
SOVIET-U.S. RELATIONS 1933-1942



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"СССР и США накануне и в начале войны. 1933-1942"

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Foreword

The evolution of historical science is constantly accompanied by a struggle of ideas, an analysis and comparison of different viewpoints, and the presence of schools and trends in historiography. An important part in all this is played by academic forums and round-table meetings of scholars.

This book brings together reports delivered by prominent Soviet and American scholars at a symposium held in October 1986 in Moscow on Soviet-American relations from 1933 until 1942. The reports focussed mainly on the events leading up to the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition and the nature and goals of this alliance.

The reader is offered fresh sources, original conceptions, subtle observations and new approaches and conclusions. The opinions of the authors in many ways diverge, for each presented his own view of the evolution of economic, political and diplomatic relations between the USSR and the United States. Relations between the two countries evolved at a time when the world was plunged into a political crisis by the approaching war. To a significant degree, this ominous setting preordained the contradictory and complex nature of global developments during this period, changes in the world balance of power, and the policies of individual states.

The differing approaches made for a lively exchange of opinions among the participants in the symposium. And this is only natural in view of the complex nature of historical research in general and methodology in particular. Much here depends on the views and prejudices of the researcher himself, on his ability to objectively analyze historical facts and documents and make accurate generalizations from them. Arguments and disputes among historians can only help serve the cause of restoring the historical truth.

When historians representing different schools and trends are brought together in one place, differences in the interpretation of the same events can only be expected. However, this counterposi-

tioning of viewpoints should help expand our body of knowledge about the events dealt with and move us closer to the truth.

This is particularly true in respect to the history of World War II, many of whose problems have yet to be studied exhaustively. If there was perhaps one thing that all the participants in the symposium shared, it was a belief that truth is borne out of dissension. It was in search of this truth that the historians resorted to a wide range of sources, including official documents, memoirs and interviews, and sought to scientifically analyze them.

The reports delivered at the symposium by Soviet researchers provide a broad overview of the development of international events during this period and in particular of the foreign policy efforts by the Soviet government to set up a system of collective security aimed at averting war, to bolster relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and to promote cooperation between the two powers during the war against their common enemy. Throughout can be found a striving to underscore the factors that—despite numerous ups and downs—brought the two countries closer together and eventually led to the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition.

The American participants in the symposium examined various aspects of Soviet-American relations. Their papers incorporate a vast amount of archive and other material published in English. One general criticism that could be made is that, with a few notable exceptions, the authors drew too little on Soviet reference sources, which in the end could not help affecting the way certain events were dealt with and the conclusions that were reached. The exceptions are the papers delivered by Steven Miner and Hugh Phillips, who make avail of Soviet sources. Miner's paper, "Stalin's 'Minimum Conditions' and Military Balance, 1941-1942," traces the link between the course of war and diplomacy. The author acknowledges that the "minimum conditions" of the Soviet government included the demand for the return of lands beyond the country's Western borders previously belonging to it and the desire to build relations with its neighbors on a friendly, bilateral basis without the participation of a third party.

The Soviet Union's legitimate demand for territorial integrity was challenged by Britain and the United States. In dealing with the issue of postwar arrangement in Europe they excluded the territories seized from Russia during the October 1917 Revolution. The Western allies also refused to recognize the voluntary

unification of the Baltic states with the USSR. However, the Soviet government's "minimum conditions," as expounded by Professor Miner, appear to be more like Soviet "aggrandizement," "claims" or "ambition." In this respect his conclusions are flawed, which was pointed out at the symposium by Soviet scholars.

Professor Hugh Phillips' report, "Rapprochement and Estrangement: The United States in Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1930s," justly notes the Soviet government's interest in establishing diplomatic relations with the United States and analyzes the reasons that prompted Moscow and Washington to normalize relations. He maintains that soon after diplomatic relations were established, Moscow's interest in the United States declined and a period of estrangement set in. This was only natural, he argues, considering that Moscow sought better relations with Washington merely to offset the growing threat posed by Japan.

However, this interpretation of events is difficult to accept. In fact, the USSR made repeated overtures to the United States with the offer to work together to safeguard peace and avert aggression in Europe as well as in the Far East. Viewing the world as an indivisible whole, the Soviet government proposed the signing of peace accords for the Pacific region. But all of these proposals were rejected, as were the Soviet appeals at the peace conference in Brussels for a collective response to the Japanese aggression in China.

One of the highlights of the symposium was Professor Mark Stoler's paper on the opening of the second front in Europe during World War II. In it Stoler examines this complex problem from the angle of actual possibilities of opening a second front in northern France. American military planners, Stoler maintains, proposed opening a second front in Europe in 1942 or 1943 by landing a large invasion force across the English Channel. But Roosevelt and Churchill vetoed the idea, preferring instead a "peripheral" strategy involving the landing of a joint Anglo-American force in northern Africa. For Stoler, the postponement of the allied invasion of Western Europe was merely an "unpleasant event." But other scholars attending the symposium pointed out a key weakness in Stoler's paper: the insufficient linkage of military and political strategies, for the timing of the opening of the second front was determined primarily by political considerations.

To be sure, the other papers presented at the symposium, which are included in this book, also provoked lively debate. The broad

range of views expressed in these scholarly reports will allow us to gain a greater understanding of and reflect deeper upon the tendencies and specific nature of the development of political, economic, scientific and cultural relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. It is hoped that this book will prove useful to those who are interested in questions associated with the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition, the role of the USSR and the United States in this military alliance and the development of Soviet-American relations and cooperation during the war years.

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**RAPPROCHEMENT AND ESTRANGEMENT:
THE UNITED STATES IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY
IN THE 1930s**

The middle of the 1930s marked a great turning point in Soviet-American relations. Or so it seemed to many people at the time. Citizens of both countries believed that the years of animosity that had begun with the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 were coming to an end. It soon became apparent, however, that very little in the way of a fundamental change had taken place in relations between Moscow and Washington. The reasons for this unhappy fact were, of course, complex. This paper cannot hope to achieve anything like comprehensiveness, but it does have as its object an illumination of the Soviet Union's goals and frustrations in its dealings with the United States in the years around America's recognition of the Soviet Union.

One thing is undeniably clear: from early 1932 until the spring of 1934 the Soviet Union placed great importance upon establishing and improving its relations with the United States. The causes of this urgency were many but foremost it was a direct result of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in September 1931, an act which threatened the Soviet-controlled Chinese Eastern Railway, or C.E.R. At the other end of the Soviet Union events also looked bad. The Weimar Republic, with which the U.S.S.R. had enjoyed especially close and beneficial relations, was in the midst of its agonizing disintegration which culminated in the establishment of the Nazi regime in January 1933. The new government made no secret of its long-term ambition of the annexation of the Ukraine and the Caucasus. And Moscow was well aware of these Nazi goals.¹

At the same time Soviet relations with Britain and France were uneasy, not that they ever had been cordial. In this case, the immediate source of tension was Western anger with the Soviet

¹ Papers by the US participants in the Soviet-American symposium are reproduced as they were presented by the authors. — *Ed.*

Union's sale of agricultural goods on the international market at very low prices, something London and Paris denounced as "dumping."²

Finally one must not overlook the domestic situation in the Soviet Union. Perhaps as important as any external factor, internal policy demanded a cautious and even conciliatory foreign policy. An economy in the process of the unprecedented violence and convulsion that accompanied the implementation of the first Five-Year Plan for rapid industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture³ could ill-afford the added strain of war that might follow some adventure or disaster in foreign policy.⁴

In these complex and dangerous circumstances, the Soviet leadership made a brief but determined effort to establish satisfactory relations with the United States. However, as a result of America's policy toward Moscow and significant changes in the U.S.S.R.'s foreign relations, the importance of the United States in Soviet policy declined dramatically in 1934, and did not resume a place of consequence until 1941 and the German invasion of the Soviet Union.

Moscow's primary goal of obtaining American support against Japanese aggression in the Far East was truly formidable because when Japan launched its attack, the United States still had not even recognized the Soviet government. The U.S.S.R. had long wanted to end such a state of affairs,⁵ but refused to compromise on two issues: its support of the Third International, or Comintern, and the Soviets' repudiation of the debts owed to the United States by the Imperial and Provisional governments. On these matters, Soviet-American relations floundered until 1933.⁶

An early sign of a change in American policy appeared in July 1932 when Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Democratic Party's nominee for President, said that he would give the matter of recognition of Soviet Russia "his impartial consideration" if he were elected. Roosevelt's opponent, the incumbent Herbert Hoover, refused even to answer such questions.

Soviet hopes were soon fulfilled. After some preliminary discussions, President Roosevelt dispatched a letter on 10 October 1933 to the President of the Soviet government, Mikhail Kalinin, suggesting an end to the "abnormal relations" between the United States and the U.S.S.R. through "open, friendly discussions" of the "serious ... but not insoluble" difficulties that separated the two governments. To this invitation Kalinin replied that Soviet-American difficulties could never be resolved as long as the states lacked "direct

relations." But Kalinin went further than Roosevelt, adding that the estrangement of the two countries was detrimental not only to each other but "to the general international situation, strengthening elements of disturbance, complicating the process of the consolidation of a general peace and encouraging forces, which are aiming at the violation of this peace."⁷

The Soviet government sent its Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Maksim Litvinov, to Washington for the recognition talks which lasted from the eighth until the seventeenth of November. Further evidence of Soviet desires for American help quickly became apparent. Early in the talks Litvinov made a startling departure from past Soviet policy — he discarded the usual practice of insisting upon formal recognition before discussing particular political issues. The Americans successfully insisted on a settlement of the following points before the extension of formal recognition: the repudiated debts; Soviet interference in American domestic affairs through the Comintern and the American Communist Party; and the protection of the rights of American citizens, especially freedom of worship, who might reside in Russia subsequent to recognition.⁸

Litvinov, who was uncomfortable in what he perceived as a "very nervous situation" at the White House due to the unpopularity of Soviet Russia, replied first to the debt issue. He insisted that his government could not be expected to pay for guns used to shoot its own soldiers by the troops of the Provisional Government of Alexander Kerensky.⁹ William C. Bullitt, Roosevelt's friend and advisor on Soviet affairs, replied that at least two-thirds of the money sent to Kerensky had been used in the war effort against the Germans and therefore must be repaid.¹⁰ Litvinov replied that if that were the case, the Russians had their counterclaims arising from the American intervention of 1919-1920.¹¹ Sensing an impasse, Bullitt startled Litvinov by noting that soon the United States Congress would pass the Johnson Act forbidding loans to nations in default to the American government. Therefore if the Soviet government continued to bicker they would not be able to obtain "one penny of credit" in the United States.¹² Soviet documents and accounts are unclear why Litvinov eventually relented on the debt issue. Maybe it was because the Soviet government hoped to make substantial purchases with American financial help. Or perhaps Litvinov was so determined to obtain American cooperation against Japan that he accepted a settlement that could set a dangerous precedent for the Soviet Union's

international relations, particularly with France and Britain. Whatever the reason, on 15 November Litvinov and Roosevelt signed a "gentlemen's agreement" wherein the Soviet Union agreed to "pay the government of the United States on the account of the debt of Kerensky or others a sum not less than \$75,000,000 in the form of a percentage above the normal rate of interest on a loan which will be granted to it by the government of the United States or its citizens."¹³ With this document signed the most difficult obstacle to formal recognition was seemingly removed.

Regarding the other issues for the United States, the activities of the Comintern and religious freedom for Americans in the U.S.S.R., Litvinov had from the outset insisted that these matters could be easily resolved. On 16 November Litvinov guaranteed that the Soviet government would not allow "any organization" on its territory which aimed at the overthrow or preparation for the overthrow of the United States government and assured Roosevelt that Americans' religious rights would be carefully protected under the Soviet Constitution.¹⁴ These three commitments made by Litvinov have been called the "most thoroughgoing" accepted by the Soviet Union to another government in its history.¹⁵ If Litvinov thought he had gained sufficient American goodwill to obtain concrete support against Japan, he was rapidly disillusioned.

But Litvinov at first had cause for optimism, especially after a lengthy conversation with Roosevelt on 17 November in which the two men discussed the general international situation. Roosevelt openly recognized Germany and Japan as threats to the peace and said that the United States "was prepared to do everything to avert the Japanese peril [to the U.S.S.R.]." However, Litvinov reported that Roosevelt set limits on America's support. The President said that "America will not fight because not one American would accept that, but [the United States] is prepared to render [the U.S.S.R.] 100 percent moral and diplomatic support." Then Roosevelt tossed out the idea of a "nonaggression pact to which [Litvinov] gave immediate consent and also approved the idea of a Pacific pact. Roosevelt then and there instructed Bullitt to study these issues and report back to him." In summing up for the Politburo, Litvinov thought the future looked bright. "I have the impression that in the event of a settlement of the debt problem and with an absence of incidents involving Americans [in the U.S.S.R.], we should be able to establish very friendly relations with Roosevelt."¹⁶

Therefore in November 1933 the Soviet leaders could reasonably assume that their substantial concessions to the United States might well bear fruit. They were quickly enlightened. On 11 December 1933 William Bullitt arrived in Moscow as the new American ambassador. (The Soviet Union sent Alexander Troianovsky, a leading diplomatic specialist on Japan, to Washington, further evidence of a desire for American cooperation against Japan.) Although Litvinov had already developed a distaste for Bullitt,¹⁷ there is no evidence to suggest that the other Soviet leaders felt the same. The government held a tremendous reception for Bullitt at the home of the Soviet Marshal, Kliment Voroshilov. There Stalin met with a foreign ambassador for the first time. The General Secretary introduced Bullitt to Marshal Alexander Yegorov saying that Yegorov would victoriously lead Soviet troops against Japan, "when Japan attacks." Stalin continued his anti-Japanese theme, asking Bullitt to help the Soviet Union obtain as much as 250,000 tons of steel rails from the United States to facilitate the completion of a second rail line to Vladivostok. He asserted that without the rails the Red Army would defeat the Japanese but the task would be easier with them.¹⁸

On 11 December, however, the brief, even illusory, rapprochement began to unravel. In a meeting with Bullitt, Litvinov "reminded" the ambassador of Roosevelt's recent instructions that Bullitt study the possibilities of a Pacific pact. Bullitt simply evaded the question.¹⁹ On 21 December Bullitt said that the United States could not sign a nonaggression pact with only the Soviet Union after Washington had rejected such a pact with Japan and added that "such a pact [between America and the U.S.S.R.] was not even necessary because neither side was preparing to attack the other." It must have now become clear to Litvinov that he could not expect any type of Soviet-American alignment in the Far East. But he tried again, pointing to the possibility of a joint Soviet-American proposal for a non-aggression pact that would include those two powers and Japan. He had absolutely no doubt that Japan would reject such an idea but its very rejection "would once again reveal [Japan's] aggressive intentions." Bullitt could only promise that he would discuss the matter with Roosevelt, but the ambassador exhibited no enthusiasm for the proposal.²⁰ According to Bullitt's account of the meeting, Litvinov asked if the United States would be willing simply to send a naval warship or squadron to Vladivostok or Leningrad as a symbolic gesture. Bullitt replied that such a visit was unlikely.²¹

Finally the new Soviet ambassador to Washington, Troianovsky, met with Roosevelt on 23 February 1934. The former emphasized that "to contain Japan and to limit its appetite would not be easy. Japan would not listen to America and the U.S.S.R. speaking separately, but would listen to them together if only at the last minute. Therefore it is necessary for us to have contact." Roosevelt's response was to dwell "on the peaceful intentions of our countries and the absence of territorial claims on each other" and then to change the subject.²²

In this way the Soviet Union had quite explicitly revealed its desire for American cooperation in the Far East against a militarist and expansionist Japan. The United States had been evasive and noncommittal. By the spring of 1934 it was obvious to Moscow that it would not achieve its main foreign policy goal vis-à-vis the United States. It is hardly surprising therefore that when the focus of talks shifted to a satisfaction of America's objectives regarding the debt and the Comintern, the Soviet leadership showed no inclination to conciliate the United States.

When talks opened on the implementation of the "gentlemen's agreement" on the debt, the Soviets consistently demanded an outright "loan" to be spent wherever they pleased. The United States government was aghast and just as consistently asserted that it had actually meant a "credit" to be spent entirely in America under Washington's supervision.²³ Technically the Soviet position was correct and Moscow clung to it.

But a question immediately arises: why did the Soviet Union not retreat and accept the American position on the debt controversy even if it was not technically correct? Stalin himself had admitted that the Soviet Union could use steel rails from the United States. While it is impossible to be certain, the answer seems fairly simple—Stalin informed Bullitt in September 1934 that "if an arrangement were made to pay the United States' claims by extra interests on commercial credits, the Soviet Union could not refuse to make similar arrangements with France and England without greatly angering them..."²⁴ From Stalin's remarks two conclusions are possible: that the Soviet Union was so desperate for American support against Japan that it briefly was willing to risk provoking the ire of Britain and France or that the position outlined by Stalin had always been Soviet policy and there had never been any intention to repay the repudiated loans. Whatever the case may be the result was that "no loan was ever granted, and no debt ever

paid."²⁵ Similarly, Soviet support for the Comintern remained unabated, much to the anger of the American government.

Briefly, a few other events warrant mention to elucidate further Moscow's reduced interest in good relations with the United States. First the Soviet Union sold the C.E.R. to the Japanese puppet-state of Manchukuo and thereby reduced at least for a time the tension on its eastern border. Considering Moscow's failure to achieve firm support against Japan from any nation except China, the U.S.S.R. had little choice. And in the West the Soviet position improved significantly with its entrance into the League of Nations and the negotiation of a defensive alliance with France. In the meantime the United States continued to follow an isolationist policy, embodied especially in the Neutrality Acts. Until 1941 the two future superpowers were barely on speaking terms.

It is always risky to attempt to find "lessons" in history; ironies, however, are easier to discover. And the irony of Soviet-American political relations in the 1930s was that both nations were essentially dedicated to a policy that was hostile to the goals of the fascist or militarist powers. Both wanted peace so that they could concentrate on domestic affairs. But for reasons that might seem trivial in hindsight, issues of relatively small debts and generally ineffective Communist propaganda, two nations desirous of the maintenance of peace remained estranged until crisis became near catastrophe.

NOTES

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¹Stalin's speech to the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 26 January 1934, *Dokumenty vneshnei politiki S.S.S.R.*, Vol. XVII, p. 86. (Hereafter cited as *D.V.P.*). For an outline of the Nazis' foreign policy goals toward the U.S.S.R. see Gerhard Weinberg, *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Diplomatic Revolution in Europe, 1933-36*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1970, pp. 4-16. Igor F. Maksimychev, "Sovetsko-Germanskiye otnosheniya v period obrazovaniya ochaga fashistskoi agressii v Evrope, 1933-1936" (Ph.D. dissertation, Moscow State Institute for International Relations), pp. 1-42, gives a Soviet account of the collapse of the Weimar regime and the place of Nazi Germany in "the anti-Soviet plans of imperialism."

²Louis Fischer, *Russia's Road from Peace to War, 1917-1941*, New York, Harper and Row, 1969, p. 211. A succinct Soviet rebuttal of the dumping charge can be

found in Maksim M. Litvinov, *The Soviet Dumping Fable*, New York, The Worker's Library, 1931.

³The experience of collectivization was especially traumatic for the Soviet system. According to Stalin it involved a "fearful" struggle with "ten millions" of small farmers. Winston Churchill, *The Second World War: The Hinge of Fate*, London, Cassell, 1951, p. 447. The official Soviet version of the collectivization process concedes only that it involved "coercive measures." B.N. Ponomarev, et al., *Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza*, 6th ed., Moscow, Politizdat, 1982, pp. 382-383.

⁴Jonathan Haslam, *Soviet Foreign Policy, 1930-1933*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1983.

⁵In early 1918 the Soviet representative in London and future Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Maksim M. Litvinov, suggested to Lenin that he be reassigned to the United States because the British would have virtually nothing to do with him and he understood the growing importance of the United States in world affairs. Lenin agreed, but the American embassy in London refused to respond to Litvinov's request for a visa. Ivan Maisky, *Journey Into the Past*, London, Hutchinson, 1962, p. 67. For details on Soviet-American contacts before recognition in 1933 see Vasilii Val'kov, *S.S.S.R. i S.Sh.A.*, Moscow, Nauka, 1965, pp. 7-196, and Hugh Phillips, "Between the Revolution and the West: A Political Biography of Maksim M. Litvinov" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1985), pp. 136-141.

⁶John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1978, pp. 87-117.

⁷Exchange of Notes Between Kalinin and Roosevelt, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 564-565.

⁸Orville Bullitt, ed., *For the President, Personal and Secret: Correspondence Between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1972, pp. 43-50.

⁹Z.S. Sheinis, "Vashingtonskaya missiya," *Moskva*, Number 9, 1967, pp. 185-186. Sheinis, the author of an unpublished complete biography of Litvinov, had access to Foreign Ministry and Party Archives. The present author's request for such access was denied in 1982 and 1983.

¹⁰Bullitt, ed., *For the President...*, p. 48.

¹¹Sheinis, "Vashingtonskaya missiya," p. 186.

¹²Bullitt, ed., *For the President...*, p. 48.

¹³Mutual Communique of Litvinov and Roosevelt, 15 November 1933, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVI, p. 640. It should be noted that in an earlier meeting Litvinov said that a final resolution of the financial issue would "require a month of sustained work." Memo of Litvinov to Narkomindel, 10 November 1933, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVI, p. 622.

¹⁴United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Soviet Union, 1933-1939*, Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952, pp. 28-33.

¹⁵Beatrice Farnsworth, *William C. Bullitt and the Soviet Union*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1967, p. 106.

¹⁶Telegram of Litvinov to Narkomindel, 17 November 1933, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 658-659.

¹⁷Letter of Litvinov to Troianovsky, 10 April 1934, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVII, p. 243.

¹⁸Bullitt, ed., *For the President...*, p. 67.

¹⁹Memo of meeting of Litvinov with Bullitt, 11 December 1933, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVI, p. 731.

²⁰Memo of meeting of Litvinov with Bullitt, 21 December 1933, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 759-760.

²¹Bullitt, ed., *For the President...*, p. 71.

²²Telegram of Troianovsky to Stalin and Molotov, 23 February 1934, *D.V.P.*, Vol. XVII, pp. 163-164.

²³Telegram of Bullitt to the Secretary of State, 15 September 1934, United States National Archives, U.S. Department of State, General Files, 1933-1941, Record Group 59, 800.51, W89, U.S.S.R./121.

²⁴Telegram of Bullitt to Department of State, 15 September 1934, Record Group 59, 800.51, W89, U.S.S.R./124.

²⁵Fischer, *Russia's Road...*, p. 218.

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THE U.S. AND THE U.S.S.R.: VIEWS FROM AMERICA, 1933-1942

It was, I believe, the British historian Phillip Guedalla who remarked that if history repeats itself, then historians repeat each other. Certainly what I offer here is intended much less as an original statement than as a summary and synthesis of what a number of people (including myself) have had to say about the way in which Americans perceived and discussed the Soviet Union from the early 1930s to the early 1940s.

First, a note of disclaimer. I am under no illusions that I can truly describe the state of what in the United States — probably more than is the case in any other country — we like to term “public opinion.” In a political democracy such as that of the United States, it is perhaps inescapable that those seeking to understand the country’s political dynamics should presume that within the great masses of American citizens, certain broadly shared beliefs and values not only exist but can be apprehended by systematic, rigorous analysis of vast amounts of both quantitative and qualitative information. A further presumption is that understanding the thinking of people in general, however ill-formed or inarticulately expressed their thinking might be, is critical to understanding how government functions at all levels, how policies and measures get decided upon, enacted or proclaimed, and pursued. For students of American life, the proverbial man (or woman) on the street becomes ubiquitous and omnipresent. Thus the still further presumption that the United States’ political-governmental leadership always has to operate within the boundaries of “public opinion,” which serves more than any other factor to limit what the leadership is able to do to change established practices and inaugurate new ones.

