stalin's personality and by his assurance that the Red Army could keep the Germans at bay through the succeeding winter.⁵⁰ From this moment forward, he was an ardent partisan of aid to Russia in ever-growing quantities. With this optimistic view of the new situation, he left Russia in the same airplane which had brought him and made his return flight to Great Britain. He rejoined Churchill at Scapa Flow on August 2 just as the Prime Minister was on the point of leaving for the Atlantic Conference aboard the battleship Prince of Wales.⁵¹ Churchill was much encouraged by what Hopkins had to say--as was Roosevelt, too, when he learned the details a few days later.

III.

Throughout July and August, relations between Washington and Madrid continued the trend they had been following since

⁴⁹See Part III of Hopkins' record of his conversation with Stalin, July 31, 1941, Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 342-43.

⁵⁰Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 343.

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 347-48.

the first of the year. Neither Franco nor Serrano Suñer evinced the slightest disposition to resume contact with Weddell, and the Caudillo was especially provocative in his annual speech to the Falange on July 17 when he stated that Great Britain had so obviously lost the war that it would be "criminal madness" for the United States to intervene.⁵²

Under these circumstances, the State Department had no reason to grow more trustful of Spanish policy. Except that many exports were now subject to licensing control, American trade with Spain was still as free, in theory, as Spain's supply of dollar credits and British blockade policy would allow it to be. But the unofficial delays and impediments mentioned in the last chapter were applied more systematically from the beginning of July under the direction of Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson; and Welles on August 3 accepted the view long championed by Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes that ships owned or controlled in the United States should be forbidden to carry oil to Spain or the Canary Islands.⁵³ This imposed even heavier burdens upon Spain's notably inadequate merchant marine.

In such a manner, the economic noose was gradually tightened. The effect was especially noticeable in the declining volume of Spain's petroleum imports. Beginning in July and continuing for a period of about three months,

⁵²Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 136.

⁵³Ibid., p. 138.

American shipments of gasoline to Spain were reduced to about one-half of normal, while fuel oil sales amounted to only about two-thirds of their accustomed total.⁵⁴ Whether Franco admitted it or not, this was a serious matter; and Demetrio Carceller, the Minister of Trade and Industry, approached Weddell on July 31 with conciliatory advice. Somewhat plaintively, it would seem, Carceller told the Ambassador that, since Spain was still neutral, the American government should not regard Franco's public attitude too seriously--that deeds, after all, are more important than words. But the State Department was not convinced that Carceller spoke with Franco's approval, and no attempt was made to widen this opening for another month.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, of course, the United States government followed developments in North Africa and unoccupied France with the closest attention. From his post in Algiers, Murphy on July 7 sent Washington the details of a report supposedly emanating from Berlin. According to this story, the Nazi invasion of Russia was nothing more than part of a German scheme to gain absolute control of the Mediterranean. After surrounding the Black Sea, Hitler's armies would turn southward through the Near East and then sweep westward across North Africa, drawing Spain into the war and bringing

⁵⁴Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 139.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 139-40.

Dakar and Casablanca firmly under German domination.⁵⁶ On July 11, Weygand suddenly left his headquarters for new consultations at Vichy. When he returned to Algiers a few days later, he told Murphy that he feared a crisis in September or October.⁵⁷ At the same time, Weygand's advisers made it clear that the General's position would be greatly strengthened by definite promises of substantial military aid from the United States. Murphy saw considerable merit in this idea and immediately started a long but fruitless campaign to secure from his government the assurances which Weygand was thought to desire.⁵⁸

But the State Department was viewing both the North African situation and the German invasion from a much different perspective than either Murphy, Weygand, or the General's retinue; and while it was not yet in a position to take much for granted, it was generally inclined to regard the immediate future in this part of the world with less pessimism than was evinced by anyone on the spot. Indeed, Murphy's own alarm dwindled notably by the end of the month; for after pondering local conditions another two weeks, he sounded almost optimistic. "It is clear," he confessed in a letter sent to Washington on July 31, "that

⁵⁶Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 176.

⁵⁷Murphy to Hull, July 15, 1941, quoted in ibid, p. 182.

⁵⁸Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 183.

we have a far greater time margin than we dared hope some months ago."⁵⁹

Nevertheless, the American government applied its usual diplomatic pressure at Vichy throughout this time of apparent crisis. In mid-July, while Weygand was conferring with Pétain, Roosevelt sent the latter new warnings against concessions of any kind. But Leahy made no headway whatever. Darlan was still Vice-Premier, and on July 16 he not only declined to make any promises regarding concessions to Germany but also informed the American Ambassador that Japan was about to occupy new bases in Indo-China.⁶⁰ Leahy received immediate instructions to submit a new protest against concessions to Japan. He did as he was bidden, but Darlan merely replied that France was helpless. On July 21, he concluded the episode by informing Leahy that the French government had been forced to yield again; Japan had been granted permission to occupy southern Indo-China.⁶¹ Owing to its very immediacy, this problem at once overshadowed the ebbing worries produced by Murphy's dispatches; and the United States had no choice but to continue its discussion of the matter with Japan.

⁵⁹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 183.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 176-77.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 177-78.

IV.

Though France's new allowances to Japan had not yet been officially proclaimed by either government, Tokyo made no secret of the business; and Nomura finished the revelations he had started in his confidences to Admiral Turner on July 21 by telling Welles on July 23 that he "understood" Japan had concluded an agreement with France which permitted the occupation of southern Indo-China by Japanese troops. He did his best, however, to create an impression that the move was only temporary. With that emptiness of phrase which had become such a marked characteristic of Japanese diplomacy in recent years, he insisted that no violation of Indo-China's "inherent sovereignty" would occur and explained that the occupation was necessary for reasons of military security. The activity of Free French elements in Indo-China had to be controlled, he said; and Japan had to guard her access to food supplies in this region. Expressing hope that the United States government would not act hastily, Nomura revealed the main focus of Tokyo's worries by declaring that any further restriction of American oil exports to Japan would "inflame" Japanese opinion. He ended his discourse with an optimistic statement to the effect that he had new instructions from his government to seek a general agreement with the United States.⁶² But the

⁶²Memorandum by Welles, July 23, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 523.

Ambassador's outpourings were all too familiar, and Welles' quick reply did not mince words for an instant. In view of what the other had just told him, he said, all basis for continuing negotiations between their respective governments had disappeared. If Japan occupied the remainder of Indo-China, the United States would have no alternative but to assume that she was bent upon a "policy of totalitarian aggression in the South Seas."⁶³

The decisive moment in our relations with Japan had arrived. Diplomatic contact was not broken; several rounds of further negotiation were destined to ensue. Nevertheless, Welles' statement of July 23 marked a genuine turning-point in the Far Eastern policy of the United States, a kind of watershed between hope and resignation. Having accepted Japan's latest move in Indo-China as final evidence that Tokyo planned no compromise whatever as basis for a peaceful settlement with this country, the American government would henceforth place less reliance upon diplomatic persuasion than upon economic pressure. And since it had little expectation that ultimate war could be avoided, its major objective would be to gain time.⁶⁴

After his discouraging exchange of views with the Acting Secretary of State, Nomura tried going directly to the

⁶³Memorandum by Welles, July 23, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 525.

⁶⁴Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1015.

President. He was received at the White House on July 24, but he did no better here than he had done at the State Department. Roosevelt grasped the opportunity to deliver a severe lecture on the newest dangers of Japanese policy and bluntly informed his visitor that the United States had so far hesitated to declare an oil embargo only because it did not wish to give Japan an incentive for seizing the Dutch East Indies.⁶⁵ Whether he planned to impose one now the President did not say, but the drift of his remarks could hardly be mistaken. With this threat of new economic restrictions hanging in the air, Roosevelt went on to suggest a formula which, if accepted, would stabilize conditions in southeastern Asia long enough to permit further study of the differences existing between Tokyo and Washington. In brief, he offered to seek an agreement with the British, Dutch, and Chinese providing for the neutralization of Indo-China if Japan would withdraw her troops from that country.⁶⁶ The campaign to gain time was already getting under way.

Meanwhile, however, the Japanese occupation of southern Indo-China was proceeding rapidly; and Roosevelt's implicit

⁶⁵Memorandum by Welles, July 24, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 527.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 529.

threat materialized long before he received an answer to his proposals. On July 26, he issued an executive order freezing all Japanese assets in the United States.⁶⁷ This brought Japanese-American trade to an immediate standstill. As Welles told an anxious Nomura on July 28, all Japanese vessels in American ports would be granted clearance by the Treasury Department as soon as permission to depart was requested. But he made it clear that such vessels would carry nothing except enough fuel to see them home.⁶⁸ Deeds, for the moment, were moving faster than words--but not with the complete approbation of everyone concerned. There were some who felt that such a drastic step as the freezing order would merely defeat the hope of gaining time.

Through the device of placing the export of strategic materials under licensing control, the United States had exerted a mounting economic pressure against Japan for more than a year. Since the autumn of 1940, the Japanese had been unable to buy from this country such articles as aircraft engines and parts, various minerals and chemicals, aviation gasoline, aviation lube oil, and any kind of scrap iron and steel. The advisability of extending these prohibitions had been kept under constant study, moreover; and in recent weeks,

⁶⁷Executive Order No. 8832, July 26, 1941, Federal Register, Vol. 6, p. 3715.

⁶⁸Memorandum by Welles, July 28, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 537-38.

the question of stopping all shipments of oil to Japan had been especially vexed. That such a move would strike Japan in her weakest spot so far as preparations for war were concerned could not be doubted; but as Roosevelt had explained to Nomura on July 24, action had been restrained by fear that it might drive Japan into a precipitate seizure of the Dutch East Indies in an effort to gain a firm hold upon a new source of supply. This anxiety was particularly strong in military and naval circles. Commenting upon Japan's newest aggression in a letter written to Admiral Hart on July 24, Stark had expressed his belief that Japan would lie idle for a time after seizing the remainder of Indo-China unless Washington decreed an oil embargo. In such an event, he thought, Japan might enter Borneo at once. For this reason, he added, he had always opposed an oil embargo as strongly as he could.⁶⁹ The same view had already been presented in an official analysis submitted by Admiral Turner of the War Plans Division on July 22.⁷⁰

That the civilian heads of the government did not share these misgivings to the same extent accounted for the freezing order of July 26. Nevertheless, the gravity of the action could not be denied. Since the British and Dutch

⁶⁹Stark to Hart, July 24, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2173.

⁷⁰Memorandum by Turner, July 22, 1941, in Stark's testimony, Jan. 4, 1946, ibid., pt. 5, p. 2384.

governments had issued freezing orders similar to that of the United States,⁷¹ Japan could not rely on the East Indies to make good even a substantial part of the tremendous oil deficit thus produced unless she took control of these territories by main force. Nor could she afford much delay in making up her mind. Her oil stocks were good for only twelve to eighteen months of wartime consumption; she normally imported 80 percent of her oil from the United States, while domestic wells and synthetic production were capable of filling only about 12 percent of her needs.⁷² The American government held a powerful economic weapon and was now using it freely for the first time. But since it confronted Japan with a choice between surrender and new aggressions, this decision was made at the cost of bringing war a good deal closer.

The caution displayed by Stark and others tended to harmonize with the general strategic pattern which had been elaborated in concert with Great Britain since the preceding

⁷¹Cf. Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 62. Britain also chose this moment for denouncing her commercial treaty with Japan. See Notice of abrogation by the United Kingdom, India, and Burma of commercial treaties with Japan July 26, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1941-42, pp. 507-8.

⁷²United States, Strategic Bombing Survey, The Effects of Bombing on Japan's War Economy (Washington: Gov't Printing Office, 1946), p. 9; Appendix A, pp. 79-80; and table, Appendix C, p. 134. Cf. Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, pp. 63-64.

autumn, for this pattern assumed that a diplomacy of restraint would be used to avoid an open break in the Pacific as long as possible. But the order of July 26 also bore directly upon particular concepts relating to defense of the American position in the Far East.

Since about 1921, it had been taken for granted that any future conflict between Japan and the United States would commence with a Japanese invasion of the Philippines; and these islands had always been regarded as indefensible in the primary stages of such a war. As a result, there was to be no attempt to hold even the island of Luzon. Instead, plans called for withdrawal of the Philippine Army and the United States Army garrison to the Bataan Peninsula. From this stronghold, all efforts would be concentrated upon retention of Manila Bay until help could arrive from across the Pacific.⁷³

But a change was in progress by July 1941. The native military establishment seemed to have made great strides under the direction of former Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur, who had resigned from the United States Army in 1937 to accept the rank of Field Marshal under the Filipino government; and MacArthur was now convinced that a Japanese attack might be successfully resisted. This optimism had an

⁷³ Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 150; and Jonathan M. Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, ed. by Robert Considine (Garden City, N. Y.; Doubleday, 1946), p. 9.

appeal to which higher authority was not immune. At the same time, moreover, the Army was gaining an unusual respect for the capabilities of its new bombing plane, the Flying Fortress. A number of these craft had been allotted to the British under Lend-Lease, and the Royal Air Force had found them very effective in bombing operations over Germany. As a result, the General Staff began to forget about immediate retirement to Bataan in the event of a Far Eastern war. It was prepared to concede that Luzon and the Visayas might be held if the strength of MacArthur's army could be increased to 200,000 men and if he could be provided with a sizable force of B-17's to operate against the Japanese invasion fleet and Japanese invasion bases in Formosa and elsewhere.⁷⁴

On July 26, the day of the freezing order, President Roosevelt nationalized the Philippine Army and made it a part of the United States Army Forces in the Far East.⁷⁵ He also recalled MacArthur to active duty with the rank of Lieutenant General and placed him at the head of the new command.⁷⁶ Our Far Eastern defense preparations were thus given a more systematic footing and oriented to a new plan;

⁷⁴Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 388; cf. Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 153.

⁷⁵Military Order, July 26, 1941, Federal Register, Vol. 6, p. 3825.

⁷⁶Marshall to MacArthur (undated), Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 179, pt. 20, p. 4364; also Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, p. 11.

but the reinforcements in men and aircraft which were needed to give the plan a chance of success would take time, several months at least. This furnished both Marshall and Stark with additional incentives to oppose any move by the United States which was calculated to provoke sudden action by Japan. That the freezing order of July 26 did not broaden their time margin is certain.

In the days that followed, this much became perfectly evident: Neither Welles' assertion that he could see no basis for continuing the Washington talks nor the freezing order seemed to impose the least restraint upon Japanese policy. Foreign Minister Toyoda's first reaction to these developments was a heightened anxiety.⁷⁷ But he told Grew on July 27 that, while the offer made by President Roosevelt to Nomura on July 24 would be carefully examined, he feared that the proposal had come too late. The freezing order, he stated, had had a most adverse effect upon Japanese opinion.⁷⁸ Grew's observations were duly reported to Washington, and no one appeared greatly surprised. Nevertheless, Roosevelt was determined to give his hope for a moratorium on activity in southeastern Asia as broad a basis as possible; and Welles, at his direction, told Nomura on July 31 that the President wished to extend his offer to

⁷⁷Memorandum by Grew, July 26, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 533-34.

⁷⁸Memorandum by Grew, July 27, 1941, ibid., p. 535.

embrace Thailand as well as Indo-China.⁷⁹

By the time the Japanese government framed its answer to Roosevelt's proposal of July 24, the President was already on his way to the Atlantic Conference, while Hull--who had finished his sojourn at White Sulphur Springs and returned to Washington--was once more in direct charge of dealings with Japan. But the counter-offer which Nomura presented to the Secretary of State on August 6 was not calculated to remove the blight which had fallen upon American-Japanese relations. Evading the point with customary persistence, Tokyo attempted to revive the conversations which had been informally terminated by Welles on July 23 and based its own proposals upon an effort to get everything it wanted in exchange for virtually nothing at all. Unwilling to yield a single position that had already been gained, Japan offered a promise to station no more troops in the southwestern Pacific area outside of Indo-China but declined to withdraw her troops from that country before the China Incident was settled. She also offered to guarantee the neutrality of the Philippines "at an opportune time" and to lend a hand in procuring from southeastern Asia such raw materials as were needed by the United States. Bearing as they did upon the future rather than the past, these concessions were slight enough. On the other hand, Tokyo's

⁷⁹Memorandum by Welles, July 31, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 540.

desires were virtually without limit; for the United States was to do the following things: suspend its military preparations in the southwestern Pacific, advising Great Britain and the Netherlands to do likewise; cooperate with Japan in procuring raw materials, especially those available in the Dutch East Indies; restore normal trade relations with Japan; use its good offices to encourage direct negotiations between Chiang Kai-shek and the Japanese government; and recognize the special status of Japan in Indo-China even after the withdrawal of her troops from that country.⁸⁰ Hull studied this offer for two days and then handed Nomura a statement which characterized it as "lacking in responsiveness to the suggestion made by the President."⁸¹

Thus ended another brief chapter in a lengthening tale of frustration. But Nomura launched a new offensive before the interview closed. Revising a project which had been suggested as a kind of afterthought in the Japanese Embassy's unofficial program of April 9,⁸² he now expressed the view that the best approach to a settlement of differences lay in a personal meeting between President Roosevelt

⁸⁰Proposal by the Japanese government, Aug. 6, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 549-50.

⁸¹Document presented by Hull to Nomura, Aug. 8, 1941, ibid., p. 553.

⁸²Proposal presented to the Department of State, Apr. 9, 1941, ibid., p. 402.

and Prince Konoye.⁸³ Hull gave him no encouragement, but this time the idea was not to be dropped so lightly. For it had recently been espoused by Konoye himself,⁸⁴ and it was to furnish the only real basis for conversations between the United States and Japan during the next two months.

V.

As noted above, Hopkins had made final arrangements for the Atlantic Conference during his talks with Churchill in July and had returned from Moscow in time to join the Prime Minister on the Prince of Wales as she was about to effect a quiet departure from the base of the British Home Fleet at Scapa Flow. The exodus of Roosevelt and his party from Washington was similarly unobtrusive. Leaving the capital by train on August 3, they proceeded to New London, Connecticut, where they boarded the presidential yacht Potomac. Ostensibly it was a vacation trip, intended to combine fishing with relaxation and a leisurely cruise along the New England coast. This festive atmosphere was carefully preserved. On August 4, Princess Martha of Norway, Prince Karl of Sweden, and a few other members of European royalty then in the United States joined the President on the Potomac for a brief round of deep-sea fishing. On the

⁸³Memorandum by Ballantine, Aug. 8, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 550.

⁸⁴Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, pt. 20, p. 3999.

morning of August 5, however, Roosevelt and his party transferred to the cruiser Augusta. Here they joined forces with Marshall, King, and Stark; and while the Potomac continued up the coast, the Augusta made directly for her rendezvous, reaching Argentia on August 7.⁸⁵ The Prince of Wales arrived two days later, and business started at once.

Although Roosevelt and Churchill had seen each other once before--when Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, visited England during the first World War--this was the first time they had met on anything like equal terms;⁸⁶ and it would be interesting to know the thoughts of either man as he faced his opposite number at dinner aboard the Augusta that evening. Both enjoyed worldwide prestige as leaders of the forces opposing Hitlerism, and certainly the two were mainly responsible for the extremely close cooperation which had grown up between Great Britain and the United States over the past year. At the same time, however, each was head of government in his own country, the representative of national hopes, fears, and policies; and each was bound to some extent by the constitutional system which gave him office. Moreover, one represented a country which had been at war nearly two years, while the other headed a nation that was still only in a state of advanced non-belligerency.

⁸⁵Ross T. McIntire, (in collaboration with George Creel), White House Physician (New York: Putnam, 1946), pp. 130-31.

⁸⁶Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 351.

The practical identity of their larger objectives was clear, but that their interests varied in many details was equally patent. Certainly each wanted to see how far the other was prepared to go in the several spheres of military and diplomatic action that had to be considered, and the fundamental purpose on both sides was to concert measures for projecting Anglo-American coöperation into the future. Additional intentions, if any, can only be guessed. There is much evidence that Roosevelt wanted a detailed commitment guaranteeing the purity of British war aims.⁸⁷ Churchill, on the other hand, may have hoped for an outright pledge of American intervention.⁸⁸ But these were subjects which had to be approached with caution, and their coverage seems to have been partial and indirect at best.

While no formal agenda had been prepared, it was understood in a general way that the following matters would be discussed: (1) a broad declaration regarding the post-war policies of the United States and Great Britain, (2) Anglo-American relations with Russia, (3) the Atlantic war, and (4) Anglo-American relations with Japan.

The first item listed had practically nothing to do with the immediate conduct of the war except as it might

⁸⁷Cf. Sumner Welles, Where Are We Heading? (New York: Harper, 1946), p. 6; and Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 360.

⁸⁸Cf. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 355.

spur the downtrodden peoples of Europe and Asia to new efforts of resistance with its promise of better days to come. Hence it may be passed over rather briefly. Since Roosevelt apparently feared that the British government might be tempted to enter a web of secret treaties like that which had plagued Wilson after the first World War,⁸⁹ he was perhaps even more interested in such a statement than Churchill. Nevertheless, it was Churchill who took the initiative. On the morning of August 10, he submitted the draft of a joint proclamation which was to serve as basis for the famed Atlantic Charter.

During the next two days, this document was given extensive revision, most of the changes being proposed by Roosevelt and Churchill, while the actual task of drafting and re-drafting was entrusted to Sumner Welles and Sir Alexander Cadogan, British Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Agreement concerning most points was fairly easy, but on two items they never did reach an absolutely common ground. Owing to his distrust of isolationist sentiment in the United States and a reluctance to invoke memories of the failures connected with the League of Nations, Roosevelt insisted upon a somewhat less forthright statement regarding the future of international cooperation than Churchill desired, while Churchill proved

⁸⁹Cf. Welles, Where Are We Heading?, p. 6.

troublesome on economic questions. Considering himself bound by the system of imperial preference established by the Ottawa Agreements of 1932, the Prime Minister refused to accept the American statement on future policy toward world trade without a hedging qualification which, in Welles' view, destroyed much of its value.⁹⁰ But eventually the job was completed. As finally approved on August 12 and as published on August 14, the Atlantic Charter contained its familiar eight points which, among other things, renounced territorial aggrandizement on behalf of the United States and Great Britain and promised the best efforts of those two countries to secure a revival of self-government wherever it had been forcibly destroyed, to promote worldwide coöperation in the economic field, and to keep all new aggression in check after the war ended until "a wider and permanent system of security" could be established.⁹¹

There was considerable discussion of Russia, based largely upon Hopkins' findings. Churchill readily embraced the proposal for a three-power supply conference in Moscow and undertook to appoint Lord Beaverbrook as British

⁹⁰The detailed story of the drafting of the Atlantic Charter is given by Welles in Where Are We Heading?, pp. 6-18. For additional points of interpretation, see Memorandum by Welles, Aug. 11, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 22-C, pt. 14, pp. 1283-91; and Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 359-60.

⁹¹Joint Declaration of the President of the United States and the Prime Minister, Aug. 14, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Aug. 16, 1941), pp. 125-26.

representative "with full power to act for all British departments."⁹² Another of Hopkins' suggestions was also taken, for Roosevelt and Churchill drew up a joint message to be dispatched to Stalin at the end of their meeting. Replete with words of encouragement and guarantees of aid, it followed in general outline the draft prepared by Cripps during his conversation with Hopkins in Moscow⁹³ and formally suggested that a three-power conference be held to review problems of supply.⁹⁴

The military and naval advisers who had accompanied the two leaders--including General Marshall, General Henry H. Arnold (commander of the Army Air Forces), Admiral King, and Admiral Stark on the American side and General Sir John Dill, General Sir Frederick Morgan, and Admiral Sir Dudley Pound on the British--spent considerable time in the discussion of strategic and operational questions, but no significant new decisions were reached. The more important details of the Atlantic convoy problem had already been settled, and the American officers betrayed a certain indifference to British fears regarding the Middle East and the possible extension of Japanese power into the Indian

⁹²Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 359.

⁹³Cf. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 331.

⁹⁴Joint message of Roosevelt and Churchill to Stalin, Aug. 15, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 227, pp. 711-12.

Ocean. They were cool to a British proposal for new staff conversations at Singapore by representatives of the United States, Great Britain, The Netherlands, and Australia.⁹⁵

But Roosevelt and Churchill, in their own talks, found time to revive the Azores project which had yielded in June to the occupation of Iceland.

The idea of such a move had never been truly abandoned; for in the meanwhile, Roosevelt had made overtures to the Portuguese government suggesting that it might wish to invite the United States to occupy the Azores if Germany threatened to seize them. He had also inquired whether Brazil, formerly a Portuguese colony, would be willing to join the United States in such an occupation.⁹⁶ On August 11, he read Churchill a letter from the Portuguese dictator, Oliveira Salazar, which seemed to favor the proposition, at least in principle. Since this harmonized with much that Churchill had been saying to Hopkins of late,⁹⁷ the Prime Minister seized the opportunity to repeat his fears regarding the collaborationist tendencies of the Spanish government and to state that, in view of the threat which would be offered to Gibraltar if the Canary Islands fell into German hands, Great Britain planned to seize these islands from

⁹⁵Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 358.

⁹⁶Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 941.

⁹⁷Cf. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 355.

Spain about the middle of September. Owing to the demands of this operation, he added, Britain would be unable to defend the Azores in fulfillment of a pledge she had already made to Portugal. Prompt occupation of the latter islands by American troops was therefore doubly important, and Churchill agreed to do his best to inspire Salazar to send Washington a formal invitation as soon as possible. He guaranteed that the Royal Navy would forestall any attempt by Germany to prevent such an occupation; and on Roosevelt's complaint that the United States could not at once assume the duty of protecting the Cape Verde Islands as well, he also promised that British forces would occupy these in addition to the Canaries, turning them over to American troops at a later date.⁹⁸

But this was a program for early autumn at best; and since Hitler did not furnish the expected provocation, these plans never matured. Far more significant to the diplomacy of the immediate future were decisions relating to Japan.

Since every indication pointed to new Japanese moves in southeastern Asia or the East Indies--thus threatening Britain's whole position in that part of the world--it was only natural that the British government should be even more disturbed by Japan's current policy than was the United States. On August 9, while the Atlantic Conference was just

⁹⁸ Memorandum by Welles, Aug. 11, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 22-C. pt. 14, pp. 1275-78.

getting under way, Halifax had called at the State Department to ask Hull what aid this country would be able to furnish his own government if Japan attacked Singapore or the Dutch East Indies. Always cautious, Hull replied that the answer to this question depended upon the amount of aid needed by Great Britain in other theaters when such an attack developed and added that the matter would be discussed at the proper time.⁹⁹ But Churchill, at Argentinia, was not to be put off so easily. Thinking in terms of a definite agreement for common opposition to Japan, he did not wish to talk of help which might be available in a future contingency. Instead, he wanted diplomatic action, backed by a threat of military action, which might keep that contingency from arising at all. As he told Welles,

...if a war did break out between Great Britain and Japan, Japan immediately would be in a position through the use of her large number of cruisers to seize or destroy all the British merchant shipping in the Indian Ocean and in the Pacific, and to cut the life-lines between the British Dominions and the British Isles unless the United States herself entered the war.¹⁰⁰

He met Roosevelt with plans already formed. In his view, parallel declarations by the United States, Great Britain, the British dominions, The Netherlands--and possibly Russia--which amounted to virtual ultimatums would stand a good

⁹⁹Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 9, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 226, pp. 710-11.

¹⁰⁰Memorandum by Welles, Aug. 10, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 22-B, pt. 14, p. 1273.

chance of keeping Japan from new aggressions for the time being.¹⁰¹ The statement proposed for delivery by Washington--and it would serve as model for all the others--was couched in the following terms:

Any further encroachment by Japan in the Southwestern Pacific would produce a situation in which the United States Government would be compelled to take counter measures even though these might lead to war between the United States and Japan.

If any third Power becomes the object of aggression by Japan in consequence of such counter measures or of their support of them, the President would have the intention to seek authority from Congress to give aid to such Power.¹⁰²

What the Prime Minister wanted, in short, was a plain declaration that Japan could make no move against British and Dutch possessions in the Far West without having to fight the United States. Without such a declaration, he said, "the blow to the British Government might be almost decisive."¹⁰³

Although he sympathized with Churchill's views, Roosevelt found the proposed draft much too strong. So threatening a statement might affront Japanese pride and hasten the very action it was designed to forestall. Moreover, he considered Churchill's draft too limited in scope. The southwestern Pacific was not the only area of possible Japanese action; in view of Hopkins' recent talk with Molotov,

¹⁰¹Memorandum by Welles, Aug. 10, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 22-B, pt. 14, pp. 1273-74.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 1270.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 1274.

he wanted to phrase the warning in such a manner that it would also cover an attack against Russia.¹⁰⁴ The President agreed that Japan should be allowed to go no further but emphasized his belief that every effort should be made to postpone the outbreak of war in the Far East. He therefore undertook to read Nomura a severe lecture on Japanese policy as soon as he returned to Washington and deliver an even more comprehensive warning against further aggression. But this was to be accompanied by a somewhat less definite threat of American counter-action than the Prime Minister had envisaged.¹⁰⁵ Such a course, he thought, would delay for at least thirty days any Japanese move which might result in war. After some reflection, Churchill agreed. Apparently convinced that he had gained a substantial part of what he wanted, he promised to support Roosevelt's statement with one of his own and even expressed the opinion that the new joint policy had a "reasonable chance" of preventing war in the Pacific altogether.¹⁰⁶ It was clear that the framework of diplomatic coöperation against Japan had been greatly tightened.

¹⁰⁴Cf. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 356.

¹⁰⁵Memorandum by Welles, Aug. 11, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 22-C, pt. 14, pp. 1279-80.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 1283.

VI.

The five weeks beginning with the American occupation of Iceland and ending with the Atlantic Conference formed, in all likelihood, the most significant period of America's non-belligerency. Our fundamental position in the world crisis had not been in doubt for more than a year; since the fall of France, events had pushed us steadily toward a conclusion which was vague only in details. But now the details themselves were beginning to emerge. For Germany's attack on Russia had set latent plans in motion, and these bore fruit in virtually every sector of United States policy between the end of June and the middle of August.

The assignment of American naval units to escort duty followed hard upon the occupation of Iceland. Thanks to Hopkins' quick journey and to the prompt acceptance of his recommendations, the Anglo-American community of interest with Russia now gave every sign of growing into an unassailable working partnership. It became clear at the same time that slackening German pressure on the Mediterranean had rendered the United States much more independent in its dealings with France and Spain. But most important of all was the widening breach with Japan, culminating in Welles' rupture of the Hull-Nomura conversations, Roosevelt's fruitless proposals regarding the neutralization of Indo-China and Thailand, the freezing order of July 26, and the utter cessation of Japanese-American trade at the very time when new plans for defense of the Philippines made the prospect

of early hostilities with Japan even less attractive than before.

All these threads were gathered up at the Atlantic Conference during the second week in August. It is true that Churchill obtained no commitment here regarding possible American entry into the war. But the general strategy laid down in the Washington staff report was confirmed; a broad statement of Anglo-American war aims was drawn up; the joint policy of aiding Russia was embraced more heartily than ever; new plans were laid for the seizure of Spanish and Portuguese islands in the eastern Atlantic; and an agreement for more vigorous diplomatic coöperation against Japan was reached.

While the Atlantic and Europe had lost none of their accustomed priority in strategic planning, relations with Japan were to be the most crucial aspect of United States foreign policy from this moment onward. Though caught between the American embargo and an Anglo-American diplomatic front which was resolved not to yield another inch, Japan obviously planned no withdrawal. The basic framework of the situation which was to bring the United States into the war as a full partner was now complete. Within it, neither side could do much except play for time and position.

CHAPTER X

PACIFIC NEGOTIATIONS AND ATLANTIC WAR

I.

The warning which he had undertaken to give Nomura for transmission to the Japanese government stood first upon President Roosevelt's order of business as he parted from Churchill at Argentia. Its exact form still had to be determined, however; for in his conversations with the Prime Minister he had merely outlined the general substance of what he planned to say without committing himself to any precise phraseology.¹ Armed with the President's ideas on the subject, Welles had already flown back to Washington to commence the actual work of drafting. But this was no easy task. Under the circumstances, a statement showing infirmity of purpose could not be counted upon to deter Japan at all. Yet, as Roosevelt had explained to Churchill, anything which smacked of an ultimatum might induce her to act at once. Every word in the proposed declaration had to aim at a delicately balanced emphasis which closed the door on

¹Welles' testimony, Nov. 24, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 2, pp. 539, 541.

expansion without locking it against time-consuming talk.

According to Welles' initial draft, completed August 15, Roosevelt was to state flatly that any new Japanese aggressions of a military nature in any part of the Pacific or the Orient would force the United States government

...to take immediately any and all steps of whatsoever character it deems necessary in its own security notwithstanding the possibility that such further steps on its part may result in conflict between the two countries.²

In its lack of specific threat that the President would make such a development the occasion for requesting new authority from Congress, this formula was somewhat less vigorous than the one originally suggested by Churchill. But it still spoke pointedly of a war for which the United States was not ready, and Hull objected with considerable determination. A less bellicose tone, he thought, would be more appropriate to the objectives of American policy. He proposed, therefore, that the above statement be changed to read as follows:

...the United States will be compelled to take immediately any and all steps which it may deem necessary toward safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the United States and American nationals and toward insuring the safety and security of the United States.³

This was the version accepted by Roosevelt when he returned to Washington the morning of August 17.⁴ Meanwhile, on

²Draft by Welles, Aug. 15, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. #2, pt. 14, p. 1261.

³Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1018.

⁴Idem.

August 16, Nomura had tendered Hull a direct inquiry as to the possibility of resuming the informal conversations terminated by Welles on July 23;⁵ and the President also agreed to include in his remarks an answer to this question.⁶

Attended by Hull, Roosevelt received Nomura at the White House late in the afternoon of August 17, took charge of the conversation with a minimum of preliminaries, and delivered his warning according to the Secretary's text.⁷ Nomura did not try to argue the point. Instead, he reaffirmed Tokyo's wish to secure a peaceful adjustment of Japanese-American relations, asked whether his informal conversations with Hull could be resumed in pursuance of this end, and expressed his government's eagerness to learn whether the President would consent to meet Prince Konoye for a direct exchange of views.⁸ Roosevelt then proceeded to read a second statement which declared, in essence, that the United States was not averse to considering further talks but that the success of any such move depended upon Japan's readiness to submit a much clearer expression of her attitude and

⁵Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 16, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 553.

⁶Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1018.

⁷Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 17, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 554-55; and Oral statement by the President, Aug. 17, 1941, ibid., pp. 556-57

⁸Nomura to Toyoda, Aug. 18, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 124, pt. 17, p. 2751.

desires than had yet been furnished.⁹ The rest of the interview appears to have been largely devoted to the question of a Roosevelt-Konoye meeting. While the President remained somewhat noncommittal on this matter, he did succeed in giving the Ambassador an impression that he was not opposed to the idea, at least in principle.¹⁰

Three salient facts had emerged from this discussion. Two of them related to American policy, and the third shed much light on the tactics of the Japanese. In the first place, Roosevelt had made it perfectly clear that any movement of Japanese troops into areas not already under Japanese control would beget serious counter-measures on the part of the United States; for despite the element of moderation introduced by Hull, the President's warning had been a strong one. He had also made it clear that Japan would have to prove her readiness for new conversations by giving up her attempts to avoid plain speaking on the real causes of tension in the Pacific. On the other hand, Nomura's steady preoccupation with the idea of a personal conference between the President of the United States and the Premier of Japan indicated that Tokyo was disposed to shelve all consideration of basic issues until Washington

⁹Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 17, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 555; and Oral statement by the President, Aug. 17, 1941, ibid., pp. 557-59.

¹⁰Nomura to Toyoda, Aug. 18, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 124, pt. 17, p. 2754.

agreed to cooperate in such a project. And if the White House interview of August 17 had not made this last point clear enough, additional evidence was supplied in Tokyo the very next day when Foreign Minister Toyoda approached Grew with a detailed proposal for an early meeting between Roosevelt and Konoye at Honolulu, urging its desirability with such conviction that he won the Ambassador's enthusiastic support.¹¹

That Washington did not fully share Grew's enthusiasm was evident. Hull's reaction to Nomura's first approach on August 8 had been distinctly noncommittal, and Roosevelt himself had been only a little less vague when confronted with the question on August 17. But an attitude was in the making, and Hull seems to have taken the lead in determining its broad outlines. His experience with Japanese diplomacy had never been fortunate; its tortuous course throughout the informal negotiations of the spring and summer just past had completed his disillusionment. From the outset, he was frankly sceptical of the possibility that a leaders' conference might accomplish anything of value where all else had failed. Outwardly, at least, the Japanese proposal involved nothing more than a change in diplomatic procedure; and he viewed such an expedient as futile unless it were accompanied by a significant change in Japan's attitude

¹¹Memorandum by Grew, Aug. 18, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 563-64.

toward conditions in Asia and the Pacific. As soon as the new idea reached a stage of serious discussion, therefore, he took the position that Roosevelt should decline to meet Konoye without a preliminary agreement covering the main questions at issue between the two countries.¹² On the other hand, ventures in personal diplomacy had a natural fascination for the President; and this might have led one to expect that he would consider the Japanese offer with less serious misgivings than those which plagued the Secretary of State. But he, too, lacked faith in Japan's good intentions and seems to have adopted Hull's view without marked reluctance.

That they acted wisely in thus refusing to accept the Japanese proposal out of hand is now perfectly clear. As Prince Konoye later revealed in his memoirs, he had presented his idea concerning a meeting with Roosevelt to the War and Navy ministers on August 4, several days before Nomura was directed to submit it to Hull. The Navy Minister had offered no objection whatever; but the War Minister, General Hideki Tojo, had forced the Premier to agree that there would be no change in Japanese policy regardless of what happened at the proposed conference, and to guarantee that he would go ahead with preparations for war with the United States if Roosevelt declined to make the concessions

¹²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1025.

necessary for a settlement of the type desired by Japan.¹³

In retrospect, therefore, the negotiations which followed partake somewhat of the unreal. Considering the beliefs entertained by the President and the Secretary of State, indeed, these talks must have appeared even then as a kind of shadow-boxing which was useful only so far as it delayed the inevitable break. This utility was an important one, however; for time to strengthen our Pacific defenses was a primary objective so long as it could be bought without fresh concessions. Thus deprived of all reason for haste, the American government let Japan keep her full initiative in all matters relating to the leaders' conference. Hull neither accepted nor declined the invitation, seldom mentioning it except in reply to a direct question. At the same time, he endeavored to keep Great Britain from introducing any new notes of discord. Later that month, for example, when the British chargé d'affaires showed him two drafts of a proposed British statement to Japan by which Churchill meant to fulfill the pledge he had given in this connection at Argentia, his lack of enthusiasm for such a move was so obvious that the matter was apparently dropped.¹⁴

On August 23, Nomura approached Hull once more to urge the necessity for a prompt decision. His government feared

¹³Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, pt. 20, p. 4000.

¹⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1023.

that agreements detrimental to Japan might be reached at the conference which Great Britain, the United States, and Russia planned to hold soon in Moscow; and he therefore wanted to suggest that the President arrange to meet Konoye before October 15, preferably during the early part of September. But Hull refused to be hurried.¹⁵ Four days later, Konoye sent Roosevelt a personal appeal, asking him to arrange for the conference at the earliest possible date.¹⁶ Nomura delivered the Premier's message on August 28, and the President was again evasive. Honolulu, he thought, was too far away. Perhaps Juneau, Alaska, would be a more convenient rendezvous.¹⁷ Nomura accepted this change at once and proposed that the meeting be held September 21-25. But Roosevelt still declined to commit himself.¹⁸

In the meanwhile, American oil shipments to Vladivostok furnished an element of diversion. Acting under instructions which had their origin in German pressure at Tokyo,¹⁹ Nomura

¹⁵Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 23, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 568.

¹⁶Konoye to Roosevelt, Aug. 27, 1941, ibid., pp. 572-73.

¹⁷Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 28, 1941, ibid., p. 571.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 576.

¹⁹Memorandum by Amai (Japanese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs), Aug. 19, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 132-A, pt. 18, p. 2948; and Toyoda to Nomura Aug. 23, 1941, ibid., Ex. 124, pt. 17, p. 2772.

complained on August 23 that the United States was building up Russia's Far Eastern position in a manner threatening to Japan. Hull replied that American supplies were being sent to Russia only for use in the European theater. He remarked, however, that a different situation would arise if Japan chose to meddle in the Soviet-German war.²⁰ Nomura protested again on August 27. This time Hull contented himself with a flat statement that such trade was perfectly valid under all the laws of commerce, adding that a Japanese attempt to have it stopped would be "preposterous."²¹

But the Japanese Foreign Office was not easily discouraged. It next tried to erect a kind of modus vivendi upon the proposed leaders' conference, suggesting to Grew on August 29 that the United States discontinue oil shipments to Russia and suspend its freezing order relative to Japanese assets until the Roosevelt-Konoye meeting could be held. Needless to say, Grew offered no encouragement.²² But fatuous as it was, this proposal indicated that Japanese expectations were getting out of hand again. Such a tendency, if allowed to continue, would only give rise to new problems;

²⁰Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 23, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 566-67.

²¹Memorandum by Hull, Aug. 27, 1941, ibid., p. 570.

²²Grew to Hull, Aug. 29, 1941, ibid., p. 570; and Grew, Ten Years, pp. 423-24.

and Roosevelt lost no more time in making his position absolutely clear. On September 3, he sent Konoye his formal reply to the latter's message of August 27. This note left Tokyo no valid reason to believe that he meant to embrace the proposed meeting without further conditions, for it stated categorically that preliminary agreements were necessary.²³ At the same time, he explained to Nomura that such agreements would have to be taken up with the British, Chinese, and Dutch before he could enter into any final discussion with Konoye.²⁴

II.

If there were any changes in our relations with Spain and France during the months of August and September 1941, they were changes of atmosphere rather than changes of policy. Neither Madrid nor Vichy supplied the American government with a clear reason for doing either more or less than it had been doing; and there was, in consequence, no departure from the attitude of nervous caution which had virtually immobilized our policy toward Spain since the beginning of the year and which had prevented any real effort to broaden our relationship with France since the activation of the

²³ Roosevelt to Konoye, Sept. 3, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 592.

²⁴ Memorandum by Hull, Sept. 3, 1941, ibid., p. 588.

Murphy-Weygand accord a few months later. Nevertheless, tendencies which might be regarded as a possible foundation for future policy changes were observable in both capitals. Although none of these tendencies could be read with finality, the Spanish government appeared to show a reviving interest in better relations with the United States, while developments at Vichy were calculated, on the whole, to produce little optimism regarding the future course of the Pétain regime.

Both Franco and Serrano Suñer continued to avoid all personal contact with Ambassador Weddell. Demetrio Carceller, the Minister of Trade and Industry, had made overtures to Weddell at the end of July, however, which were clearly intended to open a new round of economic discussions with this country; and the State Department, fearing that Carceller acted on no authority but his own, had declined to carry the matter any further at the time. This aloofness broke down to some extent during the next month. Carceller's ideas were brought up again and studied with more or less care. But the result was no different. The Minister's effort to explain away Franco's public truculence with respect to the democratic cause had fallen far short of a guarantee that Spain would not enter the war at Germany's side; and the State Department made it clear to Weddell on September 18 that this country would furnish Spain with scarce and essential foods only in return for a definite quid pro quo. Spanish

good will, by itself, was not enough.²⁵

Throughout this period, moreover, the State Department made no move to lift its informal restrictions on the shipment of American oil to Spain; and steadily falling oil reserves gave the Spanish government a new incentive to be conciliatory despite this rebuff. In the meanwhile, therefore, the Spanish Ambassador to the United States, Juan Cárdenas, opened a new offensive in Washington. He approached Hull early in September with a direct inquiry regarding the possibility of a commercial understanding. Immediately thereafter, Cárdenas returned to Madrid for consultation with his superiors. Here, on September 28, he told Weddell that Franco planned to invite him to call.²⁶ Two days later, Weddell managed to see Serrano Suñer for the first time since April. Especially noteworthy was the Foreign Minister's attitude during the interview. Prior to this time, he had never displayed much interest in economic problems; but now his concern was almost humble as he admitted that Spain was in the throes of economic strangulation.²⁷ The diplomatic atmosphere of the Spanish capital had obviously warmed again.

But if the tone of Washington's conversations with Madrid grew somewhat more friendly in August and September,

²⁵Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 140.

²⁶Idem.

²⁷Ibid., p. 141.

that of its exchanges with Vichy sharpened almost by the day. Weygand was again called before Pétain on August 8, thus re-
viving fears that Germany was about to be given a foothold
in French North Africa, particularly at Bizerte in Tunisia.²⁸
While these apprehensions were not confirmed, Pétain's next
move was no better designed to inspire the United States
with confidence. For on August 12, the aged Marshal pro-
claimed the suspension of all political parties in France
and announced the assumption by his government of new police
powers which gave it an even more totalitarian aspect than
it already had.²⁹ That Hull associated this act with pos-
sible changes in French foreign policy was made clear a week
later. When the French Ambassador in Washington, Gaston
Henry-Haye, undertook to assure him on August 20 that Pétain
viewed his speech of August 12 merely as an attempt to calm
the internal situation, the Secretary of State did not try
to hide the fact that he attributed it to the work of pro-
German forces behind the old soldier and expressed the blunt
opinion that the "uppermost purpose of the Laval-Darlan
group" was to "deliver France body and soul to Hitler."³⁰

Nevertheless, Hull threatened to take no special action.
Except for its ideological bearing, the decree of August 12,

²⁸Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 184-85.

²⁹Ibid., p. 185.

³⁰Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1039.

as it stood, was clearly a domestic matter. North Africa was our principal concern; and in the absence of a definite move on Vichy's part to grant Germany special concessions in that area, the North African situation was changed in no way whatever. Reports from Murphy and other American representatives on the spot still indicated that there was no serious German infiltration in any part of the territory under Weygand's control.³¹ Nor were the Army and Navy disposed to regard North Africa as an immediate military problem; apparently about this same time, the two services joined in recommending that Weygand be accorded no guarantee of military aid, at least for the moment.³² Pétain's latest move did intensify another old problem, however. This was the question of our attitude toward General DeGaulle.

Despite its unbroken relations with Vichy, the American government already countenanced the Free French movement to some extent. Since July 1941, Free French authorities had been permitted to buy non-military goods in the United States; and they had been receiving American Lend-Lease supplies of a military character through the British for some time.³³ This much could be done within the framework of our Vichy

³¹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 187.

³²Ibid., p. 190.

³³Ibid., p. 175; cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1042.

policy, and the administration had so far been able to resist the widespread popular demand that it do a great deal more on DeGaulle's behalf. But the effect of recent changes in unoccupied France was to enhance popular distrust of the Vichy regime throughout the United States and to make it increasingly difficult for Roosevelt and Hull to avoid altering their course in this respect. The difficulties of their position became especially evident after September 24, when DeGaulle and his adherents were permitted to organize the Free French National Committee in London. For Great Britain lost no time in according this group a considerable degree of recognition as the de facto authority in territories under its control; and there was a heavy demand in this country that the American government do likewise, severing its connection with the unedifying regime of Marshal Pétain once and for all.³⁴

But the considerations which had dictated our Vichy policy in the first place had not yet been overruled. Hull and Roosevelt were still unprepared to vent their annoyance with Pétain by openly transferring the support of the American government to the Free French. In spite of these new tribulations, therefore, they resolved to adhere to established policy until they found a more tangible reason for changing it. So our diplomatic relations with the Pétain government were studiously maintained, but the new

³⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1042; cf. Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 186.

suspicion created by developments at Vichy was not forgotten.

III.

From the beginning of the Soviet-German war, the United States government afforded Russia all the diplomatic help of which it was capable. American efforts to discourage a Japanese attack on Siberia have been mentioned, and these were duplicated in Europe as far as possible. Hungary, Slovakia, Rumania, and Finland began hostilities against the Soviet Union almost as soon as Germany did. Diplomatic remonstrance with Hungary and Slovakia was palpably useless from the first. But Finland and Rumania seemed to offer greater hope; and in spite of the fact that both had received more than adequate provocation for striking at Russia whenever opportunity offered, the United States lost no time approaching these two countries in attempts to secure their withdrawal from the war.

In answer to a question regarding its objectives in the conflict, the Rumanian government asserted that it merely planned to have Rumanian troops occupy Bessarabia and the other territory which it had yielded to Russia the year before; then they would take up static defensive positions along the Dniester River.³⁵ Hull appears to have accepted this statement without further inquiry and to have exerted no more pressure in that quarter for the time being.

³⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 977.

Finnish policy involved much more urgent considerations, however. Thanks to her geographical position, Finland was readily capable of threatening the vital northern supply route which led from the Atlantic into the Arctic Ocean and thence to the Russian ports of Murmansk and Archangel. If the Finnish Army advanced too far eastward, or if German troops were allowed the extensive use of Finnish territory as a base of operations, British and American plans for supplying Russia with badly needed war materials would be seriously jeopardized.

Weighing this prospect well ahead of time, Britain had threatened Finland with economic reprisals as early as June 14 if she joined Germany in a possible war against Russia.³⁶ London's growing friendship with Moscow after the war actually started hastened the trend thus set in motion, and Finland on July 28 somewhat incontinently broke off diplomatic relations with Great Britain.³⁷ Not yet totally unsympathetic with regard to Finnish policy toward Russia, the United States remained passive for another two weeks. But when the Soviet Ambassador in Washington informed the State Department that his government was prepared to grant Finland some territorial concessions in return for her withdrawal from

³⁶Wuorinen (ed.), Finland and World War II, p. 129.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 131-32.

the war,³⁸ American policy entered a more active phase.

On August 18, Welles communicated the Russian proposal to the Finnish Minister in the United States, Hjalmar Procopé; but this elicited no reply from Helsinki.³⁹ Choosing a more direct attack, Hull found occasion on September 8 to express his pleasure at Finland's having recovered so much of the territory lost in 1939-1940 and then suggested to Procopé that his country retire from hostilities at once. When the other made a vague answer, Hull pointed out that Rumania had undertaken to break off her advance as soon as Odessa fell, thus clearly implying that here was a suitable example for Finland.⁴⁰ About the same time, he also brought pressure to bear through the American Minister in Helsinki. This tack seemed to promise better results at first. Within a few days, the Finnish Minister of Industry and Commerce stated that Finnish troops not only would hold on a defensive line shortly to be reached but also would refuse to participate in any German attack on Leningrad;⁴¹ and Hull was so encouraged by this informal pledge that he declined for the time being to consider further action of any kind.

³⁸Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 401.

³⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 979.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 978-79.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 979.

Indeed, when the British government suggested on September 17 that he take the initiative in starting Russo-Finnish negotiations by acting as middleman for a definite exchange of views, he rejected the proposal at once.⁴² When Finland still showed no sign of withdrawing from the war a fortnight later, however, Hull's attitude became more crisp; and on October 3, he delivered some sharp observations to Procopé which cleared the way for a much stronger diplomatic offensive at Helsinki during the latter half of the month.⁴³

But these beginning efforts to restrain Finland were scarcely more than incidental to our main Russian policy, for here the great question was supply. The stop-gap agency created by Roosevelt at the end of June to expedite shipments of war materials to the Soviet Union was supplanted a month later by a new section of the Division of Defense Aid Reports.⁴⁴ While it was informal and temporary at best, this authority operated on a somewhat larger scale than its predecessor. Hull saw Oumansky and General Golikov on August 4, about two weeks after the military mission headed by the latter reached the United States, and promised to do his best to see that Russia obtained the materials she

⁴²Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 979.

⁴³Ibid., p. 980.

⁴⁴Deane, The Strange Alliance, pp. 87-88.

needed.⁴⁵ By September 11, the American government was seriously coming to grips with the details of a long-range supply program.

On that date, Roosevelt, Hull, and Hopkins discussed credits with Oumansky; and the President straightway brought up a point which was causing him no little anxiety. It would be very difficult, he explained, to secure Lend-Lease appropriations for Russia. The Soviet Union, unfortunately, was not very popular among certain groups in the United States which enjoyed great influence with Congress. A basic cause of this was Russia's attitude toward religion. The President noted that religious worship was permitted by the Soviet constitution of 1936, and he therefore suggested that the Russian government arrange to give this fact some favorable publicity in the United States before the impending conference at Moscow. Oumansky promised to see what he could do.⁴⁶

Passing to another aspect of the supply question, Roosevelt warned the Soviet Ambassador that Congress would not grant Russia Lend-Lease funds unless he could furnish official information concerning Russian assets, the amount of gold on hand, and the degree to which barter might be carried on between the Soviet Union and the United States.

⁴⁵Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 974.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 977.

In this connection, the President offered to buy large quantities of manganese, chromium, and other materials produced in Russia with the understanding that they did not have to be delivered until after the war. Apparently somewhat worried by the amount of information requested, Oumansky promptly replied that his government preferred a direct credit to Lend-Lease aid. He added, however, that Lend-Lease aid would be perfectly acceptable if the other were not forthcoming. Roosevelt apparently did not comment on this; but regardless of the form ultimately taken by long-range American aid to Russia, it was essential to get some kind of program under way at once. As a result, it was agreed before the meeting ended that Russia should be granted a credit of \$75,000,000 by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for immediate purchases in the United States, this loan to be retired through the operation of a barter arrangement.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, preparations for the Anglo-American-Russian supply conference had been making steady progress. Because of his recent trip to Moscow, as well as his intimate connection with Lend-Lease activities, Hopkins at first seemed the logical choice for American representative in this assignment. But owing to his precarious health, the President eventually chose in his stead W. Averell Harriman, then serving in London as Expediter of Lend-Lease.⁴⁸ Nevertheless,

⁴⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 977.

⁴⁸Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 359.

Hopkins assumed general charge of the project from Washington; and he was able to inform Churchill on September 9 that arrangements were virtually complete. A plan showing what the United States would be able to do for both Great Britain and Russia in the field of military supply up to June 30, 1942, would be ready soon enough to allow a preliminary conference between American and British officials in London about September 15; and he suggested that the larger discussions in Moscow begin as soon as possible thereafter.⁴⁹

Although he gave no indication of wavering on the Russian supply program, Roosevelt was still concerned about its effect on American public opinion. Always sensitive in this regard, he was especially alert where religious feelings were involved. The misgivings with which he had confronted Oumansky on September 11 were perfectly genuine, and his greatest single worry grew out of the traditional attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward communism. No effort was made to keep this fact a secret. In a letter written to Brendan Bracken, the British Minister of Information, about this same time, Hopkins stressed the anti-Russian sentiment among Catholic groups in the United States;⁵⁰ and the President's attempt to soften Catholic opinion with

⁴⁹ Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 385.

⁵⁰ Excerpt from letter by Hopkins in Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 372-73.

regard to the Soviet Union constituted another important aspect of his preparations for the Moscow conference. Here the relations which he had already established with Pope Pius XII stood him in good stead, for he elected to work directly with the Vatican.

As a matter of fact, a definite basis for such an effort had been laid almost as soon as Germany's attack on the Soviet Union began. Roosevelt's personal representative at the Holy See, Myron C. Taylor, had been absent in the United States at that time; but one of Taylor's subordinates, Harold Tittman, had called on both the Pope and the Cardinal Secretary of State during the first week in July to suggest on behalf of the American State Department that they do nothing which might be interpreted as favoring Germany in her new venture. Apparently both men had given some kind of assurance on this point.⁵¹ But Roosevelt was not satisfied; and apparently hoping to obtain commitments which were more direct or more tangible, he sent Taylor back to Rome early in September armed with a personal message to His Holiness.

This letter, as was only natural considering its objective, argued Russia's case in the most favorable terms possible. Stating that churches were now open in Russia according to his best information, Roosevelt expressed the belief that there was "a real possibility that Russia may as a result of the present conflict recognize freedom of

⁵¹Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War, p. 272.

religion." Having thus blanketed the religious outlook in a pious hope, he turned without further ado to the hard realities of politics. He began by admitting that Russia was in the grip of a dictatorship "as rigid in its manner of being" as the Nazi government of Germany. But he went on to distinguish one country from the other by pointing out that Russia had so far confined herself to propaganda in her efforts to spread communism, while Germany was aiming at world conquest by military aggression. In view of these facts, the survival of Russia would be less dangerous to both religion and humanity in general than would a Nazi victory in the present war.⁵² Therefore, he concluded,

...it is my belief that the leaders of all churches in the United States should recognize these facts clearly and should not close their eyes to these basic questions and by their present attitude on this question directly assist Germany in her present objectives.⁵³

Taylor handed this message to the Pope on September 9.⁵⁴ The latter's formal reply, dated September 20, was non-committal.⁵⁵ Nor did his conversation with Taylor bring forth such a statement of his official views as Roosevelt probably wished. The gist of the Holy Father's remarks appeared to

⁵²Roosevelt to Pius XII, Sept. 3, 1941, Taylor (ed.), Roosevelt and Pius XII, pp. 61-62.

⁵³Ibid., p. 62.

⁵⁴Explanatory note, ibid., p. 58.

⁵⁵Cf. Pius XII to Roosevelt, Sept. 20, 1941, ibid., p. 63.

be that the Vatican was not prepared to alter its stand against atheistic communism in any way but that, as always, it viewed the Russian people with paternal affection.⁵⁶ In the long run, however, this seemed to be enough; for on the whole, Catholic authorities in the United States expressed little serious opposition to the new alignment.⁵⁷

By late September, these and other necessary arrangements for the Moscow conference were complete; and the two delegations began assembling at the Russian capital. Harriman, who was already in England, traveled to Russia with Lord Beaverbrook and other members of the British mission aboard a British cruiser. He was joined in Moscow by a group of American experts who had flown directly from the United States;⁵⁸ and the crucial three-power talks got under way on September 28, the approximate date suggested by Hopkins in his own conversations with Stalin at the end of July. The meeting lasted three days and included talks on several different levels. But the various subcommittees of Russian, British, and American experts were concerned only with details. All the real decisions of the parley grew out of the trio of long conversations held by Stalin, Beaverbrook, and Harriman.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Explanatory note, (Taylor (ed.), Roosevelt and Pius XII, p. 58.

⁵⁷Cf. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 398.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 385.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 387.

In their opening encounter with the Russian leader, Harriman and Beaverbrook were given a comprehensive survey of Axis and satellite strength on the Russian front, a general list of the Red Army's most urgent needs, and a few comments on possible coöperation between Great Britain and the Soviet Union. For the moment, at least, Stalin did not seem to be especially anxious regarding a second front in the west; but he did urge Beaverbrook that it would be a most desirable thing for his government to send an expeditionary force into the Ukraine. When the latter replied that British forces then being accumulated in Iran might be sent into the Caucasus, Stalin became impatient and made it clear that he did not regard such a move as having much pertinence to the immediate situation. Nor did he show a great deal of interest in Beaverbrook's proposal for staff conversations between their two countries. Instead, he began talking about the eventual peace settlement and German reparations; and Beaverbrook hurriedly quelled further discussion of this topic by pointing out that the war had not yet been won. For his own part, Harriman brought up the possibility of delivering American bombers to Russia by way of Alaska and Siberia. He gathered, however, that Stalin did not care to have American pilots flying planes over this route because he feared complications with Japan. Harriman also mentioned President Roosevelt's concern about the status of religion in the Soviet Union; but when his host seemed disinclined to talk about it, he volunteered to

present a memorandum explaining the American attitude in this regard.⁶⁰

That swift alteration of mood from cordiality to brusqueness which had already become a staple of Russian diplomatic procedure was observable during their second meeting the next day. Stalin seemed preoccupied and impatient almost to the point of discourtesy. As a result, little was accomplished.⁶¹ But he was again congenial at their final talk on September 30. Beaverbrook opened the session by reading a memorandum which listed the supply commitments that Great Britain and the United States were prepared to make at once. Stalin received the list with enthusiasm, and the meeting continued in an atmosphere of growing warmth.⁶² The Russian leader engaged Beaverbrook in a spirited discussion of European politics and suggested that the Anglo-Russian alliance be extended into the post-war period.⁶³ In answer to Harriman's request for his views on the Far East, he expressed the belief that Japan could be weaned away from her Axis connection. Finally, he brought the meeting to a harmonious close by inviting his guests to dinner.⁶⁴

⁶⁰Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 387-88.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 388-89.

⁶²Ibid., p. 389.

⁶³Ibid., p. 390.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 390-91.