It is not my purpose here to undertake a critique of what appears, at least to me, almost an obsessive American faith in the ontological reality of public opinion. But I would remind you of what Walter Lippmann said many years ago, in the aftermath of the First World War and the most massive effort the American government

had made up to that time to mold the public perceptions of the citizenry. “The public,” Lippmann observed, “is a phantom, a congeries of blind prejudices, stereotypically conditioned responses, half-understandings and misunderstandings.”¹ In fact there are many publics, arguably about as many as there are different individuals whose thoughts are probed by those striving to assess the state of “public opinion.”

With all that said, the assignment remains to comment upon American perceptions of the Soviet Union — its policies, its people, its behavior in the world — in the period roughly from the establishment of official diplomatic relations between the United States and the U.S.S.R. in 1933 up until the two countries found themselves fighting together in an all-out war against Nazi Germany. I am concerned with three fairly discrete kinds of articulated opinion: the views of those termed (with necessary imprecision) intellectuals; the images of the U.S.S.R. and of what Americans understood as Communism to be found in the forms of popular culture, most notably magazines and motion pictures; and what usually passed for “public opinion,” especially the findings in the increasingly systematic and elaborate opinion polls that made their appearance in the middle 1930s.

I

As Peter Filene and Frank Warren, among others, have explained at length, the onset of the Great Depression in the United States changed what had been, in the 1920s, a widespread intellectual curiosity about revolutionary Russia into an intensifying fascination with and frequently admiration for that country. The early 1930s brought the full flowering of what Malcolm Cowley, one of the interwar period’s foremost literary protagonists, has called “the Red Romance.”² In the same years in which capitalism in the United States and nearly everywhere else seemed on the verge of collapse, the Soviet Union, under the Stalin regime’s Five-Year Plan, was undergoing a stunning industrial and agricultural transformation. The rapidly increasing number of American travelers to Russia commonly came home with glowing and often rapturous descriptions of the Russian “miracle.” The responses of Edmund Wilson, already a distinguished critic and essayist, and Bruce Bliven, editor of the influential liberal weekly *New Republic*, were typical

of Americans who went to Russia looking for inspiration and found what they were looking for. "Russia ... is a land of hope," Bliven wrote in 1931. "It strikes you as soon as you are across the border." Reported Wilson, "The strongest impression one gets in Russia ... is one of extraordinary heroism... You feel in the Soviet Union that you are at the moral top of the world where the light never really goes out."³

Except for the relatively small number of confirmed American Communists and their closest sympathizers, the Red Romance was more of an infatuation than a deep and lasting commitment. In the early Depression years, the primary attractiveness of the Soviet Union was the comprehensive economic planning that was the central feature of the Five-Year Plan. The aging liberal journalist Lincoln Steffens put it succinctly in his widely read autobiography, published in 1931: "That is the advantage of a plan. You can go wrong, you can attack, as you must, but if you know you are wrong, you can steer back on your course."⁴ For Steffens and much of the rest of the American intelligentsia, the way out of the Depression nightmare and toward recovery and a more equitably distributed prosperity lay in observing, learning from, and partially emulating the great collectivist experiment going on in Russia.

Yet the characteristic view of non-Marxist liberals and radicals in the United States was pragmatic. The Soviet Union, as they saw it, was a great laboratory, a place where social and economic experimentation was proceeding on an unprecedented scale. While Americans might profit in many ways from the Russian example, historical and contemporary circumstances in the two countries were so different that the United States could never use the U.S.S.R. as an exact model. Thus the Russian experiment was just that—an experiment—and not a Marxist blueprint. Planning was mainly a matter of technique, of methods to be employed as conditions, not dogma, required. Moreover, advocates of economic planning usually insisted that the reconstruction of the American economy must take place within the existing framework of representative political democracy. Presumably the hoped-for reorientation of governmental and economic affairs could be brought about with broad popular support. Almost all of the planning enthusiasts either had reservations about the Soviet system or, like the historian Charles A. Beard and the renowned philosopher John Dewey, forthrightly criticized the absence of political dissent in the U.S.S.R. In short, the excitement over national planning in

the early thirties, while strongly influenced by what was happening in the Soviet Union in those years, was much less a matter of wanting to bring Marxist revolution to America than of seeking to learn by looking abroad, and then applying that knowledge in a distinctly American context. As they debated questions having to do with economic planning in the depths of the Great Depression, American intellectuals usually perceived the Soviet Union in the light of their own needs, hopes, and fears.

That much can also be said for the period of the Popular Front. If the Great Depression was the central reality of the 1930s for American life as a whole, then from 1935 to 1939 the Popular Front was the single strongest influence at work in American intellectual and cultural life. Fearing the isolation of the Soviet Union in case of war with Nazi Germany, late in the summer of 1935 the Stalin regime shifted its official policy line from open hostility toward the Western capitalist governments over to accommodation and conciliation, in the interest of stopping the spread of fascist and pro-fascist influence throughout Europe and presumably in the Western Hemisphere as well. Henceforth domestic Communist parties were to cooperate closely with anti-fascists of every kind and virtually abandon their revolutionary line and agitation-propaganda activities. The Communist Party U.S.A. reached out to unite with liberals, non-Communist radicals, and all other so-called "progressive" forces in common opposition to fascism everywhere. The ideological radicalism that had flared across the intellectual and cultural spectrum in the early thirties largely subsided after 1935. American Communists stopped talking about awakening revolutionary consciousness in the working classes, concentrating instead on common efforts among "progressives" to aid the struggle of organized labor—especially the new mass-production unions affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations—for "social justice" within the framework of a capitalist system throttled by the Depression and then tamed by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.

While Earl Browder, secretary of the Communist Party U.S.A., proclaimed Communism to be twentieth-century Americanism, Mike Gold, the Party's leading spokesman in cultural affairs, announced that "the chief battleground in the defense of culture against fascist barbarism is in this question of the national tradition."⁵ Thereafter the Party patriotically embraced the American past, especially those figures who had done most to shape the nation's democratic, "progressive" heritage. At the Party's 1936 na-

tional convention, huge likenesses of Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln hung behind the speaker's rostrum. The Red Romance had turned into a romance with America. The orthodox Marxist analyses of the early thirties, which had arrayed a bourgeois ruling class against the downtrodden, powerless masses, now gave way to a fuzziest view of "the people," often aided by their New Deal government, struggling against the élite of "economic royalists" (as Roosevelt called them) who stood athwart the movement for social justice in the United States.

The Popular Front, by creating a kind of ecumenical leftism, greatly enhanced the images of both the Communist Party U.S.A. and the Soviet Union. Stalin's willingness to aid the Spanish Republic in its struggle against rightist revolutionaries, together with his opposition to German demands on Czechoslovakia, prompted large numbers of American intellectuals to hail the U.S.S.R. as the only major power prepared to stand in the way of Hitler's territorial ambitions. Although many non-Communists fretted and argued over the advent of Communist-instigated terrorism within the Spanish Republic and over the bloody purges of Stalin's supposed enemies carried out in the Moscow trials of 1936-1938, most managed to keep their faith in the broad Left coalition. As some four hundred prominent people in scholarship and the arts declared in the liberal *Nation* magazine on August 26, 1939, "the Soviet Union continues as always to be a bulwark against war and aggression, and works unceasingly for a peaceful international order."⁶

Three days earlier (after the *Nation's* weekly issue was already in press), the U.S.S.R. had signed its pact of trade and non-aggression with Germany. Within twenty-four hours after the signing of the pact, Communist Party publications in the United States stopped exhorting "progressives" to take common action against the common menace of fascism and started calling for strict American neutrality if war broke out in Europe. Of course that war came eight days later with the German invasion of Poland and British and French declarations of war against Germany. The Popular Front was left a shambles; for many the autumn of 1939 was a time for painful reevaluation and recantation, for searching the wreckage of the Front for some kind of coherent position. Ultimately nearly all liberals and non-Communist radicals abandoned the Front, leaving only outright Communist Party members in control of the various Front organizations. For most intellectuals the Red Romance was over, at least for the time being.

Within the American Communist movement there was no return to the revolutionary Marxism of the early thirties. Mike Gold and other Communist literary figures joined the Party's political leadership in denouncing the Roosevelt Administration's pro-British foreign policy and the incipient buildup of American armed forces. Yet such arguments frequently invoked the anti-militarism and aversion to European entanglements that were supposed to be basic to American national tradition. Gold, at the same time that he attacked the "renegades" and "hollow men" who had deserted the Left, could still maintain that "You cannot go wrong in the politics you follow if you keep your eye always fixed on this true nation of the majority." Communism, at least to American Communists, still equated with Americanism.⁷

When Germany attacked the U.S.S.R. on June 22, 1941, American Communists and "fellow travelers" instantly moved to reconstruct the Popular Front. Reciprocally, numerous non-Communists, still not having resolved the basic ideological conflicts they had avoided during the earlier period of collaboration with the Communist Party, were willing once again to view the U.S.S.R. as one of the "progressive" nations fighting against the global menace of fascism. The image of Stalin's Russia, tarnished by the Nazi-Soviet Pact and then by what articulate opinion overwhelmingly condemned as a Russian war of aggression against Finland, nonetheless remained brighter than that of fascism. For probably a majority of the American intellectual class, the U.S.S.R. remained, spiritually as well as ideologically, on the Left — and therefore ultimately on the side of progressive humanity, however cynical and repressive the Stalinist state might be. In the summer of 1941, as American Communists hurriedly switched from neutralism to ardent interventionism, it again became possible to close ranks on the Left.

The Soviets' fiercely heroic stand against the German invaders served to obscure such bothersome matters as the Moscow trials, the Nazi-Soviet Pact, and the Russo-Finnish war. Like the previous coalition, the neo-Popular Front sought cohesiveness among anti-fascists and as close ties as possible between the United States and the U.S.S.R. The neo-Front failed to reenlist considerable numbers of intellectuals who, though they unhesitatingly supported the war effort, would no longer cooperate with the Communist Party. Yet the neo-Front also benefited enormously from the formation of the Soviet-American alliance and from the Roosevelt Administration's encouragement of pro-Russian feeling among all Americans.

Despite the cautionary admonitions of such varied figures as Walter Lippmann, the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, the historian Carl Becker, and the radical journalist Dwight Macdonald, the prevailing intellectual mood — at least during the first two years of the Soviet-American alliance — was buoyant and confident. Cooperation borne of wartime necessity, according to the most widely accepted belief, would provide the keystone for a new, peaceful international order. The “people’s war,” as Left spokesmen dubbed the conflict, would assuredly usher in what, in May 1942, Vice President Henry Wallace insisted must become “the century of the common man.”

II

By 1942-1943 this preponderant intellectual enthusiasm for the U.S.S.R. had come to be shared by Americans in general — if one is to judge by such indicators as popular magazines, motion pictures, and opinion polls. In a survey for the period 1939-1944 of twenty-three prominent magazines, classified according to liberal, moderate, and conservative political inclinations, Melvin W. Small has found not only an expected big jump (about fourfold) in total articles on Russia, but also a striking increase in *favorable* articles (from only four to 145) among the politically moderate and conservative magazines.

Unquestionably the high point of pro-Soviet depictions in the popular periodical press was the famous March 29, 1943, all-Russia issue of the weekly *Life*, which that year had a national circulation exceeded only by *Reader's Digest*. Published by Henry Luce, whose magazines had all been staunchly anti-Soviet before Pearl Harbor, *Life* now offered a smiling Stalin on its cover and photo-essays on the diverse people of the U.S.S.R., on Lenin (“perhaps the greatest figure of modern times”), and on the present “Red leaders,” characterized as “tough, loyal, capable administrators.” Joseph E. Davies, whose memoirs of his tour as U.S. ambassador in Moscow had become a best-seller the previous year, gave positive answers to a series of questions about Soviet international conduct, and *Life* declared editorially, “We respect the mighty Russian people and we admire them. It is safe to say that no nation on earth has ever done so much so fast.”⁸

If *Life's* Russia issue marked the apex of favorable coverage in the mass-circulation magazines, the release by Warner Brothers

studios shortly thereafter of the motion picture *Mission to Moscow*, based on Davies' memoirs, was Hollywood's supreme pro-Russian offering. Before the German invasion, American movie-makers had satirized and ridiculed Communism and Russian society in such films as *Comrade X*, *He Stayed for Breakfast*, and most of all *Ninotchka*. The last movie, starring Greta Garbo as a dedicated government functionary and Party member who loses her heart to a suave and wealthy Parisian (played by Melvyn Douglas), was a success both at the box office and with the critics in 1940. Beginning in 1942, however, American movie-goers watched a steady flow (though never a deluge) of movies that depicted the endurance, courage, and resourcefulness of a Russian people united behind their leaders and determined to drive out the German hordes. It was hardly necessary for the Office of War Information, the American government's chief wartime propaganda agency, to urge the movie studios to portray the U.S.S.R. in the best possible light. In the early war years Hollywood was caught up in its own version of the Red Romance, with some producers even going so far as to submit screenplays to the Soviet embassy for approval and technical assistance.

Besides *Mission to Moscow* (whose heavy-handed apologetics for Stalin's prewar policies offended even some sympathetic reviewers), such feature films as *The North Star*, *Song of Russia*, and *Days of Glory* helped cultivate pro-Russian feeling among the estimated eighty-five million Americans who went to movie theaters each week. At least as effective were Russian-made documentary films such as *Moscow Strikes Back*, *The Siege of Leningrad*, and *Stalingrad*, narrated by Edward G. Robinson and other prominent American actors, and *The Battle of Russia* from the acclaimed *Why We Fight* series of documentaries put together by the Hollywood director Frank Capra.

III

Actual events, however, shaped the thinking of Americans more than movies, magazine layouts, or editorial commentary. At least that was what the public opinion polls suggested. By the early 1940s the surveys done by George Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion, by *Fortune* magazine under Elmo Roper's direction, and by various lesser organizations had become a basic part of public life in the United States. Although their methodology would appear

crude by the standards of a later generation of pollsters, from the time they made their appearance in the mid-thirties, the polls were widely taken to be accurate and reliable measurements of what the American people thought and felt about a wider and wider range of issues.

In the fall of 1938, with Europe still nominally at peace, Gallup's pollsters asked their sample of three thousand adult Americans which side they would rather see win in case of war between Germany and Russia. Eighty-two percent of the respondents favored the U.S.S.R. In the same poll, however, 59 percent said they would rather live under the kind of government in Germany than that in Russia, and a few months later 55 percent of those questioned told Gallup pollsters that they considered Communists more dangerous than Nazis within the United States.

The Nazi-Soviet Pact and then the Russo-Finnish conflict did enormous damage to Soviet standing with Americans. In December 1939, nearly all of the 89 percent of Gallup's respondents wanted Finland to triumph—although fewer than two in five favored direct U.S. assistance to the Finns. Throughout the rest of the period of official Soviet-German neutrality, the polls continued to reflect strong hostility toward the U.S.S.R.

Less than a month after the German attack on Russia, however, nearly three-fourths of Gallup's interviewees said they wanted to see a Russian victory. The most common explanation given by the respondents, as Gallup summarized it, was that "Russia is not imperialistic, but Germany is. Russia, even if she won, would not invade the United States, whereas Germany probably would."⁹ In the fall of 1941, 14 percent of those questioned by Elmo Roper opposed any kind of U.S. aid to the U.S.S.R.; but two months after Pearl Harbor, only 4 percent felt that way, and nearly half were in favor of treating Russia as an equal partner with Great Britain in the war against the Axis powers. The shift toward Russia in American public attitudes, according to Ralph Levering, amounted to a change in the thinking of some fifteen million citizens.¹⁰ Whereas opinion, as indicated in various polls, was evenly divided in the spring of 1942 on whether the U.S.S.R. could be trusted to cooperate with the U.S. after the war, a year later, in the afterglow of Stalingrad, respondents were prepared to "trust Russia" by a margin of two to one. The Moscow and Teheran conferences in the fall of 1943 pushed friendly feelings toward the U.S.S.R., again as indicated in the public-opinion polls, to still higher levels.

In mid-1943 *Life* magazine characterized the present state of Soviet-American relations as "the era of good feeling."¹¹ Despite Russian resentment over the Anglo-American failure to open a full-scale second front, the Grand Alliance was in full swing. The Soviets were killing huge numbers of Germans and thereby saving American lives. For the time being, that central fact in the military situation outweighed the anti-Communism that was still a fundamental element in American life.

In 1942 William Z. Foster, past and future secretary of the Communist Party U.S.A., wrote that "The anti-Soviet lies are falling one by one in the light of war realities." Events had proved the necessity of collective security to stop fascism, as the Soviets had advocated in the thirties. Stalin's purges had liquidated traitors and spies. The war with Finland now appeared fully justified. The Russian Orthodox Church, far from suffering persecution, was loyally supporting the Soviet government in the war. Finally, "the wonderful fighting quality" in the Russian people stemmed from "their unshatterable loyalty to their much-maligned Socialist system and Communist leaders." The most remarkable thing about Foster's statement, Ralph Levering has suggested, was that it was a fairly close summary of the changes that had occurred in the outlook of many millions of Americans since U.S. entry into the war.¹²

Obviously the Soviet Union would be a powerful force in the postwar international situation. But in mid-war few Americans were prepared to do much hard thinking about what the world would be like once the Axis were overcome. By nearly every indication, the majority of Americans had come to admire, maybe even like the Russians. The time had not yet come to start worrying about them.

NOTES

¹Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.

²Malcolm Cowley, "A Remembrance of the Red Romance," *Esquire*, LXI (March-April 1964), pp. 124 ff., 70 ff.

³Edmund Wilson, *Travels in Two Democracies*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936, pp. 320-321; Bliven quoted in Peter G. Filene, *Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1967, p. 195.

⁴Lincoln Steffens, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1931, p. 798.

SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS, 1939-1942: SEARCHING
FOR ALLIES IN A THREATENING WORLD

I

On the eve of World War II Roosevelt had a far clearer picture in mind of the nature of the Axis threat to world peace and the interconnection of the Far Eastern and European crises than many in his Department of State. He told his Ambassador to Japan Joseph Clark Grew that the Japanese had run beyond the limits of endurance in playing into the hands of the European aggressors by diverting the attention of the democracies to the Far East and that it was time the Japanese government was told clearly what the consequences of further aggressiveness would be.¹

Obviously if the Soviet Union was concerned about the aggressive designs of Japan, and the United States agreed with those concerns, it was natural for the powers to work as best they could to curb Japan's appetite despite their differences over what was happening in Europe. Seeing possible obstructionism in the Department of State over direct cooperation, Franklin Roosevelt turned to his Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., to work something out with the Soviet Union which would assist China in her battle with the Japanese. Morgenthau was to arrange a "three cornered deal" between the Americans, Russians, and Chinese. Roosevelt set him to this task in July 1940. The intent was to provide China with military hardware which the neutrality laws prohibited the U.S. from supplying but which Russia could sell if the Americans exchanged strategic materials and gave the Chinese money to pay the USSR. All parties would be served in their efforts to thwart aggression and prevent Japan from stopping the vital flow of raw materials from the Far East to the beleaguered democracies in Europe.²

Morgenthau's "diplomacy" conflicted with the efforts of the Department of State at that time to work out a new trade pact with the USSR the intent of which was to give the impression to the world

⁵Gold quoted in Howard Lee Hertz, "Writer and Revolutionary: The Life of Michael Gold, Father of Proletarian Literature in the United States" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1974), p. 681.

⁶"To All Active Supporters of Democracy and Peace," *Nation*, CLIX (August 26, 1939), p. 228.

⁷Gold, *The Hollow Men*, New York, International Publishers, 1941; Hertz, "Writer and Revolutionary," pp. 681-697.

⁸*Life*, XXIX (March 1943), *passim*.

⁹Quoted in Ralph B. Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, 1939-1945*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1976, p. 43.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

¹¹Quoted in Paul Willen, "Who 'Collaborated' with Russia?" *Antioch Review*, XIV (September 1954), p. 272.

¹²Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance...*, p. 99; Foster quoted *Ibid.*

that American-Soviet differences had been smoothed over in regards to the crisis in Europe and to give Germany something to worry about vis-à-vis American-Soviet rapprochement.

Although Roosevelt had turned Morgenthau loose on the triangular arrangement he did not want it to be a change of focus to Far Eastern affairs which he saw merely as a part of the global strategy to confront the main threat from Hitler. At the time that Morgenthau was carping about the attitude of the State Department FDR and Hull were apprised of Josef Stalin's efforts to ease the strained relations between the U.S. and the USSR which gave them hope that the Soviet Union might still be willing to abandon its agreement with Germany or that the Russian leader still did not believe that his country was safe from German attack.³

Soviet discussions with the Americans bothered the Japanese and the Germans. German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop tried to explain the Tripartite Pact signed between Germany, Japan, and Italy September 27, 1940 as merely a means of stopping the meddling of the war-mongering Americans. He assured Russia that she was in no danger from the agreement and the squeeze on the Americans would mean an early peace.⁴ Both Morgenthau and Welles would have been gratified to know that their conversations with the Soviet Ambassador had so worried Ribbentrop that he felt the need to assure Russia that the Americans were being isolated.

Information flowing to President Roosevelt gave him hope that there was a chance to work out something really useful with the Soviet Union.⁵

At the same time the Soviet government desired closer relations with the United States as Ambassador Konstantin Umansky made a pitch for mutual support and closer relations to Morgenthau on October 17. Similar messages about the German threat to both the United States and Russia came from Soviet diplomats, for example, Ambassador to Sweden Madame Kollontai.⁶

Hitler himself undertook to disabuse the Soviet Union of any faith which the Russian leaders might place in the United States.⁷

Whether because of Roosevelt's speeches and arrangements with the British or because they knew the Americans and the Russians were holding conversations in Washington, the Nazis went out of their way to let the Soviet Union know that the Americans could not help anyone but that Germany could arrange things for the USSR vis-à-vis Japan if that was what concerned the Soviet leader-

ship. The American-Soviet conversations apparently brought forth a worried if typically arrogant response from the Nazis.

II

Franklin Roosevelt began 1940 with an attempt to shock Americans into a realization of the dangers they confronted from the aggressors.⁸ He continued this effort at the end of the year when he said in his Arsenal of Democracy address the Tripartite Pact of September 27 was aimed directly against the United States and the Nazis intended to use the resources of the captured nations of Europe "to dominate the rest of the world."⁹

Hard intelligence reached the State Department beginning in August 1940 which encouraged Roosevelt and Hull to believe that Russia would enter the war by no choice of her own when the Americans found out about the planning of Operation Barbarossa.¹⁰ Hitler might have aborted Barbarossa had Stalin conceded what the German leader demanded in the way of future collaboration in both economic arrangements and division of territory. When V.M. Molotov made a visit to Berlin in the late fall and flatly refused to grant further concessions and economic arrangements and returned to Moscow, leaving Hitler seething, the order went out in November to speed up the preparations for Barbarossa.¹¹

Inside this framework of events the Americans grew more optimistic about the prospects for bringing the Russians into their side of the operation. Thus the discussions between Umansky and Welles and Umansky and Morgenthau intensified. The USSR gave the signal that she might be an available ally, and FDR knew that much depended on achieving that objective.¹²

III

Roosevelt saw the international crisis as global and was determined not to treat the problem piecemeal. Like his Secretary of State the President thought it was time to make clear to the Japanese that they had only one choice available if they wished to avoid a losing conflict with the combined British, American, and hopefully Soviet powers. Japan had to recognize that she would not be permitted to seize resources of the European nations in Asia or

close routes to strategic materials without opposition from America because victory in Europe depended on continuing the flow of goods and on not diverting European efforts from confronting the major enemy.¹³ This is absolutely the clearest exposition of Roosevelt's Europe-first strategy which exists anywhere and it precisely defined the position of Far Eastern affairs to Grew — they were secondary to any consideration of policy which aimed at taking care of the most dangerous threat to both American security and the American political and social systems; Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler were the main concern.¹⁴

Clearly the Soviet Union was the apparent focal point of Axis policy East and West. Events moved rapidly toward some sort of action involving the USSR. February and March witnessed the completion of the German move into Bulgaria prompting a strong response from Molotov.¹⁵

Roosevelt and Hull found cause for renewed interest in Soviet Far Eastern policy. With mixed emotions they watched the conclusion of the Japanese-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of April 13, 1941. This demarche convinced them that Stalin was clearing the decks in order to face the German problem, which was encouraging. Until that time the President and Hull believed that Japan might still attack the Soviet Union which would affect Russian ability to confront Hitler. However, the Pact opened a route for Japan's southern advance making Japan a source of further concern because this might clear the way to Singapore and Indo-China. This was in fact precisely the reason that Hitler encouraged Matsuoka to pursue an invasion to the south when the Japanese Foreign Minister was in Berlin in March 1941; however the German leader could not have been very happy about Japan's move to clear the way by settling her differences with the USSR which he was about to attack.¹⁶

Stalin was growing more concerned over the prospect of war in the West and wanted to insure his flank; or rather he believed that by insuring his position in the East the Germans would have to think more carefully about a move against him in East Europe.