The results of the conference were embodied in a "confidential protocol" signed by Harriman, Beaverbrook, and Molotov on October 1. It was primarily a supply agreement by which the United States and the United Kingdom undertook to furnish the Soviet Union with a long list of armaments and other materials ranging from destroyers and airplanes down to army boots and medical items.⁶⁵ The Russian aid program could now begin in earnest. In recognition of this fact, Hopkins immediately designated Colonel Philip Faymonville-- who had come to Moscow as a member of the Harriman mission-- to remain as permanent Lend-Lease supervisor in the Russian capital. In addition to being thoroughly schooled in the Russian language, Faymonville, significantly enough, was still one of the few regular officers in the United States Army who thought the Red Army would be able to stem the German advance.⁶⁶

Altogether, Harriman spent about a week in Moscow; and notwithstanding the rebuff he had drawn from Stalin in the course of their first meeting, he strove diligently to impress Soviet officials with the importance of conciliating American public opinion so far as the Russian government's attitude toward religion was concerned. But his results,

⁶⁵ Confidential protocol of the conference of the representatives of the U.S.A., U.S.S.R., and Great Britain held in Moscow, Sept. 29 - Oct. 1, 1941, United States, Department of State, Soviet Supply Protocols (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1948), pp. 3-8; also Annexes 1 and 2, pp. 9-12.

⁶⁶ Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 395.

on the whole, were not encouraging. Neither Stalin nor Molotov seemed greatly interested; and although Oumansky (who had returned home to be superseded as Russian Ambassador in Washington by Maxim Litvinov), assured him that the Kremlin's liberality in this regard would be given favorable publicity in the United States, Harriman doubted that established practice would be greatly altered. According to the best information he could obtain, worshippers were no longer persecuted directly. But the denial of political and economic advancement to believers, close scrutiny by the secret police, and the deliberate educational policy of the Russian government kept religious observance within narrow bounds. Practically no one except women, people over thirty, and persons who were not members of the Communist party attended church, while youths under sixteen were denied all forms of religious instruction. In Harriman's view, the political philosophy upheld by the Soviet government was fundamentally incompatible with religious belief; and while he thought that Moscow might give out reassuring statements from time to time, he did not believe that actual conditions inside Russia would be substantially altered.⁶⁷

In a sense, his fears had already been borne out. The final communiqué issued by the Moscow conference on October 1 had ended with a statement to the effect that the three

⁶⁷Memorandum by Harriman in Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 391-93.

participating governments were resolved "after annihilation of the Nazi tyranny" to establish a peace which would "enable the world to live in security in its own territory free from fear or need." That this formula omitted two of the Four Freedoms--freedom of expression and freedom of religion--was not lost upon some of those present.⁶⁸

IV.

Whatever its other concerns in the weeks following Roosevelt's meeting with Churchill, the United States did not permit its Atlantic policy to languish. It had been clear from the beginning of the Russo-German war that one of the main supply routes to the Soviet Union led from the Persian Gulf through Iran; and owing to this circumstance, Great Britain, in August, had requested the Iranian government to expel some 3,000 Germans known to be present in that country. When the Shah temporized, Russian and British troops had entered his territory, assuming control of the railways and the more important oil deposits. By the end of the month, Churchill was able to give Roosevelt an optimistic report concerning developments in the Middle East.⁶⁹ But more British troops were needed there to exploit the situation to greatest advantage; and the Prime Minister on

⁶⁸ Henry C. Cassidy, Moscow Dateline, 1941-1943 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), p. 134.

⁶⁹ Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 374.

September 1 asked American help in transporting two divisions --some 40,000 men--from the United Kingdom to the head of the Persian Gulf.⁷⁰ Since this request could not be met by a simple transfer of ships to Great Britain, it called for the employment of United States Army transports. To use its own ships in moving a large consignment of belligerent troops to a recognized theater of operations halfway around the world was a serious step for the American government to contemplate. But Roosevelt had been shedding hesitations with great rapidity of late, and he did not lose much time in hesitation over this proposal. Taking up the matter with Stark, King, and other naval authorities on September 5, he obtained a favorable reaction immediately. As a result, it was decided that transports necessary for the movement of 20,000 men--half the number mentioned by Churchill--should be made available to the British. Nor was this all. For it was also decided that these ships should fly the American flag and be manned by their own crews while engaged in their somewhat novel task.⁷¹

Drastic as it seemed at the moment, however, this undertaking was not out of harmony with other advances in our Atlantic policy which were to assume definite form by the end of the month.

⁷⁰Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 374-75.

⁷¹Memorandum by Hopkins, Sept. 6, 1941, ibid., p. 375.

The promise given by Roosevelt in June to the effect that the United States Navy would eventually assume the duty of guarding convoys over that portion of the transatlantic route lying between this country and Iceland had been only partially fulfilled by the order of July 11--which, prospectively at least, entitled ships of other nationalities to join convoys of American and Icelandic vessels bound for Iceland under United States escort. Later in July, moreover, Roosevelt had also promised Churchill, through Hopkins, that the patrol area covered by the Atlantic Fleet would be extended at its northern end in such a way as to include the whole of Iceland and its surrounding waters. Thus the United States Navy was still committed to the assumption of heavy new responsibilities when Roosevelt returned from the Atlantic Conference at the middle of August. And the President was as good as his word, for he now set about fulfilling these obligations without any more delay.

On August 25, he issued an order directing the Atlantic Fleet to "destroy surface raiders" which attacked shipping along the sea lanes between North America and Iceland or which approached these lanes closely enough to threaten such shipping.⁷² More general in its bearing than Admiral King's Operation Plan No. 5 of July 15--which seems to have been concerned only with the protection of American and Icelandic

⁷²Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2295.

shipping and the defense of territory in the Western Hemisphere--this order was a step forward in United States naval policy. But the advance was again prospective, for the operation of this directive was suspended until the earlier provision relating to escort-of-convoy for ships that were not of American or Icelandic registry should become effective.⁷³ Nevertheless, its somewhat elastic terms were clarified on September 23 by another directive which explained that hostile forces would be deemed to menace the route to Iceland if they entered the general area of this route or if they infringed the neutrality zone established by the Declaration of Panama.⁷⁴ On the same day, the patrol area of the Atlantic Fleet--heretofore bounded on the east by the 26th meridian--was given a large bulge at its northern extremity which veered eastward at 53 degrees North Latitude, reached 10 degrees West at 65 degrees North, and proceeded onward to the Pole along the 10th meridian.⁷⁵ This brought Iceland within the patrol area by a safe margin and included another good slice of the German operational zone of March 26. Further detailed, but still prospective, orders covering escort techniques were given in Admiral King's Operation

⁷³Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2295.

⁷⁴Idem.

⁷⁵Idem.

Plan No. 7, issued September 1.⁷⁶

Within two weeks of the President's return from Argentina, therefore, his Atlantic program was virtually rounded out. Detailed orders which broadened the scope and deepened the intensity of both convoy and patrol operations were already in hand, needing only a date of execution. As soon as this was furnished, the United States Navy would be as deep in the Atlantic war as the British except for certain geographical restrictions and the lack of those fully-recognized belligerent rights which only a formal declaration of war can bring. A few days later, the Greer incident was revealed to the nation.

According to official testimony, the United States destroyer Greer, en route to Iceland and well inside the German zone of operations, was informed by a British plane on the morning of September 4 that a German submarine lay some ten miles directly ahead. Following standing orders, the Greer proceeded to locate and trail the U-boat by means of her underwater equipment and to broadcast its movements, keeping the submarine ahead in the meanwhile. About an hour later, the British plane, which had remained in the neighborhood, dropped four depth charges and departed. Shortly after noon, when the chase was more than three hours old, the submarine suddenly altered its course and fired a torpedo at the destroyer. The missile failed to reach its target, and

⁷⁶ Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 84-85.

the Greer retaliated with a pattern of eight depth charges. A few minutes later, the U-boat launched a second torpedo, which also missed. At this point, the Greer lost contact with her quarry. But she found it again after a search of about two hours, whereupon another collection of depth charges was tossed overboard. Although she continued her search until 6:40 that evening, the Greer failed to discover any further trace of the U-boat. She then resumed her voyage to Iceland.⁷⁷

As far as immediate damage was concerned, the Greer episode was no more serious than the Niblack's encounter with a submarine the previous April. But since it became one of those momentous trifles which so often form the visible turning-points in international relations, it is important to see the Greer affair in its true light. From the standpoint of immediate circumstances, the Greer's conduct was certainly no less aggressive than that of the U-boat. Having been notified of the U-boat's presence by a belligerent plane, she deliberately searched until she found the craft and trailed it for more than three hours, broadcasting its movements regularly, before it struck back. During this period, the British plane dropped four depth charges. While it might be argued that the Greer refrained from using depth charges until such action was

⁷⁷Statement by Harold R. Stark with regard to the Greer incident, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1941-42, p. 95.

required as a defensive measure, it must be realized that, in trailing the submarine, she was following orders⁷⁸ which had been standard since April--while other orders, already given if not yet in effect, clearly provided for the destruction of any Axis craft encountered on or near the established convoy route between North America and Iceland. In the final analysis, the Greer incident, like the Niblack episode, was the logical outcome of mutually hostile German and American naval policies. Together, they made such clashes inevitable.

The use which President Roosevelt made of this incident was likewise the outgrowth of larger policy. According to Hopkins, he had been planning, at least since the middle of August, to go before the country some time in September with an explanation of his broadening Atlantic policy. No date was set, but the Greer incident furnished so obvious a point of departure for the sort of message the President wished to deliver that he elected to act at once.⁷⁹ A brief delay was occasioned by the death of his mother, and he did not give his famous "shoot-on-sight" speech until September 11. But he was still able to exploit the Greer's adventure to the full. Combining indignation with defiance, he castigated

⁷⁸That the Greer had followed orders was emphasized in Stark's report. Statement by Harold R. Stark with regard to the Greer incident, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1941-42, p. 96.

⁷⁹Memorandum by Hopkins, Sept. 13, 1941, Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 370.

Germany's methods of naval warfare at appropriate length and then revealed that United States naval forces in the Atlantic had been ordered to fight fire with fire, to render their patrols effective by destroying enemy vessels wherever they were encountered.⁸⁰ Two days later, the Atlantic Fleet received an order, effective September 16, to protect ships of any nationality between North American and Iceland, including convoys in which no American vessels were present.⁸¹ This was the execution clause specified in the various directives issued over the past two months, and it brought the United States Navy automatically into the war.

Any doubts on this point were resolved by the events of the next fortnight. United States forces took their first prisoners of the Atlantic war on September 14, when the crew of the Coast Guard cutter Northland, after having captured a Norwegian sealing vessel which was obviously in German service, proceeded to liquidate the German radio station on the coast of Greenland which the craft supplied.⁸² On September 15, the term "United Kingdom" was redefined by executive action to permit American vessels to carry arms to

⁸⁰Radio address by the President, Sept. 11, 1941, Department of State, Peace and War, No. 235, p. 743.

⁸¹Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2295.

⁸²Walter Karig (with Earl Burton and Stephen L. Freeland), Battle Report: The Atlantic War (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1946), pp. 35-37.

British overseas colonies and possessions without running afoul of the neutrality act.⁸³ The first transatlantic convoy escorted by United States warships, as distinguished from the Iceland-bound variety, left Halifax, Nova Scotia, on September 16.⁸⁴ Hull chose September 19 for presenting the German government with an American claim for damages of nearly \$3,000,000 arising out of the sinking of the Robin Moor.⁸⁵ He received his answer a week later: the German chargé d'affaires refused to transmit this demand to Berlin on the ground that it was not the type of communication to beget an appropriate reply from his government.⁸⁶ The same day, September 26, all recent orders affecting United States naval policy in the Atlantic were drawn together in a broad new summary known as Western Hemisphere Defense Plan No. 5. Within the American patrol zone--as extended, of course, by the order of September 3--our forces were directed to protect all American and foreign ships (except German and Italian) by escorting, covering, and patrolling, and to trail merchant vessels suspected of assisting hostile warships or aircraft. This directive further pointed out that

⁸³Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1046.

⁸⁴Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 86.

⁸⁵Hull to Thomsen, Sept. 19, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 8, 1941), p. 364.

⁸⁶Thomsen to Hull, Sept. 26, 1941, idem.

we were not at war "in the legal sense,"⁸⁷ but the mere circumstance that such a reminder was considered necessary spoke eloquently of the new situation.

However, the fact that the Navy was compelled to operate without benefit of a formal declaration of war did not constitute the only restriction upon United States policy in the Atlantic. While Lend-Lease had effectively by-passed the anti-loan provisions of the joint resolution of November 4, 1939, other parts of the neutrality law were still effective. A few of these, like the sections providing for government supervision of arms exports and imports and the collection of charitable funds for belligerents, the State Department had always wished to retain.⁸⁸ But others-- particularly sections 2 and 3, which forbade American merchant vessels to enter combat zones, and section 6, which prohibited them from carrying armament--constituted real obstacles to the most effective use of the American merchant marine. Specifically, the former restriction kept the American cargo ships from entering ports in the United Kingdom, in European Russia, and in the Mediterranean, while the latter rendered them incapable of self-defense no matter where they went. Of course, the provisions relating to combat zones had been fathered by the Roosevelt administration.

⁸⁷Stark's testimony, Jan. 3, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2296.

⁸⁸Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, 1047.

But their main purpose had been that of persuading congressional isolationists to give up the arms embargo; and the current situation, in any event, was far different from that of November 1939. Fully aware of this, Hull had advised President Roosevelt as early as June 1941 to begin sounding congressional leaders on the possibility of revising the neutrality act once more.⁸⁹

Acting on the Secretary's advice, Roosevelt formed the opinion that, while any major proposal for changing this law would evoke prolonged debate, there was enough favorable sentiment in both houses of Congress to give such a move a reasonable chance of success. In consequence, a number of amendments involving various degrees of revision were drawn up and made ready for use by September 24. But caution prevailed thereafter; for instead of trying to deal with all three offending sections at one time, it was decided by the beginning of October to concentrate first upon section 6, leaving the combat zones for subsequent action.⁹⁰ Thus, as the United States Navy assumed responsibility for transatlantic convoys over the western half of the route and launched a determined hunt for Axis raiders as far east as the 10th meridian in the latitude of Iceland, preparations were made to do away with the vexatious restrictions still hedging the use of our merchant marine.

⁸⁹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1046.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 1046-47.

V.

As War Minister Tojo had revealed early in August, Japanese Army leaders had never been very sympathetic toward Konoye's plan for direct negotiation with Roosevelt; and by the end of the month, they were beginning to press for its abandonment.⁹¹ That Konoye bore a large share of responsibility for the course Japan had followed since 1937 cannot be doubted, but he apparently did what he could to stem this particular phase of the tide. His success was negligible, however. Another Imperial Conference met on September 6 to elaborate the plans for a southward movement which had been laid down on July 2; and while it did not rule out further efforts by the Premier to arrange a meeting with Roosevelt, it certainly placed a definite limit upon them. For it approved a schedule of "minimum" demands and "maximum" concessions already drawn up by the Japanese Army and Navy⁹² and decided that if there were no reasonable prospect of a settlement within this framework by the early part of October "we will immediately make up our minds to get ready for war against America (and England and Holland)."⁹³ Apparently expecting the United States to haul Great Britain along in its wake, this program required Washington and London to

⁹¹Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, pt. 20, p. 4004.

⁹²Ibid., Appendix 5, pt. 20, pp. 4022-23; also p. 4004.

⁹³Ibid., p. 4022.

forswear all aid to China, leaving Japan to settle the China Incident on her own terms. In addition, the United States and Great Britain would have to agree to establish no military bases in the Dutch East Indies, China, or Siberia; undertake not to increase their existing military forces in the Far East; restore trade relations with Japan; and assist Japan in establishing closer economic relations with Thailand and the Dutch East Indies. By way of return for this, Japan was prepared to guarantee the neutrality of the Philippines and to withdraw her troops from Indo-China as soon as a "just peace" was established in the Orient. Until such a peace could be realized, however, Japan would keep her troops in Indo-China, merely promising not to use Indo-China as a base of operations against any country except China.⁹⁴

Whether Koneye truly believed that Roosevelt might be persuaded to accept these conditions is impossible to say, but he did not relax his efforts to arrange a conference with the President. Inviting Grew to a private dinner the same evening (September 6), he mounted a new offensive and asked that his statements be transmitted directly to Roosevelt. Seemingly convinced that the end justified the means, he allowed Grew to understand that he accepted the four principles laid down by Secretary Hull in April as

⁹⁴Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, Appendix 5, pt. 20, pp. 4022-23.

basis for a Japanese-American settlement: (1) respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, (2) non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, (3) respect for the equality of all nations, and (4) non-disturbance of the status quo in the Pacific except as it might be altered by peaceful means. Konoye then resorted to still another dubious guarantee, for he assured the Ambassador that his Cabinet was strong enough to uphold a peaceful program and stated that any commitment given would be observed. Repeatedly stressing the importance of time, he also made it clear that he desired a meeting with Roosevelt as ardently as ever.⁹⁵

His words were fair but poorly scheduled. For September 6 was likewise the date chosen for Nomura to offer Hull a new memorandum which was fondly characterized as Japan's response to the American desire for some kind of preliminary agreement. A substantial paraphrase of the demands just embraced in Tokyo by the Imperial Conference, this note completely destroyed any effect that Konoye's supposed acceptance of Hull's four principles might otherwise have had.⁹⁶ Speaking to Campbell, the British chargé d'affaires, two days later, Hull was notably pessimistic. He thought

⁹⁵Memorandum by Grew, Sept. 6, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 604-6.

⁹⁶Draft proposal presented by Nomura, Sept. 6, 1941, ibid., pp. 608-9.

that there was only about one chance in fifty of reaching an agreement with Japan and stated his belief that the primary objective now was to keep her from initiating new advances as long as possible.⁹⁷

Although Hull had certainly offered him no encouragement on September 6, Nomura managed to keep up his spirits. On September 17, he cabled Tokyo his certainty that Roosevelt was prepared to meet Konoye "if the preliminary arrangements can be made."⁹⁸ Taken literally, his words were probably sound enough; but their whole context revealed his inability to appreciate the vast difference between Tokyo's reading of that phrase and the stipulations envisioned by Hull and Roosevelt. He was only a little clearer on September 22 when he assured his government that if Japan were to "give up forceful aggressions, Japanese-American trade relations could be restored, and the United States would even go so far as to render economic assistance to Japan."⁹⁹ For while this was also true as a general proposition, it represented an issue which had to be worked out in highly specific terms; and the Japanese government had repeatedly demonstrated its awkwardness with the specific

⁹⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 1029-30.

⁹⁸Nomura to Gaimudaijin, Sept. 17, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 28.

⁹⁹Nomura to Toyoda, Sept. 22, 1941, ibid., p. 31.

except where its own demands were concerned.

Also on September 22, Toyoda handed Grew another set of Japanese proposals for liquidating the China Incident. But these contained nothing new. Substantially a repetition of earlier offers, this memorandum was no more acceptable than any of its numerous forbears. Nevertheless, Toyoda took advantage of the opportunity to press for a Roosevelt-Konoye meeting.¹⁰⁰ On September 25,¹⁰¹ and again two days later,¹⁰² Grew received further proddings on this subject. Although a preliminary agreement seemed as far distant as ever, reiteration had its effect; and on September 29, after another interview with Konoye, Grew sent Hull a long report urging that Roosevelt give serious consideration to the idea of meeting the Japanese Premier. The Ambassador also warned that failure of such a conference to materialize might cause the downfall of the Konoye government and the formation of a military dictatorship that would have no desire to avoid war with the United States.¹⁰³

Probably because they lacked full details, Japan's

¹⁰⁰Memorandum by Grew, Sept. 22, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 631.

¹⁰¹Grew, Ten Years, p. 435.

¹⁰²Memorandum by Grew, Sept. 27, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 642.

¹⁰³Grew to Hull, Sept. 29, 1941, ibid., pp. 649-50.

European partners, in the meanwhile, took these negotiations for a leaders' conference much more seriously than did Hull and Roosevelt. As early as August 29, the German Ambassador in Tokyo had asked Toyoda whether these efforts implied any weakness in Japan's affection for the Tripartite Pact.¹⁰⁴ Now, on September 30, the Japanese Ambassador in Rome reported that Italy was suspicious of the whole project.¹⁰⁵ The next day, the Japanese Ambassador to Germany informed his government that a similar feeling existed in Berlin. German leaders, he declared, no longer concealed their annoyance over the independent negotiations which Japan was carrying on with the United States; if Tokyo persisted in this course without talking things over with Berlin, he warned, there was "no telling what steps Germany might take without consulting Japan."¹⁰⁶

But regardless of the effect which these negotiations produced in Rome and Berlin, the American government was still much less than satisfied with the position maintained by Japan. Nor was this feeling restricted to President and State Department. Notwithstanding its concern over our military weakness in the Far East, at least a portion of the

¹⁰⁴Memorandum by Amai (Japanese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs), Aug. 29, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 132-A, pt. 18, p. 2949.

¹⁰⁵Rome to Tokyo, Sept. 30, 1941, ibid., Ex. 1, pt. 12, pp. 44-45.

¹⁰⁶Berlin to Tokyo, Oct. 1, 1941, ibid., pp. 48-49.

General Staff fully agreed with them. In a memorandum prepared on October 2, the Acting Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, expressed the view that no useful purpose could be served by a Roosevelt-Konoye meeting unless Japan would commit herself in advance of such a conference to withdraw from the Axis. Instead of advising the President to accept Konoye's proposal, therefore, this estimate recommended increasing our military and economic pressure in the Far East.¹⁰⁷

Almost simultaneously, Japanese-American conversations ground to another temporary halt. For on this same date, Hull gave Nomura a blanket reply to the various statements and proposals which had dribbled in from Tokyo over the past month. Here the Secretary yielded nothing. Pointing out that Japan's attitude had narrowed steadily since the beginning of September, he suggested that the two countries launch a new series of conversations and a new effort to formulate an agreement in principle which could serve as basis for a Roosevelt-Konoye meeting. He urged particularly that Japan manifest her good intentions by withdrawing her troops from China and Indo-China at once.¹⁰⁸ Finally convinced that the limit had been reached, Nomura answered that he did not think his government could go further at this time.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷Memorandum by Kroner, Oct. 2, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 33-M, pt. 14, pp. 1385-88.

¹⁰⁸Oral statement by Hull, Oct. 2, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 659-61.

¹⁰⁹Memorandum by Ballantine, Oct. 2, 1941, ibid., p. 655.

VI.

In the six weeks following the Atlantic Conference, the United States moved perceptibly closer to war. Talks with Japan were resumed on a note of stern warning against any further changes in the Far Eastern status quo, a warning which hinted clearly that new Japanese advances in the Orient might lead to military action on the part of the United States. Once resumed, negotiations continued; but they moved at some distance from the basic issues in the controversy. Outwardly, at least, the main question now centered about procedure. Japan began and ended each exchange of views with Konoye's idea regarding a leaders' conference, while the United States adhered just as consistently to its demand for a preliminary agreement. From the first, Hull was inclined to view his work as little more than a delaying action; and it was plain by October 2 that this phase of negotiation had worn itself out.

Our relations with Spain during this period tended to grow slightly better as the prospect of new economic discussions was revealed. The increasingly totalitarian aspect of the Vichy regime, on the other hand, threatened to complicate our relations with France; but in neither country did American policy undergo a definite change. Coöperation with Russia broadened rapidly, encouraged to some extent by the diplomatic pressure which Hull chose to exert against Rumania and Finland, but aided more directly by the speed

and generosity of our Russian aid program. Moscow's less than satisfactory response to Roosevelt's views on the religious question had no immediate bearing upon larger policy; and Stalin's bumptious concern over post-war political questions, while perfectly evident, was still only a small cloud on a distant horizon.

In our dealings with Japan and Russia, we were merely preparing for action. In the Atlantic, however, we grappled with action itself. The Navy's patrol area was enlarged to include Iceland; it assumed its full place in transatlantic convoy operations; shooting-orders were given and openly avowed; and definite plans were made for new revisions in the neutrality act.

Public opinion, moreover, seemed generally to approve these developments. By September 2, no less than 52 percent of those interviewed by the American Institute of Public Opinion favored using the American Navy to convoy war materials to Britain. By the end of the month, 46 percent thought the provision relating to combat zones should be withdrawn from the neutrality act, while only 40 percent opposed such a change.¹¹⁰ That the American people were not yet thoroughly acclimated to our new friendship with Russia was indicated by a Fortune poll taken in October when those expressing opinions were almost equally divided on the

¹¹⁰-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 5 (Winter 1941), p. 680.

question of whether or not the Soviet government was a more admirable institution than the German government.¹¹¹ Some confusion also existed with regard to Japan. In October, according to a Fortune survey, 43 percent were not greatly exercised by any direct threat which Japan might offer to the United States.¹¹² But a month later, 64 percent of those contacted by the Gallup organization thought this country should take immediate steps to keep Japan from becoming any more powerful.¹¹³ Even though 79 percent of those interviewed during early October opposed an immediate declaration of war against any country,¹¹⁴ it was quite evident that Roosevelt, on specific issues, was not dangerously ahead of public opinion. If the American people were not growing more belligerent, they at least seemed more resigned to the inevitable.

¹¹¹-----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 6 (Spring 1942), p. 152.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 150.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 163.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 164.

CHAPTER XI

RELEASING THE STOPS

I.

When Nomura told Hull on October 2 that he did not think the Japanese government was prepared to go beyond its offer of September 6, he was being no more pessimistic than the situation warranted. For Konoye himself was already engaged in another effort to realize his scheme for a personal meeting with Roosevelt, and his unsuccess did not belie the Ambassador's prediction.

Fully aware that the time limit set by the Imperial Conference of September 6 was nearing its end, Konoye had opened a series of talks with various members of his Cabinet late that month. Blocked at every turn by earlier decisions, he apparently hoped to secure their agreement to some new concession which might satisfy Washington's demand for a preliminary understanding and dispose Roosevelt to accept his invitation to a conference.¹ Thus Hull's note of October 2 merely spurred him to fresh exertions, while its suggestion that Japan withdraw her troops from China and Indo-

¹Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, pt. 20, p. 4008.

China as an earnest of good faith pointed out the route he was already seeking. Hull's note, moreover, received quick support from Nomura. On October 3, the latter cabled his belief that the continued occupation of China by Japanese troops was the one thing which prevented an understanding between Japan and the United States.² Without delay, therefore, Konoye tried to set at least one foot upon the path which had been indicated by arguing for a partial evacuation of China. He saw Emperor Hirohito on October 4 and then conferred with members of the Japanese High Command. The next day, he talked personally with War Minister Tojo-- who, as acknowledged leader of the militarists, represented the chief hurdle he needed to cross. But his efforts, however sincere, were not productive. On October 7, Tojo informed him that the Army would find it "difficult...to submit" to any withdrawal from China.³ Confronted by this gruff dictum, Konoye took refuge during the next three days in talks with the Navy Minister and the Foreign Minister on "methods of avoiding a crisis."⁴ But he was still held prisoner by the inflexible decisions of September 6, and the expedient finally hit upon was that of leaving the next move

²Nomura to Toyoda, Oct. 3, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 53.

³Konoye memoirs, ibid., Ex. 173, pt. 20, p. 4008.

⁴Ibid., pp. 4008-9.

to Washington. As a result, Toyoda asked Grew on October 10 to obtain a statement of just what the American government wanted, attempting to justify this somewhat preposterous request by stating that Nomura had been "unable to provide" the desired information from his post in Washington. Observing that Nomura seemed very fatigued, he also mentioned the possibility of sending an experienced diplomat to Washington to assist the Ambassador in his work of negotiation.⁵

Having created another temporary diversion, Konoye held a new series of Cabinet meetings from October 12 to October 14 for the purpose of discussing the general question of peace and war. The Premier made it clear to his associates that he wished to continue negotiations with the United States as long as possible and to give them a chance of success by withdrawing some troops from China. In this, he was supported by Toyoda and, somewhat less vigorously, by the Navy Minister. But Tojo was adamant. To withdraw troops from China, he argued, would not only destroy the fighting spirit of the Army; it would also lead to more high-handed acts on the part of the United States. Further negotiations, he believed, would come to nothing in the end. Moreover, Japan could pursue this forlorn hope only at the

⁵Grew to Hull, Oct. 10, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 678-79.

risk of missing the most favorable time for fighting.⁶ The sole result of these talks was Tojo's suggestion on October 14 that the Cabinet resign en masse to clear the way for a thoroughgoing reëxamination of policy.⁷ In this connection, the War Minister expressed the view that Prince Higashikuni, then serving as Chief of the General Staff, was a suitable choice for the Premiership.⁸

Konoye retired from the lists without further argument. He saw the Emperor again on October 15 and explained Tojo's stand. Hirohito seemed noncommittal with regard to everything but the question of Prince Higashikuni's appointment. Here he was uncertain. With war in the offing, he did not think it was the proper time for a member of the Imperial Family to assume direct responsibility for the government. Konoye discussed the matter that evening with the Prince himself, but again he could obtain no immediate decision. Therefore, he let matters take their course. Together with every member of his Cabinet, Prince Konoye resigned on the morning of October 16.⁹ The next day, General Tojo received the Emperor's command to form a new government.

The significance of this change was immediately clear despite Japanese efforts to keep it hidden. Konoye hastened

⁶Konoye memoirs, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 173, pt. 20, p. 4009.

⁷Ibid., p. 4010.

⁸Idem.

⁹Ibid., pp. 4010-11.

to assure Grew that the new Cabinet would not break off conversations with the United States;¹⁰ and a few days later, the Ambassador received additional enlightenment to the effect that Tojo had been appointed Premier because, as a general still on the active list, he would be able to quell the Army's discontent with the policy of peaceful negotiation to which the government was still committed.¹¹ Nomura, in Washington, expressed a similar view to Lord Halifax.¹² But messages then passing between the Foreign Office in Tokyo and himself belied this comfortable assessment. An intercepted cablegram from Toyoda to Nomura, dated October 17, gave a full explanation of the disagreement which had preceded Konoye's resignation. Although it added that talks with the American government would continue,¹³ Nomura's return message of October 18 (likewise intercepted) asking to be relieved from his Washington assignment on the ground that he felt unable to accomplish anything further in the United States did not indicate that the Ambassador himself placed much value on this assurance.¹⁴ That the militarists

¹⁰Konoye to Grew, Oct. 16, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 691.

¹¹Memorandum by Grew, October 25, 1941, ibid., pp. 697-98.

¹²Memorandum by Halifax, October 16, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 158, pt. 19, p. 3464.

¹³Toyoda to Nomura, Oct. 17, 1941, ibid., Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 76.

¹⁴Nomura to Tojo, Oct. 18, 1941, ibid., p. 79.

were now in power could not be doubted; and the proposed leaders' conference, the hallmark of Konoye's diplomacy since the early part of August, dropped immediately from sight.