Roosevelt and Hull were fairly positive that Stalin was informed of an assault from Germany because they knew it was coming and warned the Soviet Chief of State during January 1941 and again on 20 March to this effect.¹⁷ The Secretary of State thought this would prove American sincerity in its desire to cooperate against the enemy.

There has been considerable speculation as to whether or not Stalin believed the warnings he received concerning a German attack on the Soviet Union.¹⁸ His actions of the time indicated that he did not wholly discount the rumors even if he rejected information as to the precise date and locations of such an assault. He chose instead to think that the Germans wanted a provocation and he was not going to give it to them.¹⁹

However, it is clear that Franklin Roosevelt and Cordell Hull believed the Germans were going to attack the Soviet Union and that would bring Russia into the war on the Allied side.

Though Roosevelt's advisers were getting more and more nervous about America not taking a more direct role in the war when it might mean the difference between victory and defeat for the Allies, the President awaited events.²⁰ He was rewarded from an unusual source as it was actually Adolf Hitler when against all logic he loosed his Wehrmacht on the Soviet Union.

Hitler explained his reasoning behind Barbarossa several ways. One constant remained in each rationalization, the idea that to knock Russia out of the war would either force the British to give up or failing this that with Russia out of the way the Germans could attack the British Isles at their leisure. He asserted that it made no difference whether the Americans actually entered as belligerents because for all practical purposes they were already supporting Germany's enemies with everything they had to offer. Britain, on the other hand, lived on hope and that was two-fold: help from Russia and from America. He concluded:

"We have no chance of eliminating America. But it does lie in our power to exclude Russia. The elimination of Russia means, at the same time, a tremendous relief for Japan in East Asia, and thereby the possibility of a much stronger threat to American activities through Japanese intervention."²¹

Thus, if this rationale is to be believed, Hitler's intention to further neutralize the United States played a role in his decision to attack the Soviet Union.

When news of the German attack reached the United States Roosevelt proceeded very cautiously. FDR was also reluctant to identify too closely with the Russian war effort because of the information conveyed to him by both his Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. They informed the

President on June 23 that Russian chances for survival against the German onslaught were slim to none. They gave the Red Army at the outside three months before it collapsed and more probably it would be four to six weeks.²² Roosevelt also heard from his public opinion research people that although Americans wanted Russia to win the war they did not want the same kind of aid provided her as to Great Britain.²³ An important source of pressure to move more openly was provided by the conversion of Harry Hopkins to a belief in the possible success of the Russian cause.

Hopkins met with Stalin on July 30 and was told what FDR wanted to hear about Soviet perceptions of the Germans.²⁴ The President's Special Assistant also changed his mind about Russian ability to resist the German invaders. He persuaded Roosevelt thereafter to have more hope for a sustained Soviet effort against the Nazis.²⁵

A long and complicated debate went on within the Roosevelt administration on precisely how Russian requests for materiel should be met. The obvious and most efficient means was through Lend-Lease. At first this route was avoided because it was uncertain whether the USSR would survive long enough for the aid to be of practical use. Gradually it became obvious to the President that this was the only means to effectively supply the Soviet Union as he saw the red tape and obstructionism thrown up in the way of delivering Soviet requests.²⁶

Roosevelt was particularly concerned about obstructions he saw coming from the War Department. He promised the Soviet Union certain supplies which he believed were very important to holding out against the Germans. Roosevelt wanted those supplies delivered by October 1 and wrote Stimson a memorandum making his desires clear and informing the Secretary of War that the Army was to cooperate with the committee the President established to identify Soviet needs.²⁷

That FDR for very practical reasons was determined to provide vital military supplies to the Soviet Union is not a matter of doubt. What was in doubt was what he could provide realistically of the clearly inadequate materials at his disposal.

V

FDR knew that European events were either effected by Japanese machinations or vice versa. He instructed Ambassador

Grew to deliver a message to Prime Minister Konoye Fumimaro asking what Japan's plans were vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and including an unsubtle warning that Japanese action could trigger a response from the United States if such plans included an attack on the USSR.

Roosevelt was determined that aid to the USSR would be more than military equipment. He intended to use diplomacy to threaten the Japanese with dire consequences should they decide to expand the war by attacking the Soviet Union. Nothing should be permitted to distract Soviet attention from dealing a crippling blow to the primary enemy Adolf Hitler. FDR was fairly well convinced that the United States would be dragged into participation but thought that a Pacific War would rest primarily on naval and air action without large scale troop commitments and was willing to risk this kind of war to keep the Red Army in the field against the Germans. In the eyes of some of Roosevelt's advisers it was even more essential to supply Russian needs than British ones and certainly more important to send the Soviet Union planes, tanks, and trucks than to keep them in the United States because the Russians were fighting the battles and the United States was not. They hoped the Americans continued in that role.

VI

Although the President and the Department of State knew that the Far Eastern crisis was reaching a climax, they had no idea that it was about to explode in such a way as to change the nature of the war and to bring the American-Soviet relationship into a different focus.

Again American and Soviet interests were intertwined as they related to the Far East and Europe. The Japanese were worried about Soviet-American rapprochement. Ambassador Nomura Kichisaburo wrote his government on August 7, 1941, warning that the United States was prepared to take drastic action dependent on the way that Japan moved and that included a move northward.²⁸ The next day Commander Uchida Shigeshi of the Japanese Naval General Staff wrote a revealing notation in his journal: "Since July Russian resistance good. So Japan could not begin operations in Siberia against Russia in 1941."²⁹

Both the Soviet resistance against Germany and the growing closer ties between the Americans and the Russians influenced Japan to abandon the planned attack on the USSR. Therefore the Neutrality Pact between the Soviet Union and Japan had less to do with the shift to an attack on Pearl Harbor than the decision of the military in Japan that the Americans had to be dealt with and that there was little likelihood of keeping America neutral in any event.

When Saturday December 7 the first report of the attack came through Hopkins was with the President and exclaimed that surely there must be a mistake because the Japanese would not attack Honolulu. Roosevelt responded that if true all of his efforts to keep the nation out of the war had been defeated, and the matter was out of his hands. He called a conference of Hull, Stimson, Knox and the Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Navy — General George C. Marshall and Admiral Harold Stark — for 3 p.m. Hopkins was present and noted a relative lack of tension resultant from the belief of all present that in the last analysis the enemy was Hitler and that he could never be defeated without force of arms; that sooner or later we were bound to be in the war and that Japan had given us the opportunity. Everybody agreed, however, on the seriousness of the war and that it would be a long hard struggle.³⁰

Eleanor Roosevelt thought that after the years of tension and uncertainty her husband was relieved. Pearl Harbor had removed the burden of both restraint and indecision.³¹

Obviously nearly everyone's thoughts turned to Hitler and the European war. Hopkins in fact almost apologized for this in his own notes of the day but instantly stated that after all they all knew that the main enemy was Hitler. There was instant pressure from Stimson and others to declare war on Germany, but Roosevelt resisted in the name of national unity.³²

There was an almost instantaneous effort to get the Soviet Union to respond formally via some policy position regarding Japan. In a conversation with Maxim Litvinov, who by a twist of fate arrived as the new Soviet Ambassador to the United States on the very day of the Pearl Harbor attack, Hull tried to get the Soviet position clarified. Litvinov told Hull there was no chance of the Soviet Union declaring war on Japan until things were under control on the German front. Hull said this was understandable. Hull then tried another tack as he reminded the Soviet Ambassador that Americans would wonder why they aided Russia and received nothing in return in their war with Japan.³³

Joseph Davies and Archibald MacLeish immediately tried to head off any possible conflicts over Soviet refusal to enter the Far Eastern War which might move anyone in the administration to believe that Russia's significance as a partner in the war had in any way diminished. They urged the President to announce the clear connection between the Americans and the Russians to divert any such carping criticism.³⁴ Gradually, however, the Secretary of State came around to realizing that the Soviets might indeed be in a poor position to carry the brunt of the war against Hitler and be of real assistance against Japan at the same time. In any case Hull thought the Soviet Union would be in the Far Eastern War shortly based on his information about Japan responding to a German request to attack the USSR.³⁵

Ironically, 1941 ended with the "reluctant belligerents," America and Russia, calling on one another to enter the other's battle. Both expressed chagrin at the other's refusal to commit on two fronts for Maxim Litvinov began to pressure for a second front in Europe almost immediately. These differences were buried in the relief that the Soviets, British, Americans and Chinese felt at the turn of events on December 7, and the desire of all parties not to press any issues too far which might so upset the others as to make them less willing or effective in the phase of the war in which they were involved. However, these expectations of assistance in what each considered to be "the other war" were to become irritants as the euphoric stage of the relationship wore down in 1942.

NOTES

¹The Joseph Clark Grew Papers, The Houghton Library of Harvard College Library, Cambridge, Mass., bMS Am. 1687. 5 Diary Vol. 94, Leave of Absence, 1939, pp. 4083-84. Cited hereafter as Grew Papers. The author is indebted to the Houghton Library for permission to cite the Grew Papers.

²The Morgenthau Diaries, Book 307, September 19, 1940, pp. 65, 148, 369. Henry Morgenthau, Jr. Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York. Cited hereafter as Morgenthau Diaries.

³Steinhardt to Hull, September 22, 1940, Department of State Files 741.61/755. National Archives, Washington, D.C., Record Group 59. Cited hereafter as DSF.

⁴Raymond James Sontag and James Stuart Beddie (eds.), *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*, Department of State, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1948, pp. 195-96. Cited hereafter as Sontag and Beddie, *Nazi-Soviet Relations*.

⁵Morgenthau Diaries, Book 318, October 3, 1940, p. 665.

⁶Ambassador Frederick Sterling to Hull, October 23, 1940, DSF 711.61/768.

⁷Sontag and Beddie, *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 218-19, 231.

⁸Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Roosevelt's Foreign Policy: Franklin D. Roosevelt's Undated Speeches and Messages*, New York, Harper, 1942, p. 225.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 310-11.

¹⁰Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, New York, Macmillan, 1948, II, pp. 967-68. Cited hereafter as Hull, *Memoirs*.

¹¹Charles E. Bohlen, *Witness to History*, New York, W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1973, pp. 103-05.

¹²For the sequence of events leading to the public removal of the Moral Embargo see Welles to FDR with enclosure, December 9, 1940, Official File 220, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York. Cited hereafter as OF. Press Conferences, 1941, Vol. 17, 1 January 1941 to June 1941, No. 713, January 24, 1941, p. 92, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York. Cited hereafter as Press Conferences. Thomas R. Maddux, *Years of Estrangement: American Relations with the Soviet Union, 1933-1941*, Tallahassee, University Presses of Florida, 1980, pp. 138-39, points out that an aspect of the problem was that members of the Congress and the press were using opposition to aiding the Soviets as a cover for general opposition to Lend-Lease aid.

¹³FDR to Grew, January 21, 1941, Grew Papers, Personal Notes, No. 144, p. 4793.

¹⁴Grew Papers, Personal Notes, February 1941, pp. 495-96.

¹⁵Memorandum from Molotov to the German Ambassador on the Entry of German Troops into Bulgaria, 1 March 1941, Jane Degras (ed.), *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, Vol. 3, London, Oxford University Press, 1953, p. 482.

¹⁶Gordon W. Prange et al., *Target Tokyo*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1985, p. 357. Cited hereafter as Prange, *Target Tokyo*.

¹⁷Hull, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 967-69.

¹⁸See, for example, Lisle A. Rose, *The Long Shadows: Reflections on the Second World War Era*, Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1978, p. 44; Alexandr Nekrich, "June 22, 1941" in Vladimir Petrov, "June 22, 1941": *Soviet Historians and the German Invasion*, Columbia, South Carolina, 1968, pp. 182-85; Gerhard L. Weinberg, *World in the Balance: Behind the Scenes of World War II*, Hanover, N.H., University Presses of New England, 1981, pp. 14-15; Valentin Berezhkov, *History in the Making: Memoirs of World War II Diplomacy*, trans. by Dudley Hagen and Barry Jones, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1983, pp. 145-50.

¹⁹Petrov, *Soviet Historians....*, pp. 164 ff.

²⁰James P. Warburg to FDR, June 6, 1941, PPF 540, James P. Warburg Folder.

²¹Sontag and Beddie, *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 351.

²²Stimson to FDR, June 23, 1941, PPF 20; Knox to FDR, June 23, 1941, PSF, Knox File.

²³Hadley Cantril to Anna Rosenberg, July 3, 1941, PSF, Princeton University Folder.

²⁴Hopkins Memorandum of his Conversation with Stalin of July 30, 1941, Hopkins Papers, Box 303, H.L.H. to Moscow Folder.

²⁵Dwight William Tuttle, *Harry L. Hopkins and Anglo-American-Soviet Relations, 1941-1945*, New York, Garland Publishing Co., 1983, pp. 99-107; Hopkins to FDR, July 31, 1941, DSF 740.0011 EUROPEAN WAR 1939/15578.

²⁶For details of the exchange which led to this decision see Undated Stettinius Memorandum to Hopkins, Hopkins Papers, Box 303, Russian Aid Folder;

Morgenthau Diaries, 1941, August 4, 1941, pp. 0952-53; Memorandum from FDR to Coy, August 2, 1941, PSF, Russia, 1941.

²⁷FDR to Stimson, Memorandum of August 30, 1941, OF 220-D.

²⁸As quoted in Prange, *Target Tokyo*, p. 357.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 177.

³⁰Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1948, pp. 430-31.

³¹Eleanor Roosevelt Interview; Perkins Interview, University of Illinois, spring 1958.

³²Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 312.

³³Memorandum of a Conversation between Hull and Litvinov, December 11, 1941, "Soviet Policy in [the] United States-Japanese War," Memoranda of Conversations, PHILIPPINES-YUGOSLAVIA, Box 61, Folder No. 250, 1934-1942, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁴Telegram from Davies to Roosevelt's Press Secretary Steve Early, December 11, 1941; Memorandum from MacLeish to Early, December 12, 1941, OF 36.

³⁵Hull, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 1111-12.

THE ISOLATIONIST CONTEXT OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION IN 1940-1941

In mid-July 1940 Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson received a letter from the syndicated columnist Dorothy Thompson advocating that the United States seek an alliance with the Soviet Union. "It is perfectly apparent," she wrote, that the USSR had "signed the nonaggression pact with Germany in order to protect herself. What we have to fear is that Germany, having settled with the rest of Europe, will turn on Russia..."

Thompson added that American leaders should have no fear of the Soviets subverting American capitalism. "It is a complementary economy with our own," she noted.¹

Stimson, who had been sworn in as a Republican member of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Cabinet only a few days earlier, did not answer this prophetic letter from a journalist whom he admired.² Indeed, in his first twelve months at the War Department, Stimson seems to have paid little attention to the Soviet Union. In Stimson's voluminous diary there is only one pointed reference to a Cabinet discussion in September 1940 wherein the Secretary of War urged that "we woo Russia a little, so that we could buy some manganese from her and as a consideration also that she would help the Chinese" against Japan. When Secretary of State Cordell Hull complained "in the strongest language" that the Soviet Union "could not be trusted for a minute," Stimson pointed out that Russian interests in the Pacific "were parallel with ours and that probably she could be trusted to go along as far as her interests went and that was all we need to ask."³

The Thompson-Stimson episode raises the important question of why the United States did not do more to facilitate a rapprochement with the Soviet Union in the years 1939-1941, when both powers were trying to keep out of the conflicts then raging in Europe and Asia. To be sure, some suspicion and conflict between the two countries were inevitable, given the ways Moscow and Washington maneuvered in their respective roles as neutrals.⁴ Neverthe-

less, the possibility that mutual interests and Axis aggression would eventually result in Soviet-American cooperation was always present, especially in President Roosevelt's mind.⁵

To explain why the Roosevelt administration did so little to reorient its policy toward the Soviet Union until June 1941 requires a discussion of what might be called the "isolationist context" of United States policy. As one who liked to keep his options open, President Roosevelt optimistically viewed the Nazi-Soviet pact more as a marriage of convenience than a totalitarian alliance. Thus, in the aftermath of Hitler's *blitzkrieg* victories in the spring of 1940, the President quietly directed Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles to reopen discussions with Ambassador Konstantin Umansky to discuss a renewal of the Russian-American trade treaty and a settlement of outstanding grievances. FDR lifted the moral embargo against Soviet exports in January 1941 (in effect since the Russo-Finnish war), but the impact on Soviet-American trade was slight because of American rearmament needs and subsequent Lend-Lease commitments to Britain. Nevertheless, the Welles-Umansky talks improved the psychological atmosphere, and when Welles provided the details on March 1, 1941, of the German operational plans for the invasion of Russia, it opened up the possibilities of an entirely new relationship.⁶

It was at this juncture that President Roosevelt succeeded in obtaining passage of the Lend-Lease Act, thereby laying the foundation for what became a massive wartime program of military assistance to the USSR. Even though the primary purpose of the legislation was to facilitate aid to Britain, the President had insisted on language in Section 3 (a) (1) that authorized assistance to any country whose defense he deemed vital to the security of the United States.

Two days after the invasion began, FDR ignored State Department advice and told reporters: "Of course we are going to give all the aid we possibly can to Russia."⁷ That same day he began the process by unfreezing Soviet assets in the United States and by refusing to apply the Neutrality Act so that U.S. vessels could legally travel to Vladivostok.⁸

The usual explanations for FDR's earlier policy hesitations in 1941 emphasize the constraints of public opinion. Indeed, careful studies of American public opinion in the period 1939-1941 leave little doubt that mass public attitudes were particularly anti-Soviet.⁹

Virtually every book and article on the USSR published during this period was negative. Less obvious was the potential malleability of American attitudes toward the USSR during this period.

In an excellent recent monograph on Roosevelt's relations with the media, the historian Richard W. Steele has shown how the President experienced his greatest frustrations with public opinion in the critical spring of 1941. Convinced that the newspapers were stirring up isolationist opposition with constant questions about naval convoys, FDR refused to discuss the matter.¹⁰ As he watched and gauged opinion, he encouraged officials and private groups to float trial balloons, all the while preparing a major speech to be given over national radio on May 27, 1941. The President's speech, delivered before the Governing Board of the Pan-American Union, declared an unlimited national emergency in order to defend the unity of the American Republics against Axis aggression in the Atlantic.¹¹ Yet in this last major speech prior to the German invasion, Roosevelt's sole attempt at educating public opinion in favor of the Soviet Union was his decision not to mention the USSR by name and to eliminate Finland from a list of countries invaded since 1939.¹² The President privately hoped that German aggression in the Balkans would favorably affect American opinion in behalf of the Soviet Union, but he was not ready to say so publicly.¹³

If FDR was cautious about leading public opinion in the spring of 1941, he was even more circumspect in dealing with Congress. Even though the administration's major policy initiatives since the outbreak of the war—neutrality revision, selective service, and Lend-Lease—had all passed Congress by decisive majorities, the President did not relish confrontations with outspoken isolationists, and he put measures to a vote only when he had tested the ground thoroughly and was reasonably certain of victory.¹⁴ He was, as one pro-New Deal Congressman later recalled, "hardly a Ronald Reagan who called you on the phone and publicly asked for your vote on all sorts of measures. He was sometimes so subtle that we were not sure what he wanted."¹⁵ In such a context, Roosevelt was content with the defeat of all amendments to the Lend-Lease Act that specifically excluded the Soviet Union as a potential recipient.¹⁶ The fact that Senator Robert Reynolds of North Carolina, a staunch conservative who had sponsored an anti-Soviet amendment to the Lend-Lease bill, became chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee later in the spring made it even more unlikely that the

President would approach Congress on military assistance to Russia prior to the German attack.

The fierce public debate then raging between interventionist and isolationist organizations also militated against any early overtures toward the Soviet Union.¹⁷ Often interventionist leaders exaggerated the extent to which their isolationist opponents were influenced by Communists and other allegedly subversive groups, a perception that soon took on the public charge that opponents of FDR's foreign policy were part of a conspiratorial "Nazi Transmission Belt" that would aid Hitler by so-called fifth column methods.¹⁸

In actuality, the principal isolationist organization, the America First Committee, took great pains to rid itself of Communist sympathizers and had even greater aversion to the Soviet Union as a potential ally than did the interventionists.¹⁹

When the German invasion of Russia did occur in June 1941, the America First Committee (AFC) executive committee immediately declared: "The entry of Communist Russia into the war certainly should settle once and for all the intervention issue here at home. The war party can hardly ask the people of America to take up arms behind the red flag of Stalin."²⁰ Hoping that Soviet involvement in the war would dampen the ardor of interventionists who could support bundles for Britain but not for the Bolsheviks, the AFC also contended that even if Hitler conquered Russia quickly, Germany would remain dependent on the Western Hemisphere for raw materials and food, and "the enlarged German economy may be weakened rather than strengthened."²¹ Notwithstanding its opposition to sending Lend-Lease aid to Russia, the committee's strategy and propaganda maintained its emphasis against war in behalf of England for the rest of the year.

The anti-Soviet element in isolationist thinking was even more evident in agitation for a negotiated peace in Europe, even though President Roosevelt had proclaimed in December 1940 that a negotiated peace with Hitler "would be no peace at all... [but] only another armistice leading to the most gigantic arms race and the most devastating trade wars in all history."

In addition to the obstacles posed by public opinion, Congress, and the isolationist-interventionist debate, bureaucratic constraints also worked against a more forthcoming policy toward the Soviet Union. The State Department was particularly negative. Such scholars as Hugh DeSantis and Daniel Yergin have shown that the Rus-

sian specialists in the foreign service who dealt with the Soviet Union at first hand during the 1930s developed a set of markedly suspicious attitudes about Soviet purposes, power, and value as a potential ally.²²

Nor was anti-Soviet rigidity the exclusive preserve of the department's Russian specialists. Such political appointees as Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy and Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long feared that a prolonged war in Europe would result in "the victory of Communism in Europe and confront us with our eventual enemy — Russia."²³ Possibly the most antagonistic official in the State Department was President Roosevelt's good friend and former brain truster, Assistant Secretary Adolf A. Berle, who noted in his diary in February 1941 "a dipsomaniac's dream — that this year may be the climactic year; that both the Russian and German systems may go down in a kind of hideous deadlock."²⁴ Berle was doubly suspicious of Soviet motives because, as the State Department official in charge of counterespionage, he told Ambassador Umansky that "we know, of course, that all this agitation against defense, against the Lend-Lease Bill, and so forth, was inspired by the Communists — probably by agreement with the Germans."²⁵ Such strong views did not mean that the Department would necessarily sabotage White House overtures toward the USSR, but such attitudes did translate into recommendations for tough bargaining, opposition to any recognition of Soviet gains in eastern Europe, and an insistence on Wilsonian principles.

Secretary Hull, whose deep suspicion of the Kremlin was balanced by the hope that "eventually Russia would come over to the side of the Allies," realistically assessed the peripheral importance of the Soviet Union in the gradual development of American commitments in 1941.²⁶

So long as the Axis threat was defined within the parameters of the Monroe Doctrine, naval superiority in the Atlantic, and aid to England, cooperation with the Soviet Union remained only a hopeful possibility for the future. Only a dramatic turn in the war could elevate Moscow's importance.