There followed a lull of slightly more than two weeks while the Japanese government prepared its next move. Just what it might be was uncertain, but Grew lost no time in discounting the assurances he had been given with regard to the peaceful intentions of the new Cabinet. Keeping his ear to the ground, he saw no reason for optimism. On November 3, he pointed out the "shortsightedness of underestimating Japan's obvious preparations to implement an alternative program in the event the peace program fails" and added that war might come on Japan's initiative "with dangerous and dramatic suddenness."¹⁵ The next day, November 4, the Japanese Foreign Office apprised him that Saburu Kurusu, a career diplomat and former Ambassador to Germany, would join Nomura in Washington to assist with forthcoming negotiations, and requested him to make arrangements to postpone the departure of the Pan-American clipper from Hong Kong for two days in order that Kurusu might board her for the United States.¹⁶ And on November 5, Nomura finally yielded to the solicitations of the new

¹⁵Grew to Hull, Nov. 3, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 704.

¹⁶Grew, Ten Years, pp. 470-71.

Foreign Minister, Shigenori Togo, by agreeing, somewhat reluctantly, to stay at his post in Washington.¹⁷ Both cast and setting for the last act were now complete. Only the script remained.

This was being rapidly filled in behind the scenes. Togo informed Nomura on October 21 that Japan could do nothing more except urge the United States to reconsider its views as to what a settlement should contain. But beyond requesting the Ambassador to suggest to the State Department at "an opportune moment" that Japan could not afford to spend much more time in these discussions, and asking him to emphasize Japan's desire to receive a new American counter-proposal, the Foreign Minister issued no specific instructions.¹⁸ The counselor of the Japanese Embassy, Wakasugi, attempted to press these points with Welles on October 24; but the Under Secretary merely expressed the view that the American position had already been made clear and that no further counter-proposals were required.¹⁹ On October 30, Togo approached Grew with a plea for coöperation in his efforts to bring American-Japanese conversations to a speedy

¹⁷Nomura to Togo, Nov. 5, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 100.

¹⁸Togo to Nomura, Oct. 21, 1941, ibid., p. 81.

¹⁹Memorandum by Welles, Oct. 24, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 693-94.

and successful end.²⁰ But it was not until November 4 that anything definite began to take shape. On that date, Togo favored Nomura with another prolix survey of the dangerous state of Japanese-American relations, reemphasized the importance of time in the very strongest terms,²¹ and gave him two sets of proposals for use in the new talks which he was to open in accordance with later instruction. One set, designated "Proposal A" and characterized in Togo's message as Japan's "revised ultimatum," had four main points: (1) Japan would offer to apply the principle of non-discrimination in trade throughout the Pacific area, including China, if this principle were extended to the entire world by the United States; (2) with respect to the Tripartite Pact, Japan would merely state that she wished to "avoid the expansion of Europe's war into the Pacific;" (3) all Japanese troops in China would be evacuated following the conclusion of peace with that country save troops in North China, Mongolian border regions, and those stationed on the island of Hainan, where they might remain for a period of twenty-five years; and (4) Japanese troops would be withdrawn from Indo-China as soon as the China Incident was

²⁰Memorandum by Grew, Oct. 30, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 699.

²¹Togo to Nomura, Nov. 4, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, pp. 92-94.

liquidated.²² The other set, "Proposal B," was to be used only if "Proposal A" made no progress; then it could be advanced "with the idea of making a last effort to prevent something happening." Nevertheless, "Proposal B" constituted little more than the reverse side of "Proposal A;" for its principal function was to specify exactly what Japan wanted in return for the concessions listed above. In substance, it ran as follows: (1) the United States and Japan were to agree that neither would invade any area of southeastern Asia or the southwestern Pacific, Indo-China excepted; (2) the two governments should cooperate in obtaining materials needed by both from the Dutch East Indies; (3) the United States should suspend its freezing order and resume oil shipments to Japan; and (4) the United States should do nothing to hamper Japan's efforts to establish peace with China. If necessary, stipulations relating to equal commercial opportunity and the Tripartite Pact could be added.²³

Having intercepted this material, the American government now possessed the essence of Japan's "maximum" concessions and "minimum" demands; and it was obvious that our relations with that country were about to enter their last pre-war phase.

²²Togo to Nomura, Nov. 4, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, pp. 94-95.

²³Ibid., pp. 96-97.

II.

Meanwhile, American preparations for war in the Far East continued. As always, these centered about two large problems. At least since the old plan of operations--which marked off the Philippines as an almost total loss as soon as war began--was tacitly discarded in late July or early August, the primary objective of these efforts had been to prepare the islands, especially Luzon, for a more or less permanent defense. But this question could never be separated from the larger one of concerting measures with the British, Dutch, and Australians to sustain their joint position in southeastern Asia and the southwestern Pacific. And closely related to this second problem was the matter of coöperation with China.

As observed earlier, new plans for defending the Philippines were based upon the assumption that 200,000 troops and a genuinely effective force of B-17's could be made available to General MacArthur before the outbreak of war. After the Philippine Army was mustered into United States service on July 27 and thus added to the minuscule Regular Army units already on the ground, he possessed about half the required number. Training camps in the United States were to make good the deficiency.²⁴ But considering the extreme scarcity of trained men even in the United States, it was obvious that a troop movement of such dimensions

²⁴ Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 153.

would require several months at best. Other shortages were hardly less exigent, and similar delays could be anticipated in building up United States air power in the Philippines and in stocking the islands with adequate supplies of war materials. During the rest of the summer, therefore, MacArthur and his principal subordinates--Major General George Grunert, commanding the Philippine Department; Major General Jonathan M. Wainwright; and Brigadier General Henry B. Claggett, commanding the Air Force--could do little except make plans and proceed with training as rapidly as possible.²⁵ Not until fall did the situation improve greatly. But the extremely high priority which the Philippines had gained as a result of the July decisions began to yield concrete dividends by the end of September.²⁶ On October 6, Secretary Stimson advised Hull that "we needed three months to secure our position."²⁷

Military men themselves were both more and less optimistic, however. Whatever their foundations for such a belief, they were proceeding on the assumption that hostilities with Japan would not commence before April 1, 1942.

²⁵Cf. Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, pp. 11-12; and Allison Ind, Bataan: The Judgment Seat (New York: Macmillan, 1944), pp. 17-19, 20-21, 30-33, 50-56. Cited henceforth as Bataan.

²⁶Cf. Ind, Bataan, pp. 58-61.

²⁷Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 389.

About to depart for the Philippines to relieve General Claggett of his command over the Far East Air Forces, Major General Lewis H. Brereton discussed war prospects with authorities in Washington during the second week of October. The view that peace in the Far East would not be ruptured until the following April was held so strongly by members of the General Staff that he was convinced as well.²⁸

MacArthur entertained exactly the same opinion; in fact, the mobilization and training plans of the Philippine Department were geared to this schedule.²⁹ In allowing itself six months instead of three to complete its preparation for war, therefore, the Army was being optimistic. On the other hand, those who exercised direct command in the potential battle areas do not seem to have shared Stimson's view that our positions in the Pacific would be secured by the end of the year. Although he echoed MacArthur's guess as to the probable starting date of hostilities, General Wainwright believed "that even if the Japs held off that long it would still be a tight squeeze."³⁰ Others in the Philippines noted similar apprehensions.³¹ And Brereton

²⁸Lewis H. Brereton, The Brereton Diaries: The War in the Pacific, Middle East, and Europe, 3 October 1941-8 May 1945 (New York: Morrow, 1946), p. 10. Cited henceforth as Diaries.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 19-20; cf. Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, p. 13.

³⁰Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, p. 13.

³¹Ind, Bataan, p. 60.

himself was not altogether happy even before he reached his new command and its multitudinous problems. War Department plans for stocking Luzon with relatively unescorted B-17's did not fit his notion of sound Air Force doctrine; and while still in Washington, he objected to the policy of having strong bombardment units in a critical area with inadequate fighter protection, only to be assured by General Marshall that it was a "calculated risk."³² Pausing briefly at Oahu later in the month, he was

...surprised and somewhat disappointed to note the incomplete preparations against air attacks, particularly the lack of adequate air warning equipment.³³

Nor did he find the situation in Luzon much better. Brereton had scarcely alighted from the plane which brought him to Manila before he was confronted by a number of tasks which made it painfully evident that the Far East Air Forces still lacked a good deal of being ready for war. These tasks included such major items as reorganization of the command, improvement of airport facilities, and--by no means least--arrangements for a new transpacific air route with landing fields in remote parts of Australia and New Guinea.³⁴

Time was less significant as far as naval preparations

³²Brereton, Diaries, p. 8.

³³Ibid., p. 12.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 21-24; Ind, Bataan, p. 69.

were concerned. The maritime defense of the Philippines was entrusted to the Asiatic Fleet as then constituted; unlike MacArthur, Admiral Hart enjoyed no prospect of reinforcement in advance of hostilities. Such preliminary arrangements of a general type as he could make were virtually complete by the fall of 1941. The main strength of the Asiatic Fleet had been transferred to Manila from Shanghai the year before. During the summer, Manila Bay and Subic Bay had been mined and other routine preparations given effect.³⁵ Since his battle force was already in being, moreover, Hart's training problem was much less serious than that of his Army colleagues. His greatest uncertainty was his plan of operations, but this was uncertain indeed.

Under the old plan, the Asiatic Fleet was to play no direct part in the defense of the Philippines. Instead, as the land forces withdrew to Bataan, the Fleet was to retire southward and westward to carry on the war from less vulnerable positions in the Indian Ocean.³⁶ This was clear enough in itself; but Rainbow No. 5, the Army-Navy basic war plan drawn up in May to give effect to the decisions of the Washington staff conference, had introduced a kind of paradox. While it assumed that the Asiatic Fleet would retire very early to the southwest in order to support Dutch and

³⁵Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 155.

³⁶Ibid., p. 150.

British positions in the East Indies and Malaya under the strategic direction of the latter, it also stated that Hart's primary duty was to bolster the defense of the Philippines as long as that defense continued.³⁷ Since Rainbow No. 5 clearly intended that the Asiatic Fleet should be preserved as a force in being at all costs, the latter point obviously had to be construed with some freedom. Thus the paradox of telling Hart to fight and run at the same time was not as great as it might otherwise have been; it left the detailed operations plan substantially unchanged and raised no special problem at first. But the new concepts regarding defense of the Philippines which took root during the summer of 1941 lent fresh importance to this section of Rainbow No. 5.

Both MacArthur and the General Staff seem to have been notably vague with respect to their changing views on the possibility of defending the islands, for Hart apparently was not informed of their new orientation until the autumn was well advanced. But having learned what the Army now had in mind, he asked the Navy Department on October 27 to authorize a change in his own plans. Briefly, he wanted to concentrate the Fleet in Manila Bay instead of leading it southward. Supported by the growing Air Force, he believed

³⁷Sec. 1, ch. 3, pt. 3, W.P.L.--46, Navy Basic War Plan (Rainbow No. 5), Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 129, pt. 18, p. 2894.

it could aid materially in holding the islands. Until an answer came three weeks later, however, this question remained in suspense.³⁸

At the same time, Hart was forced to consider another matter scarcely less perplexing. The weightiest of his secondary duties under Rainbow No. 5, as noted above, involved support of the British and Dutch. He was authorized by this plan to shift his base to a British or a Dutch port at his own discretion, whereupon any forces thus transferred came under the strategic control of the British Commander-in-Chief, China, to be used along with British and Dutch naval units in the defense of British and Dutch possessions.³⁹ Since existing plans were based on the assumption that a shift of this kind would take place soon after the fighting started, it was a contingency by no means remote; but owing to the rejection of the Singapore staff agreement by Marshall and Stark, there was still no real understanding as to the exact form which coöperation with the British and Dutch might take. In August, following our dismissal of the Singapore report, Great Britain had proposed a new agreement somewhat more in accord with American views. But negotiations lagged through September and October.⁴⁰ Finally, on November

³⁸Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 154.

³⁹Sec. 3, ch. 3, pt. 3, W.P.L.--46, Navy Basic War Plan (Rainbow No. 5), Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 129, pt. 18, pp. 2894-95.

⁴⁰Turner's testimony, Dec. 20, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 4, p. 1932.

11, Stark directed Hart to open new talks with Admiral Tom Phillips of the Royal Navy, who was about to take command at Singapore.⁴¹ More than three additional weeks were to elapse, however, before this exchange of views got under way. In the meanwhile, Hart waited, still uncertain as to whether he should retire at all and equally uncertain as to just what he should do if he did retire.

Through late October and early November, the weakness of our Pacific defenses won enough recognition in Washington to give it a marked influence over deliberations bearing upon the closely related problems of future policy toward Japan and guarantees of aid to China.

In all its recent negotiations, particularly those carried on since the spring of 1941, the United States had betrayed an unyielding solicitude for the interests of China; and this concern, diligently stimulated by promptings from the Chinese government, was mirrored in direct relations between Washington and Chungking. Stressing the importance of upholding Chinese morale, Sumner Welles had urged Hopkins on July 7 to increase the flow of Lend-Lease supplies to China as rapidly as possible.⁴² Owen Lattimore, American political adviser to Chiang Kai-shek, had sounded a kindred note on August 12 in a message to presidential assistant

⁴¹Stark's testimony, Jan. 4, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 5, p. 2369.

⁴²Welles to Hopkins, July 7, 1941, Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 403.

Lauchlin Currie. The Generalissimo wanted more formal recognition of his alignment with the democratic cause than that implied by Lend-Lease aid; and to this end, he had suggested that Roosevelt take the initiative in persuading Great Britain and Russia to form an alliance with China. If this could not be done, he at least wanted the President to make arrangements for giving China a voice in Pacific defense conferences. Either one of these expedients, Lattimore had noted, would

...safeguard China's equal status among the anti-Axis powers ...remove the stigma of discrimination...and thereby strengthen Chinese morale.⁴³

Neither of the moves outlined by Chiang had been practicable just then. Before the end of the month, however, Roosevelt had thrown some oil on the waters by appointing Major General John Magruder to head a military mission to Chungking.⁴⁴ This hint of regular military discussions with the United States appeared to mollify the Chinese for a time. Owing to shortages in this country and to the high priority accorded British and Russian needs, the United States was unable to fulfill even the slender allocations of war matériel it had already granted China; and her main theme during

⁴³Excerpt from Lattimore to Currie, Aug. 12, 1941, Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 404.

⁴⁴Press release, Aug. 26, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Aug. 30, 1941), p. 166.

the next few weeks related to the slowness of Lend-Lease deliveries.⁴⁵ But by late October, when Magruder actually reached Chungking, the Generalissimo was occupied with new fears of imminent Japanese aggression in the south. Receiving Magruder for the first time on October 28, Chiang at once confronted him with a request that Roosevelt intercede with Great Britain to have the Singapore air force support his own armies in resisting an anticipated Japanese drive on Kunming, the capital of Hunnan province and a city with a commanding position on the Burma Road. He also wanted Britain and the United States, acting jointly, to warn Tokyo that any such move would be considered "inimical" to their interests.⁴⁶ The same request was presented in Washington two days later by T. V. Soong who, though China's Foreign Minister, had been in the United States for some time trying to expedite Lend-Lease aid to his country.⁴⁷

Chiang's plea was referred to Hull, and the latter saw its implications at once. In his view, further warnings to Japan were useless unless the Army and Navy were prepared to

⁴⁵For some account of approaches made to Hopkins and others during this period, see Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 404-10.

⁴⁶Magruder's telegram, Oct. 28, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 47, pt. 15, pp. 1480-81.

⁴⁷Message from Chiang Kai-shek, Oct. 30, 1941, ibid., Ex. 16-A, pt. 14, pp. 1079-80.

support them with military and naval action.⁴⁸ This threw the decision to Marshall and Stark. Accordingly, the Army-Navy Joint Board met on November 3 to ponder the situation. Marshall appears to have taken the lead in this conference, stating flatly that the United States was not yet ready for war in the Orient and expressing his conviction that, until this country finished building up its forces in the Far East, American policy should aim at avoiding war with Japan even at the cost of certain "minor concessions which the Japanese could use in saving face." He thought this objective might be achieved through some relaxation of economic pressure.⁴⁹ The other Board members signified their agreement with the Chief of Staff, and it was decided that his views should be embodied in a memorandum for the President and the State Department.⁵⁰

Neither Hull nor the Joint Board had misread the Generalissimo's thoughts. As both had assumed, a warning without teeth was not what Chiang desired. Chiang made this clear in a personal message to the President received the following day, November 4. This time, the Generalissimo did

⁴⁸Minutes of meeting of Army-Navy Joint Board, Nov. 3, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 16 pt. 14, p. 1063.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 1064.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 1065.

not even mention the proposed warning to Japan. Instead, he revealed that he had asked Churchill for air support "with American coöperation" and went on to request that the United States "draw on its air arm in the Philippines to provide either an active unit or a reserve force in the combined operations."⁵¹

Chiang was obviously swimming against the tide in Washington; but that he struck a more responsive chord in London was indicated by the cablegram which Roosevelt received from Churchill on November 5. Although he stated his readiness to assist Chiang with both pilots and planes "if they could arrive in time," the Prime Minister evidently thought more highly of the Generalissimo's other suggestion. In his view, the situation called for "a deterrent of the most general and formidable character," one that would keep Japan from any action leading immediately to war. Observing that Britain was unable to furnish such a deterrent by herself because of her heavy engagements elsewhere, Churchill expressed the hope that Roosevelt could warn the Japanese against any move into the Chinese province of Yunnan and stated that he would support any policy the President chose to follow.⁵²

⁵¹Chiang Kai-shek to Roosevelt, Nov. 2, 1941 (delivered by Hu Shih on Nov. 4), Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 47, pt. 15, pp. 1476-78.

⁵²Churchill to Roosevelt (through Winant), Nov. 5, 1941, ibid., Ex. 16, pt. 14, p. 1061.

This was the climax of a vigorous and concerted effort to place China on a basis of equality with Malaya, the East Indies, and the Philippines in British-American strategic calculations. But Marshall and Stark were already convinced that China should be kept in a separate category; and on November 5, the very day of Churchill's message, they handed Roosevelt the memorandum which had been outlined in the meeting of the Army-Navy Joint Board two days earlier. Covering all aspects of the strategic situation in the Pacific with exemplary thoroughness, this document offered the President a clear choice. He could grant the plea from Chungking and the suggestion from London or he could follow the recommendations of his own military and naval advisers. But he could not do both, for the one automatically excluded the other.

Brushing aside all quibbles, Marshall and Stark launched their argument by stating that the real question which they had been called upon to decide was whether the United States would be justified "in undertaking offensive military operations...against Japan, to prevent her from severing the Burma Road." Their basic premise, they added, was that "such operations, however well disguised, would lead to war."⁵³ Founding their case upon the strategic decisions made at Washington earlier in the year, they next proceeded to examine our readiness for war in the Pacific.

⁵³Memorandum by Marshall and Stark, Nov. 5, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 16, pt. 14, p. 1061.

Temporarily, at least, Japanese naval strength in that ocean was greater than our own. Only by virtually withdrawing from the Atlantic war could we give the Pacific Fleet enough reinforcement to undertake "an unlimited strategic offensive." As a result, existing plans for hostilities with Japan related only to defense of the Philippines and the East Indies in coöperation with the British and Dutch; and even here defensive arrangements would not be complete until February or March 1942. By that time, United States air power in the Philippines would have reached a point where it might be able to discourage any attack against Malaya or the Indies, while the British position at Singapore would have been considerably strengthened with new air and naval units. These were the areas which the Singapore staff report had considered vital to American interests; and even though the Singapore report had been disapproved, Marshall and Stark followed it exactly in recommending that military action against Japan should be reserved for (1) a direct attack by Japanese forces on "the territory or mandated territory of the United States, the British Commonwealth, or the Netherlands East Indies" and (2) "the movement of Japanese forces into Thailand to the west of 100 degrees East or south of 10 degrees North; or into Portuguese Timor, New Caledonia, or the Loyalty Islands."⁵⁴ A Japanese

⁵⁴Memorandum by Marshall and Stark, Nov. 5, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 16, pt. 14, p. 1062.

advance into Yunnan, Thailand (except as indicated), or Siberia obviously did not fall within this strategic design. With respect to the original question, therefore, Marshall and Stark expressed the belief that American aid to China should stop short of actual intervention against Japan. To this end, they strongly recommended that Chiang's appeal for military assistance be disapproved and that nothing in the way of an ultimatum be delivered to Japan.⁵⁵

Their views prevailed. Hull gave the memorandum strong support,⁵⁶ and Roosevelt appears to have done likewise. In his reply to Churchill on November 7, the President discounted the likelihood of an immediate Japanese advance against Yunnan, promised that Lend-Lease aid to China would be increased, spoke reassuringly of continued defense preparations in the Philippines, and stated that he doubted the advisability of confronting Japan with a new warning since its effect might be the very opposite of what was desired.⁵⁷ A week later, November 14, a similar message was sent to Chiang Kai-shek.⁵⁸

⁵⁵Memorandum by Marshall and Stark, Nov. 5, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 16, pt. 14, p. 1062.

⁵⁶Hull's testimony, Nov. 23, 1945, ibid., pt. 2, p. 428.

⁵⁷Roosevelt to Churchill (through Winant), Nov. 7, 1941, ibid., Ex. 16-B, pt. 14, pp. 1081-82.

⁵⁸Hull's testimony, Nov. 23, 1945, ibid., pt. 2, p. 428; and Roosevelt to Chiang Kai-shek (undated), ibid., Ex. 16, pt. 14, pp. 1072-76.

While this action effectively disposed of the Chinese request, it did nothing to solve our basic problem in the Far East. Although Japan's "final proposals" had not yet been brought into the open, the American government knew their substance as stated in the intercepted messages received by Nomura on November 4. That a crisis was fast approaching regardless of what we did in China could not be doubted, and a policy was still needed for meeting it.

In spite of his decision on China, Roosevelt still seemed to be of two minds. On the one hand, he thought of delaying hostilities with minor concessions to Japan as Marshall had suggested to the Joint Board on November 3. Talking with Stimson on November 6, he discussed the possibility of a six-month truce with no troop movements on either side. The Secretary of War gave him little encouragement, objecting that such a course would not only tie our own hands but also leave China at a serious disadvantage.⁵⁹ The next day, however, the President veered sharply, asking the members of his Cabinet whether they thought the American people would support him if the United States struck at Japan in the Far East. All agreed that the country would accept such a development.⁶⁰ Roosevelt's question seems to have been

⁵⁹Statement by Henry L. Stimson, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 11, p. 5431.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 5432.

regarded as more or less hypothetical and was doubtless so intended. But it did point out the likeliest alternative to a modus vivendi. Considering the formal recommendations of Marshall and Stark on the one hand and what was known of Japan's probable intentions on the other, it was obvious that the American government might soon have to grant concessions of some type or see Japan launch new advances which would require counter-measures by the armed forces of the United States.

III.

Through October and early November, Washington's direct concern with the affairs of continental Europe remained about equally divided between developments that had a potential bearing on the Mediterranean situation and those related to the problems of the Soviet Union. Activity was light, generally speaking; and not much positive gain was effected in either category. On the other hand, there was some apparent loss during this period; for trends at Vichy created the prospect of a serious reverse for the United States, and American diplomacy was wholly unsuccessful in Finland.

The more or less tentative plans made by Churchill and Roosevelt at the Atlantic Conference for the occupation of the Azores, the Canaries, and the Cape Verde Islands had not materialized in September as scheduled. One reason was that Hitler's continuing difficulties in Russia lessened the immediate probability of an aggressive German drive into the

Iberian Peninsula and the consequent seizure of these outposts by German troops. Another reason--so far, at least, as the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands were concerned--seems to have grown out of the attitude of Portugal. In their discussions at Argentia, Roosevelt and Churchill had evidently thought that the Portuguese dictator, Dr. Salazar, was becoming more amenable to such a project. But the formal invitation which Churchill had hopefully undertaken to secure was not issued; and while returning to the United States from his September conversations at the Vatican, Myron C. Taylor stopped briefly in Lisbon for an exchange of views with Salazar. He found the latter almost painfully cautious. Taylor gained the impression that Salazar deprecated American intervention in the war out of fear that it would prolong the struggle indefinitely. The Portuguese leader seemed to think that Great Britain could serve European interests most effectively by reaching an agreement with Hitler which approved the annexation of the Ukraine by Germany, thus establishing a sort of continental balance that would be able to keep Russia in check. He also appeared to be worried lest an occupation of the Atlantic islands by American and British troops might precipitate a Nazi invasion of Spain and Portugal, and he knew very well that neither Great Britain nor the United States could do anything to hinder such a move.⁶¹

⁶¹Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 400.

When he lacked a compelling reason to do otherwise, Roosevelt was inclined to feel sympathetic toward the problems of lesser nations caught in a struggle among the great powers; and he was unable completely to deny the logic of Salazar's position. Therefore, since the problem did not seem to be overwhelmingly urgent as long as the Russo-German war continued in full course, the occupation plans were slowly moved into the background of Anglo-American intentions. As a matter of fact, conditions never did become ripe for a full-scale occupation of these strategically located bits of land. Finally, in October 1943, the British government acquired base rights in the Azores in exchange for two corvettes and permitted the American government to share its facilities.⁶² This was the net result of all the complicated arrangements made on this point during the spring and summer of 1941.

The new cordiality which had begun to sweeten our relations with Spain in late September persisted, on the whole, throughout the next two months. Weddell's relatively favorable interview with Serrano Suñer on September 30 was followed, as Cárdenas had promised, by an invitation from the Caudillo himself. The American Ambassador saw Franco

⁶²Karig, Battle Report: The Atlantic War, p. 157. Cf. Great Britain, Foreign Office, Documents constituting agreements between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Portuguese Government concerning facilities in the Azores, Lisbon, Aug. 17, 1943, Nov. 28, 1944, May 30, 1946 (Portugal No. 3, 1946), Cmd. 6854 (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1946).

on October 6. Betraying a marked concern over Spain's economic needs, the latter discussed his shortages of foreign exchange, oil, wheat, and cotton in a genial manner and let it be known that he wished to go ahead with talks leading to a commercial agreement with the United States.⁶³ So negotiations continued, although the American government still maintained its familiar attitude of restraint. With some justice, the State Department suspected that Spain was using American oil to fuel German submarines.⁶⁴ In actual fact, two German supply ships were allowed to meet U-boats regularly in the outer harbor of Las Palmas until early October, when the Spanish government, yielding to British demands, ordered them withdrawn to the inner harbor;⁶⁵ and the difference between permitting this kind of thing and actually drawing the oil from Spanish storage tanks was not great. Therefore, our unofficial policy of restricting oil shipments from American ports through the deliberate use of bureaucratic delays was continued. At the same time, we became firmer than ever in the determination which the State Department had explained to Weddell in its letter of

⁶³Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 141.

⁶⁴Idem.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 146.

September 18, namely, that we would furnish Spain with scarce and essential articles only if she reciprocated in kind.⁶⁶

Thus American policy toward Spain forged ahead of British policy; for London remained primarily concerned with buying Franco's abstention from the war and, as a result, generally bargained for little else. Quite apparently, the State Department believed that it held Spain at a serious disadvantage. Quite apparently, also, it did not anticipate any sudden change in the balance of forces on the Iberian Peninsula. For it betrayed not the slightest disposition to hurry as week followed week, and the middle of November was well past before it finished drafting a new proposal for a trade agreement with Madrid.

The buffeting sustained by our Vichy policy in August and September continued through October and into November without much change. It is true that the French situation carried a number of favorable signs during the autumn of 1941. Hull, for example, became almost optimistic with regard to the general temper of the French people. It seemed to him that popular feeling reflected a growing dislike for all types of Franco-German collaboration and that not even Darlan was proof against this change. The Secretary attributed this development to the sense of outrage produced by Germany's wholesale shooting of hostages in October, the growth of the resistance movement, and the circumstance that Russia's

⁶⁶ Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 142.

failure to collapse was beginning to undermine the myth of German invincibility.⁶⁷ From his post in Vichy, Admiral Leahy supplied corroborating evidence. He noted on October 15 that Darlan and his cohorts were now leaning "toward our side of the question" and expressed the view that their final attitude was "dependent upon the outcome of the campaign in Russia."⁶⁸ About the same time, another source revealed that one of Darlan's associates had admitted that the Vice-Premier was "the most detested man in France," adding that Darlan was extremely sensitive to this unpopularity and that he was now much less certain of German victory than he had been earlier.⁶⁹ In consequence, there was some reason to believe that our relations with France might take a turn for the better.

But these auguries, however favorable, were still too nebulous for immediate profit; and they were more than offset, temporarily at least, by rumors of an entirely different sort. For Vichy, in October, once more came to life with talk of Weygand's impending dismissal.⁷⁰

According to information that was pieced out later,

⁶⁷Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1042.

⁶⁸Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 190.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 191.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 192.

the Germans had been pressing for Weygand's removal since December 1940. Their campaign was intensified in September 1941 when Otto Abetz, Hitler's chief representative in occupied France, confronted Pétain with a written demand that the General be ousted from his post in Africa. This document even went so far as to hold that Weygand's original appointment had been an act unfriendly to Germany. Pétain was evasive from the outset. But Darlan, whatever change his views on collaboration were then undergoing, still had no use for Weygand--a dislike which was more than shared by the powerful and fascist-minded Banque Worms group--and it was common knowledge by late October that Darlan and the Banque Worms group were vigorously using their influence to accommodate the Germans. Early in November, Abetz saw Pétain again; and Weygand was hurriedly summoned to Vichy for another consultation. But even though Pétain assured the American chargé d'affaires on November 11 that the General would return to Africa, it was clear by the middle of the month that Weygand's hold on office was tenuous in the extreme.⁷¹

Hull's efforts during October and November to secure Finland's retirement from her war with the Soviet Union produced an equivalent frustration. As noted above, he had been well-satisfied with the statement of Finnish war aims offered in Helsinki the first part of September by the

⁷¹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 192-93.

Finnish Minister of Industry and Commerce. But as the Finnish Army continued its advance week after week, he lost patience. Returning to the attack on October 3, he addressed a number of rather sharp comments to Procopé, expressing his pleasure at seeing Finland recover her lost territory but asking once more whether Finland meant to press her advantage so far as to involve herself in the general war.⁷² This brought no result, however; and subsequent efforts by the United States Minister in Helsinki to obtain a clear statement of Finland's intentions elicited nothing but a refusal to make any promises.⁷³ Therefore, Hull addressed a pair of formal notes to Helsinki--dated respectively October 25 and October 27--which, in his own words, were "so strong that they fell just short of a breach of relations."⁷⁴

This description is accurate enough. The first note stated categorically that Finland, if she wished to retain American friendship, would have to guarantee an immediate cessation of hostilities against Russia and undertake to withdraw her forces to the 1939 boundary between Finland and the Soviet Union. The note added that the launching of any attacks from Finnish-controlled territory against shipments of American military supplies bound for Russia would

⁷²Memorandum by Hull, Oct. 3, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 8, 1941) p. 363.