Not even the discovery in early 1941 of Hitler's plan to launch Operation Barbarossa altered Washington's perception of priorities. Even though Sumner Welles officially warned Ambassador Umansky in March, recent scholarship suggests that Roosevelt and his closest advisers continued to operate on the erroneous as-

sumption that the German attack, if it occurred, would come *after* an invasion of England.²⁷

Even as evidence of German preparations against Russia became unmistakable, most observers still echoed Ambassador Steinhardt's prediction that "to avoid war at this time Stalin is prepared to make almost any concessions ... to satisfy any reasonable German demands."²⁸

If the invasion did come, the embassy in Moscow judged it "highly probable that the Stalinist regime could not survive."²⁹ Moreover, when Operation Barbarossa did take place, the Roosevelt administration, despite promises of material aid to the USSR, reacted to the apparent diversion of German power by maintaining its Atlantic-first strategy and carrying out the occupation of Iceland, ostensibly in the interests of hemispheric defense.

The armed forces also acted as a brake against greater flexibility in dealing with the Soviet Union. Although not isolationist in the most invidious sense of the word, the uniformed leaders of the Army and Navy were so conscious of the country's manifest unpreparedness that they advocated policies that can be best described as "America First." When, in June 1940, FDR suggested contingency plans for possible naval and air action against German forces, the Joint Planning Board replied: "Our unreadiness to meet such aggression on its own scale is so great that, so long as the choice is left to us, we should avoid the contest until we can be adequately prepared."³⁰ Even after the passage of Lend-Lease in March 1941 affirmed that the defense of Britain was vital to the security of the United States, a major reason why the Navy wanted to begin convoying in the Atlantic as soon as possible was the fear that President Roosevelt would give another thirty or forty destroyers to the British unless the vessels were otherwise utilized.³¹ In view of such reluctance to make vital war equipment available to the British, not to mention Army and Navy opposition to supplying the Soviet Union immediately after the German attack, it was unthinkable that any defense planner should suggest such a policy of assistance before June 22, 1941.

Such "me-first" predilections were also reflected in the evolution of strategic planning. Admiral Harold R. Stark's Plan Dog in October 1940 and the subsequent ABC-1 agreements with British planners in February-April 1941 envisaged the Atlantic sea lanes, the British Isles, and Western Europe as the theater of highest strategic priority.³² Even the prospect of war between Germany and

the Soviet Union did not deflect American strategists from their preoccupation with hemispheric defense.³³ Moreover, when Operation Barbarossa did take place, General Marshall, although recognizing that a strategic retreat by the Red Army would probably deny the Wehrmacht a quick victory, adamantly opposed releasing a squadron of pursuit planes to the Soviet Union on the grounds that it might endanger supposedly more important positions in Brazil or the Philippines.³⁴

This tendency to underestimate the strategic importance of the Soviet Union was pervasive. "There was almost unanimous agreement among all military men that Russia would be quickly and decisively destroyed," the assistant chief of the Army's War Plans Division in 1941 recalled. "The only difference of opinion seemed to be concerning how long it would take. No one that I knew of had any other view."³⁵ After the recall of Colonel Philip R. Faymonville as military attaché in early 1939 there had been only scanty military intelligence coming out of the Soviet Union.³⁶ By contrast, the much greater volume of intelligence on Nazi Germany grossly overrated Hitler's strength.³⁷ Little wonder, then, that the strategists were virtually unanimous in predicting only two or three months of resistance to the Nazi juggernaut. In retrospect, it was one of Roosevelt's shrewdest gambles to heed instead the more optimistic assessments of Colonel Faymonville and former Ambassador Joseph Davies in the summer of 1941.³⁸

In addition to these institutional biases within the armed forces, FDR had to move cautiously lest he arouse political opposition or even disloyalty to the commander-in-chief. The President encountered such attitudes personally when he had to chastise Maritime Commissioner Emory S. Land.³⁹

Especially pertinent in this regard was a group of General Staff officers, most notably General Stanley D. Embick and Colonels Albert C. Wedemeyer and Truman Smith, who had served tours of duty in Germany and whose strategic views tended to be noninterventionist, anti-British, and anti-Soviet.⁴⁰ This is not to suggest that isolationist opposition within the armed forces prevented any decisive reorientation of policy toward the Soviet Union, if only because the President vigorously overrode Army and Navy objections to extending Lend-Lease to Moscow later in 1941; rather, the existence of bureaucratic opposition served to reinforce FDR's Micawber-like instinct to wait for something decisive to happen.

FDR's usual method of circumventing bureaucratic obstacles was to create new administrative fiefdoms and to appoint hard-driving surrogates to take short cuts, eliminate red tape, and cajole the regular agencies into overcoming their inertia. By giving Cabinet hawks like Harold Ickes and Henry Morgenthau special authority over foreign purchases and strategic materials, the President speeded up aid to England in 1940 and 1941. Harry Hopkins, as head of the Lend-Lease advisory board, played the same role toward the Soviet Union after the German attack. The President let languish the one man in the State Department committed to a policy of greater cooperation with the Soviet Union, Ambassador Davies. Not until after the German attack did FDR ask Davies to serve as a direct channel of communication between the Soviet embassy and the White House.⁴¹ Nor did Roosevelt act on his foreknowledge of Operation Barbarossa by instructing his admirals and generals to recast strategic plans in anticipation of Soviet belligerency. Distracted by strikes in munitions plants, lingering flu and sinus infections, and priorities in the Atlantic, the President waited. "When I don't know how to move, I stay out," he once said.⁴²

The question still remains — given the anti-Soviet isolationist attitudes in Congress and the public at large, given the bureaucratic constraints, and given the geographic focus of the great debate on convoys in the Atlantic in the spring of 1941, was there anything President Roosevelt could have done differently to prepare the ground ahead of time for the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union? Theoretically, he might have encouraged Soviet diplomats to work with prominent Americans to generate pro-Russian publicity, just as the British Ambassador Lord Lothian cultivated former Rhodes scholars and other Anglophiles to galvanize public opinion for the Destroyers-Bases agreement in 1940.⁴³

Notwithstanding successful wooing by the British, it was dangerous for a foreign government to try to influence American opinion through unofficial channels.⁴⁴ Any successful cultivation of pro-Soviet opinion in the United States had to await the objective reality of Russian belligerency against Nazi Germany.

A more viable option for FDR during this period was to speak more candidly to the public, the Congress, and the press about the global nature of the world war. The President, as the historian Alan Henrikson has emphasized, portrayed the war publicly in geographic terms as a threat to the security of the United States and

the Western Hemisphere. In cartographic terms, the Soviet Union was half-way around the world from the United States. By focusing on the hemisphere and by talking constantly about the political and economic solidarity of the Americas, Roosevelt obscured the geographic fact that Leningrad and Moscow were closer to Washington than were Buenos Aires or Montevideo, and that an ally on Hitler's eastern flank would do more to sustain England and American security than would ten Pan-American conferences.⁴⁵

To be sure, President Roosevelt did not mention the Soviet Union in a public speech from February 1940 to June 1941 and talked continually about the Western Hemisphere, and he did so in part because he could best dramatize the importance of the war to isolationist opinion by emphasizing the Monroe Doctrine. But it was also true that the President, as an avid navalist who had long subscribed to Mahanite views of seapower, conceived of global strategy primarily in terms of defending the sea approaches to the hemisphere. As Henrikson points out, the Pearl Harbor attack shattered cartographic illusions.⁴⁶ Only after Pearl Harbor could FDR hope to persuade Americans that "our ocean-girt hemisphere is not immune from severe attack — that we cannot measure our safety in terms of miles on any map any more."⁴⁷ Only after the United States became a belligerent did the President take on the role of geography teacher, telling Americans to get out their maps and trace the battle lines from North Africa to the Caucasus to Burma to Guadalcanal. American entry into the war was thus a necessary precondition for breaking isolationist constraints and recognizing, as Roosevelt told Churchill in 1942, that "the Russian front today is our greatest reliance."⁴⁸

The historian Robert A. Divine has argued that President Roosevelt was a confirmed isolationist at least until the Munich conference because he placed the domestic concerns of the New Deal ahead of foreign policy and took no serious risks to check aggression in Asia or Europe prior to 1939.⁴⁹ It could also be said that FDR retained certain essential tenets of the isolationist credo until Pearl Harbor, if only because the President sincerely hoped to stay out of the global conflict by giving assistance short of war to those countries fighting the Axis. Although Roosevelt broke with Congressional isolationists and considered critics like Charles Lindbergh to be Nazi sympathizers or worse, he still consciously placed American interests first as he risked war to preserve at least a certain part of the world so that the United States could survive politi-

cally and economically. His cautious decision to give military assistance to the Soviet Union after the German attack in June 1941 should be viewed within the same isolationist context, in that it was a gamble aimed at helping the United States first by gaining time. An earlier rapprochement with the Soviet Union might have been desirable but not essential. By treating the Soviet Union as a peripheral issue until the German attack, the President was following Adolf Berle's pragmatic dictum that "one thing that can be done is worth twenty that can't."⁵⁰ FDR told Joseph Davies in September 1941 that "I can't take communism nor can you but to cross this bridge I would hold hands with the Devil."⁵¹ It was also true, however, that neither Roosevelt nor the American people would attempt to cross that bridge until they had to.

NOTES

¹Dorothy Thompson to Henry L. Stimson, July 10, 1940, Stimson MSS, Sterling Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

²See Stimson Diary, October 23, 1939, in *Ibid.*

³*Ibid.*, September 27, 1940.

⁴Henry A. Wallace Diary, May 13, 1940, copy in possession of Theodore A. Wilson, Lawrence, KS.

⁵On this point see especially Edward M. Bennett, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Search for Security: American-Soviet Relations, 1933-1939*, Scholarly Resources, Inc., Wilmington, Del., 1985, "Epilogue"; and Thomas R. Maddux, *Years of Estrangement: American Relations with the Soviet Union, 1933-1941*, University Presses of Fla., Gainesville, Fla., 1980, Chs. 9-11; "Memorandum of a Conversation Between the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR and the Ambassador of the USA to the USSR, August 16, 1939", in A.A. Gromyko, et al., eds., *Soviet Peace Efforts on the Eve of World War II*, Part 2, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1973, p. 273.

⁶Sumner Welles, *Time for Decision*, New York and London, Harper and Brothers, 1944, pp. 170-71.

⁷Quoted in Robert Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1969, p. 80.

⁸Raymond Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia, 1941*, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1959, p. 121.

⁹Ralph B. Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, 1939-1945*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina University Press, 1976, p. 34.

¹⁰Richard W. Steele, *Propaganda in an Open Society: The Roosevelt Administration and the Media, 1933-1941*, Westport, Greenwood, 1985, p. 115.

¹¹Samuel Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, in 13 volumes, New York, 1938-50, Vol. XI, p. 192.

¹²Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, New York, Harper, 1948, p. 297.

¹³Samuel Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, Vol. XI, p. 190. "The President wished the Germans had delayed their action against Yugoslavia even by a day to allow the Yugoslav-Russian arrangement to have had time to affect public opinion." In Lord Halifax memorandum of visit to the President, April 6, 1941, FO/115/3465, PRO.

¹⁴See especially David L. Porter, *The Seventy-Sixth Congress and World War II, 1939-1940*, Columbia University Press, 1980; J.Garry Clifford and Samuel R. Spencer, Jr., *The First Peacetime Draft*, Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, KS, 1986, Ch. 12; William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Undeclared War, 1940-1941*, New York, Published for the Council of Foreign Relations by Harper, 1953, pp. 443-44.

¹⁵Interview with former Congressman Thomas H. Eliot of Massachusetts, February 10, 1983.

¹⁶Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, p. 40.

¹⁷See Mark Chadwin, *The War Hawks*, New York, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1970; William Allen White to Alfred M. Landon, November 29, 1940, Landon MSS, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka; Justus D. Doenecke, "Power, Markets, and Ideology: The Isolationist Response to Roosevelt Policy, 1940-1941," in Leonard P. Liggio and James J. Martin, eds., *Watershed of Empire*, Colorado Springs, CO, 1976, pp. 132-35; Thomas Lamont to Clark Eichelberger, April 8, 1941, PSF, Box 81, Roosevelt MSS, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York (hereinafter FDRL); Stephen J. Snicgoski, "Interventionist Ideology, 1939-1941," Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1977, Ch. 2.

¹⁸See Geoffrey Smith, "Isolationism, the Devil and the Advent of the Second World War: Variations on a Theme," *International History Review*, No. 4, 1982, pp. 55-90.

¹⁹Although the most prominent backers of the AFC were Midwestern Republican businessmen, including national chairman Robert E. Wood of Sears-Roebuck, several key staffers on the AFC had worked for mainstream peace organizations in the 1930s. Having experienced Communist "united front" tactics themselves, these socialist/pacifists were even more determined to purge Communists and fellow travellers. See Interview with Ruth Sarles Benedict, Washington, DC, August 20, 1985; *Congressional Record*, 1941, p. A3283; Doenecke, "Power, Markets, and Ideology," pp. 146-50; Wayne S. Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932-1945*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, NE, 1983, Ch. 29; William R. Castle Diary, February 28, 1941, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

²⁰*America First Committee Bulletin*, No. 350, June 23, 1941, AFC MSS, Hoover Institute of War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford, CA.

²¹*America First Research Bureau Bulletin*, No. 6, "Buy America or Die," July 5, 1941, *Ibid*.

²²Hugh DeSantis, *The Diplomacy of Silence: The American Foreign Service, the Soviet Union and the Cold War, 1933-1947*, Chicago, London, the University of Chicago Press, 1980; Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace*, Boston, 1977; John C. Wiley to Arthur Bliss Lane, November 27, 1939, Arthur Bliss Lane MSS, Sterling Library, Yale University; Loy Henderson to Laurence Steinhardt, December 13, 1940, Box

29, Laurence Steinhardt MSS, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereinafter LC); Steinhardt to Henderson, October 20, 1940, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940*, in 5 volumes, Washington, 1955-61, Vol. III, p. 107.

²³Fred L. Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, NE, 1966, p. 27.

²⁴Adolf A. Berle Diary, February 3, 1941, Berle MSS, FDRL.

²⁵*Ibid.*, March 12, 1941.

²⁶Notes of personal interview with Cordell Hull, March 5, 1941, Box 9, Raymond Clapper MSS, LC; and Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, 2 volumes, New York, Macmillan Co., 1948, Vol. I, p. 707.

²⁷William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Undeclared War, 1940-1941*, p. 337; Hull, *Memoirs*, Vol. II, pp. 967-69; Sumner Welles, *Time for Decision*, pp. 170-71; Israel, *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, p. 183; Waldo Heinrichs, "President Roosevelt's Intervention in the Battle of the Atlantic," paper presented at SHAFR meeting, Stanford, CA, June 1985, pp. 11-12.

²⁸*Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941*, Vol. I, pp. 55-57.

²⁹Quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, p. 65.

³⁰Joint Planning Board to Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 26, 1940, quoted in Robert Charles Erhart, "The Politics of Military Rearmament, 1935-1940: The President, the Congress, and the United States Army," Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 1975, p. 307; see Clifford and Spencer, *The First Peacetime Draft*, "Epilogue"; David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-1941. A Study in Competitive Cooperation*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1982, Ch. 5; and Fred E. Pollock, "Roosevelt, the Ogdensburg Agreement, and the British Fleet: All Done with Mirrors," *Diplomatic History*, 5 (Summer, 1981), pp. 203-19. See also William R. Castle Diary, September 20, 1940.

³¹Heinrichs, "President Roosevelt's Intervention in the Battle of the Atlantic, 1941," pp. 9-11.

³²Richard Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940-1943*, Washington, Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1955, pp. 68-71.

³³Stinson Diary, June 1-22, 1940.

³⁴Larry I. Bland, ed., *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall "We Cannot Delay"*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, pp. 555, 569-70.

³⁵Lt. Col. Paul M. Robinett, as quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 565.

³⁶James S. Herndon and Joseph O. Baylen, "Col. Philip R. Faymonville and the Red Army, 1934-1943," *Slavic Review*, No. 34, 1975, p. 499.

³⁷David Kahn, "United States Views of Germany and Japan by 1941," in Ernest May, ed., *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1985, pp. 493-94.

³⁸Richard H. Ullman, "The Davies Mission and United States-Soviet Relations, 1937-1941," *World Politics*, No. 9, 1957, pp. 220-39.

³⁹Landon to FDR, April 4, 1941, OF 48, Roosevelt MSS, FDRL.

⁴⁰Mark D. Stoler, "From Continentalism to Globalism: General Stanley D. Embick, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, and the Military View of National Policy during the Second World War," *Diplomatic History*, No. 6, 1982, pp. 303-21.

⁴¹Elizabeth Kimball MacLean, "Joseph E. Davies and Soviet-American Relations, 1941-43," *Diplomatic History*, No. 4, 1980, pp. 73-94.

⁴²Quoted in Reynolds, *The Creation of Anglo-American Alliance*, p. 113.

CRISIS DIPLOMACY. JUNE-DECEMBER 1941

Americans were no more prepared for war in 1941 than were their Soviet counterparts. The Soviet Union did not declare war on Germany, it responded to an attack. The United States did not declare war on Germany – or Japan – it responded to an attack. Both nations saw Hitler's defeat as benefitting their own interests.

Nor was British Prime Minister Winston Churchill any less practical. Knowing that Operation Barbarossa was due to begin any day, Churchill observed on June 21st that Hitler was wrong to think that "capitalist and right-wing sympathies" would be with Germany. Instead, commented the Prime Minister, we "will go all out to help Russia." The tone of Churchill's private, and even public messages was never "Russia must survive", but rather "Russia must resist as long as possible – for that will help England survive." And what else should a national statesman say? Neither Stalin nor any other Soviet leader had argued that Britain's survival was "essential" to the USSR.

Americans, Britons, and Russians were compelled to join forces against Germany out of national interest and expediency. Ideological perceptions shaped, to a degree, how each of those nations defined national interest, but so did more practical assessments of military strategy, logistics, and geography. Short-term questions, particularly ones regarding the Soviet Union's ability and willingness to resist the Germans, tended to obscure the longer-term issue of Soviet-American relations. But historical perspective makes clear that what happens in periods of crisis diplomacy frequently, even invariably, affects and even defines the long-term, post-crisis relations between states. How then did American diplomacy in that crisis period from June through December 1941, shape and aim Soviet-American relations thereafter? Was it, as some have

* This is an abridged version of a paper presented to the 1st Symposium of the joint Soviet-American Project on the History of World War II, Moscow, USSR, 21-23 October 1986.

⁴³David Reynolds, *Lord Lothian and Anglo-American Relations, 1939-1940*, Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1983.

⁴⁴Raymond James Raymond, "David Gray, the Aiken Mission, and Irish Neutrality, 1940-41," *Diplomatic History*, No. 9, 1985, pp. 55-72.

⁴⁵Alan K. Henrikson, "The Map as an 'Idea': The Role of Cartographic Imagery During the Second World War," *The American Cartographer*, No. 2, 1975, pp. 19-53.

⁴⁶Henrikson, "The Map as an 'Idea'," p. 20.

⁴⁷Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁸Quoted in James M. Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, New York, Harcourt, 1970, p. 313.

⁴⁹Robert A. Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969, Ch. 1.

⁵⁰Adolf A. Berle to Ralph Barton Perry, September 2, 1941, Ralph Barton Perry MSS, Pusey Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

⁵¹Joseph E. Davies Diary, September 29, 1941, Davies MSS, LC.

claimed, simply a matter of "trying to prolong the war in order to weaken the USSR?"¹ Or were there other, less anti-Soviet national concerns that underlay American policy?

Both British and American intelligence had, since early in 1941, received increasing indications that Hitler planned to attack the Soviet Union. The British hesitated in passing the information to Moscow. Part of that hesitation was because they believed, with a bit of national conceit, that the Germans had spread rumors of an eastward move as a prelude to the more important invasion of Great Britain. But British analysts also thought that there was no need for such an attack since the Soviet Union would invariably cave in to German demands. Moreover, they feared that Stalin and his advisers would interpret any British warnings as a ploy designed to lure the Soviet Union into a provocation that would destroy its treaty with Germany. Eventually, in early April 1941, the warning was passed on, but Soviet histories as well as reports from Sir Stafford Cripps, the British Ambassador in Moscow at the time, indicate that the Soviet Government chose to treat the information just as London had feared.² The American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Laurence Steinhardt, likewise believed that such warnings would be seen as "an attempt to drive a wedge between the Soviet Union and Germany," but Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles early in March 1941 passed on the information to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, Konstantin Umansky.³

Rumors of an impending German attack reached Moscow from Soviet sources as well. Their intelligence apparatus in Germany may have been less active during the period of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, but reports did arrive from other agents, particularly Richard Sorge in Japan. One Soviet diplomat in Berlin in 1941 had written of "regularly transmitting" the alarming signals back to Moscow starting as early as March of that year.⁴

There is a parallel between Soviet actions and those of the United States in the months immediately preceding the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, even with the vast differences created by geography and domestic political considerations. Both Roosevelt and Stalin tried to delay what they, or at least their advisers, thought was the inevitable conflict. In the United States, military leaders warned that their nation was ill-prepared for war and that they should "put off hostilities with Japan as long as possible" hoping "to tide the situation over for the next several months."⁵ Thus Roosevelt left the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Hawaii — much more vulnerable to attack

than he or his naval staff ever imagined. As for Stalin, according to one Soviet history, he "mistakenly assumed that Hitler would not risk violating the non-aggression treaty unless he were given a pretext for doing so. Right up till the last moment Stalin considered it inexpedient to bring the troops ... into a state of full combat readiness. The leadership of the People's Commissariat for Defence at that time shares responsibility with Stalin for this and for the defects in the general preparations for defence."⁶

The initial reaction of officials in the Roosevelt Administration to the German attack reflected their preoccupation with the threat to Great Britain. British Ambassador Lord Halifax reported after a talk with Roosevelt that "the time that we had been thus able to gain had made the President feel much more hopeful than he did a [few?] weeks ago."⁷ Others were more worried. For over a year, the Roosevelt Administration had worked, against substantial domestic opposition, to expand its aid-to-Britain effort. The first reaction of Harry Hopkins, the President's closest adviser, was colored by strong support for that program. Ever since his visit to England early in 1941, he had been fighting so-called isolationists, who opposed anything that smacked of intervention. Moreover, U.S. military leaders wanted production reserved to strengthen the American armed forces. Little wonder, then, that Hopkins should express concern that the Russo-German war would add to the arguments of those who wanted to "arm America rather than England," although his initial reaction was to credit the aid-to-Britain program for forcing Hitler to turn "to the left."⁸ Two of Roosevelt's major Cabinet officers, Secretary of War Henry Stimson and Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, similarly recommended that the United States take advantage of German preoccupation with the Russian front and increase naval support to Britain.⁹

There were those whose responses captured the intensity of the barriers that suspicion and emotion had raised between the two nations. Ambassador Steinhardt had written to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, only five days before the German attack, in words that betrayed his dislike of Russia and Russians: "My observation of the psychology of the individuals who are conducting Soviet foreign policy has ... convinced me ... that it is not possible to create 'international good will' with them... Concessions ... have been received ... with marked suspicion and ... as evidence of weakness..."

Yet, in the same message, Steinhardt claimed that the Soviet Government disliked Britain, but had "great respect for the United States."¹⁰ Advice flowed into Washington, solicited and unsolicited, recommending caution, and even distrust in dealing with the Soviets. William Bullitt, one of the President's personal trouble-shooters until 1942, predicted a quick Soviet collapse and warned "that Communists in the United States are just as dangerous enemies as ever."¹¹ Two days after the German attack, George Kennan sat at a desk in the American Embassy in Berlin and wrote a personal note to his friend, Loy Henderson, then with the Division of European Affairs in the State Department. Twenty-five years later, when Kennan wrote his memoirs, he proudly included the note. His comments to Henderson combined moralizing with expediency. He warned against following Churchill's lead in extending "moral support" to the Soviet Union "as an associate in the defense of democracy." Kennan argued that to do so would identify the United States with the foreign and domestic policies of what he said was "a regime which is widely feared and detested throughout this part of the world." Nevertheless, Kennan went on to point out that "such a view would not preclude the extension of material aid wherever called for by our own self-interest. It would, however, preclude anything which might identify us politically or ideologically with the Russian war effort. In short, it seems to me that Soviet Russia could more soundly be regarded as a 'fellow traveler' in the accepted Moscow sense, rather than as a political associate."¹²

While Roosevelt received advice from all quarters on how to deal with the Soviet Union, the game of diplomatic tit-for-tat, which had marred Soviet-American relations throughout the 1930s, continued unabated. Diplomats went on quarreling bitterly over issues, new and old, that clouded relations — debt payments, propaganda activities, independence of the Baltic republics, complaints about "limited freedom of movement" for diplomats.¹³

The initial response of American diplomats to the German attack on Soviet forces is hardly surprising. Churchill and Roosevelt had agreed in mid-June to extend aid to the Soviet Union once war broke out, but those promises from the President were immediately circumscribed by words that made clear the primacy of aid to England.¹⁴ At the same time, a number of American officials warned that Russia's policy of friendship toward the United States was based solely on expediency and could change at any time. One State

Department memo summed up American distrust when it speculated that "the Stalin Government might again come to an agreement with Germany."¹⁵ Most threatening of all from a Soviet point of view was the belief that the Germans would achieve a quick, overwhelming victory in Russia.

British and American pessimism in 1941 about Soviet chances of survival was only strengthened by a combination of previous German successes, the carry-over of distrust and antagonism toward the Soviet Union, and what the Allies saw as Soviet reluctance to share, even in small ways, knowledge about their military situation.¹⁶ Stalin was imprisoned by the same dilemma that Churchill had struggled with since September 1939: how to strike that delicate balance between a portrait of need so as to justify aid, while not painting the kind of dismal picture that could convince the Americans that resistance against Germany might fail or collapse.

Both Roosevelt and Churchill were strangely silent about the Nazi-Soviet war in their usually voluble correspondence. Neither made any direct mention to each other of the Soviet Union or the Russian campaign until after their meeting off Newfoundland early in August, six weeks after the German attack.¹⁷ The President did complain to Churchill about rumors of British postwar commitments to various "racial groups" in the Balkans, but he did not draw the obvious conclusion about the tensions such promises posed for Soviet-British relations.¹⁸

For both the British and the Americans, it was a time for waiting. Hasty decisions and promises would not change the course of events in Russia. Even Soviet officials indirectly accepted that an immediate second front was unlikely, if not unrealistic.¹⁹ During a brief private talk with British General Hastings Ismay in late September, Stalin himself admitted that "he quite understood why we [Great Britain] could not at the moment establish a Western Front."²⁰ That left the Soviets with their requests for supplies — requests that were couched in the language of understandable uneasiness, giving them the tone of demands. For the British this posed a dilemma. Rejecting a second front was easy, and promising all possible assistance to the Soviet Union cost little. But actually sharing war supplies with them was a vastly different matter. The British War Office and Chiefs of Staff were uniformly pessimistic about Soviet military chances and assumed that pushing the Red Army east of the Urals would eliminate effective Soviet resistance. To agree to any long-

term sharing of supplies made no sense, an argument ironically similar to that made by the American military about aid to Britain back in June 1940.²¹ But if the Americans insisted, then the British had to work with the United States or risk being left holding an empty, or at least a less full bag. Throughout 1941 and early 1942, Churchill and his advisers invariably found reasons to restrict aid to Russia in order to use it elsewhere, often in the Middle East, but those arguments usually were rejected by the Americans. Only rarely during the war did Churchill permit an open dispute to develop with Roosevelt—and those instances were ones which triggered emotional responses, like India and Greece. Aid to Russia, particularly in this early phase of the war, was not such an emotional issue. Churchill's promise to aid the Soviets was, from all appearances, made in good faith. But as delivery dates drew near, some more immediate problem—a German threat in North Africa, the fear of a Soviet collapse in the Caucasus, the continued expansion of Japan—always took priority.²²

In Washington, the tone of early discussions between Umansky and State Department officials, particularly Sumner Welles, was one of doubt, delay, distrust, and disingenuousness. Americans doubted the Soviet Union could survive the German attack; they looked to delay sending aid lest it be wasted (the fall of France was an ever-present memory); and they distrusted long-term Soviet intentions.²³ Nevertheless, like the Soviet Union, the United States Government had to make its decision based upon self-interest. Sumner Welles, on June 23rd, criticized both the Soviet and the Nazi forms of government but then followed with a practical argument: "The immediate issue that presents itself ... is whether the plan for universal conquest,... which Hitler is now desperately trying to carry out, is to be successfully halted and defeated... It is the issue ... which most directly involves ... the security of the New World in which we live... [A]ny defense against Hitlerism ... will therefore rebound to the benefit of our own defense and security."²⁴

But before Roosevelt could propose a policy of aid to the Soviets, he needed to do more than state the obvious, more than just appeal to national self-interest. He needed more information to determine just what aid would help, but he also needed the kind of public information gathering that would create an image of expertise; an image of a wise and informed leader acting on the best and most recently obtained facts. That image and information was to come from

two missions to Moscow—that of Harry Hopkins in late July, and that of Averell Harriman in October.

As the President's closest and most trusted adviser, Hopkins had moved from domestic to international politics as that became the area of crisis.²⁵ When Roosevelt decided that someone ought to discuss the American aid program as well as broad strategy with Churchill in the light of the German attack on the Soviet Union, Hopkins was the logical emissary. No record has surfaced of the discussions during Roosevelt's meeting in the White House with Hopkins on the evening of July 11, but five days later Hopkins arrived in Scotland aboard a lend-lease bomber. Churchill, "never one to overlook a glimmer" of hope, as Robert Sherwood put it, may have seemed to Hopkins a bit more optimistic about Russia's ability to prolong the war, but the bulk of their discussions apparently centered on the naval war in the Atlantic, preparations for a Churchill-Roosevelt meeting off Newfoundland, and, most important of all to the British, the issue of strategy in the Middle East. Hopkins summed up the American position succinctly when he told Churchill and his generals that "there are now grave doubts as to whether it is wise for you to go any further in that region." Putting the cart before the horse, the British responded that the imminent collapse of Soviet resistance made it imperative that the Middle East be strengthened.²⁶ It was the first in a war-long series of disagreements between Britain and the United States over policy in that part of the world.

There are few references to aiding the Soviet Union in the British or American records of Hopkins' visit to England, but British slowness in following-up Churchill's promise of aid was indirectly highlighted in a speech given by Hopkins over the BBC. Although the bulk of the talk concerned American aid to Britain, it closed with a pointed reference to the President's recognition "of the magnificent fight which the people of Russia are putting up against the diabolic legions of barbarianism and blackness. As your Prime Minister said a month ago today on this same program, 'Anyone who fights against Fascism is our ally and our friend.' We in America feel that too and any aid which we can give to either China or Russia will be given—and immediately."²⁷

Perhaps the speech rang a warning bell in Churchill's mind, for he met with Hopkins immediately after the speech and, while they walked on the lawn at Chequers, told the American "in minutest detail of the efforts that Britain was making and planned to make

to bring aid to Russia." "He talked with his usual vigor and eloquence," Hopkins recalled, and stressed "the importance of Russia in the battle against Hitler."²⁸

A trip to Moscow was a logical idea for Hopkins. At his own suggestion, he had been the President's eyes and ears in England back in early 1941. Now Hopkins made a similar proposal.²⁹ As he put it in his message to Roosevelt: "I have a feeling that everything possible should be done to make certain the Russians maintain a *permanent* front even though they be defeated in this immediate battle... I think it would be worth doing by a direct communication from you through a personal envoy... Stalin would then know ... that we mean business on a *long term* supply job."³⁰

Hopkins traveled as an expert in supply matters, but the gist of that message was political: the Soviet Union should be made part of a permanent wartime coalition against Hitler, not just propped up to provide Britain with a brief respite. Moreover, the message assumes a similar attitude on the part of the President, an indication that the mission to Moscow, or at least a policy of long-term support for the Soviet Union had been discussed before Hopkins left Washington. The absence of any record or recollection of extensive discussions between Hopkins and Roosevelt on how to respond to the entry of the Soviet Union into the war is, itself, suspect. Military predictions that Soviet resistance would quickly collapse (the War Department estimated "a possible maximum of three months"), did not mask the broad significance of the new situation that existed. The only subject mentioned in Robert Sherwood's one-sentence summary of "the long talk" between Hopkins and Roosevelt on July 11th, was the extension of American naval patrols to include Iceland. Two days later the Presidential adviser was on his way to England. Given the tenor of Hopkins' statements in London and his subsequent reports from Moscow, it is clear that he and Roosevelt were looking for evidence needed to create a political atmosphere within the Administration that would permit the extension of American aid to Russia. That was the impression of Sir Stafford Cripps during his first meeting with Hopkins in Moscow. As the Ambassador noted in his diary, the President, according to Hopkins, was "all out to help all he could even if the Army and Navy authorities in America did not like it."³¹

Roosevelt's actions at home, just as Hopkins was about to depart from Moscow and before he passed on any detailed report, fit the

pattern. When Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau reported that Soviet officials were getting the run-around, the President angrily ordered Stimson on August 1st to "get the planes right off with a bang next week." According to a gleeful Morgenthau, Stimson "looked thoroughly miserable." Although Roosevelt admitted such early aid was being sent "in order to help their [Soviet] morale," he indicated his commitment to an effective, long-term aid program by stating he would "put one of the best administrators in charge."³²

Roosevelt's predisposition to aid the Soviet Union fit his grand strategy in 1941. Even though he had moved closer and closer to accepting the inevitability of American entry into the war, the President still hoped, however wishfully, to avoid sending American soldiers to fight in Europe, despite Churchill's persistent if indirect entreaties.³³ When military assessments pointed out that only the Red Army could achieve victory over Hitler in a land war, aid to the Soviet Union became a presidential priority.³⁴ Churchill himself recognized that Soviet involvement could diminish or at least delay the chances of full American entry into the war, a scenario that threatened all of the Prime Minister's plans. Shortly after the Atlantic conference, he presented another pessimistic picture of the Soviet military situation, connecting such comments with pleas for the United States to join the fray.³⁵

Whether to obtain information, justification, or for public consumption, Roosevelt immediately agreed to Hopkins' proposal to fly to Russia. Wearing one of Winston Churchill's gray Homburgs, the American left London on July 27 for Scotland and the long, cold flight over the Arctic. The details of Hopkins' talks with Stalin are oft-told. On the four-hour flight from Arkhangelsk to Moscow, Hopkins was struck by the vast forests that seemed to him to pose an almost impenetrable barrier to German tanks, but that was about the only chance he had to assess the military situation in person. His talks with Stalin, Molotov, and other Soviet officials provided no surprises. The Soviets seemed to hate Hitler, were determined to resist, and made requests for the kind of production equipment and raw materials that indicated their own faith in being able to fight a prolonged war against the Germans.³⁶ Ambassador Steinhardt, hardly a friend of the Soviets, was openly surprised at the warm, gracious reception for Hopkins and "unusual attention" he received in the press. "He [Hopkins] was received promptly by Stalin who granted him very extended interviews and discussed with a frank-

ness unparalleled in my knowledge ... the subject of his mission and the Soviet position."³⁷

Hopkins found some things he did not like.³⁸ He was no Lincoln Steffens, seeing the Soviet state as the next stage in social development. He criticized what he saw as the intimidating personal style of Stalin's leadership, and warned Roosevelt that any important negotiations had to be conducted directly with the Soviet leader. But such negatives were unlikely to change the policy Roosevelt and Hopkins had agreed upon weeks earlier. Perhaps if the presidential emissary had found an atmosphere of gloom and doom in the Soviet capital, things would have been different. But Hopkins sent only one message from Moscow, but the words were what the President expected: "I have had two long and satisfactory talks with Stalin and will communicate personally to you the messages he is sending. I would like to tell you now, however, that I feel ever so confident about this front. The morale of the population is exceptionally good. There is unbounded determination to win."³⁹

Hopkins assessed the will to fight, an intangible that a frightened Steinhardt, eager to flee the German attack on Moscow, and American military leaders, insulated and isolated in the United States, could not appreciate. Despair and fear of defeat are contagious in an army and a government, and are difficult if not impossible to hide. What Hopkins found in Moscow was not a vision of ultimate victory by the Red Army, but a clear atmosphere of determination to fight on, even if Moscow were taken. Time and again Stalin promised to continue the struggle using the industrial resources that lay east of the capital city. All Hopkins concluded was that aid to Russia was a good bet. Like most other leaders, east and west, he saw the war through the spectrum of his own nation's interests, and prolonging the war on the Russian front clearly met that criteria. Hopkins carefully evaded all suggestions for a formal Soviet-American alliance, for that would have raised political issues that were both divisive and, in 1941, unnecessary. But that was hardly any indication of trying to hold the Soviets at arm's length. After all, the United States had no formal alliance with Great Britain or any of its other wartime allies.

Hopkins' long reports to Roosevelt on the Moscow talks were taken from notes that were not written up until later — perhaps not until after the Atlantic conference.⁴⁰ That makes a conversation between FDR and his son, Elliott, held before Hopkins' return, another indication that Roosevelt had made up his mind to aid the So-

viets before the Hopkins mission ever began. The President commented that the British would be concerned about the diversion of supplies to the Soviets, and went on to complain:

"I know already how much faith the P.M. has in Russia's ability to stay in the war." He snapped his fingers to indicate zero.

"I take it you have more faith than that."

"Harry Hopkins has more. He's able to convince me."⁴¹ An unlikely conclusion to draw on the basis of only one brief, if optimistic message from Hopkins.

In a small footnote to the Hopkins mission, the British Ambassador in Moscow, Stafford Cripps, tried to use the Americans to jolt Churchill and the British Cabinet out of their policy of promises without action. Cripps was convinced that "we must consider the question of help to Russia not as merely sparing to a partner or an ally what we feel we can spare but rather as the point upon which we should concentrate all the supplies that we can raise because that is at the moment the weakest point of the enemy and therefore our best chance of success." It was hardly difficult to get an already convinced Hopkins to agree.⁴²

For Soviet-American relations, the period of crisis diplomacy was over, although the Hopkins mission was not the final word. The Anglo-American supply mission that Hopkins had suggested went to Moscow in late September 1941. Led by Harriman for the United States and Lord Beaverbrook for the British, it built on the policy Roosevelt had adopted back in July. Specific requirements were defined, and a long-term program of aid developed. Harriman reported to Roosevelt on October 29th "that Russia can make very effective use of the latest types of American equipment and that *Russia will continue to fight even in retreat.*"⁴³ The next day, the President ended the nickel-and-dime approach to funding Soviet supply requirements by promising to make arrangements to pay for up to one billion dollars worth of goods through the Lend-Lease Act. A week later, the President formally instructed Lend-Lease administrator, Edward Stettinius, that the defense of the Soviet Union "is vital to the defense of the United States," thereby making the USSR eligible for the transfer of defense materiel under the terms of the Lend-Lease Act.⁴⁴

By the end of 1941, the basic pattern had emerged. Neither Britain nor the United States were willing to jeopardize their own security and interests in order to aid the Soviets, but for the remainder of the war, Roosevelt saw American interests advanced by push-

ing for more, while Churchill, with a different set of interests to protect, consistently held back. One thing this episode makes clear, is that it is impossible to write about this stage in the development of the Soviet-American coalition without discussing, in some detail, British reactions and policies. That is, in part, because a Soviet-American coalition in World War II never existed: it was always an Anglo-Soviet-American association. Americans may have had their own intellectual and cultural perceptions of the Soviet Union, but in the period 1939-1942 American foreign policy was greatly affected by British needs, requests, and suggestions. That is not to say that American foreign policy was a prisoner of 10 Downing Street, far from it. In fact, much of American foreign policy was in reaction to British moves. One historian (David Reynolds) has called the Anglo-American relationship one of "competitive co-operation," but there are times when "combative kinship" seems more appropriate. The issue of aid to the Soviet Union in 1941, with all the overtones of Anglo-American tension that it raised, foreshadowed acrimony that would develop between London and Washington over the issue of a Second Front.

What is fascinating about that aid program is that its purpose was always political. At no time in 1941 did Roosevelt or Hopkins claim that American aid would play any significant role in the battle for Moscow. Quite the contrary. They admitted that little aid could reach the Russians until after that campaign was decided. Similarly during the war, Roosevelt treated the aid-to-Russia program more as a matter of "good faith" than for its value to the Soviet war effort. One careful American historian has noted that, although lend-lease "filled critical gaps in Russian output," the estimated value represented "only a small percentage of Russian production—best estimates set the figure at 10 or 11 percent."⁴⁵ But whatever the actual value of lend-lease to the Soviet Union, Roosevelt had bigger things in mind.

The significance of the Hopkins mission goes far beyond the President's decision to provide short-term aid to the Soviet Union. Franklin Roosevelt assumed that the Soviets would be a major player in the postwar world. Whatever the reaction of others to the growth of Soviet power, Roosevelt concluded that the forced co-operation of World War II should provide a building block for co-operation in the postwar era. Yet, would that policy have been possible had Harry Hopkins, or someone else, not provided testimony Roosevelt needed in the summer of 1941 in order to promise

aid to Russia? And that promise was crucial; it must have been a litmus test in Soviet eyes, for it came at a time when the very existence of the Soviet state and even the Russian nation was at stake. Both Stalin and Roosevelt knew that little if any American aid could arrive before the battle of Moscow was decided. But had the President not made such promises and had the United States not begun to put the machinery of aid into motion, then FDR's policy of co-operation would likely never have been born. Regardless of how one evaluates that policy, all can agree that without it, the history of our era would have been quite different.

All of the suspicions, excuses, complaints, apologies, and breast-beating about Allied aid to the USSR in the period from June 22, 1941 through June 1942 cannot disguise the cardinal military fact—the battle of Moscow was won by the Soviet Union, taking advantage of every military and logistic advantage it could find: factories relocated in the mountains east of Moscow, manpower, surprising (at least to the outside world, and especially to the Germans) air strength, shorter lines of communication, the dispersal of German strength created by a long front in the east as well as the need to police conquered areas from France to the Ukraine, partisan activities, and what very little Allied aid could arrive before the battle. German over-optimism plus Hitler's personal timetable, which ran ahead of that of his generals and his economic planners, left a German Army ill-prepared for an extended campaign or for the earlier than expected onset of the fall rains and winter snows. Soviet forces used the Russian climate to good advantage—but that came only *after* two months of bitter resistance that kept the Germans out of Moscow before the weather turned. Thus all of the recriminations about Allied aid during that first year of the Russian front are quite beside the point. Even without the crisis of supply caused by the Japanese attack on the United States, American and British aid to Russia in that twelve month period could only be a gesture and a hint of things to come, and all the parties knew it.⁴⁶

Emphasis on the realities of power and nationalism, *realpolitik* as it were, in the conduct of US-USSR relations should not obscure the equal reality of the role played by personalities and by personal emotions. Had Roosevelt and Hopkins not been inclined, early on, to aid the Soviet Union, and had Hopkins and Averell Harriman not gone to Moscow, talked to Stalin and other Soviet officials, and reported back to Roosevelt their conviction that the Soviet Union was an ally the United States could and should support, there is little

doubt that the course of Soviet-American relations would have been different.

The popular image of Roosevelt's efforts to build on the wartime alliance in order to create an atmosphere of cooperation and trust with the Soviet Union is essentially correct, even though, like any national leader, he hedged his bets. Nonetheless, there was something in Roosevelt's style that has prompted Soviet leaders and historians to look favorably on Roosevelt's policies. The Japanese have long claimed that style *is* substance, and in the case of Franklin Roosevelt that seems to be true. From the outset, the President gave the appearance of treating the Soviet Union as an equal, something of enormous psychological significance to a new, revolutionary state that saw itself (as the United States did in 1776) as a *novus ordo seclorum*—a new social order.⁴⁷ Of course the impact of style over substance may have been enhanced by the fact that Soviet-American relations during much of World War II were conducted at a distance and through third parties, especially Great Britain, but that is a subject for another paper.

Roosevelt's style may have prompted Soviet analysts to underestimate his "Americanism." Franklin Roosevelt was no ideologue, but he had an ideology—"basic assumptions" is a less politicized phrase. He saw no sense in letting ideology stand in the way of common sense. But that is misleading. Franklin Roosevelt was a true 20th century American liberal; inspired by his cousin Theodore, tutored by Woodrow Wilson, and trained by Josephus Daniels. He possessed a calm, quiet conviction that Americanism (a better word than liberalism) was so very sensible, logical, and practical, that societies would adopt those values and systems if only given the chance.⁴⁸ It was the City-on-a-Hill, an-example-for-all-the-world-to-follow approach that FDR preferred. Put another way, his four Policemen concept for the postwar world was a plan for peaceful co-existence, but the final goal was still a homogeneous world.

The Hopkins/Harriman missions prompted and permitted Franklin Roosevelt to treat the Soviet Union as an ally worth supporting, not an enemy or weak house of cards about to fall. His commitment to aid is evidence of Roosevelt's belief, sooner than we had previously supposed, that the Soviet Union would be a major power in any postwar world. Moreover, the President's actions demonstrate his growing conviction that Britain could not and should not be the broker for Soviet-American relations. Had

Roosevelt not so acted in 1941, his wartime policy, even as carefully hedged as it was, of trying to create a cooperative relationship with the Soviet Union would not have been possible. And without that window of trust and cooperation—based as it had to be on mutual self-interest, expediency, and a common enemy—we might very well not be here today.

NOTES

¹*Soviet Foreign Policy, Vol. I, 1917-1945*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1981, p. 418.

²Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow, 1940-1942*, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1984, pp. 112-25. Gorodetsky is primarily concerned with exonerating Cripps for initially refusing carry out Churchill's instruction to pass on such warnings to Stalin. Whatever the verdict, the account illustrates Britain's uncertainty about the matter. The most complete summary of British intelligence indications of the German attack, Operation BARBAROSSA, is in F.H. Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War, Vol. I*, HMSO, London, 1979, pp. 429-83. Soviet histories generally make no reference to such warnings. German diplomats in Moscow quickly learned of the warning given by Cripps; see *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, series D, Vol. 12, USGPO, Washington, 1962, pp. 604-05.

³Hull to Steinhardt, 4 March 1941, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, USGPO, Washington, 1961, Vol. I, 1941, p. 714. Barton Whaley, *Codeword BARBAROSSA*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1973, is a fascinating study of the intelligence warnings that preceded the German attack on the Soviet Union, although the book is marred by extensive speculation and use of undocumented claims.

⁴Whaley, *Codeword BARBAROSSA*, *passim* and especially pp. 36-37, 41-42, 66-73. Valentin Berezhkov, *History in the Making: Memoirs of World War II Diplomacy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1983, p. 72. Soviet intelligence directed against Germany is surveyed with grudging admiration in Paul L. Kesaris (ed.), *The Rote Kapelle: The CIA's History of Soviet Intelligence and Espionage Networks in Western Europe, 1936-1945*, University Publications of America, Washington, 1979.

⁵Joint Army-Navy Board minutes, 3 Nov. 1941, as quoted in Edwin T. Layton, Roger Pineau, & John Costello, "And I Was There," William Morrow, New York, 1985, pp. 176-77. Whaley, *Codeword BARBAROSSA*, pp. 222-45, concludes that through disinformation and deception, Hitler convinced Stalin that war would come *only* if the Soviet Union rejected a German ultimatum. That ultimatum never came. There has been speculation that Stalin saw a long-term arrangement with Germany as much more dangerous than a rapprochement with Britain and the West, but potentially much more rewarding.

⁶*Soviet Foreign Policy, Vol. I, 1917-1945*, p. 411.