⁷³Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 402.

⁷⁴Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 980.

provoke an immediate crisis in Finnish-American relations.⁷⁵
 The second note argued that Finland's current operations against Russia were of marked service to Germany in her program of world aggression and declared that they offered a definite threat to the security of the United States without strengthening Finland's long-term position in any way.⁷⁶

Hull's next move was to publicize the whole issue. In a press conference held November 3, he repeated much of the above argument and dilated at considerable length upon Helsinki's failure to use the intelligence communicated by Welles to Procopé on August 18 regarding Soviet willingness to make peace on the basis of territorial concessions.⁷⁷ But his words again fell on barren ground as far as tangible results were concerned. In a long reply submitted November 11, the Finnish government reviewed its dealings with the Soviet Union since 1939, denied that its policy had any relation to American security, stoutly maintained that Russia still threatened the security of Finland, and declined to withdraw its forces to the 1939 boundary.⁷⁸ With respect to

⁷⁵Wuorinen (ed.), Finland and World War II, p. 136.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 137.

⁷⁷New York Times, Nov. 4, 1941, p. 1, c. 1; and p. 10, c. 2.

⁷⁸Memorandum presented by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Schoenfeld (American Minister in Helsinki), Nov. 11, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1941-42, pp. 645-51.

the peace feeler of August 18, the note pointed out that no concrete terms had ever been mentioned and observed, justly enough, that Welles' statement to Procopé had constituted neither a genuine peace offer nor even a clear recommendation that a possible future offer be accepted. As a result, Finland had regarded it as nothing more than an item of information.⁷⁹ This concluded Hull's endeavors to stop the Russo-Finnish conflict until long after the United States was itself at war.

While the above negotiations were in progress, the United States rounded out its supply agreement with Russia. On October 30, President Roosevelt informed Stalin that he had approved the Moscow protocol and that delivery of the articles specified therein was about to commence. To finance the program, he said, he had allocated \$1,000,000,000 in Lend-Lease funds. If the Soviet government concurred, repayment should be made over a ten-year period, the first installment falling due five years after the war's end. There would, however, be no interest charges.⁸⁰ Stalin accepted this arrangement with many signs of appreciation on

⁷⁹Memorandum presented by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Schoenfeld (American Minister in Helsinki), Nov. 11, 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1941-42, pp. 648-49.

⁸⁰Roosevelt to Stalin, Oct. 30, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 8, 1941), pp. 365-66.

November 4,⁸¹ and Roosevelt concluded the formalities three days later with a public announcement to the effect that Russia had been granted \$1,000,000,000 worth of Lend-Lease assistance.⁸² By various gradations--not all of them subtle--Russia had moved in a little more than four months from a position of psychological hostility into a relationship with the United States which, on the material side at least, bore a notable similarity to that occupied by Great Britain.

IV.

Throughout October and November, the Atlantic policy evolved by the American government since the spring of 1941 yielded a steady harvest of belligerent episode and informal expedient which continued to stretch our already taut relations with Germany on the one hand and drew us ever closer to Britain on the other. But the most significant development relating to its further growth unfolded in Washington and consisted in the administration's successful effort to change the neutrality act of 1939.

Guided from start to finish by restrained estimates of public and congressional opinion, the President thought it advisable to initiate this effort by asking for less than he

⁸¹Stalin to Roosevelt, Nov. 4, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 8, 1941), p. 366.

⁸²Press release, Nov. 7, 1941, ibid., p. 366.

desired. Although the prohibition respecting combat zones constituted an even greater hindrance to the most effective use of the American merchant marine than the clause which forbade the arming of ships registered in the United States, administration leaders had determined in late September, as noted above, that their first objective should embrace only the latter point. In this connection, Hull requested Admiral Stark to present his views. But even though Stark on October 8 expressed himself strongly in favor of abolishing combat zones as well as the restriction on the arming of merchant vessels,⁸³ the original strategy was not changed. For while Roosevelt alluded generally to several undesirable features of the neutrality act of 1939 as he drove home the opening wedge of his attack in a special message to Congress on October 9, his main theme was the necessity of permitting our merchant vessels to carry armament; and the only change he specifically recommended was repeal of section 6.⁸⁴

The House of Representatives acted quickly. An administration bill calling for repeal of section 6 was promptly introduced and referred to committee. Hearings were held

⁸³Memorandum by Stark, Oct. 8, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2216.

⁸⁴Message of the President to Congress, Oct. 9, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Oct. 11, 1941), pp. 257-59.

October 13 and 14,⁸⁵ and the bill was favorably reported on October 15 in spite of a minority complaint that the mere arming of merchantmen could not effectively protect their crews and a shrill minority charge that the measure was part of the administration's scheme to put us into war by subterfuge.⁸⁶ Two days later, the bill received House approval.⁸⁷ So far, the President's request had been met with commendable dispatch. But he had received nothing extra.

In the long run, however, events were with him. The number of American ships sunk or damaged by submarine action jumped sharply upward after the middle of September; and added to these sinkings of a more or less routine nature were a pair of attacks which recalled the Greer incident. The American vessel Pink Star was sent to the bottom on September 19. She was followed in rapid succession by the I. C. White on September 29, the W. C. Teagle and the Bold Venture on

⁸⁵United States, Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Arming American Merchant Vessels: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H. J. Res. 237, Oct. 13 and 14, 1941 (77th Cong., 1st sess.), (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1941).

⁸⁶United States, Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Arming American Merchant Vessels: to accompany H. J. Res. 237, Oct. 15, 1941 (77th Cong., 1st sess.), House Report No. 1267 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1941), p. 3.

⁸⁷House Journal (77th Cong., 1st sess.), p. 670.

October 16, and the Lehigh three days later.⁸⁸ On October 17, the U.S.S. Kearny, one of five American destroyers sent from the neighborhood of Iceland to help repel the assault of a German wolf-pack on a slow-moving convoy, was torpedoed. She made port badly damaged and with the loss of eleven men.⁸⁹ The naval tanker Salinas suffered an attack on October 30.⁹⁰ And then came the hardest blow of all. The U.S.S. Reuben James, one of five American destroyers attached to another convoy, was torpedoed and sunk about six hundred miles west of Ireland on the morning of October 31. Only 45 out of her crew of 160 were rescued. This was the first United States warship to be lost completely in the second World War,⁹¹ and the incident did not pass unnoticed. Stark reported, for example, that it set naval recruiting back about fifteen percent.⁹² And Count Ciano, from his vantage point in Rome, expressed an unqualified fear that it could not help but accelerate the crisis in German-American relations.⁹³

⁸⁸Data regarding attacks on American-owned merchant vessels, Aug.-Oct. 1941, Jones and Myers (eds.), Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1941-42, pp. 86-87.

⁸⁹Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 92-93.

⁹⁰Karig, Battle Report: The Atlantic War, p. 77.

⁹¹Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 94.

⁹²Stark to Kimmel, Nov. 25, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 106, pt. 16, p. 2224.

⁹³Ciano, Diaries, p. 400.

Although none of these incidents begot anything like a popular demand for war, they probably imbued congressional deliberations with a new sense of urgency; and the total effect was doubtless more favorable to administration hopes than otherwise.⁹⁴ At all events, Congress eventually gave the President exactly the kind of revision he wanted. For while disaster continued to strike in the Atlantic, the House resolution went before the Senate; and here it gained a strikingly favorable reception. On October 25, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations not only approved the arming of merchant vessels but moved for the abolition of combat zones as well, advising the repeal of sections 2 and 3 of the neutrality act of 1939 in addition to section 6 because they were voluntary restrictions imposed "in derogation of American rights under international law"⁹⁵ and because it was unreasonable to produce war materials without taking steps "necessary to insure their full utilization."⁹⁶ Thus

⁹⁴On October 27, for example, Senator Tom Connally upheld the recommended abolition of combat zones on the ground that the merchant sinkings listed above proved that the policy of restricting the activities of merchant vessels did not contribute to their safety. Congressional Record, Vol. 87, p. 8248. And on October 31, Senator W. Lee O'Daniel tried to make the announcement of the Reuben James incident the occasion for demanding an immediate vote on the measure. Ibid., p. 8377.

⁹⁵United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Modification of the Neutrality Act of 1939: to accompany H. J. Res. 237, Oct 25, 1941 (77th Cong., 1st sess.), Senate Report No. 764 (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1941), p. 3.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 2.

amended, the new resolution was approved on November 7.⁹⁷ The Senate amendment gained acceptance in the lower house on November 13.⁹⁸ Four days later, the bill became law.⁹⁹ So far as its ability to interfere with presidential control over foreign policy was concerned, that imposing mass of special neutrality legislation built up during the late 1930's was dead. Henceforth, it could be criticized only in retrospect.

Throughout this final debate on statutory change, the roots of our coöperation with Great Britain on the Atlantic front went steadily deeper. It was a phase without sweeping new agreements, express or implied--a growth which reflected little save the momentum of established policy. But this was enough. For as the mounting intensity of German attacks on United States vessels, merchantmen and warships alike, gave new emphasis to the similarity between our own position in the Atlantic and that occupied by Great Britain, the American and British navies tended more than ever to operate as a single unit.

In its very nature, escort and patrol duty bespoke a constantly growing sphere of required activity; and the operations of United States naval forces expanded by almost

⁹⁷Senate Journal (77th Cong., 1st sess.), p. 445.

⁹⁸House Journal (77th Cong., 1st sess.), p. 716.

⁹⁹United States Statutes at Large, Vol. 55, pp. 764-65.

insensible degrees to a point where they included virtual support of the Royal Navy's blockade of the European coastline. Toward the end of October, for example, Admiral King arrived at an informal understanding with British authorities which divided the responsibility of guarding the northern approaches to the transatlantic convoy route. Under this agreement, the British Home Fleet was to observe and intercept Axis ships which tried to enter the Atlantic between the Faeroe Islands and Iceland, while American units based on ports in the latter country were to hold the line in Denmark Strait. If any hostile craft managed to evade this dual watch, it was agreed that ships of the Atlantic Fleet would be placed temporarily under British command to assist in hunting them down.¹⁰⁰ That this was more intimately related to North Atlantic patrol problems than to the blockade activities of the Royal Navy goes without saying, but it is obvious that the two questions were beginning to overlap.

Further evidence on this point was supplied early in November, when the United States cruiser Omaha captured a German blockade runner a few hundred miles off the coast of Brazil. This vessel, the Odenwald, was disguised as an American ship--purporting to be the S.S. Willmote of Philadelphia--and was then heading for Germany with a cargo of rubber obtained in Japan. Since the Odenwald was not a

¹⁰⁰ Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 81-82.

raider, the Omaha's commander, Captain T. E. Chandler, lacked instructions for dealing with her. But he held the ship on the altogether remarkable allegation that she was suspected of being a slave trader and took her into Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.¹⁰¹ Thus it was demonstrated again how easily and informally United States patrol craft might serve as adjuncts to the British blockade.

It was also during this period that Roosevelt fulfilled the promise of aid he had given Churchill in connection with the projected movement of new British forces to the Middle East. The original plan, as formulated in his conference with naval authorities on September 5, apparently took it for granted that the American transports assigned to this duty would pick up the troops in the British Isles and proceed to Iran from there. Being government-owned transports, these ships--like all regular naval vessels--were not barred from combat zones by the neutrality act. As a result, their voyage to British ports would involve no legal transgression. But the neutrality act still had to be considered in another way. For the likelihood of a German attack on these vessels once they entered the combat zone could not be ignored, and the President soon realized that an incident arising under circumstances of this type might adversely affect his chances of doing away with the objectionable features of that law. So he reopened the question in early October,

¹⁰¹Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 84.

explained his misgivings to Churchill, and offered the Prime Minister a choice of two alternatives. The necessary ships might be temporarily loaned to the British on a Lend-Lease arrangement, whereupon they could proceed with British officers, British crews, and flying the British flag. Or the troops could be embarked at Halifax, Nova Scotia, after having been sent there in British ships. This would allow the American convoy to remain in the Western Hemisphere until it reached the South Atlantic. Then it could swing east, sail round the Cape of Good Hope, and thus avoid the main submarine zones completely.¹⁰²

Although Roosevelt indicated his preference for the first alternative, Churchill chose the second; and this arrangement was permitted to stand.¹⁰³ By early November, one British division (some 20,000 men) had arrived at the designated Canadian port. The troops were quickly shifted to three American transports--U.S.S. Mount Vernon, U.S.S. Wakefield, and U.S.S. West Point--and the convoy left Halifax on November 10. Subsistence for the troops was furnished out of Lend-Lease funds, and a strong escort was supplied by the United States Navy.¹⁰⁴

Fortunately, this move had no special repercussions. Indeed, the convoy was still two days out of Capetown when

¹⁰²Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 375-76.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 376.

¹⁰⁴Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, pp. 109-10.

the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor;¹⁰⁵ and the United States was at war with all three Axis countries four days later. But it did offer one more indication of the government's increasing disregard for this country's non-belligerent status.

In terms of broad policy, Germany's response to the implacable extension of naval warfare carried out by the United States in the fall of 1941 was extremely cautious. On September 17, following Roosevelt's public announcement of shooting-orders, Admiral Raeder urged that his submarines be freed of a number of restrictions which, theoretically at least, hampered their ability to meet new conditions.¹⁰⁶ But Hitler demurred, insisting that it was still advisable to keep direct clashes with the United States to a minimum; and while he agreed to permit a slight intensification of U-boat warfare, the operating directives of the Naval High Command remained unchanged.¹⁰⁷ According to a summary of existing orders drawn up at this same time, attacks on American naval vessels that could be recognized as such were forbidden even within the original German blockade area--which corresponded to the American combat zone extending from the European coastline westward to the

¹⁰⁵Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 112.

¹⁰⁶Annex 1, Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Sept. 17, 1941, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, Vol. 2, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰⁷Annex 5, ibid., p. 49.

20th meridian. Attacks within the extended zone of operations--which touched the three-mile limit of Greenland--were allowed only when such action became necessary as a measure of self-defense or when the vessels in question were actually engaged in convoy duty. United States merchantmen could be sunk in the original zone (from which they were barred by American law anyway), but attacks outside this area were not permitted even when the ships were encountered in convoy. Within the limits of the Pan-American safety zone, German forces were under orders to engage in no warlike acts whatever on their own initiative.¹⁰⁸

Of course, it becomes evident on analysis that Germany was exercising no great forbearance. Wherever our naval activity made a direct contribution to the task of supplying her enemies, German commanders were authorized to act with almost complete freedom. The same freedom existed wherever the safety of German naval units was directly menaced by American forces. That German submarines were not unduly hampered in their efforts to deal with United States patrol and escort vessels is proved by the Greer, Kearny, and Reuben James incidents, while a number of the merchant sinkings listed above occurred in locations and under circumstances which made it perfectly evident that general

¹⁰⁸Appendix 3, Annex 1, Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Sept. 17, 1941, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, Vol. 2, pp. 44-45. Outside the extended blockade area, there was apparently no distinction between the treatment accorded American ships and the vessels of Spain and Japan, the "friendly neutrals." Cf. ibid., p. 44.

restrictions were not always observed in specific cases. Nevertheless, German naval orders retained a careful distinction between the treatment accorded the United States and that prescribed for the full belligerents. Externally, at least, there was some basis for the opinion expressed by Count Ciano on October 27 to the effect that Germany still wanted the United States to remain out of the war.¹⁰⁹

On the other hand, Hitler felt venturesome enough by November 1 to authorize the deployment of submarines about Cape Race and in the Straits of Belle Isle off the coast of Newfoundland.¹¹⁰ According to German naval records, two U-boats were present in this area by November 10.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, the High Command accepted its loss of the Odenwald in a philosophic mood and decided that no formal protest should be offered in view of the fact that she was flying the American flag when captured.¹¹² By this time, November 13, German naval strategists were deeply concerned about the prospective revision of our neutrality act and invited Hitler to say what measures he planned to take in the event of such a change in American policy. But the Führer would

¹⁰⁹Ciano, Diaries, p. 398.

¹¹⁰Morison, The Battle of the Atlantic, p. 95.

¹¹¹Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Nov. 13, 1941, Annex 3, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, Vol. 2, p. 68.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 58.

venture no predictions,¹¹³ and Raeder therefore had to content himself with an elaboration of previous directives which emphasized the fact that German commanders were expected to take offensive action against United States forces as soon as the safety of their own vessels was threatened in any manner.¹¹⁴ This was apparently his last significant move with respect to general naval policy until after the United States entered the war.

V.

Between early October and mid-November, the posture of our relations with Japan had shifted from one of admitted strain to that of evident crisis. The tension created in July, August, and September by Tokyo's relentless aggression in Indo-China, the breaking off of the Hull-Nomura conversations, the freezing orders, Roosevelt's warning to Japan after the Atlantic Conference, the Japanese decisions of September 6, and the bootless talks which followed had been so exacerbated by the fall of Prince Konoye, misgivings in Chungking and London, and the new proposals communicated to Nomura on November 4 that the United States government now recognized the imminent danger of having to choose between war in the Pacific and concessions to Japan. But this fact

¹¹³Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer, Nov. 13, 1941, Fuehrer Conferences, 1941, Vol. 2, p. 58.

¹¹⁴Annex 2, ibid., p. 66.

had not been permitted to alter strategic decisions made long ago. It had always been assumed that war, if it came, would have to be waged in the Atlantic and Pacific simultaneously; it was still believed that the former constituted the more important theater; and the Atlantic retained its established priority in American plans.

While it kept our policy makers from losing sight of the main objective, this rigid adherence to the strategic design laid down in the Washington staff talks did not simplify all the decisions faced by the American government. For even though Marshall and Stark were expressing the view that the casus belli would arise if Japan overstepped the boundaries defined in the Singapore staff conversations, the impossibility of rounding out our defensive preparations in the southwestern Pacific before the spring of 1942 without weakening our Atlantic position was causing them, at the same time, to advocate a most restrained form of diplomacy. By the end of the first week in November, therefore, President Roosevelt was torn between concession and firmness--between the idea of a modus vivendi and a course of doing nothing until Japanese infringement upon a vital area produced the necessity and the opportunity for military action. By allowing the Pacific only what was not required for a strong hand in the Atlantic, the United States government had placed its Japanese policy in danger of falling between two stools.

On the other hand, the implementation of our supply agreement with Russia--as well as our continued, if somewhat ineffectual, labors with the affairs of Spain, France, and Finland--demonstrated that nothing was left undone with respect to the European theater, while our expanding naval operations in the Atlantic caused Admiral Stark to remark on November 7 that "whether the country knows it or not, we are at war."¹¹⁵ And ten days later, as the prospect for peace in the Orient grew more and more dubious, final revision of the neutrality act rounded out our program of non-belligerent activity on this side of the world by giving the American merchant marine a freedom which, in its own sphere, was roughly equivalent to that already enjoyed by the United States Navy.

¹¹⁵ Stark to Hart, Nov. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 109, pt. 16, p. 2456.

CHAPTER XII

END OF NON-BELLIGERENCY

I.

The anomalies in the situation which confronted United States policy makers at the beginning of November grew even more patent as the month progressed, for it was now clear that strength and diplomacy had ceased to revolve on the same pivot. American strength was oriented primarily toward Europe. The British and Russian aid programs had first call upon the productive facilities of the nation, while the Atlantic Ocean enjoyed strategic priority in all matters affecting the use of American naval forces. But in spite of the fact that the United States was already fighting an undeclared and limited war against Germany in the latter theater, the chief immediate threat of formal and unlimited hostilities lay in the problem of Japan. While the eastward thrust of American power maintained a steady pressure against the European Axis, therefore, a relatively unsupported American diplomacy looked westward to the seat of grimmer crisis; and conditions in the Pacific furnished the overwhelmingly dominant theme of American foreign relations throughout our final month as a non-belligerent.

The opening move in this last phase was Japan's. The third Imperial Conference since the beginning of July assembled in the Japanese capital on November 5 and straightway approved the proposals which Togo had sent to Nomura only the day before. In consequence, the latter was immediately directed to give Hull "Proposal A." At the same time, it was made clear to Nomura that "Proposal B" would be substituted for the first offer if progress were slow, that the Japanese government planned to have the United States obtain the consent of Great Britain and the Netherlands to any terms which demanded their acquiescence, and that a settlement, if reached at all, would have to be completed before November 25--although the Foreign Minister instructed the Ambassador to avoid giving the impression that a time limit had been set.¹

Likewise on November 5, Admiral Yamamoto, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet, issued a basic directive to fleet and task force commanders. Entitled "Combined Fleet Top Secret Operation Order No. 1," it stated that war was expected to break out with the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands.² It also gave plans for a great initial offensive extending from the

¹Togo to Nomura, Nov. 5, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 99.

²Japanese Combined Fleet Top Secret Operation Order No. 1, Nov. 5, 1941, ibid., Ex. 8, pt. 13, p. 433.

Hawaiian Islands to Malaya and included detailed arrangements for a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.³ Two days later, Yamamoto made known that December 8 was regarded as the approximate date when hostilities might be expected to begin.⁴ For the time being, of course, these directives were merely preparatory; like many operations plans issued by our own Navy, they would go into full effect only when the order for their execution was given. But they did lend an ominous significance to the Foreign Minister's deadline.

Having received his new instructions, Nomura proceeded to fulfill them without further delay. On November 7, he notified Hull that he had been directed to resume conversations with the American government. According to his analysis, he said, the main points at issue between Japan and the United States were three: (1) the problem of insuring equal opportunity in international trade, (2) Japan's obligations under the Tripartite Pact, and (3) the China question. Nomura thought that it would not be particularly difficult to reach agreement on the first two, but he admitted that the third presented greater difficulties. With this, he handed the Secretary of State a document which contained the formulas of "Proposal A" regarding nondiscrimination in international trade and the withdrawal of troops from

³Japanese Combined Fleet Top Secret Operation Order No. 1, Nov. 5, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 8, pt. 13, pp. 433-41; and U. S. Navy summary of Japanese submarine operations at Pearl Harbor attack, ibid., pp. 488-92.

⁴Japanese Combined Fleet Top Secret Operation Order No. 2, Nov. 7, 1941, ibid., p. 486.

China. Observing that the Ambassador's memorandum offered nothing on the Tripartite Pact, Hull remarked that a definite statement concerning the nature of Japan's obligations to Germany was in order; but Nomura only replied that he thought his government had said enough on this matter to render its position clear.⁵ Since Hull did not press the issue, the rest of the discussion was more or less general, consisting largely of Nomura's request for a personal interview with President Roosevelt and of the Secretary's reminder that he would undertake no formal negotiations without first consulting Great Britain, China, and The Netherlands.⁶

Although its ignorance of Yamamoto's directives to the Japanese Fleet concealed the urgency of the situation from the American government to some extent, Togo's messages to Nomura had been regularly intercepted; and the significance of the November 25 time limit was not entirely lost upon the State Department. In Cabinet meeting the same afternoon (November 7), Hull made it clear that a Japanese attack was to be expected at any time,⁷ while Roosevelt, as indicated above, solicited the views of those present as to whether

⁵Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 7, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 706-9; and Document presented by Nomura, Nov. 7, 1941, ibid., pp. 709-10.

⁶Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 7, 1941, ibid., pp. 708-9.

⁷Hull's testimony, Nov. 23, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 2, p. 429.

the American people would back him in an aggressive policy toward Japan. When Nomura saw the President on November 10, therefore, the atmosphere was one of mounting crisis.

Elaborating the proposals given to Hull three days earlier, the Ambassador explained that his government was ready to accept the principle of equality in international trade for the whole of Asia, including China, provided that the same principle could be extended to the rest of the world. Making it clear that Japan had nothing new to offer on the Tripartite Pact, he repeated his government's statement of September 27--that while her aim was peace, Japan had to be guided by considerations of self-defense in the meanwhile and would therefore undertake nothing except to reach an independent decision as to the proper interpretation of that treaty if the United States became involved in war with Germany. Regarding the third problem, he said that most of the Japanese forces in China would leave that country within two years of a Sino-Japanese peace settlement. However, troops stationed in certain parts of North China, in Inner Mongolia, and in Hainan would remain where they were "for a certain required duration" after the restoration of peace between China and Japan. Having made as much of Tokyo's offer as he possibly could, Nomura concluded his discourse by pointing out that the American, British, and Dutch freezing orders were regarded in Japan as an economic blockade, and by assuring his host that the proposals he had just submitted represented his government's "utmost effort"

to reach an understanding with the United States.⁸ The President's reply to this lucubration was general in the extreme. Although he expressed a hope that the new round of talks would have a favorable outcome and remarked that Japan and the United States ought to seek a modus vivendi, he offered no proposals of his own; nor did he take exception to anything the Ambassador had said.⁹

As though afraid that Nomura would not make his government's position clear enough in Washington, the Japanese Foreign Minister launched a secondary campaign in Tokyo at the same time. Meeting Grew on November 10, he informed the American Ambassador that the proposals recently submitted to the United States government embraced Tokyo's "maximum possible concessions" and assured him that feeling in Japan would "not tolerate further protracted delay in arriving at some conclusion." Revealing his thoughts on a possible settlement a little more fully, he added a hope that Great Britain, in view of her Pacific interests, would arrange her differences with Japan simultaneously. He then referred to Japan's population problem, stressed her need for growing quantities of raw materials, complained of the hardships which had arisen from the freezing orders, and hinted broadly that "continued economic pressure" might

⁸Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 10, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 715-17.

⁹Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 10, 1941, ibid., pp. 718-19.

eventually force Japan into "measures of self-defense."¹⁰
The need for haste was urged upon Grew once more two days
later.¹¹

Having failed in his effort to persuade Roosevelt that a new warning should be delivered to Japan, Churchill now did what he could to influence the situation in other ways. As he had predicted, he was unable to do much; but he again made it clear that the United States could depend upon the full coöperation of the British government no matter what course it elected to follow. On November 10, he rumbled defiance, publicly announcing that Great Britain would declare war on Japan "within the hour" if hostilities should commence between Japan and the United States.¹² But he also extended the olive branch. Acting on instructions from London, the British Ambassador to Japan, Sir Robert Craigie, saw Togo on November 11 to urge that the Japanese government make a supreme effort to reach an understanding with the United States. When the talks going on between Washington and Tokyo reached the point of actual negotiation, he added, Great Britain would likewise be prepared to seek an agreement.¹³

¹⁰Memorandum by Grew, Nov. 10, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 711-14.

¹¹Memorandum by Grew, Nov. 12, 1941, ibid., p. 720.

¹²New York Times, Nov. 11, 1941, p. 1, c. 1.

¹³Togo to Nomura, Nov. 11, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, pp. 117-18.

Meanwhile, Nomura did what he could to keep events from lagging in the American capital. On November 12, he pressed Hull for an early decision regarding Japan's latest proposals; but the Secretary of State put him off with the statement that they were being considered with all possible dispatch.¹⁴ Nomura obviously deprecated the growing strain between his country and the United States, and his agitation was further increased on November 14 when he received from Togo the English text he was to use in submitting "Proposal B" to the American government. Although he was not to present this "final" offer until further instructions arrived,¹⁵ he was more than a little taken aback at the speed with which his superiors were now moving. In a return cable, he strongly advised against such hasty action and requested that the November 25 time limit be extended by one or two months.¹⁶ But Togo promptly refused to alter the deadline and added to this refusal a cryptic but foreboding statement that "the fate of the Empire hangs by the slender thread of a few days."¹⁷ More dismayed than ever at the swift passage of

¹⁴Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 12, 1941, Department of State, Japan Vol. 2, p. 723.

¹⁵Togo to Nomura, Nov. 14, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, pp. 125-26.

¹⁶Nomura to Togo, Nov. 14, 1941, ibid., pp. 127-29.

¹⁷Togo to Nomura, Nov. 16, 1941, ibid., pp. 137-38.

time, Nomura endeavored to persuade Hull on November 15 that their talks had reached a stage where formal negotiations might begin at once; but the Secretary replied that it was impossible to think in such terms until he had had an opportunity to discuss the Japanese proposals with the British, the Dutch, and the Chinese.¹⁸ The same day, another grim note was sounded in Tokyo as instructions concerning "the order and method of destroying...code machines in the event of an emergency" were dispatched to Japanese missions abroad.¹⁹

At this juncture, Saburo Kurusu--who had left Japan November 5--arrived in Washington. As Togo had described it to Grew, his mission was to assist Nomura in reaching a settlement with the United States; but his real purpose, to all appearances, was to stiffen the latter's resolution and see that he maintained a sufficiently uncompromising attitude throughout the final stage of negotiations. In Nomura's company, Kurusu was received by Hull on November 17. While he stressed his government's desire for a peaceful understanding with the United States, he conveyed no

¹⁸Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 15, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 731-32.

¹⁹Togo to Nomura, Nov. 15, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 137.

further offers;²⁰ and his initial interview at the White House later the same day was equally unproductive.²¹

That evening, however, the two Japanese envoys "went to call on a certain Cabinet member."²² Presumably their host was Postmaster General Walker,²³ who had been interested in the unofficial talks which Bishop Walsh and Father Drought had carried on with the Japanese Embassy during the early months of 1941. At all events, this personage suggested that the United States might be willing to moderate its freezing order if Japan withdrew her troops from Indo-China as an earnest of her good intentions.²⁴ Nomura was still clutching at every straw which offered the faintest hope of peace; and when he and Kurusu saw Hull again the next morning, November 18, he repeated this proposal without substantial change. Even his less friendly colleague seemed to think well of the idea. Indeed, Kurusu gave it explicit support, although he explained his attitude with the

²⁰Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 17, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 738-39.

²¹Cf. Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 17, 1941, ibid., pp. 740-43.

²²Nomura to Togo, Nov. 18, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 154.

²³Cf. Pearl Harbor Report, p. 356.

²⁴Nomura to Togo, Nov. 18, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 154.

decidedly partial assertion that the embargo established by the freezing orders was chiefly responsible for the growth of a belligerent spirit in Japan. Needless to say, Hull was suspicious. While he did not reject Nomura's proposal out of hand, he obviously viewed it with distinct reservations. He emphasized the difficulty of changing American policy with respect to Japanese trade as long as Japan adhered to the Tripartite Pact and questioned his visitors as to just how much the Japanese government would alter its course in return for a relaxation of the American freezing order.²⁵ The subject was discussed again, however, on November 19; and after Nomura made it clear that the temporary arrangement which he proposed would bring no cessation in his efforts to negotiate a broader settlement of Japanese-American differences, the Secretary appeared to be in a more receptive frame of mind.²⁶

Although the American government, as Nomura's informant had suggested, was not averse to exploring the possibilities of a modus vivendi, Hull's coolness toward this particular overture was well-founded. For Nomura and Kurusu were acting entirely on their own responsibility in this matter; and thanks to "Magic," Hull understood the situation almost as clearly as they did. Both men sent cablegrams on

²⁵Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 18, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 749-50.