⁷Halifax to Eden, 7 July 1941, FO 954 (Eden papers)/29, US/41/116 (Public Record Office, Kew, England).

⁸Hopkins as quoted in Jan Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory*, Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1947, p. 26. Dwight W. Tuttle, *Harry L. Hopkins and Anglo-American-Soviet Relations, 1941-1945*, Garland, New York, 1983, p. 86, uses this comment and a few similar statements by Hopkins to argue that he "disagreed with FDR's Russian policy." There is no evidence of such disagreement, nor did Roosevelt cease to support the aid-to-Britain program. The turn-to-the-left pun, accidental or not, is from Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins: An Intimate History* (rev. ed.), Grosset & Dunlap, New York, 1950, p. 303.

⁹David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-1941: A Study in Competitive Co-operation*, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1982, p. 206; Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins...*, pp. 303-04.

¹⁰Steinhardt to Secretary of State, 17 June 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, Vol. I, p. 765.

¹¹Bullitt to Roosevelt, 1 July 1941, in Orville H. Bullitt, ed., *For the President, Personal and Secret*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1972, p. 522. There are literally hundreds of similar examples. Some of the more colorful public responses are in Wayne S. Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932-45*, Lincoln, Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1983, pp. 434-35. See also Raymond Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1959.

¹²George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, Little, Brown, Boston, 1967, pp. 133-34.

¹³Memo of Conversation between Atherton (Acting Chief of the Division of European Affairs) and the Soviet Ambassador (Umansky), 30 June 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, Vol. I, pp. 778-79.

¹⁴The exchange of mid-June is in Warren F. Kimball (ed.), *Churchill & Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, Vol. I, Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, 1984, C-100x. Roosevelt's response was sent indirectly through the American Ambassador in London; Winston S. Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1951, p. 369.

One example of American caution in promising aid is in a memorandum of a conversation between Welles and Halifax (British Ambassador in Washington), 10 July 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, Vol. I, p. 789; Welles told Halifax that "whatever it was decided by this Government to send to Russia would be the subject of consultation between this Government and the British Government since it was a matter of common concern to all three Governments that the supplies which this country might have available be utilized in those particular places where, from the military standpoint, they might prove to be most useful."

¹⁵A.A. Berle, Jr. to J. Edgar Hoover, 10 July 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, I, p. 790.

¹⁶It is worth noting that the Allies were just as reluctant to share military and technical information with the Soviet Union. See, for example, *FRUS*, I, pp. 766-802, *passim*.

¹⁷See Lloyd C. Gardner, "A Tale of Three Cities: Tripartite Diplomacy and the Second Front, 1941-1942," a paper presented at the 1st Soviet-American Symposium on the History of World War II, Moscow, 21-23 October 1986. Kimball, *Churchill & Roosevelt*, I, R-46x, and pp. 212-35.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, R-50x.

¹⁹Gorodetsky, *Cripps' Mission*, pp. 196-98. In September, the British Foreign Secretary reported that Soviet Ambassador Ivan Maisky had "admitted the

difficulties of an opposed landing on the coast" although there were times "when the political chiefs must be prepared to accept an over-riding responsibility." Maisky went on to inquire if, since a second front seemed to have been ruled out, renewed efforts could not be made to provide munitions and supplies. Eden to Cripps, 4 Sept. 1941, FO 371/29490 [100670] (Public Record Office, Kew, England). Stalin, by his willingness to stick to discussions of supply matters during the Beaverbrook-Harriman talks, made a similar admission, notwithstanding his taunting question to Beaverbrook: "What is the good of having an army if it doesn't fight?" W. Averell Harriman and Ellie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946*, Random House, New York, 1975, p. 101.

²⁰Military Report by H.L. Ismay, 6 Oct. 1941, CAB 120/36, enclosure II to the report of the Moscow Conference, 29 Sept.-1 Oct. 1941 (PRO).

²¹Gorodetsky, *Cripps' Mission*, pp. 184, 194.

²²This argument is suggested by Gorodetsky, *Cripps' Mission*, p. 198. A promise of two squadrons of "Hurricane" aircraft in July became impossible by August, and there are many examples of the same pattern. The evidence of British preoccupation with the Middle East is in all the official histories and memoirs of the era, and is well summarized in Reynolds, *Anglo-American Alliance*, pp. 208-10.

²³See *FRUS*, I, pp. 766-802, *passim*. Also memorandum from A.A. Berle, Jr. to Hopkins, 30 July 1941, Harry L. Hopkins papers - Sherwood collection, book 4, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, NY.

²⁴Press Conference statement by Welles quoted in Welles to Steinhardt, 23 June 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, I, pp. 767-68. Soviet historians have correctly pointed out that American scholars long ago dismissed altruism as the motive for the decision to aid the Soviet Union. Even Joseph Davies, who staunchly defended Soviet foreign policy during the 1930s in a letter to Harry Hopkins, argued for aid to the Soviet Union on grounds that anything else would aid Hitler in his attempts to get "an armistice or peace on the Russian front." Davies to Hopkins, 8 July 1941, Hopkins papers - Sherwood collection, book 4.

²⁵It is a testimony to the talent of Robert Sherwood that his study, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, remains the best study of that most significant relationship, despite the wealth of new material that has appeared with the opening of British and American wartime archives.

²⁶Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, p. 315. The Anglo-American dispute over strategy in the Middle East is well summarized in Reynolds, *Anglo-American Alliance*, pp. 208-10.

²⁷PREM /224/2, p. 66. British records are disappointingly devoid of memoranda or minutes regarding the Hopkins trip, particularly his conversations with Churchill.

²⁸Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, p. 321.

²⁹Ambassadors Maisky and Winant (U.S. Ambassador in London), both take credit for the suggestion, but it was clearly Hopkins' idea. See Tuttle, *Harry Hopkins*, pp. 92-93.

³⁰Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, p. 318. Emphasis mine.

³¹Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, p. 315, Cripps diary, 30 July 1941, as quoted in Gorodetsky, *Cripps' Mission*, p. 200.

³²Presidential diary, 4 Aug. 1941, Henry Morgenthau, Jr. papers (Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, NY).

³³The best presentation of this thesis is in Reynolds, *Anglo-American Alliance*.

³⁴The formal statement of that well-discussed thesis came in September 1941 in a Joint Army-Navy Board estimate: "The maintenance of an active front in Russia offers by far the best opportunity for a successful land offensive against Germany... Predictions as to the result of the present conflict in Russia are premature. However, were the Soviet forces to be driven even beyond the Ural Mountains, and were they there to continue an organized resistance, there would always remain the hope of a final and complete defeat of Germany by land operations. The effective arming of Russian forces, both... from the outside and by providing industrial capacity in the Volga Basin, or to the east of the Ural Mountains, would be one of the most important moves that could be made by the Associated powers." Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, p. 417.

³⁵See, for example, Churchill to Hopkins, 28 Aug. 1941, PREM 3/224/2, p. 37, where he warned "that there has been a wave of depression... here about the President's many assurances, about no commitments and no closer to war etc... If 1942 opens with Russia knocked out and Britain left again alone, all kinds of dangers may arise."

³⁶The impact on Hopkins of requests for heavy production materials is mentioned in Leon Martel, *Lend-Lease, Loans, and the Coming of the Cold War*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1979, p. 28; and Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, p. 344.

³⁷Steinhardt to Hull, 1 Aug. 1941, *FRUS*, I, p. 815; Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, p. 330; Tuttle, *Harry Hopkins*, pp. 104-05. Cripps immediately noted a change in Steinhardt's attitude toward aiding the Soviets, and concluded he "suspected that he might be in danger of being removed unless he changed his tune." Gorodetsky, *Cripps' Mission*, p. 203. It was to no avail. Steinhardt was replaced in the fall, after Stalin complained to Harriman that the Ambassador was a defeatist and concerned primarily with his own safety. Harriman and Abel, *Special Envoy*, p. 93.

³⁸Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, pp. 330, 344-45; memorandum of a Conference at the Kremlin on 31 July 1941, Hopkins papers—Sherwood collection, book 4.

³⁹Hopkins to Roosevelt, Hull, and Welles, 1 Aug. 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, I, p. 814.

⁴⁰One item in the Hopkins papers indicates that some, if not all of those reports were written after the Atlantic conference. Hopkins' reports are in his papers at the Roosevelt Library. Extensive portions of them are printed in Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins*, and *FRUS*, 1941, I.

⁴¹Elliott Roosevelt, *As He Saw It*, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1946, p. 22.

⁴²Gorodetsky (*Cripps' Mission*, pp. 200-05) argues that Cripps manipulated and helped convert a reluctant Hopkins. From my reading of the documents, it is not clear who manipulated whom.

⁴³Harriman to Roosevelt, 29 Oct. 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, I, p. 851.

⁴⁴Roosevelt to Stalin, 30 October 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, I, p. 851; Roosevelt to Stettinius, 7 Nov. 1941, *Ibid.*, p. 857.

⁴⁵George C. Herring, Jr., *Aid to Russia, 1941-1946*, Columbia Univ. Press, New York, 1973, p. 286.

⁴⁶Stalin's attitude regarding future aid was clear. At a dinner that concluded the Beaverbrook-Harriman mission, he toasted "American industry and said that the war would be won by industrial production... He said that the United States is

giving more assistance as a non-belligerent than some countries in history had given as allies." Somehow, one suspects that last remark had a current Soviet ally in mind. Steinhardt to Hull, 3 Oct. 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, I, p. 840.

⁴⁷The Latin phrase is on the obverse of the Great Seal of the United States of America — and engraving of which is on the back of the U.S. \$1 bill.

⁴⁸The book on Franklin Roosevelt as archetypal American liberal has not yet been written, although Lloyd Gardner in *A Covenant with Power*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1984, chaps. 2-3, has made some trenchant observation in this regard.

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STALIN'S 'MINIMUM CONDITIONS' AND THE MILITARY BALANCE, 1941-1942

During his visit to London and Washington in May and June 1942, Soviet Foreign Commissar Vyacheslav Molotov pressed his Western Allies to accept what he called the USSR's "minimum conditions," that is, the fundamental wartime aims of the Soviet government.¹ Molotov claimed that these conditions were not negotiable. On May 21, he told British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden that, "When he spoke of 'minimum conditions,' he meant that his Government insisted on recovering the territory violated by Hitler, and they could make no concessions in this respect. Further, it was not sufficient simply to restore what existed before the war: the Soviet Government must secure their territory on their north-western and south-western frontiers."²

Molotov was able to press for acceptance of his government's aims owing primarily to the performance of the Soviet Army during its winter counteroffensives against the Wehrmacht. The Red Army's achievements had given Moscow a certain amount of moral capital, which Soviet leaders sought to convert into recognition of their territorial aims.

The Soviet hand was strengthened by Britain's poor military showing and by the fact that the American Army had yet to make its weight felt against German forces. Soviet diplomats eagerly contrasted Allied inactivity with the vigor of Soviet operations on the eastern front. On May 5, 1942, for example, the USSR's ambassador in Great Britain, Ivan Maisky, complained that his country "had to bear virtually the whole burden" of the war against Hitler, which had "created a measure of resentment, even bitterness, in Moscow." But, Maisky said, "If [the British] were unable, for whatever reason, to give Russia help on the military side then it seemed more than ever desirable to help her politically," by acceding to her territorial demands.³

The Soviet diplomatic offensive during the spring of 1942 and the reaction of the Western Allies have been neglected by historians, in part because Allied differences at this time were apparently resolved by the anodyne Anglo-Soviet Treaty of May 26. The formal treaty avoided any mention of wartime territorial changes; indeed, it announced that London and Moscow would "act in accordance with the two principles of not seeking territorial aggrandizement for themselves and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other peoples."⁴ Many contemporary newspaper commentators viewed the treaty as a model for future Allied cooperation.⁵

The apparent harmony of the agreement, however, masked a growing discordance between the three major partners in the Grand Alliance. The Soviets claimed that their territorial gains dating from the period of the Nazi-Soviet Pact (August 1939-June 1941) formed an integral part of the Soviet state, and thus Moscow's intention to restore Soviet control over these areas could not be regarded as a desire for "territorial aggrandizement." The Western Allies had, however, never recognized Soviet sovereignty over the areas in question, and many in the West, particularly in America, continued to believe that this matter had not yet been settled. Thus, the Anglo-Soviet Treaty was less a resolution of Soviet differences with its Western partners than it was an inadequate and ultimately doomed truce.

This paper will explore the origins of the Soviets' "minimum conditions," the reasons why Stalin chose to press for their acceptance in the winter of 1941 and spring of 1942, and, finally, the reasons why the three Allies agreed to an unstable postponement of these questions in May-June 1942. Soviet diplomacy during the first year after Hitler's invasion was, as suggested above, closely connected with the events on the battlefield; any attempt to understand Stalin's foreign policy during this period must therefore take account of the consequences of the German attack, the titanic battle of Moscow and the subsequent Soviet winter offensive, as well as the failed Soviet attack near Kharkov in May 1942. Soviet diplomacy was also affected by events elsewhere in the expanding world war, not only the North African campaign but the Japanese attack on the United States and the British empire as well. Nor can Soviet-American relations be understood in isolation; during our period, Moscow's primary ally was still Great Britain. Therefore, London-Moscow relations must also be examined.

All historical writing requires making educated guesses; the study of Soviet foreign policy, however, pushes the art of speculation to its limits, owing to the persistent refusal of the Soviet government to grant scholars access to its archives. We can use Western archives and other primary sources, as well as published Soviet documents, to piece together our story, but we lack the crucial insight into Soviet debates that would allow us to make definitive judgments. What follows, therefore, should be seen as a contribution to a continuing debate, rather than an attempt to provide the final word.

I

Stalin's initial wartime territorial demands, as he outlined them to Anthony Eden in December 1941 and as Molotov repeated them during his visit to the West in May-June 1942, consisted of two separate sets of objectives: first, to regain the territories the USSR had seized during the Nazi-Soviet Pact, and, second, to expand Soviet influence into Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, and the Turkish Straits.⁶ Both sets of aims antedated the USSR's abrupt alignment with the Western democracies following Hitler's attack.

The first Soviet objective was to regain the losses the new Bolshevik regime suffered following World War I. At that time, Moscow lost extensive territory on its western border: Finland seceded from the Bolshevik state, the Baltic States gained their independence, the Romanians took Bessarabia, and, after their war with the Soviets in 1920, the Poles seized large tracts of land that had formerly belonged to the Russian empire. Furthermore, the victorious Allies excluded the Soviets from the Versailles Peace Conference. The efforts of the Entente powers to isolate the so-called "Soviet bacillus" from the heart of Europe were clumsy and eventually backfired.

Most seriously, the Versailles system created a basis for alignment between the USSR and the other great revisionist power, Germany — shared interests that led to two Soviet-German agreements, the Rapallo Pact of 1922 and the nonaggression pact of 1939. Before June 1941, Soviet leaders frequently stated that the interwar balance of power had left both Berlin and Moscow aggrieved making them natural partners. As Stalin told the British ambassador in July 1940: "During the pre-war negotiations with England and France the USSR had wanted to change the old equilibrium, for

which these countries stood, but ... England and France had wanted to preserve it. Germany had also wanted to make a change in the equilibrium, and this common desire to get rid of the old equilibrium had created the basis for the rapprochement with Germany."⁷

Soviet historians have little liking for the contention that congruent national interests, combined with an understandable Soviet fear of German attack and concern about the reliability of the Western powers' promises of assistance, brought Berlin and Moscow into alignment in 1939.⁸ But Soviet hostility toward the prewar balance of power must be taken into account if one is to understand the strains that emerged between the Allies in the first year of the Grand Alliance. The Soviets' long-term goals clashed with the interests of the Western democracies. In 1939-41, Stalin realized that pursuit of his territorial ambitions would provoke Britain and France;⁹ his bid to destroy the prewar "equilibrium" in cooperation with Germany had brought the USSR to the verge of war with the Western Allies in 1940.

A comparison of the points Molotov raised during his visit to Berlin in November 1940 with Soviet demands of the Western Allies in 1941-42 shows that a remarkable degree of continuity underlay Soviet foreign policy during this period, despite the unplanned change in allies following the German attack of June 1941.¹⁰ This continuity raises an intriguing question: if Stalin recognized in 1939-41 that pursuit of his territorial ambitions would bring him into conflict with the Western powers, why was he nevertheless prepared to press virtually the same demands in December 1941, less than half a year after events had made him an ally of Britain and, later, the United States? The answer lies in the shifting military balance and in the radically different ways the Western Allies and the Soviets perceived the purposes and limitations of the Grand Alliance.

II

In the days following Hitler's invasion of the USSR, the Soviets were not in a position to advance any territorial claims. Their concerns were more immediate and pressing; they did not want to be left alone to face the full fury of Nazi Germany. A flurry of Soviet diplomatic activity at this time strove to assure that the British would not sign their own nonaggression pact with Germany. Soviet

diplomats tried to establish contact with figures in Britain and the United States known to be opposed to any settlement with Nazi Germany.

Seen from the Soviet perspective, there were numerous reasons to fear that Britain might sign a separate peace with Germany or that the US would refuse to supply material assistance. Anglo-Soviet relations during the previous years had been rigid, and the Soviets had been deeply suspicious of what they believed to be British attempts to draw them into the war; indeed, only eight days before the German attack, TASS had accused Britain of trying to trigger a German-Soviet conflict.¹¹ Also, the Soviets had watched suspiciously as Rudolph Hess, the deputy fuhrer of Germany, parachuted into Scotland on May 10, 1941.¹²

Soviet concerns, though magnified beyond proportion, were not entirely baseless; a significant segment of Western opinion believed that the Soviets had brought their misfortunes on themselves owing to their pact with Hitler. William C. Bullitt, for example, said that war between Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union was akin to a conflict between "Satan and Lucifer."¹³ Many Western leaders resented the way domestic Communists, on the orders of Moscow, had hampered war production during the period of the Nazi-Soviet Pact.¹⁴ And, in Washington, the F.B.I. suspected officials in the Soviet embassy of passing military information to the Germans.¹⁵ In addition to such suspicions, most Western leaders believed that Stalin's purges of the Red Army before the war had critically weakened Moscow's armed forces.¹⁶ In short, many people had profound misgivings about suddenly finding themselves allied with the Communist state. London's *Evening Standard* summed up this mood best when, after the BBC refused to play the Soviet national anthem, which at that time was the revolutionary hymn "The Internationale," its leader writer suggested that the BBC play instead, "You Made Me Love You; I Didn't Want to Do It."¹⁷

The Soviets hurriedly tried to build bridges to those Western elements favoring aid to the USSR. Perhaps the most notable instance of this kind was the sudden reappearance of Maksim Litvinov, the former Soviet foreign commissar who was widely seen as an advocate of Soviet alignment with the Western powers, and whose abrupt dismissal in May 1939 had been interpreted as a sign that Moscow was turning toward a German alignment.¹⁸ On July 8, Litvinov, who had been largely out of contact with foreigners and in a certain

amount of personal danger since his dismissal, delivered a speech over Moscow radio in which he praised Churchill's "statesman-like acumen" and hinted obliquely that the USSR's pact with Germany had been a mistake, since it allowed Hitler "to prevent a simultaneous action against himself in the West and East."¹⁹ Desperate times clearly demanded desperate measures, but Litvinov's speech fell short of a *mea culpa*; although broadcast over foreign wave lengths, his address did not reach domestic ears, ostensibly owing to technical difficulties.²⁰

As soon as news of the German attack reached the West, Ivan Maisky scurried to the Foreign Office and Konstantin Umansky went to the State Department to secure assurances that Britain and the U.S., respectively, would not abandon the USSR.²¹ The Soviets also pressed the British to sign an agreement in which both parties would forswear a separate peace with Nazi Germany.²² At first, the British were hesitant to commit themselves to a formal agreement, owing to "a good deal of mistrust from the past," as Britain's ambassador in Moscow, Sir Stafford Cripps, told Molotov on June 27.²³ Also, Molotov hinted to Cripps that the Soviets wanted to negotiate a settlement of territorial questions, which London was as yet unprepared to do.

Stalin remained insistent that the British commit themselves in writing, telling Cripps that cooperation between London and Moscow would be "inconceivable without an agreement."²⁴ But he averred that Cripps had misunderstood Molotov and that he was not demanding any wide-ranging political deal. Bowing to Stalin's wishes, the British signed the Anglo-Soviet Agreement on July 12, which made no reference to territorial questions.

Having secured a British pledge to remain in the war, Stalin was free to press for greater Western aid and, more importantly, a second front. Since America was not yet a combatant, Soviet attention at this time was focused primarily on London; only well after Pearl Harbor would the Soviets view Washington as their primary ally. In his first of many personal wartime messages to Churchill, written only six days after the signing of the Anglo-Soviet Agreement, Stalin described the position of Soviet forces as "strained," after "Hitler's unexpected violation of the Non-Aggression Pact." The Soviet dictator made his first reference to the belt of territory the Soviets had seized along their western border in the summer of 1940, claiming that Soviet setbacks would have been even worse without this extra buffer. Stalin suggested that both the British and Soviet military po-

sitions "would improve substantially" if Britain would open a front either in France or Norway.²⁵

Perhaps no issue has generated more heat between Soviet and Western scholars than the question of the second front. Although Soviet historians frequently overstate their case,²⁶ Soviet resentment about being left to face the bulk of German forces rings true, and such resentment understandably grew as the years passed and no second front appeared on the Continent. But Stalin's demand for such a front in the summer of 1941 was, at best, a case of wishful thinking. Britain simply lacked the resources he attributed to her. Nor did Maisky's accusations that Britain was not doing her part in the war goad London in the desired direction; in fact, persistent Soviet accusations of bad faith backfired.²⁷ In a telegram to Cripps in October, Churchill reviewed Anglo-Soviet relations during the previous two years, stressing that, in his opinion, the Soviets "brought their own fate upon themselves when by their pact with Ribbentrop they let Hitler loose on Poland and so started the war," then "cut themselves off from an effective second front when they let the French Army be destroyed." "That a government with this record," Churchill continued, "should accuse us of ... being willing to fight to the last Russian soldier leaves me quite cool."²⁸

Nor, it should be noted, did the Soviet obsession with secrecy help to persuade the British to enter into combined operations with the Soviets in the far north. The British high command had shown an interest in naval-air raids against German positions in Norway in combination with Soviet forces. But, when General Mason-Macfarlane, Britain's military attache in Moscow, asked Molotov to supply him with details of German dispositions and the location of Soviet airfields and supplies in the area, the foreign commissar rather unhelpfully replied that "the situation at the front is already well known" and suggested the general should examine Soviet press releases to find such information.²⁹

As the situation worsened on the Soviet-German front, the tone of Stalin's messages to London and Washington became increasingly desperate. His messages to Soviet diplomats abroad were also gloomy. On August 30, as the Germans threatened to cut off Leningrad, Stalin poured out his suspicions about the British in a telegram to Maisky: "The crux of the matter is that the English government helps the Hitlerites by its passive, temporizing policies. The Hitlerites hope to defeat their opponents one at a time — today the Russians, tomorrow the English... Do the English understand this?