²⁶Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 19, 1941, ibid., pp. 751-52.

November 18 urging the Japanese Foreign Office to consider their solution and stressing their belief that it represented the only alternative to war,²⁷ but they learned almost at once that Tokyo was not interested in a modus vivendi. On November 19, the Japanese government betrayed its sense of growing crisis by informing its missions abroad of the signal which would be used to order the destruction of code materials in the event of emergency;²⁸ and the same day Togo refused to entertain the Nomura-Kurusu project except as it could be reconciled with instructions already given. To render it impossible for Nomura to misunderstand these instructions, moreover, the Foreign Minister directed him to proceed at once with "Proposal B."²⁹ Since a modus vivendi that fitted the program laid down by the Imperial Conference of November 5 was not exactly what the Ambassador had in mind, he protested this decision immediately. At the hazard of further rebuke, he expressed his conviction that war was inevitable unless a temporary agreement could be patched up and added the thought that long years of fighting in China had not

²⁷Kurusu to Togo, Nov. 18, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 151; and Nomura to Togo, Nov. 18, 1941, ibid., p. 152.

²⁸Togo to Nomura, Nov. 19, 1941, ibid., p. 154.

²⁹Togo to Nomura, Nov. 19, 1941, ibid., p. 155.

prepared Japan for a trial of strength with the United States.³⁰ But Togo's answer, received November 20, was peremptory: "Proposal B" should be handed to the American government without delay.³¹

II.

It was apparent that Tokyo had sounded a death knell over its envoys' scheme for a truce which might keep hostilities at bay until a wider settlement could be achieved. After the above exchange of views, Nomura and Kurusu had no choice but to comply with the Foreign Minister's orders; and Kurusu, who seems to have been less reluctant than his colleague, submitted "Proposal B" to Hull on November 20. Owing to the special nature of this formula, however, it was still possible to discuss a modus vivendi and to do it without much change of orientation. While "Proposal B" was much more favorable to Japan than the terms apparently contemplated by Nomura when he embraced the suggestion of Postmaster General Walker, it did envisage limited Japanese concessions in southeastern Asia in return for economic concessions on the part of the United States.

³⁰Nomura to Togo, Nov. 19, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 158.

³¹Togo to Nomura, Nov. 20, 1941, ibid., p. 160.

The draft presented November 20 called for a mutual undertaking by Japan and the United States against further troop movements into any part of southeastern Asia or the southern Pacific area with the exception of Indo-China. Japanese forces would remain in the latter country until the "restoration of peace between Japan and China or the establishment of an equitable peace in the Pacific," but troops stationed in the southern part of Indo-China would be immediately withdrawn to the northern part. In return, the United States should agree to cooperate with Japan in obtaining materials from the Dutch East Indies needed by both countries, to suspend its freezing order, to furnish Japan a "required quantity of oil," and to abstain from any activities which would hamper Japanese efforts to make peace with China.³² Since it omitted stipulations regarding the Tripartite Pact and equal commercial rights which Togo's cablegram of November 4 had mentioned for possible inclusion in the offer, this version was even narrower than the original and correspondingly further removed from American views. But its general subject matter was very close to that of Nomura's recent proposal for a temporary arrangement; and while it was completely unacceptable as it stood, it brought little immediate shift in the focus of discussion. Hull told Kurusu that his offer would be examined in a sympathetic

³²Draft proposal presented by Kurusu, Nov. 20, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 755-56.

spirit,³³ and the American government continued to study the possibilities of a modus vivendi for another six days.

The President himself furnished one basis for these deliberations. He had been toying with the idea of a modus vivendi for at least two weeks; and in an undated memorandum, apparently written about November 20, he now outlined a suggestion for a six-month truce which provided for a limited resumption of economic relations with Japan on condition that she agree not to invoke the Tripartite Pact even if the United States did enter the European war and on the further condition that she undertake to send no more troops to the Manchurian border, Indo-China, or southward generally. If Japan consented to these terms, the United States would also endeavor to pave the way for a general settlement of Oriental difficulties by encouraging China to open discussions with the Tokyo government. It would, however, take no further part in Sino-Japanese negotiations once they had started. With such a beginning, said Roosevelt, a definitive settlement of the questions at issue between Washington and Tokyo could be deferred for a time.³⁴ Combining these ideas with others supplied by the State Department's Far Eastern Division, Hull finished the initial draft of an American

³³Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 20, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 753.

³⁴Pencilled memorandum by Roosevelt (undated), Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, p. 1109.

counter-proposal on November 22. This document had two parts. The first and most crucial section offered terms for a possible modus vivendi. The second contained proposals which, in the American view, should underlie a permanent settlement.

The latter section did little but reiterate principles which the United States had consistently upheld for years;³⁵ but the proposals relating to a modus vivendi--since they envisaged coöperation and acquiescence on the part of Great Britain, China, The Netherlands, and Australia--required fuller discussion. Except that they called for a three-month rather than a six-month truce, these terms were in general accord with the President's recent memorandum. Based upon a reciprocal agreement by Japan and the United States to undertake no military advances into southeastern or northeastern Asia or into the northern or southern Pacific areas, they proposed that Japanese forces in Indo-China be immediately reduced to a total of 25,000 men. At the same time, American-Japanese trade would be restored to the extent made possible by the suspension of freezing orders in both countries, although such other export controls as were deemed necessary by either government in the interests of national defense would remain in effect. The United

³⁵Draft of "Outline of Proposed Basis for Agreement between the United States and Japan," Nov. 22, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1116-21.

States would further agree to encourage a similar resumption of economic relations with Japan on the part of Great Britain, The Netherlands, and Australia.³⁶

The same afternoon, November 22, Hull discussed the above program with Halifax; Loudon, the Dutch Minister; Richard G. Casey, the Australian Minister; and Hu Shih, the Chinese Ambassador. Although the first three raised no objections, Hu Shih was doubtful--especially when Hull made it clear that the proposed modus vivendi did not rule out further Japanese advances in China proper. But even the Chinese Ambassador's criticism appears to have been mild,³⁷ and nothing happened during this conference to suggest that Hull ought to relinquish the project. While the four envoys awaited specific instructions from their various governments, however, the Secretary could do little except study possible changes in his offer.

In an interview with Nomura and Kurusu later the same day, Hull explained that he was still unable to reply to the Japanese proposal of November 20 but hinted that a modus vivendi was not out of the question.³⁸ Since he had in the

³⁶Draft of proposed modus vivendi, Nov. 22, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1113-15.

³⁷Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 22, 1941, ibid., pp. 1122-23.

³⁸Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 22, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 757.

meanwhile received instructions from Tokyo extending the November 25 time limit to November 29,³⁹ Nomura expressed his readiness to wait a few more days.⁴⁰ Hull had no further direct contact with the Japanese representatives until November 26; but his discussions with Halifax, Loudon, Casey, and Hu Shih were resumed November 24. On that date, he handed them a slightly revised draft of his proposal, the only notable change being the inclusion of more detailed arrangements for the resumption of American-Japanese trade.⁴¹ This time, however, the Chinese Ambassador was much more intractable. Although Hull dwelled on Marshall's view that the presence of 25,000 Japanese troops in Indo-China would constitute no threat to Chiang Kai-shek, Hu Shih strenuously objected to the retention of more than 5,000 soldiers in that country. The others seemed to be more or less apathetic toward the modus vivendi; and while every one of them appeared to accept Hull's argument that all interested governments stood to gain from a three-month truce, the Secretary of State gathered the impression that the four envoys were unanimous in "thinking of the advantages to be derived without any particular thought of what we should pay for them,

³⁹Togo to Nomura, Nov. 22, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 165.

⁴⁰Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 22, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 761.

⁴¹Draft of proposed modus vivendi, Nov. 24, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1127-31.

if anything." His annoyance increased when he discovered that the Netherlands government alone had thus far given the modus vivendi its formal approval. Hull felt keenly that he was not receiving the coöperation which he had a right to expect, and he brought the meeting to a close by telling his visitors that he was not sure whether he would present the offer to Japan after all considering the difficulty he had encountered in learning the views of their respective governments.⁴² But the project was not yet abandoned; for Roosevelt, at Hull's suggestion, sent Churchill a message that evening which urged the Prime Minister to give the proposed truce his sympathetic study.⁴³

A third draft of the modus vivendi was ready by the following day, November 25. This time, the section which placed a limit of 25,000 on the number of Japanese troops to remain in Indo-China was altered to provide that Japanese forces in that country should be reduced to the total present there on July 26, 1941, the date when the full-scale occupation of Indo-China had begun.⁴⁴ But in spite of their concern over the apparent reluctance of Great Britain, China, and Australia to sanction the project, it was now evident that

⁴²Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 24, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1143-46.

⁴³Roosevelt to Churchill (through Winant), Nov. 24, 1941, ibid., pp. 1139-41.

⁴⁴Draft of proposed modus vivendi, Nov. 25, 1941, ibid., pp. 1150-54.

Roosevelt and Hull were fast losing whatever faith they might have had in the idea. Indeed, the President's message to Churchill the previous evening had stated his belief that Japan would decline the modus vivendi in any event; and in a meeting with Stimson, Knox, Marshall, and Stark held at noon on November 25, Hull expressed the opinion that it was virtually impossible to reach agreement with Japan,⁴⁵ while Roosevelt--according to Stimson--declared that the real question was "how we should maneuver them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves."⁴⁶

These misgivings were further stimulated by advices from London and Chungking. In a memorandum which reached Washington the same day, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden treated the modus vivendi with unconcealed hostility. Although he was kind enough to give Hull leave to do as he thought best, Eden expressed the view that the Japanese proposals of November 20 should be looked upon "as the opening movement in a process of bargaining," suggested that any American counter-proposal should demand total Japanese withdrawal from Indo-China and immediate suspension of further advances in China as well as assurances covering

⁴⁵Hull to Roberts, Dec. 30, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 174, pt. 20, p. 4113.

⁴⁶Stimson's notes, Nov. 25, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 11, p. 5433.

the rest of Asia and the southern Pacific, and urged that resumption of trade between the United States and Japan should include no commerce in oil.⁴⁷ Hu Shih's statements had afforded ample reason to suppose that China's official reaction would be even less favorable, and this expectation was more than borne out. A somewhat violent message from Chiang Kai-shek delivered through Stimson on November 25 by T. V. Soong stated in the most unqualified terms that any relaxation of American freezing orders which was not preceded by an agreement calling for the withdrawal of Japanese armies from China would convince the Chinese people that they had been abandoned, would ruin morale, and would bring about the collapse of Chinese resistance.⁴⁸ That evening, Chinese Ambassador Hu Shih visited the Secretary of State in an effort to explain the above cablegram; and despite his own waning affection for the modus vivendi, Hull made no attempt to conceal his irritation with the Chinese attitude. In a placatory tone, the Ambassador explained that the Generalissimo did not comprehend the full relationship between Japanese policy and the general world situation and undertook to secure some modification of his

⁴⁷Memorandum presented by Halifax, Nov. 25, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1164-67.

⁴⁸Copy of message from Chiang Kai-shek to T. V. Soong delivered to Stimson on Nov. 25, 1941, ibid., p. 1161.

government's point of view.⁴⁹ But Eden's note had already made it clear that Chiang was not alone in his worries; and Churchill now voiced much the same fears in his answer to Roosevelt's cablegram of November 24.⁵⁰ The last message reached Washington the morning of November 26, and it was evident by this time that the projected truce had scarcely a single friend.

According to his own statement, Hull decided to abandon the modus vivendi on the night of November 25, even before the above message from Churchill was received. As he later explained,

The slight prospect of Japan's agreeing to the modus vivendi ...did not warrant assuming the risks involved in proceeding with it, especially the risk of collapse of Chinese morale and resistance, and even of disintegration in China.⁵¹

The major factors in his decision, therefore, were the respective attitudes of Japan and China; and while he may have given too much weight to Chiang's fulminations, the Secretary's belief that Japan would not accept his terms in any event was solidly based in knowledge derived from messages intercepted in transmission between the Foreign Office in Tokyo and the Japanese Embassy in Washington. Thanks to

⁴⁹Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 25, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1167-69.

⁵⁰Churchill to Roosevelt (through Winant), Nov. 26, 1941, ibid., Ex. 23, pt. 14, p. 1300.

⁵¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1081.

these intercepts, the American government had never had much reason to cherish delusions with regard to the ultimate nature of "Proposal B;" and another bit of instruction received by Nomura on November 24 was enough to turn belief into certainty. For Togo in this message warned the Ambassador that the United States could satisfy Japan only by accepting every point contained in his offer of November 20 and emphasized the fact that one of these points called for cessation of American aid to China--⁵² a guarantee which Hull's project did not offer even indirectly.

Having concluded that a modus vivendi was no longer feasible, the Secretary of State approached President Roosevelt on November 26 with a recommendation that it be dropped altogether and that only the second section of the draft counter-proposal, the part which set forth American ideas as to the proper bases for a general settlement, be handed to Japan in reply to her note of November 20.⁵³ Being thoroughly familiar with the unpromising status of the modus vivendi and somewhat irritated by new reports that a large Japanese convoy was heading south from Shanghai-- a circumstance which he read as an indication of Tokyo's bad faith and relentlessly aggressive designs--the President

⁵²Togo to Nomura, Nov. 24, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 172.

⁵³Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 26, 1941, ibid., Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1176-77.

seems to have yielded without much argument.⁵⁴ Late that afternoon, in consequence, Hull received Nomura and Kurusu at the State Department and handed them the reply for which they had waited six days. Containing no trace of the modus vivendi, this document, as a first step, proposed the formation of a multilateral non-aggression pact which would include the United States, Japan, the British Empire, China, the Netherlands, Russia, and Thailand. Next, all interested governments should join in an agreement providing for the territorial integrity of Indo-China. In the third place, Japan should withdraw all her forces from China and Indo-China. So far as the future of China was concerned, both Japan and the United States should agree to support no Chinese regime except the Nationalist government, give up their extraterritorial rights in that country, and endeavor to persuade other governments to do likewise. With regard to each other, Japan and the United States should suspend their respective freezing orders, negotiate a new commercial treaty, and enter an agreement for stabilization of the dollar-yen rate. It was also provided, in obvious reference to the Tripartite Pact, that neither government should be a party to any agreement with a third power which conflicted in any way with the establishment of peace in the Pacific.⁵⁵

⁵⁴Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1082.

⁵⁵Document presented by Hull to Nomura, Nov. 26, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 768-70.

Receiving this document with long faces, the Japanese envoys agreed to transmit its contents to Tokyo; and the interview closed after some further discussion of its numerous points.⁵⁶

The session had been relatively quiet. But it was obviously the calm of resignation, not agreement; and Hull himself regarded the proposal as little more than a gesture. The next morning, November 27, he informed Stimson that negotiations had, in effect, been broken off. "I have washed my hands of it," he added, "and it is now in the hands of you and Knox--the Army and the Navy."⁵⁷ Nor did military and naval leaders disagree with him. The same day, Marshall dispatched a message to Manila informing MacArthur that, while he was to let Japan make the first overt move, he was to be guided by the fact that negotiations with Japan appeared to have been terminated.⁵⁸ Stark weighed the situation in even stronger terms. In a dispatch which characterized itself as a "war warning," the Chief of Naval Operations apprised Kimmel at Pearl Harbor that an aggressive move against the Philippines, Thailand, the Isthmus of Kra, or Borneo was to be expected within the next few days and ordered him to begin

⁵⁶Memorandum by Ballantine, Nov. 26, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 764-67.

⁵⁷Stimson's notes, Nov. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 11, pp. 5434-35.

⁵⁸Marshall to MacArthur, Nov. 27, 1941, ibid., Ex. 32, pt. 14, p. 1329.

defensive deployment of his forces in accordance with plans set forth in Rainbow No. 5.⁵⁹

III.

Japan was not the only burden carried by the State Department in our final month as a non-belligerent; for if other concerns grew relatively smaller as the Far Eastern question expanded over the center of the stage, they were by no means lost to consciousness. Whatever happened in the Pacific, many of our European policies still needed daily treatment; and these received their final pre-war corrections just before and immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Owing to its bauxite mines--which furnished about 60 percent of all the bauxite required by the American aluminum industry--as well as its location on the northern coast of South America, Dutch Guiana had been of special concern to the United States for a good while. In August 1941, the State Department had begun to take serious note of reports that persons with supposedly German connections were active on the Brazilian border of the Dutch colony only about 270 miles from the vital mines. At the beginning of September, in a note relating to a proposed visit by Queen Wilhelmina to the United States, the State Department had called Her Majesty's attention to this matter and suggested that the

⁵⁹Stark to Kimmel, Nov. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 37, pt. 14, p. 1406.

American government was willing to assume protective custody of Dutch Guiana in accordance with the inter-American agreement made at Havana in July 1940. The Queen had agreed to this proposal on September 5; Brazilian cooperation had been promised a short time later;⁶⁰ and finally, after much delay, an American occupation force landed in the Dutch colony on November 24.⁶¹

A similar leisureliness continued to mark our relations with Spain, but these produced no advance half as tangible. The more or less serious study which the State Department had been giving to the question of a commercial agreement with Franco since early October finally resulted in a definite proposal at the end of November. But the severity of this offer amply reflected the American government's increasingly close-fisted attitude toward Spain; for while the proposed agreement resembled the Murphy-Weygand accord in some ways, it was even more rigorous in others. So far as oil was concerned, the United States was prepared to supply just enough "to meet Spain's requirements for transportation and other essentials;" and to insure that it would not be employed "in any manner useful to Italy or Germany, directly or indirectly," its distribution was to be supervised by

⁶⁰Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1051.

⁶¹Press release, Nov. 24, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 29, 1941), p. 425.

American agents with free access to all facilities for receiving, shipping, storing, and refining oil. If she accepted these provisions, Spain would be allowed to buy other articles that were plentiful in the American market; and the United States would agree to furnish her enough scarce and essential goods to maintain economic activity at a restricted level. In return, Spain was to supply the United States with quantities of such materials as wolfram, cork, mercury, zinc, lead, fluorspar, and various roots and drugs. So far as possible, moreover, she was to deliver these products in her own ships.⁶²

The proposal was handed to Cárdenas, in Washington, on November 29. Although he managed to obtain certain changes in phraseology, the Spanish Ambassador was unable to secure any alterations in substance; and as week followed week without bringing a reply from Madrid, it became evident that Franco was not yet prepared to do business on such unfavorable terms. Nevertheless, Washington stood firm. While the State Department concentrated on other things, Spanish tankers were permitted to lie in our ports waiting for oil that did not come; and our other commercial relations with Spain decayed steadily.⁶³ Since Great Britain opposed this attitude, a limited exchange was permitted to begin

⁶²Feis, The Spanish Story, p. 149.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 151-52.

once more in January.⁶⁴ But the United States still seemed to be as far as ever from a permanent wartime understanding with the Franco government.

The crisis which had been brewing at Vichy in late October and early November finally broke on November 18, when Pétain informed Leahy that Weygand had been dismissed from his post in North Africa.⁶⁵ The following day, Welles told Henry-Haye, Vichy's Ambassador in Washington, that the General's removal was considered an indication of growing Nazi influence in North Africa and presented the United States with the necessity of making a "complete change" in its policy toward France.⁶⁶ In consequence, it was announced on November 20 that the North African aid program would cease while our entire French policy underwent review.⁶⁷

But second thoughts were already beginning to make their appearance. From his post at Algiers, Murphy urged on November 19 that all action be deferred until the significance of this development could be more thoroughly understood.⁶⁸ Even

⁶⁴ Feis, The Spanish Story, pp. 152-53.

⁶⁵ Excerpt from Leahy's telegram, Nov. 18, 1941, in Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 193.

⁶⁶ Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1043; and excerpt from Memorandum by Welles, Nov. 19, 1941, ibid, p. 196.

⁶⁷ Press release, Nov. 20, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 22, 1941), p. 407.

⁶⁸ Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 195.

Leahy, who was personally disappointed in Pétain for his surrender, advised no positive break.⁶⁹ Two days later, November 21, Weygand wrote Murphy a message of assurance that French policy had not been altered by his own departure from the scene. "Just suppose that I have passed to the other world," he said, and added his fervent hope that the "union" between France and the United States would continue.⁷⁰ These points of view found their echo in a memorandum prepared by the State Department's Division of European Affairs on November 28. Pointing out that the winter stabilization of the Russian front and the new British advance into Libya augmented the likelihood of a German move against French North Africa, this document argued that the Murphy-Weygand accord had already been the means of placing a good deal of valuable intelligence before the American government and advised that relations with Vichy, barring an overt act which clearly nullified Pétain's assurances, should not be broken.⁷¹

The matter was kept under consideration for another week. By that time, it was evident that nothing could be gained from hasty action; and Leahy was instructed on

⁶⁹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 195.

⁷⁰Excerpt from Weygand's telegram to Murphy, Nov. 21, 1941, ibid., p. 195.

⁷¹Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, pp. 196-97.

December 6 to tell Pétain that the United States might resume its North African program if he would give new assurances concerning the French Fleet and colonies and offer a verbal guarantee that Weygand's dismissal heralded no change in his North African policy.⁷² This message was handed to Pétain and Darlan on December 11; the necessary assurances were returned one day later; and the Murphy-Weygand accord went back into effect at once.⁷³

As a matter of fact, the real crisis was already several days past. Accompanied by Darlan and General Alphonse Juin--who had been selected by the Germans to take Weygand's place in North Africa--Pétain had met Goering at St. Florentin on December 1; and the somewhat tempestuous interview that followed had largely dissipated whatever plans for new collaboration Darlan might have cherished on the eve of Weygand's retirement.⁷⁴ In the sequel, moreover, General Juin followed his predecessor's course so faithfully that Washington had little reason for complaint.⁷⁵

Although Finland's reply (November 11) to his somewhat peremptory communication of October 27 ended Hull's direct

⁷²Langer, Our Vichy Gamble, p. 200.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 200-201.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 198-99.

⁷⁵Cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1045.

efforts to secure that country's withdrawal from the Russian war, the immediate Finnish question was not even temporarily settled until almost the day of Pearl Harbor. At ceremonies held in Berlin on November 25, Finland--along with Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Rumania, Slovakia, and the Wang Ching-wei government of China--was admitted to membership in the Anti-Comintern bloc.⁷⁶ In a press conference three days later, Hull drew unfavorable attention to this event. At the same time, he made his first public statement regarding the Finnish note of November 11, observing that this communication did not make it clear to just what extent Finnish participation in the war grew out of a joint Finnish-German military policy "intended to inflict damage on Great Britain and her Allies" or just how far this threatened the interests of the United States. Moreover, he declared, Finland's every act since dispatching the note had tended to make him believe that her military coöperation with Germany was complete.⁷⁷

Only by breaking off diplomatic relations with Helsinki could the American government go much further than this; and in spite of the fact that our relations with Finland were not broken, Hull apparently made no effort to keep the peace between Finland and Great Britain. The two countries had

⁷⁶ Wuorinen (ed.), Finland and World War II, p. 118.

⁷⁷ Report of press conference, Nov. 28, 1941, Department of State, Bulletin, Vol. 5 (Nov. 29, 1941), pp. 434-35.

not maintained diplomatic relations since July 28, and Halifax told Hull in late October that Russia wanted Britain to go the whole distance by declaring war. The Secretary was asked for his opinion as to what the British government should do, but he refused to offer any guidance in the matter.⁷⁸ There was no action for another month. Then, on November 28, Great Britain transmitted an ultimatum to Finland through the United States Minister in Helsinki stating that she would have no alternative but a declaration of war unless the Finnish government ceased its military operations by December 5.⁷⁹ The next day, Churchill forwarded a personal letter of explanation through the same channel to Marshal Mannerheim, the Finnish Commander-in-Chief.⁸⁰ Mannerheim's reply to Churchill was delivered on December 2, that of the Finnish Foreign Office on December 4. While both notes indicated that Finland had nearly reached her objectives and was about to halt her advance, neither constituted a direct acceptance of the British demand. Branding the Finnish attitude as unsatisfactory, Great Britain declared war on December 6.⁸¹

⁷⁸Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 980.

⁷⁹Wuorinen (ed.), Finland and World War II, p. 134.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 134-35.

⁸¹Idem.

In the meanwhile, Russia had refused to stop talking about peace terms. Churchill had been troubled by Stalin's attitude in this matter virtually from the beginning of Anglo-Russian coöperation and had communicated his fears to the American government, which still declined to recognize the Soviet Union's annexation of the Baltic republics. As long as the German advance continued unchecked and the all-important supply arrangements were being worked out, however, British and American representatives had managed to evade any serious consideration of the issue. But when Hitler's armies began to slow down, Russia grew more insistent; and her wants were not modest. Stalin made it clear that he desired agreements covering such matters as the future status of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia; the post-war boundaries of Finland, Poland, and Rumania; and the restoration of the Sudetenland to Czechoslovakia. When the Red Army recaptured the important city of Rostov on November 29, Soviet demands could be ignored no longer; and Anthony Eden decided to make a special trip to Moscow without further delay "to smooth out relations in general, to explore the possibility of some kind of political agreement, and to discuss certain postwar problems."⁸²

Roosevelt and Hull considered this an appropriate occasion for clearing up a number of obscurities in American-

⁸² Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 401; cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, p. 1165.

Soviet relations. Accordingly, Winant was instructed on December 5 to give Eden the following verbal explanation of United States policy for use in his talks at Moscow: In the view of the American government, the speed with which it had concluded supply agreements for the benefit of the Soviet Union gave ample proof of its sincere devotion to the Russian cause. It would remain faithful to these commitments until victory was won. So far as the post-war situation was concerned, however, United States policy was set forth in the Atlantic Charter. To endeavor to reach a more specific understanding at this time would be "unfortunate." Above all, the United States could enter no secret accords.⁸³

Eden received this statement the morning of December 6 and left for Russia the next day, after hearing the first reports of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.⁸⁴ Since the United States was now a belligerent, he apparently cited Roosevelt's position with considerable freedom at Moscow. But nothing did much good. Although Eden declined on behalf of the British government to recognize the annexation of eastern Poland and the Baltic states, Stalin would abandon neither these demands nor any of a dozen others; and by the end of the month, when the British Foreign Minister returned to London, he had more than sufficient evidence that

⁸³Hull to Winant, Dec. 5, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 166, pt. 19, pp. 3648-51.

⁸⁴Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 439, 402.

coöperation with Russia, even in wartime, might entail certain difficulties.⁸⁵

IV.

Although they had not been able to give the modus vivendi more than a highly qualified support while it was still under consideration, both the Australian Minister and the British Ambassador were inclined to favor the project and both revealed strong misgivings as soon as they learned of its abandonment. Casey saw Hull on November 27 to inquire whether the idea had been permanently discarded. On being informed that the Secretary of State had no current plans for reviving it, he wanted to know the reasons for this decision and was told that the studious reserve of Eden and Churchill, added to the grim opposition of Chiang Kai-shek, had convinced the American government that the plan was not feasible.⁸⁶ With a similar purpose, Halifax called on Welles the same day and received an almost identical answer.⁸⁷ When the British Ambassador took up the matter with Hull on November 29, he drew a response which was even more blunt; for the Secretary told him, in effect, that

⁸⁵Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 451; cf. Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 1166-67.

⁸⁶Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1182-83.

⁸⁷Memorandum by Welles, Nov. 27, 1941, ibid., p. 1180.

Churchill's seemingly careless adherence to the views of Chungking had greatly weakened the American position and made it almost impossible to deal with Chinese objections.⁸⁸ Loudon also appeared at the State Department to express his concern. But since he was able to point out that his government had accorded the modus vivendi its unequivocal support, his reception was a good deal friendlier.⁸⁹

Notwithstanding this tendency to engage in recrimination, however, Hull showed no sign of going back to the modus vivendi. On November 29, he declined Casey's proposal that Australia assume the role of mediator between Japan and the United States;⁹⁰ and when Casey and Halifax urged him jointly on November 30 to do his best to maintain relations with Japan for the time being, he gave them little encouragement.⁹¹ Nor did the British government seem to favor returning to a softer policy; for despite the implications of Halifax's attitude, Churchill was busily resurrecting the advice he had

⁸⁸Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 29, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 18, pt. 14, pp. 1194-96.

⁸⁹Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 27, 1941, ibid., pt. 4, p. 1694.

⁹⁰Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 29, 1941, ibid., Ex. 168, pt. 19, p. 3689.

⁹¹Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 30, 1941, ibid., p. 3690.

given first at the Atlantic Conference and again on November 5. What he wanted was an ultimatum. In a message dispatched to Roosevelt on November 30, he urged the President to issue a clear warning that any further act of aggression by Japan would "lead immediately to the gravest consequences" and expressed the willingness of the British government either to participate in such a declaration or to make a similar one of its own.⁹²

Nomura and Kurusu called on Hull December 1 to assure him that their government's reply to his proposals of November 26 would be delivered in a few days and to repeat that Japan's offer to withdraw her troops from southern Indo-China was still open. But the Secretary confronted his visitors with reports of new troop movements into the latter country and expressed scant optimism as to the future course of American-Japanese relations.⁹³ Even here he was concealing many of his thoughts, for a succession of Japanese diplomatic messages intercepted over the past three days had not only confirmed his belief that an understanding with Japan was out of the question but had also revealed that matters were rapidly shaping up to a climax. Among these was a cablegram received by Nomura on November 28 in which Togo reported that the American note of November 26 could not be

⁹²Churchill to Roosevelt (through Winant), Nov. 30, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 24, pt.14, p. 1301.

⁹³Memorandum by Ballantine, Dec. 1, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 772-73.

accepted and advised that negotiations would be "de facto ruptured" when he sent more complete instructions in two or three days.⁹⁴ Messages intercepted in transmission between Tokyo and Berlin pointed to the same grim conclusion. From these it was known that Ribbentrop had urged Oshima on November 29 that the time was ripe for Japan to declare war on the United States,⁹⁵ and it was also known that Tokyo's reaction had been distinctly favorable. Replying to Oshima the next day, Togo had explained that Japan's conversations with the United States "now stand ruptured;" and he had directed the Ambassador to inform the German government of the "extreme danger" that war might "suddenly break out between the Anglo-Saxon nations and Japan through some clash of arms," adding that such an event might come "quicker than anyone dreams." He had even indicated the probable direction of attack by observing that, while Japan's policy toward Russia was still guided by the decisions of July 2, it was to her advantage to "stress the south" for the time being.⁹⁶

That Japan was heading south could not be doubted. Southeastern Asia and the southwestern Pacific had been the main focus of her attention ever since the disasters of June

⁹⁴Togo to Nomura, Nov. 28, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 195.