I think they understand. What do they want? They want, it seems to me, our weakening. If this supposition is true, we must be guarded in relations with the English."³⁰

Despite Stalin's doubts, although London was reluctant to risk British lives in a premature invasion of Europe, there is no evidence to suggest that in 1941 any member of the government worked to delay a second front expressly in order to weaken the USSR; nor did the British delay shipment of war goods to the Soviets. Indeed, the Allies were very aware of Moscow's need for supplies; Churchill, for instance, wrote to Lord Beaverbrook, Britain's minister of supply, that, "It is our duty and our interest to give the utmost possible aid to the Russians, even at serious sacrifices to ourselves. However, no large flow can begin till the middle or end of 1942."³¹ During the war, Soviet leaders regularly accused the Americans and British of neglecting the duty to which Churchill referred by delivering supplies to the USSR too slowly and in insufficient quantities.³² Soviet historians have added the claim that the Western Allies withheld the bulk of their goods from the USSR until after it became clear that the tide had already turned on the eastern front.³³

Such arguments are built on a grain of truth: the Western Allies often shipped weapons to the Soviets that they regarded as obsolescent, and British and American war materiel did not begin to flow into the Soviet Union in enormous quantities until after the Battle of Moscow had already begun. But the slowness of Allied efforts owed a great deal to the sheer size of the logistical problem, including German attacks on Allied convoys, and the limited materials available for shipment to the Soviets. Western leaders made no attempt to hide the fact that assistance would be slow in coming. On September 5, for example, the prime minister told Maisky: "I do not want to delude you: until winter we cannot give you any serious help... All we can give you is a drop in the ocean."³⁴

Soviet secrecy also compounded the Allied task. Britain's General Ismay, who accompanied the Harriman-Beaverbrook mission to Moscow in late September, later complained that requests for the Soviets to provide detailed information concerning which supplies they required most urgently would invariably "get no answer," or evasive answers, from his Soviet counterparts. Such secrecy made it very difficult for the Western Allies to devise a list of priorities.³⁵ Allied officials were at a loss to explain what they regarded as a self-defeating Soviet distrust of foreigners; but, evidently, years of isolation and the personal risks attendant upon close

contact with foreigners during the 1930s had developed habits of restraint among Soviet citizens.

III

On September 30, the Germans launched their final assault on Moscow. The Soviets were caught off guard, believing that German forces were as yet too dispersed after the encirclement of Kiev to launch concerted offensive operations.³⁶ Two large holes were torn into the Soviet line, near Bryansk and Vyazma, and, for a time, it appeared as though the Soviet capital might fall. In the middle of October, the diplomatic corps was evacuated from Moscow along with many government departments.

Soviet military setbacks had a direct impact on Moscow's relations with the Western powers, causing Stalin to adopt two divergent approaches toward London and Washington. On the one hand, Moscow made several friendly overtures toward the Americans. The United States was not yet in the war and, unlike Britain, needed to be wooed patiently. On November 7, for example, on the same day that the Americans announced that a huge lend-lease package would be extended to the Soviets, Stalin revealed that he had appointed Maksim Litvinov ambassador to Washington, to replace the unpopular Umansky. Stalin had used Litvinov before, it will be remembered, as a token representing a warming Soviet attitude toward the Western powers. Litvinov quickly headed for the United States with Stalin's orders to do everything possible to draw the US into the war and to facilitate American supplies for the USSR.³⁷ He arrived, however, on the morning of December 7, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had already achieved his primary objective. Most American opinion welcomed Litvinov to the American capital. *Time* magazine, however, wrote that "convenience demanded [Soviet] friendship with the U.S. Convenience demanded that a more popular figure than Ambassador Konstantin Umansky talk bourgeois turkey to the men at the arsenal."³⁸

While making conciliatory moves towards the U.S., Stalin's messages to London became more strident, convincing several British leaders that unless he was given immediate assurances relations with the Soviets might be permanently damaged. Eden wrote: "The important thing is surely that the Russians should know that we are prepared to carry forward our collaboration with them into the peace and beyond," and he told Cripps "to emphasize our general

attitude in this respect to Stalin or Molotov at any convenient opportunity."³⁹ Eden mistakenly saw the growing rift with Moscow largely as a matter of Soviet perceptions that Britain was an untrustworthy ally and would revert to hostility toward the USSR after the war. But nothing in Soviet communications of this time suggests that the Soviets were sparing a thought for Britain's postwar attitudes toward the Soviet Union; Moscow simply wanted Britain to provide more materiel and draw German forces away from the east.

Nevertheless, Eden decided that he must travel to Moscow to reassure Stalin. By the time he arrived in Murmansk on December 12, however, the situation on the eastern front had been reversed. Beginning on December 5, Soviet troops drove the Germans away from the capital in the first of several waves of offensives along much of the front. These were the first major German reverses of the war, and, although the Wehrmacht would be able to resume its attacks during the next two summers, the Red Army had shown that Hitler's troops could be driven back.

Soviet successes strengthened Stalin's diplomatic hand. By contrast, the Western Allies were in disarray: on December 7, Japanese airplanes struck the American Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor.⁴⁰ Also, by the time of the Moscow Conference, Japanese forces had landed in the Philippines. British East Asian holdings were, if anything, even more vulnerable.

As early as November 8, Stalin had mentioned that he wanted to reach a "definite understanding" with Britain "on war aims and the post war organization of peace."⁴¹ Soviet military successes placed him in a position to advance his territorial aims. Stalin exuded confidence about the war; he boasted that "The German Army is not so strong after all. It is [strong] only because it has an enormous reputation." He even claimed that the USSR would be in a position in the next year to assist Britain and the US in their war against Japan: "We can do nothing now," he said, "but in the spring we shall be ready, and then will help."⁴²

Throughout his talks with Eden, Stalin pressed for British acceptance of the Soviets' "minimum conditions" — recognition of Soviet boundaries before the German invasion and the extension of Soviet influence in Romania, Bulgaria, the Straits, and Finland. The question of the Soviet Union's western frontiers was, Stalin claimed, "what the whole war is about."⁴³ Eden lacked the authority to agree to such demands; the British government had decided in September 1940 against recognizing any territorial changes

brought about during the war; they hoped to leave such questions for a peace conference in order to maintain harmony between the Allied powers. All Eden could do, therefore, was to promise to argue Stalin's case to the Cabinet.

The foreign secretary was as good as his word. On January 28, he submitted a long memorandum to his Cabinet colleagues in which he argued that, since France had been crippled for the foreseeable future by its defeat and America might return to isolationism after the war, Britain had no choice but to cooperate with the Soviet Union to reconstruct a counterweight to Germany. Britain must recognize Soviet gains in the Baltic States, Bessarabia, and Bukovina, he argued, in hopes of winning Soviet trust and making a more favorable settlement of the Polish-Soviet border.⁴⁴ Not all Eden's colleagues agreed with his analysis: Churchill, for instance, twice threatened to resign rather than lead a government that would recognize Soviet territorial expansion.⁴⁵

The British government nevertheless decided to follow Eden's advice and accept Soviet demands. They did so primarily owing to the performance of the Red Army, which during the winter of 1941-42 was the only Allied force having any success against the Axis. A sizeable portion of Britain's leaders, led by Eden and Cripps (who received a post in the War Cabinet after his return from the Soviet Union), believed that Soviet military successes warranted recognition of Soviet demands. Britain's decision to proceed with recognition led, however, to an Anglo-American rift. The Americans still preferred to leave territorial questions aside until a peace conference. President Roosevelt even intervened personally, trying to persuade Stalin to postpone this question until the end of the war.⁴⁶

Such was the situation when Molotov arrived in London on May 20. He had come for two reasons, he said: to negotiate an Anglo-Soviet Treaty that would settle the question of the USSR's western boundaries; and to reach agreement on the opening of a second front in Europe. Molotov's negotiating position was apparently bolstered by the Soviets' offensive near Kharkov, which, Moscow hoped, would duplicate the successes of the winter campaigns. Stalin himself seemed confident: on May 1 he claimed that "The Red Army has attained the turning point in the course of the war and gone over from active defense to successful offensive." Stalin exclaimed: "We want to liberate our brother Ukrainians, Moldavians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Karelians

from that shame and degradation to which the German-fascist scoundrels have subjected them."⁴⁷

Stalin had carefully mentioned those areas in dispute, the Baltic States, Byelorussia, and Moldavia, stating that they were a part of "our Soviet land" and again averring that the Soviets did not desire expansion at the expense of its neighbors. Unfortunately, however, Stalin's optimism about entering a new phase of the war proved to be premature. The Soviet offensive in the Ukraine was defeated with great loss, weakening the southern sector of the Soviet front and paving the way for the German attack on Stalingrad later that summer.

Despite Stalin's disclaimer about Soviet expansionism, upon arriving in London, Molotov pressed for acceptance of his government's claim to what had been eastern Poland before the war. Eden had been under the impression that Stalin had agreed in December to postpone the Polish border question in exchange for British recognition of the Soviet claim to the Baltic States. But Molotov acted as though this was not the case; he pressed instead for full recognition of the USSR's western boundary claims.

The British were appalled and tried to back out of their commitment to recognize Soviet sovereignty over the Baltic States. And they were able to do so for two reasons: in the first place, the collapse of the Soviet offensive left Molotov in a less formidable bargaining position; and second, the Americans remained opposed to settling territorial questions. Stalin decided to shelve his demands for the time being, because the Americans had shown themselves to be more forthcoming on the issue of the second front than the British. Stalin thus ordered Molotov to sign a treaty with Britain in which there would be no reference to frontiers.⁴⁸

Far from being an example of Allied cooperation or a diplomatic triumph by Eden, then, the Anglo-Soviet Treaty was a muddled affair that revealed the underlying incompatibility of the Grand Alliance's three partners. Stalin had shown that, given a promising military position, he would press his allies to accept demands that he knew were unpalatable to them. He had, however, misjudged the strength of his position and believed the German Army to be weaker than it was in fact. As a result, when his hopes were shattered by the defeat of the Kharkov offensive, he was forced to execute a diplomatic retreat in order to secure a pledge from President Roosevelt that the Western Allies would open a second front that summer. The president's pledge did not, however, deliver what

the Soviets hoped for: the Americans landed in North Africa rather than in Europe as Moscow expected.

In addition to the question of the second front, the Soviets were annoyed by their allies' complaints that the extension of Soviet boundaries to the West contravened the principles of the Atlantic Charter. The Charter had announced that the Allies would support only those wartime territorial changes that accorded with the wishes of the peoples concerned. But it applied only to changes brought about by the war, not to matters as they stood before war broke out. Thus, the British could regard their empire as exempt while denying the Soviets' right to territorial gains on the grounds they were expansionist. The Soviets had not had a hand in the drafting of the Charter, indeed had not been told of its existence until after its publication. Maisky complained bitterly to Eden that the Charter looked as though the United States and Britain were trying to sanctify their hegemony over the world. It seemed, Maisky said, "as if England and the USA imagine themselves as almighty God called upon to judge the rest of the sinful world, including my country. You cannot strengthen the alliance on such a basis."⁴⁹ As Maisky indicated, the Charter stood in the way of Soviet war aims.

The Soviet Union had become a partner of Nazi Germany in 1939 in order to alter the European and world balance of power. As the Atlantic Charter showed, the Western Allies hoped to return as nearly as possible to the prewar status quo after the defeat of Nazi Germany. But, as Stalin had told Cripps in July 1940, the USSR could never agree to this; the prewar "equilibrium" had been unsatisfactory from the Soviet point of view, and Stalin was prepared to risk damaging good relations with his allies rather than see it restored.

Like a storm cloud on the horizon, the first Soviet diplomatic offensive of the war gave warning of impending trouble. As they stood, the goals of the Western democracies and the Soviet Union were incompatible. Failure to face up to this incompatibility and to take measures to deal with it would lead in time to the Cold War.

NOTES

¹"First Meeting with the Soviet Delegation at No. 10 Downing Street, May 21, 1942," Public Record Office [hereafter, PRO], N2902/5/38. The Soviet published

version of the meetings is less complete. Ministerstvo inostrannykh del SSSR, *Sovetsko-angliiskie otnosheniya vo vremya velikoi otechestvennoi voiny 1941-1945* [hereafter, *Sovetsko-angliiskie otnosheniya*], Volume 1, Moscow, 1983, pp. 221-42.

²*Ibid.*

³Eden memorandum, May 5, 1942, PRO N2385/5/38.

⁴Graham Ross (ed.), *The Foreign Office and the Kremlin. British Documents on Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1941-1945*, Cambridge, 1984, p. 100.

⁵For the reaction of international newspapers, see United States National Archives [hereafter, NA], Winant to Secretary of State, June 13, 1942, 741.6111/20; 741.6111/24; 741.6111/38.

⁶Stalin expressed his aims in conversation with Anthony Eden when the two met in Moscow in December 1941. "War Cabinet: Mr. Eden's Visit to Moscow," January 5, 1942, PRO WP (42) 8. Again, the Soviet version is less complete. *Sovetsko-angliiskie otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 188-98.

⁷Memorandum of Conversation between Cripps and Stalin, July 1, 1940, PRO N6526/30/38. The Soviets supplied the Germans with an account of this conversation, which was, if anything, even more insistent that the USSR was opposed to restoration of the prewar status quo. State Department, *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, Series D, Volume 9, "The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry," July 13, 1940, pp. 207-08.

This is not to imply that the Soviet government approved of the Nazi regime. In December 1933, Maksim Litvinov had stated the Soviet position succinctly: "We, of course, have our own opinion about the German regime, we, naturally, are sensitive to the suffering of our German comrades, but least of all may we, Marxists, be reproached for allowing our feeling to hold sway over our policies. The whole world knows that we can maintain and do maintain good relations with capitalist governments of whatever regime, including fascist." Ministerstvo inostrannykh del SSSR, *Dokumenty vnesheii politiki SSSR*, Volume 16, 1 January-31 December 1933, "Speech of the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR M.M. Litvinov at the IV session of the TsIK USSR, December 29, 1933," p. 792.

⁸For a particularly strong attack on this Western historiographical school, see Pavel Sevostyanov, *Before the Nazi Invasion: Soviet Diplomacy in September 1939-June 1941*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1984, pp. 57-67.

⁹In January 1940, Stalin had told the German ambassador to Moscow, Count von der Schulenburg, that he knew his policies would risk conflict with Britain and France. State Department, *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, Series D, Volume 8, "The Second Conference in the Kremlin on January 29, 1940," pp. 718-22.

¹⁰Molotov outlined his country's aims in his second conversation with Hitler in November 1940. Raymond James Sontag and James Stuart Beddie (eds.), *Nazi-Soviet Relations: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*, reprint, Westport, Conn., 1976; "Memorandum of the Conversation Between the Fuhrer and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars Molotov, November 13, 1940," pp. 234-46.

¹¹Jane Degras (ed.), *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, Volume 3, Oxford, 1953, p. 489.

¹²Molotov raised this question in conversation with Cripps, "Notes of a Conversation of the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR with the Ambassador of Great Britain," June 27, 1942, *Sovetsko-angliiskie otnosheniya*,

Volume 1, pp. 47-52. Also see F.D. Volkov, "Neudavshiiisya pryzhok Rudolfa Gessa," *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, No. 6, 1968.

¹³Quoted in Raymond H. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia, 1941: Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics*, Chapel Hill, 1959, p. 69.

¹⁴Resentment at the obstructive activities of Communist trade unionists was quite widespread in both the United States and Great Britain. See, for example, *Newsweek*, June 16, 1941, "Role of Reds in Strikes Bared by FDR's Crackdown on Labor." Churchill's private secretary was "disgusted" to discover that production of military aircraft in one Coventry factory had increased after Communist shop stewards ceased to slow operations. John Colville, *The Fringes of Power: 10 Downing Street Diaries, 1939-1955*, New York, 1985, p. 441.

¹⁵Berle to Hull and Welles, October 8, 1940, NA 701.611/10-840.

¹⁶Poland's General Sikorski told Cripps, for example, that "Stalin killed the soul of the Red Army" during the purge, and Cripps agreed that Soviet resistance "would surely break down." General Sikorski Historical Institute, *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations, 1939-45*, Volume 1, pp. 100-03.

¹⁷"Our New Ally," *New Statesman and Nation*, July 19, 1941.

¹⁸Hitler, for one, felt that Litvinov's dismissal had been a "decisive" signal that the USSR was turning toward Germany. State Department, *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, Series D, Volume 7, p. 204.

¹⁹NA, "Radio address by Mr. M.M. Litvinov, Member of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., July 8, 1941," 740.0011 European War 1939/13173.

²⁰Arthur Upham Pope, *Maxim Litvinoff*, New York, 1943, p. 461; Alexander Werth, *Russia at War*, New York, 1964, p. 181.

²¹Molotov ordered Umansky to proceed immediately to meet with Roosevelt, Cordell Hull, or Sumner Welles to find out what position the U.S. would adopt toward the war. "Telegram of the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to the Ambassador of the USSR in the USA," Ministerstvo inostrannykh del SSSR, *Sovetsko-amerikanskiiye otnosheniya vo vremya velikoi otechestvennoi voyny 1941-1945* [hereafter, *Sovetsko-amerikanskiiye otnosheniya*], Volume 1, p. 45.

²²"Record of Conversations of the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR with the Ambassador of Great Britain in the USSR," June 27, 1941, *Sovetsko-angliiskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 69-73.

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 47-52.

²⁴"Record of a Conversation of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR with the Ambassador of Great Britain in the USSR," July 8, 1941, *Sovetsko-angliiskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 69-73.

²⁵"Personal Message from Stalin to Mr Churchill, July 18, 1941," *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Presidents of the USA and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Volume 1, Moscow, 1957, pp. 12-13.

²⁶Nikolai Sivachev and Nikolai Yakovlev claim, for example, that the Western Allies only opened the second front in order to prevent Soviet occupation of all of Europe. *Russia and the United States: U.S.-Soviet Relations from the Soviet Point of View*, Chicago, 1979, p. 189.

²⁷"Telegram of the Ambassador of the USSR in Great Britain to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the USSR," August 27, 1940, *Sovetsko-angliiskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 105-09.

²⁸Churchill to Cripps, October 28, 1941, PRO N6583/3/38.

²⁹"Record of a Conversation of the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR with Members of the Military and Economic Mission of Great Britain," June 30, 1941, *Sovetsko-angliiskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 56-59.

³⁰"Telegram of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR to the Ambassador of the USSR in Great Britain," August 30, 1941, *Sovetsko-angliiskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, p. 109.

³¹Quoted in A.J.P. Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, London, 1972, p. 482.

³²On October 3, 1942, for example, Stalin called on his allies for "the full and timely fulfillment ... of their commitments" in a widely reported newspaper interview. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniya*, Volume 2 [XV], 1941-1945, Stanford, 1967, pp. 57-58.

³³See, for example, P.A. Zhilin et al., *Kritika osnovnykh kontseptsii burzhuznoi istoriografii vtoroi mirovoi voyny*, Moscow, 1983, ch. 2, para. 1.

³⁴"Telegram of the Ambassador of the USSR in Great Britain to the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, September 5, 1941," *Sovetsko-angliiskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 113-16.

³⁵General the Lord Ismay, *Memoirs*, London, 1960, p. 230.

³⁶Albert Seaton, *The Russo-German War, 1941-1945*, New York, 1971, pp. 179-80.

³⁷Zinovi Sheinis, "Litvinov: Back in Harness; Second Mission to the United States, Now at War," *Soviet Life*, No. 3, March 1969.

³⁸"Mr. Wallach Goes to Washington," *Time*, November 17, 1941.

³⁹Eden to Cripps, PRO CAB 66/19.

⁴⁰Moscow responded coolly to news of the widening Pacific war, and *Pravda* reported news of Pearl Harbor only on page 4 on December 8.

⁴¹Stalin to Churchill, November 8, 1941, PRO N6540/3/38.

⁴²War Cabinet Memorandum, January 1942, W.P. (42) 8, "Mr. Eden's Visit to Moscow."

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴War Cabinet Memorandum, January 28, 1942, W.P. (42) 48. "Policy toward Russia."

⁴⁵Churchill to Eden, January 8, 1942, PRO FO 371 32874.

⁴⁶Roosevelt met with Litvinov on March 12. Litvinov to Molotov, March 12, 1942, *Sovetsko-amerikanskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 155-57. Halifax to Foreign Office, March 13, 1942, PRO N1364/5/38.

⁴⁷Stalin, *Sochineniya*, Volume 2 [XV], "Order of the People's Commissar of Defense," pp. 46-56.

⁴⁸State Department, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1942*, Volume 3, Winant to Hull, May 24, 1942, pp. 559-63.

⁴⁹"Telegram of the Ambassador of the USSR in Great Britain to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the USSR," *Sovetsko-angliiskiiye otnosheniya*, Volume 1, pp. 105-09.

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE SECOND FRONT IN AMERICAN STRATEGIC PLANNING, 1941-1942

From 1941 to 1944 the second front controversy dominated Soviet-American relations and was a source of intense acrimony within the Grand Alliance. This is puzzling, for by early 1942 both governments agreed on the nature of the problem—the need to divert German forces from the Eastern front; and both advocated the same solution—a cross-Channel invasion of northern France by Anglo-American forces that year. In fact, on June 11, 1942, they announced “full understanding ... with regard to the urgent tasks of creating a Second Front in Europe in 1942.”¹

Yet, no such front was created in 1942. Nor was one created in 1943. Not until June of 1944 did Anglo-American forces invade northern France, by which time the issue had already produced a series of politico-military crises as well as extensive suspicion and recrimination within the Grand Alliance.

In explaining why no second front was created during 1942, one must take into account numerous factors and individuals. This paper concentrates on the critical role of American military officers, the men who actually proposed and created the plans for a cross-Channel invasion. It examines their analysis of the second front problem during 1941-42, the reasons their proposed solution was unsuccessful, and the consequences of their failure.

From July of 1941 onward the Soviet Union made clear that its continued participation in the war was dependent upon the early establishment of a second front in northern France to divert German forces from the East. Without this front, Soviet leader Stalin warned British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in September of 1941, “the Soviet Union will either suffer defeat or be weakened to such an extent that it will lose for a long period any capacity to render assistance to its allies by actual operations.”² British leaders replied that any attempt to establish a second front in the immediate future would lead to military disaster without diverting any Axis forces. Germany, they maintained, would have to be substantially

weakened before any large-scale operations in Europe could be successfully undertaken, and such weakening would require preliminary peripheral operations in North Africa and the Mediterranean as well as strategic bombing and blockade of Nazi-occupied Europe.³

American military planners agreed with the Soviet position in this strategic controversy. They opposed and distrusted British peripheral strategy on the grounds that it was militarily unsound in its refusal to come to grips directly with the German armies in Europe, and that it was a politically inspired attempt to preserve and expand the British empire via the manipulation and placement of Anglo-American forces in key areas of imperial interest. Instead they insisted on a direct land confrontation in Europe as the only way to achieve victory. They also believed that continued Soviet participation in the war was mandatory to defeat Germany, and that such continued participation required the creation of a second front in northern France. As early as August of 1941, one Army Intelligence Division (G-2) officer had fused these two issues by proposing a 35-division Anglo-American invasion of northern France both to divert German forces from Russia and to serve as a base for direct rather than peripheral operations against Germany.⁴

Any such operation lay far in the future, however; in August of 1941 the United States possessed no large-scale ground forces and was not even a full belligerent in the war. It became one in December after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, but the ensuing defensive efforts in the Pacific kept cross-Channel thoughts in the background until March of 1942, when they reemerged as dominant concepts within the Army General Staff.

While opposition to British Mediterranean strategy and determination to maintain the Eastern front remained key factors in this re-emergence, the need to halt the dispersion of forces to the Pacific and reassert the “Europe-first” strategy also motivated Army planners at this time. Formally enunciated in early 1941, that strategy had called for a defensive effort in the Pacific and concentration in the Atlantic for the defeat of Germany should Britain and the United States find themselves at war with the Axis powers.⁵ It had not been devised with the destruction of the American fleet in mind, however, and ever since Pearl Harbor the U.S. had been sending the bulk of its available forces to the Pacific in a desperate and unsuccessful attempt to stop the Japanese offensives. Powerful voices, including General Douglas MacArthur, the Navy, Pacific/Asian al-

lies, and many of Roosevelt's prewar political opponents were calling for an acceleration of this process and a formal shift to a Pacific-first strategy. Desirous of revenge for Pearl Harbor and convinced that Japan constituted their "real" enemy, the American people overwhelmingly supported such a shift.⁶

Army planners vehemently disagreed, calling instead for a full return to the Europe-first approach as well as an end to the present dispersion of forces via immediate concentration for a European offensive. Roosevelt and Churchill concurred, but their eyes turned to Operation GYMNAST, the invasion of French North Africa and a key component of British peripheral strategy. Army planners opposed GYMNAST for this very reason, and saw in Roosevelt's support of it a Churchillian influence that was harmful to American interests and the war effort as well as an insult to themselves.⁷ What they now proposed instead was immediate concentration of forces in the United Kingdom for an invasion of northern France.