⁹⁵Oshima to Togo, Nov. 29, 1941, ibid., p. 200.

⁹⁶Togo to Oshima, Nov. 30, 1941, ibid., p. 204.

1940 had sapped the defenses of those regions by forcing the Dutch government into exile, destroying the resistance of France, and obliging Great Britain to concentrate on the problem of immediate survival. The cessation of imports from the United States in July 1941 had greatly increased the urgency of her designs by confronting her with a choice between relinquishing her war economy altogether or seizing those areas for their rubber, oil, foodstuffs, and other raw materials at a comparatively early date. Japan's consciousness of this dilemma had been implicit throughout her recent negotiations with the United States, and all available data on her preparations indicated that her major effort at the beginning of hostilities would be directed southward--where both need and opportunity seemed greatest. Nor were these expectations disappointed in the event. But another "clash of arms" was even nearer realization when Togo sent his warning to Berlin on November 30.

The operation orders issued to the Japanese Combined Fleet by Admiral Yamamoto on November 5 and November 7 had been followed by speedy action. Sometime within the next few days, fleet units assigned to the Pearl Harbor striking force were ordered to assemble in Hitokappu Bay, a remote anchorage off Etorofu, largest of the Kurile Islands. The rendezvous was completed in great secrecy by November 22. An advance force consisting of 20 large submarines, 5 midget submarines, and 8 supply vessels had already left for Hawaii on November 18-20, proceeding directly from Kure and Yokosuka

on the Inland Sea. Now, after final preparations had been made, the main task force--commanded by Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo and including 6 carriers, 2 battleships, and 2 cruisers as well as 9 destroyers, 3 submarines, and a supply train--steamed out of Hitokappu Bay the morning of November 26 (November 25, American time) and headed into the east.⁹⁷ This, of course, was the significance of the initial time limit set by Togo upon the final negotiations in Washington. Its extension to November 29 seems to have been prompted by the belief that orders could still be countermanded and the task force returned to Japan with no harm done if the United States accepted "Proposal B" in advance of that date. But the ultimate deadline, November 29, was already past when Togo rendered his cryptic explanation to Oshima. On December 1, the Japanese Cabinet approved Tojo's decision to begin hostilities one week later, thus confirming the date mentioned in Yamamoto's order of November 7. As a result, Nagumo was directed by radio the next day to proceed with his attack plans and strike the United States Pacific Fleet in its anchorage at Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 8 (December 7, American time).⁹⁸

Unfortunately, however, the secret was perfectly kept. Normal intelligence activities failed to uncover the move;

⁹⁷Pearl Harbor Report, pp. 56-57; also Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, pp. 88-89, 95.

⁹⁸Report from MacArthur in Tokyo on Japanese plans for Pearl Harbor attack, Dec. 13, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 8-D, pt. 13, p. 426.

and since no hint of it was entrusted to the Japanese diplomatic code, even the usually fruitful intercepts did not warn the American government. Moderately heavy weather and a good deal of fog also helped the Japanese escape detection, while Kimmel's unaccountable failure to maintain distant aircraft reconnaissance north and west of the Hawaiian Islands virtually guaranteed a surprise.⁹⁹

On the other hand, Washington continued to receive news of specific Japanese preparations for large-scale activities in the south. The effect of this was augmented by persuasions growing out of what might be termed the psychological atmosphere. The administration was still acutely sensitive to American public opinion and feared that even new aggressions might not render it easy to secure a declaration of war against Japan unless these involved a direct attack upon United States territory. Believing that Japan would launch her drive in the manner least calculated to provoke our intervention, American policy makers--civilian and military alike--were convinced that her first overt move would be directed at southeastern Asia and the Indies; for there she could, if she chose, obtain the raw materials she needed and consolidate her position for a long war without invading a single American possession. This concept was so firmly established in late November and early December that it

⁹⁹Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 92; and Pearl Harbor Report, pp. 114-17.

ruled out any serious thought of an earlier or simultaneous attack elsewhere.¹⁰⁰ Immediate strategic planning with reference to Japan, therefore, was confined almost entirely to the Far East; and little attempt was made to look beyond the Marshall-Stark memorandum of November 25. On November 27, the two repeated their advice in somewhat different form. They recommended that until the Philippines could be completely reinforced military action should be considered "only if Japan attacks or directly threatens United States, British or Dutch territory," and urged that arrangements be made with the British and Dutch to issue a joint warning against any threatened invasion of Thailand.¹⁰¹ Delivered to the President on November 28, this memorandum gave prevailing calculations one more support just nine days before the zero hour.

On the other hand, this preoccupation with the Far East was not allowed to change the basic war plan. Under Rainbow No. 5, the Pacific Fleet was to confine its efforts to a zone which did not extend westward of 140 degrees East Longitude except in the neighborhood of Japan; and despite the multitude of tasks assigned to Kimmel's command in its own area, its support of our Asiatic forces would clearly be more or

¹⁰⁰Cf. Pearl Harbor Report, p. 198; also Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 390.

¹⁰¹Memorandum by Marshall and Stark, Nov. 27, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 17, pt. 14, p. 1083.

less indirect for a good while.¹⁰² However we became involved in hostilities--whether through voluntary aid to the British and Dutch or through the stark necessity of resisting an attack on the Philippines--our Far Eastern forces were expected to carry the brunt of the war during its initial stages; and this made it doubly necessary to round out our defensive arrangements in that area as quickly as possible.

On November 20, Admiral Hart finally got an answer to his suggestion of October 27 that the Asiatic Fleet be concentrated in Manila Bay to assist the Army's defense of Luzon. It was a brusque refusal, however; and Hart immediately started his deployment southward.¹⁰³ This rendered the question of Anglo-American naval cooperation more urgent than ever; but he still had to wait another two weeks before conferring with Admiral Phillips, the new British commander at Singapore. When Phillips finally reached Manila on December 5, time was running short. In a series of talks which lasted a bare twenty-four hours, the two concluded that Singapore was indefensible and that Manila would constitute a much more useful base for offensive operations against a Japanese drive into the southwestern Pacific. But Manila's

¹⁰²Sec. 5, ch. 1, pt. 5, W. L. P.--46, Navy Basic War Plan (Rainbow No. 5), Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 129, pt. 18, p. 2912; also sec. 1, ch. 2, pt. 3, ibid., pp. 2889-90.

¹⁰³Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 154.

port facilities admittedly required expansion; and since Phillips, in any event, lacked the necessary air power to cover a shift of his larger units from Malaya to the Philippines it was decided that British strength should not be transferred to Manila before April 1942. As a result, Hart and Phillips did not change the initial disposition of their main forces; and their only agreement for immediate action was an undertaking by Hart to send four destroyers to join the other's command.¹⁰⁴

In the meanwhile, the Army did what it could. Still far short of the 200,000 total envisaged when defense concepts had been changed in late July, MacArthur's force was in a pitiable state indeed. Substantial reinforcements were on the way. One group was at sea when Japan struck, and 21,000 more troops were about to leave the United States.¹⁰⁵ But that was not the same as being in the Philippines. When General Wainwright, having completed his duties with the Philippine Division, left Fort McKinley and journeyed north to take command of four new divisions mobilizing in central Luzon, our land preparations for defending the islands had advanced about as far as they were destined to advance. This was November 28.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 157; and Hart to Stark, Dec. 7, 1941 (December 6, Washington time), Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 3, pp. 1933-35. The four destroyers involved had already joined the southward movement and were then at Balikpapan, in Borneo.

¹⁰⁵ Morison, The Rising Sun in the Pacific, p. 74.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Wainwright, General Wainwright's Story, pp. 13-14.

Likewise on November 28, that group known unofficially as the "War Council"--Roosevelt, Hull, Stimson, Knox, Marshall, and Stark--met for further study of military policy and possible diplomatic action. Going now somewhat beyond the question of a warning to Japan on behalf of the Siamese, they agreed that the United States would have to join Great Britain in resisting any Japanese move against that part of Thailand which constituted the Isthmus of Kra. It was also decided that Roosevelt should endeavor to postpone hostilities by sending a personal appeal to Emperor Hirohito and by delivering a public warning to Japan in the form of a message to Congress.¹⁰⁷ Drafts of both messages were prepared in the State Department at once and submitted to Roosevelt the following day. But as Hull now suggested that the message to Congress be postponed until "the last stage of our relations, relating to actual hostilities, has been reached," action was deferred on both counts.¹⁰⁸

Diplomatic efforts did not cease entirely, however. Intelligence reports left no doubt that Japan was increasing her forces in southern Indo-China;¹⁰⁹ and following the

¹⁰⁷Stimson's notes, Nov. 28, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 11, p. 5436.

¹⁰⁸Memorandum by Hull, Nov. 29, 1941, ibid., Ex. 19, pt. 14, p. 1203; also attached drafts of proposed message to Congress and proposed message to the Emperor of Japan, ibid., pp. 1204-28.

¹⁰⁹Cf. Memorandum by Stimson, Nov. 26, 1941, ibid., Ex. 98, pt. 16, p. 2014; Memorandum presented by Halifax, Nov. 30, 1941, ibid., Ex. 21, pt. 14, pp. 1251-52; and Bangkok to Tokyo, Nov. 29, 1941, ibid., Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 203.

President's instructions, Welles asked Kurusu on December 2 to explain this activity. But no explanation was forthcoming. Kurusu stated that he did not know just what his government had in mind.¹¹⁰ And although Welles' inquiry was duly referred to Tokyo, the Foreign Office's reply, which reached Washington on December 5, told little more. Completely ignoring the question of southern Indo-China, the Japanese government merely admitted that it was reinforcing its troops in the northern part of that country and explained that this was being done to counteract certain Chinese troop movements on the other side of the border.¹¹¹

Much less difficult to assess were a number of intercepted Japanese messages which became available about the same time. One of these was a dispatch to Togo from the Japanese Ambassador in Rome, dated December 3, which revealed that the latter had asked Mussolini whether Italy would join Japan if she declared war on the United States and Great Britain and that Mussolini had replied: "Of course. She is obligated to do so under the terms of the Tripartite Pact."¹¹² On December 4, our monitors picked up a message from Togo

¹¹⁰Memorandum by Ballantine, Dec. 2, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 779.

¹¹¹Statement presented by Nomura, Dec. 5, 1941, ibid., p. 784.

¹¹²Rome to Tokyo, Dec. 3, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 229.

himself which indicated that the Japanese Embassy in Washington was about to destroy its code machines and other code material.¹¹³ When reading the latter message, President Roosevelt agreed with his naval aide, Admiral Beardall, that it was a meaningful sign of approaching war.¹¹⁴ The State Department took a similar view, ordering Grew the next day to prepare for an emergency and sending instructions for destroying codes, confidential files, and related materials as soon as the emergency arose.¹¹⁵ By the afternoon of December 6, therefore, when the Japanese Embassy was alerted to await transmission of a fourteen-part reply to the American note of November 26,¹¹⁶ both governments were prepared for an immediate breach of relations.

Earlier in the day, the State Department had received information from London that two large Japanese task forces had passed Cambodia Point and were then nearing the coast of Thailand with the apparent intention of striking either

¹¹³Togo to Nomura, Dec. 4, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 231.

¹¹⁴Beardall's testimony, Apr. 11, 1946, ibid., pt. 11, p. 5284.

¹¹⁵Hull to Grew and others, Dec. 5, 1941, ibid., pt. 2, p. 745.

¹¹⁶Togo to Nomura, Dec. 6, 1941, ibid., pt. 12, pp. 238-39.

at Bangkok or the Isthmus of Kra.¹¹⁷ If the American government needed anything more to round out its picture of Japanese designs, this filled the breach; and sometime on December 6--the record does not establish the precise hour, but it seems to have been mid-afternoon at the latest--Roosevelt decided to send his delayed message to Emperor Hirohito.¹¹⁸ As a result, the draft which had been prepared several days earlier was subjected to final revision; and the dispatch left Washington at 9:00 that evening.¹¹⁹

The President's telegram to the Japanese Emperor represented the last attempt on either side to avert hostilities, and certainly no one in the American government expected it to be successful. In essence, it was another reiteration of what Hull and Roosevelt had been saying for months. It reviewed Japanese policy in China, Indo-China, and southeastern Asia generally. It emphasized the American desire for peace. It carried the assurance that withdrawal of Japanese forces from Indo-China would stabilize relations between the United States and Japan. And it expressed the President's "fervent hope" that the Emperor would "give thought in this...emergency

¹¹⁷Two messages, Winant to Hull, Dec. 6, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 21, pt. 14, pp. 1246-48.

¹¹⁸Memorandum by Hull, Dec. 6, 1941, and notation by Roosevelt, ibid., Ex. 20, pt. 14, p. 1239.

¹¹⁹Cf. idem.; and Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 784n.

to ways of dispelling the dark clouds."¹²⁰

Of course, the presidential message did no good whatever. Since Roosevelt yielded nothing, the gesture was futile from its very inception. Besides, it was too late. Apparently owing to slow delivery by Japanese postal authorities after it reached Tokyo, the message was delayed in reaching Grew; its progress toward Hirohito was slowed again in the Foreign Office; and it was not placed in the Emperor's hands until 3:00 A. M., December 8 (Tokyo time), about twenty minutes before the attack on Pearl Harbor.¹²¹

Meanwhile, Japan's lengthy reply to the American note of November 26 commenced to reach Washington. By 9:00 in the evening of Saturday, December 6, the first thirteen parts of the fourteen-part message were decoded and ready for distribution. Owing to the circumstance that some of the persons who ordinarily received copies of the intercepts were no longer in their offices and not readily available elsewhere, only a partial distribution was made that night. Copies were delivered to President Roosevelt and Secretary Knox by a Naval Intelligence officer, while Hull and Stimson-- who were on the distribution list of Army Intelligence--

¹²⁰Roosevelt to Emperor Hirohito, Dec. 6, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, pp. 784-86.

¹²¹Grew's testimony, Nov. 26, 1945, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 2, pp. 569-70; and Grew, Ten Years, pp. 486-87.

apparently received nothing until the following day.¹²²

The initial reactions of most of the officials who saw the dispatch that evening are obscure; but there is no doubt that Roosevelt, for one, immediately interpreted it as evidence that war was very near.¹²³ On the other hand, the thirteen available parts of the Japanese reply were not especially informative. The first twelve parts gave a rather tedious survey of Japanese-American negotiations since the preceding April, and the thirteenth stated clearly that the American proposals of November 26 were unacceptable.¹²⁴ But it had been known for over a week that this would be the outcome; and since the message contained neither a declaration of war nor a positive sign of a definite break in diplomatic relations, nothing was greatly changed. As a result, there was no effort to call a meeting of the "War Council" or to take any other action until the next day.

The fourteenth and final part of the Japanese memorandum was received and decoded during the night.¹²⁵ Summing up what had gone before, it accused the United States of con-

¹²²For a summary of the evidence as to who among top government officials received translations of the first thirteen parts of this message the evening of December 6, see Pearl Harbor Report, pp. 433-34, including footnote on p. 434.

¹²³Schulz's testimony, Feb. 15, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 10, pp. 4662-63.

¹²⁴Togo to Nomura, Dec. 6, 1941, ibid., Ex. 1, pt. 12, pp. 239-45.

¹²⁵Pearl Harbor Report, p. 434n.

conspiring with Great Britain and other countries "to obstruct Japan's efforts toward the establishment of peace through the creation of a New Order in East Asia, and especially to preserve Anglo-American rights and interests by keeping Japan and China at war." Its conclusion ran as follows:

The Japanese Government regrets to have to notify hereby the American Government that in view of the attitude of the American Government it cannot but consider that it is impossible to reach an agreement through further negotiations.¹²⁶

In the light of what was already known, this indicated clearly that a formal breach of diplomatic relations was to be expected.

Hull, Stimson, and Knox had previously made arrangements to confer at the State Department on Sunday morning; and the complete text of the Japanese memorandum was in their hands by the time they assembled.¹²⁷ That a Japanese attack could be expected they all agreed. But since the message did not challenge their established ideas regarding its probable location, they seem to have discussed nothing but the likeliest points of attack in southeastern Asia and the problem of future coöperation with the British, the Dutch, the Australians, and the Chinese.¹²⁸

¹²⁶Togo to Nomura, Dec. 6, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 245.

¹²⁷Kramer's testimony, Feb. 6, 1946, ibid., pt. 8, p. 3907.

¹²⁸Hull's testimony, Nov. 27, 1945, ibid., pt. 2, p. 611.

While this conversation progressed, two later messages from the Japanese Foreign Office were distributed. One ordered the immediate destruction of all code machines and code materials remaining in the Japanese Embassy.¹²⁹ The other directed Nomura and Kurusu to present the fourteen-part memorandum to the Secretary of State at 1:00 P.M. that day.¹³⁰ When General Marshall reached his office between 11:15 and 11:30 A.M., he read both of these dispatches as well as the long memorandum and immediately decided that there was a significant relationship between the hour stated and the Japanese plan of attack.¹³¹ The fact that 1:00 P.M., Washington time, nearly coincided with the hour of sunrise in Hawaii apparently escaped him; but he did call Stark and suggest that all theater commanders be alerted at once.¹³² Stark demurred. "War warning" messages had been sent to both Manila and Pearl Harbor as long ago as November 27. MacArthur was as nearly ready as he was likely to become; Major General Walter C. Short, Army commander in Hawaii, had been maintaining a special alert against sabotage and

¹²⁹Togo to Nomura, Dec. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 249.

¹³⁰Pearl Harbor Report, p. 437; and Togo to Nomura, Dec. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 1, pt. 12, p. 248.

¹³¹Pearl Harbor Report, pp. 223-24.

¹³²List of telephone calls made from outside through the White House switchboard, Dec. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 58, pt. 15, p. 1633; and Stark's testimony, Dec. 31, 1945, ibid., pt. 5, p. 2132.

subversive activities since November 29;¹³³ and the Admiral thought further warnings might produce nothing but confusion. He soon changed his mind, however, and urged Marshall to go ahead.¹³⁴ In consequence, Marshall drafted the following message for transmission to the Western Defense Command, the Hawaiian Command, the Panama Command, and the Philippine Command:

The Japanese are presenting at 1 P.M. Eastern Standard Time, today, what amounts to an ultimatum. Also they are under orders to destroy their code machines immediately. Just what significance the hour set may have we do not know, but be on the alert accordingly.¹³⁵

The above dispatch was filed with the Army signal center at 11:50, and Marshall was assured that it would reach the designated commanders by 1:00 P.M.¹³⁶ But the copy intended for Hawaii--where the information it contained was most needed--ran afoul of unexpected delays in transmission; and it was not placed in Short's hands until the Japanese had come and gone.¹³⁷ Thus the intelligence collected from Japanese messages during the night of December 6 and the

¹³³Short to Marshall, Nov. 29, 1941, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 32, pt. 14, p. 1331.

¹³⁴Stark's testimony, Dec. 31, 1945, ibid., pt. 5, pp. 2132-33.

¹³⁵Marshall to Short, Dec. 7, 1941, ibid., Ex. 32, pt. 14, p. 1334.

¹³⁶Pearl Harbor Report, p. 225.

¹³⁷For a summary of these delays in transmission, see Report of Army Pearl Harbor Board, Pearl Harbor Hearings, Ex. 157, pt. 39, pp. 94-96.

morning of December 7 was used to no effect whatever so far as the attack on Pearl Harbor was concerned.

About noon, the Japanese Embassy made an appointment for Nomura and Kurusu to see Hull at 1:00 P.M. A little later, however, the interview was postponed until 1:45 at the Embassy's request; and the pair did not actually arrive at the State Department until about 2:00.¹³⁸ In the meanwhile, the first report that Pearl Harbor was being attacked reached Washington. At 1:50 P.M., the Navy Department received the following dispatch from Kimmel: "Air raid on Pearl Harbor. This is not drill."¹³⁹

President Roosevelt was informed at once, and he relayed the news to Hull by telephone without delay.¹⁴⁰ Thus, when the Secretary of State received Nomura and Kurusu a few minutes later, he was not only familiar with the contents of the note they were about to present but also had a report which, though unconfirmed, offered a reasonably dependable indication that war had already started. With grim control he listened to Nomura's explanation that he had not been able to present his government's memorandum at 1:00 P.M. as he had been instructed owing to difficulties in decoding. But

¹³⁸Memorandum by Ballantine, Dec. 7, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 786.

¹³⁹Baecher to Richardson, Apr. 8, 1946, Pearl Harbor Hearings, pt. 11, p. 5351.

¹⁴⁰Hull's testimony, Nov. 27, 1945, ibid., pt. 2, p. 607.

after pretending to read the document which Nomura then gave him, Hull abandoned much of his restraint. Using language which, as he subsequently admitted, would not be considered "diplomatic...in ordinary times,"¹⁴¹ he gave the Japanese envoys his unvarnished opinion of the faithless and generally devious behavior which had marked Japan's course in recent months--whereupon Nomura and Kurusu, according to the official record of the interview, "took their leave without making any comment."¹⁴² It was the last in a long series of talks.

A few hours later, an equivalent scene was enacted in Tokyo. About 7:30 A.M., December 8 (Japan time), the Japanese Foreign Office summoned Grew to receive its answer to the message which Roosevelt had sent to Emperor Hirohito the day before. This answer consisted of the same memorandum which Nomura and Kurusu had already presented in Washington. After reading it, Grew returned to the Embassy, still ignorant of what had befallen at Pearl Harbor. He did not have much longer to wait, however. Before noon, he received a note from Togo announcing that a state of war existed between Japan and the United States.¹⁴³

The blow at Oahu had taken American strategists by

¹⁴¹Hull, Memoirs, Vol. 2, 1096.

¹⁴²Memorandum by Ballantine, Dec. 7, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 787.

¹⁴³Grew, Ten Years, p. 493.

surprise. In the long run, nevertheless, their judgment was substantially vindicated. The task force which struck at Pearl Harbor withdrew as quickly as it had come, and Japan's permanent thrust was still southward. Her forces were attacking Guam, Wake, Midway, Hong Kong, Malaya, and the Philippines in less than twenty-four hours. This was the situation faced by the United States when President Roosevelt delivered his war message to Congress and the nation shortly after noon on December 8.¹⁴⁴

Commenting on the turn of events later the same day, Count Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, placed the following record in his diary:

A night call from Ribbentrop; he is joyful over the Japanese attack on the United States. He is so happy, in fact, that I can't but congratulate him, even though I am not so sure about the advantage.¹⁴⁵

But the forebodings of Mussolini's son-in-law, even had they

¹⁴⁴Message of the President to Congress, Dec. 8, 1941, Department of State, Japan, Vol. 2, p. 794. It is perhaps desirable at this point to mention the two book-length treatments of the Pearl Harbor disaster which have so far appeared: George Morgenstern, Pearl Harbor: The Story of the Secret War (New York: Devin-Adair, 1947); and Walter Millis, This is Pearl (New York: Morrow, 1947). Both were written too early to use any of the important new material which has appeared during the last eighteen months, and neither introduces any significant documentation that was not available to the present writer. Nevertheless, these works have some interest by reason of their diametrically opposed interpretations of the events leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Morgenstern, an obvious Roosevelt-hater, sees a conscious plot on the part of the administration to bring the United States into war against its own will, while Millis takes the much sounder view that the President simply did his statesmanlike best to cope with an impossible situation, arguing that any course of action other than the one chosen would have led to even worse consequences.

¹⁴⁵Ciano, Diaries, p. 416.

not been private, could not have stemmed the surge of events. Confidence was high in Axis capitals; and on December 11, Germany and Italy fulfilled their destinies under the Tripartite Pact by joining their Oriental collaborator in her war on America.

V.

The American government stood face to face with reality throughout the month directly preceding its official entry into the war, for the ultimate implications of a political program which outran existing military capacity were now clearly understood. Nevertheless, it adhered to its basic concept of the world situation with a persistence that was almost dogged. Despite the threat of imminent hostilities with Japan, it continued to prosecute the Atlantic war with vigor and to maintain an active diplomacy in Europe generally. Viewed in retrospect, this course was sound; for Germany was unquestionably a greater threat to America than was Japan. But United States foreign policy embraced immediate as well as long-range objectives during these final weeks of non-belligerency; and judged by the attainment of immediate objectives, it was not very successful.

The United States retained its initiative in the Atlantic, to be sure. In Europe, however, it barely held its own. Although Spain was now actively seeking economic favors, Washington drew no closer to a trade agreement with Madrid; and its influence with the Franco government continued to be

a negative rather than a positive quantity. At the same time, its Vichy policy received a severe buffeting in Weygand's dismissal. And while the North African economic program was reinstated by the middle of December, the French situation still gave rise to serious misgivings. Nor was there much ground for complacency in northern and eastern Europe. Although the United States made no direct effort to change Finland's course after receiving the Finnish memorandum of November 11, presumably her retirement from hostilities with the Soviet Union was still an American objective. With Britain's declaration of war against Finland on December 6, however, the Russo-Finnish conflict became an integral part of the general struggle. And despite the growing momentum of our Russian aid program, Stalin's desire for immediate concessions with regard to the post-war territorial settlement again promised a multitude of future difficulties.

But the greatest immediate objective of United States foreign policy in the month leading to war was to gain time in the Far East. Although the hope for permanent peace no longer existed, the American government wanted to delay the outbreak of war in this area until our defensive preparations in the Philippines could be raised to the level which had been recognized as essential the previous July. To achieve this end, the idea of a modus vivendi was kept under consideration the greater part of November. But Roosevelt and Hull knew that Japan would refuse any truce which prevented her from moving ahead, and to allow her any new advances

would be to violate a principle to which the United States had been committed since August. This was the fundamental reason why the modus vivendi was abandoned.

Indeed, it is rather surprising that the modus vivendi was considered at all; for no one doubted that the new round of conversations which Nomura launched on November 7 was largely a facade. The American government knew that Japan had laid her plans and meant to take action if the United States did not consent to an impossible settlement within a specified time. It was obvious that neither side believed in the likelihood of a compromise and that neither side was prepared to consider one. Nevertheless, the appearance of negotiation was maintained until November 26.

After that, the whole initiative rested with Japan.

CONCLUSION

Viewed in its broad relationship to the growth of the world crisis during the years 1937-1941, American foreign policy was neither independent nor dynamic. Since the forms it assumed were always more or less contingent upon the actions of other powers, it remained essentially defensive throughout the entire period. That it finally seized and retained a worthwhile initiative in certain limited areas cannot be denied, but generally its problem was to minimize the dangers in situations which it had been unable to forestall. Instead of guiding events, it was, on the whole, guided by them; and sometimes its reactions were hazardously slow. Nevertheless, American policy in 1941 was very different from American policy in 1937 and 1938. Judged by range of activity, firmness of purpose, and willingness to assume responsibility, it went through two distinct phases in the four and one-half years leading up to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the entry of the United States into the second World War.

Until France collapsed and Hitler's armies stood victorious upon Europe's Atlantic coast, the efforts of the American government to influence the world situation did not extend beyond the use of moral force, legal argument, and economic measures--all so contrived as to avoid military

and political guarantees, express or implied, of any kind whatever. Even the coming of war in Europe brought no fundamental change. While it was never impartial in the strict sense of the word, the United States adhered generally to its concept of formal neutrality from September 1939 to June 1940. Once Germany threatened to invade England, seize control of the eastern Atlantic, and deprive the democratic cause of its last foothold in the European theater, however, the American government quickly abandoned much of its underlying caution. Justifying its acts on grounds of national defense, it now began to give the British significant material aid and diplomatic support and to lay plans for a possibly deeper involvement in the future. The practical effect of thus identifying the British cause with our own was to bind the United States with Great Britain as closely as it could have been bound by a formal treaty of alliance. And while localized differences continued to mar the singleness of Anglo-American endeavors, this tight and exceedingly active association with the British Commonwealth remained the dominant theme of United States policy.

The extremely isolationist neutrality act which became law on May 1, 1937, was responsible, in some measure, for the weakness of American efforts during the next twenty-eight months to dissuade Germany from going to war. More indirectly, it hampered our policy toward Japan for an even longer period. That it reduced the President's freedom to

issue threats and make promises cannot be denied, but the powerful national sentiment which lay behind the law was a much greater obstacle to effective action. For the American people remained unalterably opposed to any commitments which might draw the United States into a European or an Asiatic war long after the joint resolution of May 1, 1937, was substantially modified; and the President's reluctance to affront this sentiment made him extremely, perhaps unduly, cautious about using the wide authority over the conduct of foreign relations still left to him.

This deeply-rooted popular conviction that the United States should have nothing to do with armed conflict arising outside the Western Hemisphere was partly the fruit of American tradition and partly a result of the special disillusionment which grew out of our experience in the first World War. But the more extravagant attempts to revise the Versailles war guilt thesis, a certain misreading of the lessons of American intervention in 1917, and the rampant investigations of the international arms traffic which followed helped give isolationism the peculiarly virulent form it assumed in the middle 1930's and determined the framework of the early neutrality acts.

Because it gradually changed with the advance of time, the foreign policy of the Roosevelt administration between 1933 and the summer of 1940 cannot be treated with any single judgment. Although the principles of internationalism

gained some recognition at the theoretical level in 1933, American foreign policy was essentially tentative and formless and wholly secondary to domestic policy until 1937. By and large, the administration deprecated the growth of isolationism in the United States. But it was internationalist more by precept than by example, and even its precepts were generally restricted to endorsements of good will and international virtue. In part, this grew out of the President's resolve to deal softly with public opinion; but some of it was inherent in his own early objectives.

When his administration began, Roosevelt's principal concern was domestic recovery; and his program of economic rehabilitation called for a degree of economic nationalism which nullified all attempts to deal constructively with international economic questions. It delayed the Reciprocal Trade Act for more than a year and in the view of no less a person than his own Secretary of State helped guarantee the failure of the London Economic Conference in the summer of 1933. Indeed, except for his adoption of the reciprocal trade program a year later and his use of the moral embargo in the Italo-Ethiopian war in 1935-1936, Roosevelt was satisfied during his entire first term to tread the path marked out by Hoover and Stimson. He upheld Stimson's doctrine of non-recognition and, in May 1933, followed Hoover's Secretary of State in recognizing an American obligation to consult with other governments when war threatened; but neither policy carried internationalism very far. And while the

McReynolds resolution of March 1933 perpetuated Hoover's request for a discriminatory embargo act, the President did not hew to the line he had drawn with any great firmness. Like Hull and others, he frequently expressed his vexation with the impartial embargo laws which Congress insisted on passing. Yet he withheld the veto and lent further credence to the belief that he regarded such enactments as better than nothing by asking on special occasions for exactly the sort of law Congress was most willing to give him--as in the Chaco embargo of 1934 and the Spanish embargo of 1937.

Not until the latter year did the American government look consistently beyond the isolationism of the American people. But from early 1937 to the outbreak of war in September 1939, its caution was tempered by a growing sense of responsibility and a sincere wish to control the growth of international tension if that could be done without political or military commitment. Its use of the embargo in support of the non-intervention committee's efforts to keep the Spanish civil war from overflowing the boundaries of Spain was one evidence of this desire. Roosevelt's "quarantine" speech of October 5, 1937, offered another. His simultaneous espousal of Welles' scheme to create a kind of world peace front was a third. But appeasement was now a definite policy in Europe; and it soon became clear that the United States, if it wished to cooperate with other governments at all, would have to support Chamberlain's efforts to deal amicably with Hitler and Mussolini. After

some delay, the President did exactly that. When the Anglo-Italian Mediterranean pact was signed in April 1938, Roosevelt gave the idea of economic appeasement his formal blessing. And the support which he accorded Chamberlain during the Munich crisis in September apparently helped the Prime Minister overcome a threatened division in his own Cabinet, while Welles, who led the backers of this policy in the American State Department, greeted the resulting settlement with manifest enthusiasm.

The appeasement philosophy was based on the hope that patience, open-mindedness, and willingness to compromise would bring aggressor nations to their senses by persuading them that negotiation was more profitable than war and by affording moderate elements in such states an opportunity to gain control of their respective governments. While the United States never paraded its acceptance of this thesis as openly as Chamberlain, it held a substantial role in American foreign policy from 1937 onward, appearing in many different connections and in many different guises. Nor was appeasement always a mistake. Despite its unsavory name following the collapse of the Munich settlement, it provided a sound approach to worthwhile objectives on more than one occasion.

Since Roosevelt had little hope of converting Germany after the end of 1937, the United States never became deeply involved in this phase of appeasement. But both he and Welles thought Italy would prove more amenable, and this

conviction remained the basis of their Italian policy until the late spring of 1940. On the other hand, Hull opposed such dealings with Hitler and Mussolini from the first; and events proved him right. Nevertheless, the Secretary of State employed the same line of thought, or a close variant, in a number of other situations, both then and later. This was especially evident in our relations with Japan, Hull's own preserve. For although the revival of Japanese aggression in China during the summer of 1937 struck directly at American interests and responsibilities that could not be lightly thrown aside, our Far Eastern policy was soon reduced to a series of protests accompanied by periodic re-assertion of the principles of international good behavior. In the ~~hope~~ that Japanese moderates would eventually return to power in Tokyo, this appeasement was not wholly discontinued until the summer of 1941.

The remaining aspects of American foreign policy prior to September 1939 can be summed up quickly. While he made it clear that the United States assumed no responsibility for what happened in Europe, President Roosevelt brought his personal counsels of restraint to bear in all the major European crises from the summer of 1938 to the outbreak of war; and the United States supplemented its non-recognition doctrine with various economic measures which, if not very effective in themselves, spoke strongly of American disapproval. Among these were the practice of withholding tariff reductions from aggressor nations (used mainly against

Germany), the employment of discriminatory loans (chiefly for the benefit of China), the encouragement of moral embargoes (especially against Japan), and the imposition of countervailing duties (against Germany and Italy).

At the same time, considerable effort was made to improve the defenses of the United States and the Western Hemisphere generally. Viewed against the background of contemporary European events, the program of inter-American solidarity, which took shape rapidly in 1938 and 1939, was essentially a defense measure. A more ambitious naval policy also reflected the tenseness of the world situation. One facet of this program was the Anglo-American naval talks held in January 1938. During that year, the expansion of United States naval strength beyond previous treaty limits got under way. And some of our naval power began to move eastward with the formation of the Atlantic Squadron in January 1939.

While the United States persisted in its refusal to accept new international responsibilities until June 1940, American foreign policy underwent a subtle change as soon as the European conflict began. An actual war differs greatly from a potential one, and the fighting in Europe not only hardened American sympathies and dislikes but also confronted the American government with a number of very tangible problems that demanded some kind of solution.

The most obvious problem was that of remaining neutral. To exclude belligerent operations from this hemisphere as

far as possible, Roosevelt immediately instituted a special neutrality patrol to maintain surveillance over the waters lying off our coast; and in conjunction with the other American republics, the United States on October 3 proclaimed a tremendously wide zone extending from Canada to the lower tip of South America which was to be kept free of all belligerent activity. Otherwise, its exertions in this sphere were purely routine. The State Department protested infringements of American neutrality as the need arose and waged a conscientious, if generally fruitless, diplomatic struggle with Great Britain in regard to Allied blockade practices.

But the future weighed heavily upon the American government, and its second great problem was that of how to influence the course of world events without departing from its own neutral status. It worked out four partial answers to this question. In the first place, Roosevelt demanded and secured repeal of the arms embargo, thus giving Britain and France permanent access to American war supplies on a cash-and-carry basis. In the second place, the State Department religiously avoided a complete break with Russia; as long as she could be regarded as a potential ally, Russia was not to be driven further into Hitler's embrace. She was not appeased entirely. Hull refused to recognize her conquests in Poland. Both he and Roosevelt denounced her invasion of Finland; loans were extended to the Finnish government; and Russia was subjected to a long-lived moral

embargo. But the neutrality acts were never invoked against her, and diplomatic relations were maintained. In this way, the Kremlin was kept open to possible American influence, while Vladivostok was kept open to American ships and American products.

In the third place, the American government considered the possibility of arranging a negotiated peace before the war expanded any further. It was decided that nothing should be done to encourage German peace feelers in October 1939. But the Vatican's aid was enlisted for an attempt to open the question through Mussolini under more advantageous circumstances. This was the real point of Sumner Welles' mission to Europe in February and March 1940. The hope for achieving a settlement in this fashion proved illusory; but until the latter part of May, Roosevelt used these connections with the Italian government in an attempt to keep Mussolini from entering the war at Hitler's side. Lastly, the United States kept Germany from gaining control of additional funds in this country by freezing the American assets of Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands, and Belgium as those nations were occupied in the spring of 1940.

Although neutrality remained its official text during this entire period, every major aspect of American foreign policy between September 1939 and June 1940 was oriented toward Great Britain and France. In the same way, the Allied cause took a firmer hold on public opinion. Neither then nor later did the American people display any eagerness for

intervention. But they had always distrusted the consequences of German victory, and their fears of one side tended to make them think more charitably of projects for helping the other. These fears reached a climax in May and June as Hitler's armies moved from victory to victory in western Europe.

Amid the disasters of May, Winston Churchill had begun showering Roosevelt with specific requests for material aid; and when it became obvious that French resistance was nearing an end, the President waited no longer. With the arms transfer of early June, consummated by executive action, the United States moved from neutrality to non-belligerency. The revival of naval talks with Great Britain in August confirmed this decision. And when the destroyer transfer was announced at the beginning of September, it was clear that the American government had made a definite and permanent choice of sides, openly avowing that the cause of Great Britain was also the cause of the United States. At the same time, our own defense program gained significant speed; for the building of a two-ocean navy was authorized in July, and the Selective Service Act became law on September 16.

Meanwhile, the Japanese threat had assumed much larger proportions. Notwithstanding their gravity, Far Eastern affairs had played a secondary role in American policy since 1937. This had been doubly true since the beginning of the European war; for if Japan's New Order constituted a direct affront to the American position in China, Germany posed a

threat to the security of the Western Hemisphere itself. The American government's denunciation of its commercial treaty with Japan in July 1939 had suggested an intent to use economic reprisals of a fairly drastic character. But when the treaty lapsed in January 1940, the matter had been carried no further. The immediate conditions of American-Japanese trade remained unchanged; and except for basing the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in May, Washington merely adhered to its established policy of uniting general statements of principle with detailed complaints regarding Japanese violations of American rights.

When Japan began to move into Indo-China after the fall of France, however, the American government took quick umbrage. In September, Roosevelt used his new powers of export control to forbid the sale of scrap iron and steel, except by special license, to any country outside the Western Hemisphere save Great Britain. This struck a heavy blow at Japan's essentially precarious war economy, but it was as far as the United States went in such a direction for a good while to come. For on September 27, 1940, Japan joined Germany and Italy in signing the Tripartite Pact, an agreement which not only brought Japan closer to Germany than she had been at any time since conclusion of the Russo-German non-aggression treaty in August 1939 but also made it clear that the United States would immediately become involved in hostilities with all three Axis partners if it went to war with any one of them. The European and Asiatic situations

could no longer be separated even in theory.

Although it was left to be stated officially in the Washington staff report late the following March, the fundamental strategic decision of the war was made--implicitly, if not by express acknowledgement--immediately after the signing of the Tripartite Pact. Since the European threat was still the more dangerous to American security, the old trend was confirmed; and United States policy was decisively oriented to the principle of stopping Germany before it made any extreme effort to stop Japan. As a result, the building up of our own defenses and the widening of our coöperation with Britain remained the overwhelmingly dominant objectives of the United States throughout the next twelve months.

Extensive progress was made between the autumn of 1940 and the late summer of 1941. The Lend-Lease Act solved the monumental economic problems of such a relationship, and the Washington staff report laid out the basic strategy of wartime collaboration both in principle and in considerable detail. Behind these great pivotal developments, moreover, the United States assumed vast new responsibilities in the actual conduct of the war. The American government established a protectorate over Greenland, sent troops to occupy Iceland, and contemplated seizing the Azores on at least two occasions during this period. The patrol activities of the Atlantic Fleet were pushed eastward to the 26th meridian generally and beyond it in the neighborhood of Iceland; American ships relieved the British Navy of escort duty over

the western half of the transatlantic convoy route; and additional naval forces were transferred from the Pacific to insure an adequate performance in this demanding role. By September 1941, the American and German navies were openly engaged in a shooting war.

While these objectives were being pursued, every other aspect of United States policy was aimed at keeping international balances as static as possible: to maintain speaking, if not cordial, relations with Russia, whose good-will often seemed a dubious quantity at best; to avoid a break with Japan, which grew no less restive as time went on; and to keep Germany from gaining any new strategic advantages that might render the British American position any more difficult than it had already become. This course was followed with little change and reasonable success until July 1941.

Hull's Russian policy did not change in any essential detail. Although its volume was not great, Russo-American trade kept flowing throughout this interval; and the State Department tried from time to time to exert direct influence upon Soviet policy--as in connection with the Russo-Japanese neutrality pact of April 1941 and in its warnings to Moscow regarding German plans to invade the Soviet Union. None of these efforts was successful in detail, but the door was kept open for a quick rapprochement with Russia when her expected break with Germany came. Our Vichy and Spanish policies were designed primarily to keep France, the French Fleet, the Iberian Peninsula, the western Mediterranean, North and West

Africa, and adjacent parts of the Atlantic Ocean from falling under German control. Here, economic rewards and penalties were enough to keep the balance even; and the balance was in our favor as long as it did not change. A somewhat similar, though much less fully developed, effort was made during the spring of 1941 to overcome German influence in the Balkans; but in this instance, the Wehrmacht moved too quickly.

Throughout the period, Japan continued her advances in Indo-China and rapidly extended her influence in Thailand. There were also numerous alarms and excursions provoked by such incidents as the war scare of February 1941, Matsuoka's talks with Hitler at Berlin in March, and the signing of the Russo-Japanese neutrality agreement in April. Nevertheless, American policy remained conservative. Old economic pressure was continued and gradually increased through the device of placing additional types of exports under licensing control. But none of this was drastic; and while Hull clung firmly to his principles, he drew no lines in his conversations with Nomura which Japan was forbidden to cross. Through everything, the American government showed its willingness to negotiate for a peaceful settlement. Japan claimed the same desire, and Hull even entertained a minimal hope that her adherence to the Tripartite Pact might be somewhat loosened. This, together with a decent solution for the China Incident, became his principal objective in the informal conversations which began in April and went forward with decreasing energy into the month of July.

Up to the summer of 1941, therefore, the policy of containment which had been launched the previous autumn was remarkably successful. Although it had been in the position of fighting a rear-guard action over the whole course, the American government had suffered no very tangible reverses in the Far East; and it could count a number of definite gains so far as Europe was concerned. Germany had achieved little or nothing in France, Spain and North Africa; both the United Kingdom itself and British-American control of the Atlantic were much more secure than they had been a year earlier; and Germany's advance in the Balkans was more than offset, from the viewpoint of grand strategy, by her own attack on Russia.

This last development greatly reduced the long-term burdens of United States policy and helped stabilize the affairs of western Europe immediately. But it also freed Japan to hasten her penetration of southeastern Asia and the Indies and altered the whole tone of the Far Eastern situation almost overnight. For as Japan took over the remainder of Indo-China and set herself for a vast program of expansion in the south, the United States broke off the informal conversations, stopped all exports to Japan by the simple device of impounding all Japanese funds in this country, and issued Tokyo a virtual ultimatum against further aggressions of any kind. This meant the end of our attempts to redeem Japan by a kind of appeasement and signallized a total reversal of our Far Eastern policy.

It was a fateful and nearly inevitable decision. Anything

less drastic would have had no chance of deterring Japan and would, in effect, have sanctioned the course she had chosen. On the other hand, the action taken was drastic indeed. Through the licensing system, Japan had already been deprived of several commodities, like American scrap iron and steel, which were of great importance to her economy. But American oil was still more vital; and the total embargo on American-Japanese trade produced by the freezing order of July 26 cut off this supply at one stroke. It was a move which threatened Japan's entire war potential and offered her a choice between coming to heel or seizing new petroleum supplies where they were most readily available--that is, in southeastern Asia and the Dutch East Indies. For all practical purposes, the warning which Roosevelt gave Nomura on August 17 reduced this to a choice between surrender and war.

If the United States had been ready for war in the Pacific, this simultaneous application of economic and political pressure might have achieved its end. But the United States was not nearly ready for war in the Pacific. While Germany's preoccupation with Russia somewhat reduced the tasks of American diplomacy in Europe, it failed to lighten demands on our material resources. If anything, it increased them. Our growing responsibilities in the Atlantic forbade any diversion of strength from that theater; Britain's needs were as great as ever; and added to these were the burdens of our new Russian aid program. Only by changing the overall strategic plan, slighting Great Britain and Russia, and

withdrawing naval forces from the Atlantic could our ability to take decisive action in the Far East have been changed as quickly as our diplomatic mien; and the arguments against such a course were overwhelming. As a result, the freezing order of July 26 and the warning of August 17 gave Japan additional reasons for going ahead without supplying any equivalent incentive for holding back. Our immediate political objectives now reached far beyond our preparations to sustain them. From this moment forward, the central question of American policy was that of how long such a disparity could be maintained without a breakdown.

Japan, of course, was still desirous of getting as much as possible without fighting. And the American government, although it had forsaken the real basis of its delaying tactics, still wanted to postpone a rupture as long as it could, hoping in the meanwhile to build up its Far Eastern position with troops from the training camps and bombers from the assembly lines as they became available. Hence the reopening of conversations in the latter part of August, the fruitless and somewhat farcical negotiations bearing on a leaders' conference, and the study of a possible modus vivendi during the first three weeks of November. But the advantage never rested with Hull and Roosevelt. For Japan was prepared to act; we were not; and both sides understood the situation perfectly.

Considering their multitudinous problems, domestic and foreign, the authors of United States policy did remarkably

well from 1937 onward. Their deeds sometimes failed to bear out their words; and while their course was always restricted by conditions for which they were not primarily responsible, they did not always choose the best among possible alternatives. Nevertheless, their part in the general failure to halt aggression before it led to war was a small one. Much could be said about the ills of international cooperation before 1937, but there was little chance of creating a genuine peace front among the democratic states of the world after that time.

The American government's decision to support Chamberlain's program in a general way until the spring of 1939 had little practical importance. It was a rather detached support in any event, and Chamberlain was obviously determined to give his hopes a trial whether the United States shared them or not. American efforts to deal gently with totalitarian governments after the war started were not undertaken primarily to avoid responsibility. Instead, they grew out of a prudent desire to keep such nations from yielding further to Hitler's blandishments. That our Russian, Vichy, and Spanish policies were justified by their results up to the end of 1941 can hardly be denied.

Now and then, American policy was confused by internal divisions. This was especially true of certain details in our relations with France and Spain. On larger issues, Welles and Hull repeatedly disagreed. The Under Secretary was fertile with expedients, some of which were of dubious

practicality, while the Secretary now and then carried scepticism to the point of stagnation. On occasion, Stimson raised a dissident voice too; for he believed that the administration lacked courage in its dealings with public opinion. But since Roosevelt was, in final analysis, the real maker of policy, the external effect of such divisions was never very grave. And while our Far Eastern policy was certainly muddled in the autumn of 1941, attendant circumstances rather than confused thinking lay at the root of these difficulties.

Otherwise, the American government followed a clear set of objectives with persistence and no little skill from the fall of France to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. This did not succeed in averting war, or even in postponing war as long as had been hoped; but the alternative of doing nothing might have been permanently disastrous. As it was, the United States entered the conflict with a basic plan and a partial deployment of forces which led to ultimate victory.

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Gisevius, Hans B., To the Bitter End (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1947). Written by a German official who claims to have been associated with a number of plots aimed at Hitler's downfall, this book makes some provocative statements regarding conditions inside the Nazi government.

Grew, Joseph C., Ten Years in Japan (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944). The combined diary and memoirs of the American Ambassador to Japan from 1932 to the end of 1941. It supplements the formal diplomatic records in a number of ways.

Hayes, Carlton J. H., Wartime Mission in Spain, 1942-1945 (New York: Macmillan, 1946). Hayes was American Ambassador to Spain during the years indicated.

Henderson, Sir Neville, Failure of a Mission: Berlin, 1937-1939 (New York: Putnam, 1940). Henderson's account of his experiences as last British Ambassador to Germany.

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Hull, Cordell, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1948). In both range and detail, these memoirs are the most satisfactory personal account yet written by an American concerned with the direction of foreign affairs in the Roosevelt period. Hull does much to illuminate the considerations which lay behind important policy decisions.

Ickes, Harold L., "My Twelve Years With F. D. R.," Saturday Evening Post, Vol. 220 (June 5, 1948), pp. 15-18ff.; (June 12, 1948), pp. 34-35ff.; (June 19, 1948), pp. 30-31ff.; (June 26, 1948), pp. 36-37ff.; Vol. 221 (July 3, 1948), pp. 30-31ff.; (July 10, 1948), pp. 32-33ff.; (July 17, 1948), pp. 28ff.; (July 24, 1948), pp. 28ff. This account touches upon foreign affairs only here and there.

Ind, Allison, Bataan, The Judgment Seat (New York: Macmillan, 1944). A first-hand account of the beginning of the war in the Philippines by an Air Force staff officer.

Lansing, Robert, War Memoirs of Robert Lansing (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935).

McIntire, Ross T. (in collaboration with George Creel), White House Physician (New York: Putnam, 1946). Contains the recollections of President Roosevelt's personal physician.

Moley, Raymond, After Seven Years (New York: Harper, 1939). This account is most useful on the economic aspects of American foreign policy during the early years of the Roosevelt administration.

Morgenthau, Henry Jr., "The Morgenthau Diaries," Colliers Magazine, Vol. 120 (Sept. 27, 1947), pp. 11-13ff.; (Oct. 4, 1947), pp. 20-21ff.; (Oct. 11, 1947), pp. 20-21ff.; (Oct. 18, 1947), pp. 16-17ff.; (Oct. 25, 1947), pp. 24-25ff.; (Nov. 1, 1947), pp. 22-23ff. This is helpful on the development of the Lend-Lease Act.

Perkins, Frances, The Roosevelt I Knew (New York: Viking Press, 1946).

Shotwell, James T., On the Rim of the Abyss (New York: Macmillan, 1936). Gives some account of the author's role in suggesting the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

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- Stimson, Henry L., and Bundy, McGeorge, On Active Service: In Peace and War (New York: Harper, 1948). These memoirs deal largely, but not exclusively, with Stimson's experiences as Secretary of War in the period 1940-1945.
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- Tolischus, Otto D., Tokyo Record (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1943). A journalistic account of events in the Japanese capital from February to December 1941.
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- Welles, Sumner, The Time for Decision, 9th ed. (New York: Harper, 1944). This work supplies, among other things, a first-hand account of Welles' European mission in February and March 1940.
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- Zacharias, Ellis M., Secret Missions: The Story of an Intelligence Officer (New York: Putnam, 1946). Captain (later Rear Admiral) Zacharias devoted the greater part

of his time through the period 1920-1941 to problems of naval intelligence. His specialty was Japan. He was personally acquainted with many ranking officers of the Japanese Navy (including Admiral Nomura) and does much to explain the thinking and planning of Japanese leaders in the period before the second World War.

V. Biographies, Histories, Monographs, Reviews

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Barnard, Ellsworth, "War and the Verities," Harpers Magazine, Vol. 180 (Jan. 1940), pp. 113-128. An attack on the philosophy of appeasement and an attempt to rehabilitate the Versailles Treaty.

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Review of Europe Since 1870 by E. R. Turner, New Republic, Vol. 29 (Jan. 18, 1922), pp. 228-230.

"Seven Books of History Against the Germans," New Republic, Vol. 38 (Mar. 19, 1924), pp. 10-15.

The Genesis of the World War: An Introduction to the Problem of War Guilt (New York: Knopf, 1926).

Beard, Charles A., American Foreign Policy in the Making, 1932-1940: A Study in Responsibilities (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1946).

President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941: A Study in Appearances and Realities (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1948). Both this and the preceding work deal mainly with the verbal aspects of foreign policy. Beard's thesis is that the President willfully deceived the American people regarding his conduct of foreign affairs during most of the period involved and thus violated his moral and constitutional responsibilities.

The Devil Theory of War (New York: Vanguard Press, 1936). Basing his case on the supposed lessons of the first World War, Beard here urges an embargo on the sale of munitions and the extension of credits to belligerents. This book is actually a topical pamphlet.

- Bendiner, Robert, The Riddle of the State Department (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942). An effort to set forth disagreements within the State Department and American diplomatic establishment in the late 1930's and early 1940's. It is useful as far as it corroborates evidence from other sources.
- Bisson, Thomas A., America's Far Eastern Policy (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1945). A short study, but reasonably up-to-date.
- Borchard, Edwin M., "The Attorney General's Opinion on the Exchange of Destroyers for Naval Bases," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940), pp. 690-699. Adverse comment.
- Borchard, Edwin M., and Lage, William P., Neutrality for the United States (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1937). An attempt to rehabilitate the international law of neutrality.
- Briggs, Herbert W., "Neglected Aspects of the Destroyer Deal," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940) pp. 569-587. Adverse comment on the Attorney General's opinion in this matter.
- Bruner, Jerome S., Mandate from the People (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944). A study in public opinion.
- Cantril, Hadley, "America Faces the War: A Study in Public Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Sept. 1940), pp. 387-407.
- Corwin, Edward S., The President: Office and Powers, 2nd ed. (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1941).
- Dallin, David J., Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy, 1939-1942, trans. by Leon Denman (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1942).
- Davis, Forrest, and Lindley, Ernest K., How War Came (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1942). This is a journalistic account of the development of American policy from June 1940 to Pearl Harbor. The authors, both of them prominent Washington newspapermen, enjoyed the confidence of President Roosevelt and other members of the administration and thus had access to carefully selected bits of "inside" information which, even at this date, add greatly to the interest of the work. While it has semi-official overtones, it is exceedingly useful to any study of this period.

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- DeWilde, John C., "The War and American Shipping," Foreign Policy Reports, Vol. 16 (Apr. 1, 1940), pp. 18-28. Explains the effect of the arms embargo, the cash-and-carry policy, and the establishment of combat zones on American shipping.
- Dulles, Allen W., and Armstrong, Hamilton Fish, Can We Be Neutral? (New York: Harper, for the Council on Foreign Relations, 1936). Perhaps the best general guide to the neutrality debate of the middle 1930's.
- Eagleton, Clyde, "The Duty of Impartiality on the Part of a Neutral," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Jan. 1940), pp. 99-104.
- Engelbrecht, Helmuth C., and Hanighen, F. C., Merchants of Death: A Study of the International Armaments Industry (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1934).
- Fay, Sidney B., "New Light on the Origins of the World War," American Historical Review, Vol. 25 (July 1920), pp. 616-639; Vol. 26 (Oct. 1920), pp. 37-53; (Jan. 1921), pp. 225-254. This series of articles marked the beginning of American revisionism by introducing the concept of joint responsibility for the first World War.
- The Origins of the World War, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1928).
- Feiling, Keith G., The Life of Neville Chamberlain (London: Macmillan, 1946). Based on Chamberlain's letters and personal papers.
- Feis, Herbert, The Spanish Story: Franco and the Nations at War (New York: Knopf, 1948). This is by far the best account yet written of Franco's dealings with both the Axis and the Allies in the period 1939-1944. Its central theme is United States policy toward the Spanish government during the war years. As Economic Adviser to the State Department from 1931 to 1944, the author was personally engaged in the formulation of this policy.
- Fenwick, Charles G., "Neutrality on the Defensive," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940), pp. 697-699.

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Gallup, George, and Robinson, Claude, "American Institute of Public Opinion--Surveys, 1935-38," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 2 (July 1938), pp. 373-397. A compilation of the findings of the American Institute of Public Opinion with regard to a large number of public issues during the years indicated.

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Griswold, A. Whitney, The Far Eastern Policy of the United States (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938). A standard treatment.

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- Hinton, Harold B., Cordell Hull: A Biography (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1942).
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- Jacob, Philip E., "Influences of World Events on U. S. 'Neutrality' Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Mar. 1940), pp. 48-65.
- Johnson, Alan Campbell, Viscount Halifax: A Biography (New York: Ives Washburn, 1941).
- Johnson, Walter, The Battle Against Isolation (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1944). A careful and friendly study of the various private organizations established in the United States between 1939 and 1941 to combat isolationism.
- Johnstone, W. C., The United States and Japan's New Order, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1941). Although somewhat outmoded by the new documentation which has become available since its publication, this study supplies a careful and useful analysis of our diplomatic conflict with Japan over American rights and interests in China from 1937 to the middle of 1941.
- Kammerer, Albert, La Vérité sur l'Armistice (Paris: Éditions Medecis, 1944). A study of the armistice between France and the Axis in June 1940. Appendices contain numerous documents.
- Karig, Walter (with Earl Burton and Stephen L. Freeland), Battle Report: The Atlantic War (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1946). Part of an informal history of United States naval operations in the second world war. Karig gives major attention to dramatic trivia, leaving details of strategy and tactics well in the background.
- Koenig, Louis W., The Presidency and the Crisis: Powers of the Office from the Invasion of Poland to Pearl Harbor (New York: King's Crown Press, 1944).
- Langer, Robert, Seizure of Territory: The Stimson Doctrine and Related Principles in Legal Theory and Diplomatic Practice (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1947). The author holds that the doctrine of non-recognition, as practiced by the United States and other countries, did, in the long run, have important practical results of several types.

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- Lasswell, Harold D., Propaganda Technique in the World War (New York: Knopf, 1927).
- Lauterpacht, H., Recognition in International Law (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1947). Perhaps the best full-length study of this troubled subject.
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- "The 'Peace' Groups Join Battle," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Dec. 1940), pp. 664-673. A study of shifting alignments among internationalists, pacifists, and isolationists.
- McCallum, R. B., Public Opinion and the Last Peace (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1944). A study of public opinion in Great Britain and the United States with regard to the Peace of Versailles.
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- McNair, Arnold D., "The Stimson Doctrine of Non-Recognition," British Yearbook of International Law, Vol. 14 (1933), pp. 65-74. McNair argues that the doctrine of non-recognition can have few practical consequences of any value.
- Millis, Walter, The Road to War; America, 1944-1947 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1935).
- This is Pearl (New York: Morrow, 1947). This is a sprightly account of Japanese-American relations in 1941,

with special reference to the events surrounding the Pearl Harbor attack. Very friendly to the Roosevelt administration. Based primarily on the hearings and exhibits of the Joint Committee.

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- Rippy, J. Fred, America and the Strife of Europe (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1938). Gives the historical background of the conflicting pressures of American isolationism, expansionist sentiment, and desire for cooperation with other countries.
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- Royal Institute of International Affairs, Survey of International Affairs, by Arnold J. Toynbee and others (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1925-), 1937, 1938.
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- Seymour, Charles, American Diplomacy During the World War (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1934).
- American Neutrality, 1914-1917 (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1935).
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- Sherwood, Robert E., Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History (New York: Harper, 1948). A spacious biography of Harry L. Hopkins, dealing mainly with his activities in connection with the second World War. Based primarily on Hopkins' personal papers, this work is most valuable for its generous quotations from documents that are not yet available in any other form.
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- What Germany Forgot (New York: Macmillan, 1940). Another attempt to rehabilitate the Versailles Treaty.
- Squires, James D., British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917 (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1935).

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"The Transfer of Destroyers to Great Britain," American Journal of International Law, Vol. 34 (Oct. 1940), pp. 680-689. Favorable comment. Adhering to an argument he had used before, Wright here contends that the Pact of Paris had abolished neutral status, as between signatories, and that the United States, since Germany had violated the Pact, had the right to take whatever measures it wished regardless of the disadvantage to Germany.

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----"American Institute of Public Opinion--Surveys, 1938-1939," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 3 (Oct. 1939), pp. 581-607. A compilation of the findings of the American Institute of Public Opinion with regard to a large number of public issues during the years indicated.

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----"Assessing the Blame for the World War: A Symposium," Current History, Vol. 20 (June 1924), pp. 452-462. Favorable to the thesis of joint responsibility.

----"Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 4 (Mar. 1940), pp. 83-115; (June 1940), pp. 339-363; (Dec. 1940), pp. 708-718; Vol. 5 (Mar. 1941), pp. 133-165; (Fall 1941), pp. 470-497; (Winter 1941), pp. 666-687; Vol. 6 (Spring 1942), pp. 140-174. A regular quarterly editorial feature of this journal from the beginning of 1940.