As in 1941, the stated focal point of cross-Channel planning was the need to aid the Soviet Union. Events since that time had only reinforced the validity of the military's earlier conclusion that Germany could not be defeated without continued Soviet participation in the war, for while Anglo-American forces had suffered devastating defeats by early 1942 Soviet forces had halted the previously unstoppable German army in front of Moscow. And as they had in 1941, the Soviets made clear that their continued participation in the war depended upon the establishment of a second front.

Unstated but implicit in these warnings was the possibility of a separate Russo-German peace should the U.S.S.R. survive the German onslaught without the establishment of such a front. Western refusal to invade France, the Soviets believed, might be part of a deliberate policy to obtain a separate peace or to insure a long war in which Germany and Russia would exhaust each other, and such duplicity would justify similar Soviet countermoves. As Foreign Minister V. Molotov stated on more than one occasion during 1942, the second front question was "primarily a political one."⁸ Aware of these Soviet suspicions and beliefs, G-2 warned in February that a separate peace was possible and recommended decisive military action to convince Moscow of American "strength and determination" as well as "our desire and ability to fight a war vigorously and victoriously." On March 7, Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall similarly warned that the Soviets would consider a separ-

ate peace "justified" if the Allies "do not initiate an offensive on a large scale in the West."⁹

Within the Army staff, War Plans Division Chief General Dwight D. Eisenhower was thinking along similar lines in his efforts to stop the world-wide dispersion of American forces and arrive at a coherent global strategy. In a February 28 memorandum he bluntly stated that retention of Russia as an active participant in the war was one of only three "necessary" as opposed to "desirable" military tasks facing the U.S., and that it required "immediate and definite" action which must include "the early initiation of operations" capable of diverting "sizable portions" of the German Army from the Eastern front. Eisenhower clearly recognized that such operations were political as well as military in nature and that they would therefore have to be "*so conceived and so presented to the Russians that they will recognize the importance of the support rendered.*" He also understood that such operations could be successfully launched only with continued Soviet participation in the war so as to keep the bulk of the German army away from the Channel coast, while that continued Soviet participation could be assured through the successful launching of these cross-Channel operations. With these factors in mind, he proposed the development of a cross-Channel invasion plan capable of engaging German air and ground forces by late summer of 1942.¹⁰

While Eisenhower clearly understood the importance and complex nature of the second front issue, he was unable to overcome the old problem of American unpreparedness to cross the Channel in the immediate future, a problem now compounded by shipping shortages and Pacific commitments. And while he might rate maintenance of any hold in the Southwest Pacific as merely "desirable" instead of "necessary," neither the Navy, the public, nor the President would tolerate complete abandonment of the area. Emotionally and politically as well as militarily, the Pacific conflict had become America's private war, and it simply could not be ignored. On March 16 the Joint Chiefs of Staff therefore agreed to a United Kingdom buildup coupled with reinforcements to the Southwest Pacific "in accordance with current commitments." As one study noted, however, because of those commitments only 66,000 troops could be sent to England by October 1, thereby precluding more than token American participation in a 1942 offensive.¹¹ Army planners therefore concluded that Britain might have to provide the bulk of the forces for any 1942 crossing and backed away from a

definite target date for that year. Instead they emphasized the importance of immediate *concentration* of forces in England to end the present dispersion and set the stage for an *eventual* Channel crossing, be it in 1942 or 1943.

The final Army plan, presented by Eisenhower on April 1 and commonly known thereafter as the "Marshall memorandum," consisted of three separate operations: an immediate buildup of Anglo-American forces in the United Kingdom (BOLERO); a cross-Channel invasion in the spring of 1943 consisting of 30 American and 18 British divisions supported by 5,800 aircraft (ROUNDUP); and a very limited, "emergency" invasion with 5 or more available divisions to be launched in the fall of 1942 if either the Germans became severely weakened in Western Europe or the situation on the Eastern front looked desperate (SLEDGEHAMMER). In the latter case the invading force might well be defeated, but since it would divert the Germans from the East and thereby maintain Soviet participation that was "essential" to Allied victory, the operation should be launched as "a sacrifice for the common good."¹²

Roosevelt supported these proposals because he remained firmly committed to a Germany first strategy and, like his planners, saw BOLERO as an effective way to halt the Pacific "drain" on American resources. SLEDGEHAMMER was equally important to him, for even if unsuccessful it would give the public the offensive action it was demanding and shift attention from the Pacific to the Atlantic while providing direct aid to the hard-pressed Soviet armies. Public morale, Roosevelt later informed Molotov, would support the operation even if it failed because of this aid. Simultaneously, Roosevelt could use the operation as a diplomatic bargaining lever to block a proposed Anglo-Soviet treaty on postwar European frontiers that he strongly opposed and take the initiative in Allied relations.¹³

The British also supported the Army plan, primarily because it would result in a concentration of American power in the United Kingdom that would blunt Washington's preoccupation with the Pacific and guarantee continuation of the Europe-first approach. Moreover, the Americans implied that they would indeed turn back to the Pacific, and virtually abandon Europe, should London reject their proposals. Such rejection would also have negative political consequences within England, for the British people were dissatisfied with government conduct of the war and were demanding offensive action to aid the Soviets.¹⁴

As a result of these factors, the Army plan won approval as official Allied strategy in a very short period of time. Roosevelt agreed on April 1 and dispatched close aide Harry Hopkins with General Marshall to London in order to win British support, informing Churchill that the plan "had my heart and *mind* in it." Citing public pressure for a second front and the fact that "the Russians are today killing more Germans and destroying more equipment than you and I put together," the President noted that "Even if full success is not attained, the *big* objective will be." On April 12, Churchill responded that he and his Chiefs of Staff were in "entire agreement in principle with all you propose," and two days later the War Cabinet voted formal approval. On April 11, Roosevelt proposed to Stalin a summer summit meeting and requested the presence of Molotov and "a reliable general" in Washington "in the immediate future" to discuss "a very important military proposal involving the utilization of our armed forces in a manner to relieve your critical western front." Molotov visited England and the U.S. in late May, and on June 11 the public communique announcing "full understanding" on the second front was released.¹⁵

In reality, however, "full understanding" had been reached on virtually nothing. The basic problem was that the British had absolutely no intention of sacrificing their troops in a 1942 operation they believed doomed to failure, and without British troops no 1942 operation could be launched. London had agreed to SLEDGEHAMMER in April for the sake of the entire BOLERO-ROUNDUP proposal, because the British public was demanding action to aid the U.S.S.R., and in fear the Americans would turn back to the Pacific if any objections were voiced at that time. With these facts in mind, Churchill had kept his doubts about SLEDGEHAMMER to himself, but in late May he belatedly expressed some of them to Molotov and Roosevelt and suggested to the latter an alternative invasion of North Africa or Norway.¹⁶

Roosevelt and Molotov ignored Churchill's warnings during their negotiations in Washington. The President did try to interest the Foreign Minister in Norway, but when that effort failed he returned to SLEDGEHAMMER by suggesting a 10 division landing in 1942 with the possibility of a Dunkirk-type withdrawal. Ironically, Molotov echoed the British belief that such an operation would be insufficient to divert German forces and suggested instead sending 35 divisions across the Channel. Roosevelt did not make clear to Molotov that he was in effect suggesting a physical impossibility—a

1942 ROUNDUP. Instead he attempted to reassure the Foreign Minister by eliciting from General Marshall a positive reply as to whether "we could say to Mr. Stalin that we are preparing a second front," and by then authorizing Molotov "to inform Mr. Stalin that we expect the formation of a second front this year." Molotov considered that statement too vague, however, and on June 3 he requested inclusion of the "full understanding" clause in the public communique about the conference. Roosevelt concurred. So did the British, who felt they could not give a conflicting statement and that the communique might deceive the Germans. In a special *aide memoire*, however, Churchill made clear to Molotov his doubts and his refusal to give any promise regarding a 1942 invasion.¹⁷

Why Molotov ignored Churchill's warnings remains a matter of conjecture. Roosevelt's behavior is easier to comprehend. He had already talked the Soviets out of a territorial treaty and was still trying to gain their acquiescence to a decrease in Lend-Lease aid with the promise of a second front. He was also very concerned with Soviet morale at this crucial juncture in the war and apparently believed, as Charles Bohlen later stated, that "encouragement, even when based on false premises, would stiffen the Soviet will."¹⁸ As the President informed Churchill on May 31, the Russians were at present "a bit down in the mouth" and he was therefore "especially anxious" that Molotov "carry back some real results of his Mission and ... give a favorable account to Stalin." Yet, Roosevelt also appears to have believed that he could overcome British objections to crossing the Channel in 1942, for in the same telegram to Churchill he emphasized the necessity of a 1942 second front to help the Russians; "the important thing," he warned in this regard, "is that we may and probably are faced with real trouble on the Russian front and must make our plans to meet it."¹⁹

Roosevelt thus wanted SLEDGEHAMMER in 1942. If Britain refused to launch this operation, however, he was more than willing to return to GYMNAST as an effective substitute, and in this he differed sharply from his advisers. While not as good as SLEDGEHAMMER strategically or diplomatically, GYMNAST from his point of view still might divert German forces from the East while at least showing the Soviets *some* European action in 1942. And politically it was better than SLEDGEHAMMER in that it would provide the public with *successful* action in the European theater; despite his comments about public morale accepting a cross-Channel defeat if it aided the Soviets, Roosevelt could not

have relished the prospect of providing the American people with another military disaster during an election year.

North Africa, in short, remained for Roosevelt a viable if inferior substitute for cross-Channel operations, and one of these two offensives would have to be undertaken in 1942; the date, rather than the specific operation, remained the key for him. When informed on June 9 of Churchill's doubts regarding SLEDGEHAMMER he therefore seconded the Prime Minister's interest in a revival of GYMNAST. A few weeks later he and Churchill overruled their cautious military advisers by insisting that offensive action in 1942 was "essential" and by emphasizing GYMNAST as an alternative if a successful SLEDGEHAMMER seemed "improbable" by September 1. On July 8, Churchill informed Roosevelt that London had reached just such a conclusion and that GYMNAST would provide "the true second front of 1942."²⁰

American military planners disagreed completely. For them, GYMNAST was an indecisive and politically-inspired British ploy that would divert no German forces from the Eastern front but would divert American forces from the Pacific, cripple the BOLERO buildup, and disperse Allied forces so badly as to preclude cross-Channel operations in 1943 as well as 1942. If Britain refused to cross the Channel in 1942, the United States should therefore make good on its previous threat and shift to a Pacific-first strategy. On July 10, Marshall and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Ernest J. King formally proposed just such a shift to Roosevelt.²¹

The key to their reasoning was, once again, the Eastern front. All cross-Channel planning had been based on the need to provide aid to the Soviets and thereby maintain their participation in the war. Dropping SLEDGEHAMMER in favor of GYMNAST, and thereby postponing cross-Channel operations until 1944 at the earliest, was equivalent to abandoning the Eastern front and with it any possibility of victory over Germany. It also meant no Soviet aid in the war against Japan. Moreover, even if Russia did stay in the war without a second front, the two-year delay in crossing the Channel would lengthen the European war at least that much. Neither the public nor the Navy would tolerate this. Indeed, Admiral King had originally agreed to cross-Channel operations only because they promised quick and decisive victory against Germany, and with this the ability to redeploy large forces against Japan in the foreseeable future. Under no circumstances

would he now tolerate a Europe-first approach that promised a war of indefinite duration.²²

With these facts in mind, Eisenhower had concluded in two of his earliest memoranda in favor of cross-Channel operations that if Britain rejected the American proposals, "we must turn our backs upon the Eastern Atlantic and go, full out, as quickly as possible, against Japan!" On March 14 the joint Army-Navy Strategic Committee had reached a similar conclusion.²³ Reinforcing this conclusion was the belief that, if direct relief via SLEDGEHAMMER was not possible, a Pacific offensive would provide the U.S.S.R. with greater indirect relief than GYMNAST because the former would divert Japan from an attack on Siberia.²⁴

In addition to these prior strategic assessments, Marshall was faced by July with continuing requests for reinforcements and limited offensives against the Japanese and with a virtual Chinese ultimatum threatening a collapse or a separate peace unless massive military aid and operations were forthcoming. This could be as consequential as a Soviet collapse, for it would enable Japan to unify all the Asiatic races against the Allies and thereby endanger any possibility of victory in the Far East.²⁵ Responding to these pressures and fearful that the Navy might act unilaterally in the Pacific and cease to support him in Europe if he did not agree, Marshall in early July had sanctioned the mounting of the Guadalcanal campaign. At the July 10 Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting he cited these factors as well as the fear of a Japanese attack on Siberia to support a Pacific-first shift. Such a shift, he stated, would be "highly popular" throughout the country and would find America's Far Eastern allies as well as the Pacific fleet "in hearty accord." Second only to BOLERO it would also "have the greatest effect toward relieving the pressure on Russia."²⁶

Three days later Marshall summarized his reasoning by informing Eisenhower in London that conditions on the Eastern front were now "rapidly developing" toward the "emergency" situation for which SLEDGEHAMMER had been developed. To invade North Africa instead of France now would add to the possibility of Soviet collapse, and such a collapse would mean the end of all cross-Channel operations for 1943 as well as 1942. Moreover, even if Russia did not collapse, GYMNAST would "curtail, if not make impossible" a 1943 ROUNDUP, be indecisive, heavily drain available resources, "definitely jeopardize our naval position in the Pacific," and lead to a situation whereby "we would be acting decisively

against our enemies." If the U.S. was "to engage in any other operation rather than forceful unswerving adherence to full BOLERO plans," Marshall therefore concluded, he and Admiral King believed "that we should turn to the Pacific and strike decisively against Japan."²⁷

This Pacific-first proposal quickly led to an angry presidential veto and an order that his advisers fly to London and reach agreement with the British on some 1942 operation in the European theater. SLEDGEHAMMER remained Roosevelt's first choice, but if Britain refused his envoys would have to agree to operations in North Africa or the Middle East. Under no circumstances would he agree to turn to the Pacific.²⁸ Nor would he agree with his advisers that GYMNAST would not aid the Soviets but would destroy a 1943 Channel crossing. From his point of view, one more psychological and political than military, the two operations were complementary rather than contradictory, since launching GYMNAST in 1942 would reaffirm and strengthen a Germany-first approach that remained strategically valid. Defeat of Germany, he reminded his envoys to London, "means the defeat of Japan, probably without firing a shot or losing a life."²⁹ North Africa would be the mini-second front of 1942, solidifying public opinion around the Germany-first concept, encouraging the Soviets with offensive action and perhaps the diversion of some German forces from the East, and setting the stage for a 1943 Channel crossing.

Roosevelt's military advisers could not have disagreed more. By precluding effective aid to the Soviets as well as a 1943 cross-Channel assault, GYMNAST made sense only as a defensive move in the event of Soviet collapse. They therefore suggested in London that a final decision between SLEDGEHAMMER and GYMNAST be made in two months and in accordance with the situation on the Eastern front. Choosing GYMNAST at that time would mean the West had given up on that front holding and thus on being able to cross the Channel in 1943, and that it had thereby "definitely accepted a defensive, encircling line of action for the Continental European Theater" which would justify a shift of American shipping and air groups to the Pacific. The British objected but once again acquiesced without sincere belief for the sake of the entire proposal, while Roosevelt overruled part of the agreement by demanding that GYMNAST be chosen immediately and launched prior to October 30. Renamed TORCH, it was therefore approved and suc-

cessfully undertaken in the fall as the West's 1942 offensive in Europe.³⁰

The second front thus failed to materialize in 1942 for a host of politico-military reasons. Foremost among these was British lack of faith and refusal to participate in the operation, a refusal equivalent to a veto power because SLEDGEHAMMER relied primarily on British forces. The paucity of American forces available for cross-Channel operations was primarily the result of the shipping shortage and the decision to maintain defensive positions in the Southwest Pacific rather than abandon the entire area, a decision determined as much by political as military imperatives. Britain's veto of SLEDGEHAMMER in July led to a major crisis within the American government as well as the Grand Alliance, and revealed sharp differences between President Roosevelt and his military advisers. Indeed, on no other issue in the entire war did the President and his advisers disagree so vehemently.

Throughout the entire episode the focal point of the strategic debate remained the need to act militarily so as to maintain the Eastern front. While some of the logic and arguments may appear disingenuous in hindsight, it is interesting to note that every party in the debate agreed that continued Soviet resistance was the prerequisite for Allied victory and argued that his particular strategy was the best way to aid the Soviets. Moreover, all parties agreed in theory that a second front in northern France was the best way to provide the Soviets with direct aid. But London felt that SLEDGEHAMMER was too small an operation to divert any German forces, while the Americans felt that the GYMNAST alternative would so seriously disperse American forces as to rule out a 1943 cross-Channel assault and negatively affect the Pacific. An alternative offensive in that theater, they argued, would either force the British back to SLEDGEHAMMER or else provide the Soviets with indirect relief. Roosevelt, agreeing with Churchill that North Africa was a good "substitute" second front, vetoed this alternative even as a threat.

In retrospect, Roosevelt's strong stand in July may well have saved the Germany-first strategy in 1942, and with it eventual Allied victory. Moreover, the North African invasion did succeed in fulfilling some of his political objectives by removing public pressure for immediate action in the Pacific and providing the public with a successful offensive in the Atlantic. In all other respects, however, the President's assessment proved incorrect. Well into 1943, the

majority of the American people continued to perceive Japan as their primary enemy. TORCH did not change this. Nor did it divert the Germans in 1942. And despite Churchill's statements and a personal visit to Stalin in August, the Soviets did not accept this operation as a second front. Allied relations thus deteriorated sharply during the rest of 1942. They reached a nadir in 1943 when Roosevelt was proven incorrect regarding the negative effect of TORCH on a 1943 second front. Continued Mediterranean activity flowed logically from the North African operation, and by June of 1943 the Channel crossing had been postponed until 1944.

One should note, however, that Western inability to cross the Channel in 1943 was the result not only of Mediterranean activity, but also of a greater American emphasis on the Pacific. The Guadalcanal offensive was launched in August, and a sharp Japanese response led to a massive expansion of that operation. Even Roosevelt was forced to conclude in late October that continued reinforcement of the area at the expense of BOLERO was necessary, and he therefore approved both a cutback in forces being sent to England for 1943 and a lower priority for the construction of landing craft. Somber intelligence reports concerning the Eastern front further reinforced American interest in the Pacific, for in August the planners concluded that Soviet collapse would be a "catastrophe" of such magnitude as to force the U.S. "to adopt the strategic defensive in the European Theater of War and to conduct the strategic offensive in the Japanese theater." On November 8, Operations Division Chief General Thomas Handy informed Marshall that "Our main operations in 1943 are likely to be in the Pacific Theater." The larger question of Germany vs. Japan first was now "largely academic."³¹

1942 thus ended with more American combat forces in the Pacific than in the Atlantic theater, and only half a million instead of a million U.S. troops scheduled to be in England by April of 1943.³² The combination of TORCH, operations against Japan, and a belief that Russia could not survive without a SLEDGEHAMMER diversion had indeed made a 1943 cross-Channel assault impossible, and when Soviet forces triumphed at Stalingrad in early 1943 the British and Americans were unable to capitalize on the triumph by crossing the Channel.³³

Analysis of the 1942 second front controversy leads one to ask whether SLEDGEHAMMER could have maintained itself if launched. General Eisenhower at the time rated chances for maintain-

ing a lodgment at one in five, but he later concluded that this was an overly optimistic assessment.³⁴ Still, we will never know the answer. Nor will we ever know if SLEDGEHAMMER would have diverted German forces from the East, if a much larger operation could have been launched given an American willingness to completely abandon the southwest Pacific, how the Soviets would have reacted to total Western inaction in 1942 so as to prepare for ROUNDUP in 1943, or if Roosevelt could have politically survived had he made such decisions. Such counterfactual historical analysis is often fascinating but always inconclusive, for the historian can only deal with the results of what did happen, not what might have happened. And what did happen in 1942 is clear if unpleasant.

NOTES

¹U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1942*, Vol. III, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1961, pp. 593-94.

²Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. III, *The Grand Alliance*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1950, pp. 455-57. In this message and others Stalin mentioned the Balkans, the Arctic and northern France as possible second front locations, but northern France was clearly the preferred site and by 1942 all the allies were equating the second front with a cross-Channel invasion.

³See Michael Howard, *The Mediterranean Strategy in the Second World War*, Weidenfeld Nicolson, London, 1968.

⁴Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, "Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942," in *U.S. Army in World War II: The War Department*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1953, pp. 27-30, 177; memorandum by Lt.-Col. Edwin E. Schwien, "An Essential Strategic Diversion in Europe, August 1941," WPD 4402-77, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Record Group 165, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁵Louis Morton, "Germany First: The Basic Concept of Allied Strategy in World War II," in Kent R. Greenfield, ed., *Command Decisions*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1960, pp. 11-47.

⁶Hadley Cantril, ed., *Public Opinion*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1951, p. 1176; George H. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971*, Vol. I, Random House, New York, 1972, p. 370; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning*, pp. 86, 153-54, 204-05, 212-16, 227-29; Richard W. Steele, *The First Offensive, 1942: Roosevelt, Marshall and the Making of American Strategy*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1973, pp. 81-93; Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, p. 156; Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1979, pp. 331-33.

⁷Steele, *The First Offensive...*, pp. 76-80.

⁸*Foreign Relations, 1942*, Vol. III, p. 576; J.R.M. Butler and J.M.A. Gwyer, *Grand Strategy*, Vol. III, J.R.M. Butler, ed., *History of the Second World War*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1964, p. 593.

⁹Memorandum, Lee, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, to Chief of Staff, "Possibility of a Negotiated Russo-German Settlement," Feb. 12, 1942, Harry L. Hopkins Papers, Box 105, Russia folder, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.; minutes, JCS 4th meeting, Mar. 7, 1942, CCS 381 (3-5-42) (2), Records of the Joint and Combined Chiefs of Staff, Record Group 218, National Archives.

¹⁰Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years, 1941-1945*, Vol. I, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1970, pp. 118, 149-55. Maintenance of Britain and prevention of a German-Japanese junction in the India-Middle East area were the other "necessary" tasks.

¹¹Appendix II to JPS 2/6 in JCS 23, "Strategic Deployment of the Land, Sea and Air Forces of the U.S.," March 14, 1942, and memorandum, Smith to Dykes, same title, March 16, 1942, CCS 381 (1-30-42) (1), Record Group 218, National Archives.

¹²Butler and Gwyer, *Grand Strategy*, Vol. III, pp. 675-81; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning...*, pp. 181-87, 383.

¹³"Memorandum of Conference Held at the White House," May 29, 1942, by Samuel H. Cross, interpreter, Hopkins Papers, Box 126, Molotov Visit Folder; Steele, *The First Offensive...*, pp. 81-99; Mark A. Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Ct., 1977, pp. 36-39.

¹⁴Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. IV, *The Hinge of Fate*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1950, pp. 316-24; Sir John Kennedy, *The Business of War*, Hutchinson & Co., London, 1957, p. 224; Arthur Bryant, *The Turn of the Tide: A History of the War Years Based on the Diaries of Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff*, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N.Y., 1957, pp. 285-90; Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, 1950, pp. 536-38; Gallup, *The Gallup Poll...*, Vol. I, p. 328.

¹⁵Warren F. Kimball, ed., *Churchill & Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1984, Vol. I, pp. 437, 441, 448-49; Henry L. Stimson Diary, March 5, 7, 16, 20 and 25, 1942, Yale University, New Haven, Ct.; *Foreign Relations, 1942*, Vol. III, pp. 542-43, 593-94. This volume contains abridged minutes of Molotov's meetings with Roosevelt; the unabridged minutes are in the Hopkins papers.

¹⁶See above, note 14; Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, pp. 332-35; Kimball, *Churchill & Roosevelt...*, Vol. I, pp. 495-500.

¹⁷Minutes of Roosevelt-Molotov meeting, May 29, 1942, Hopkins Papers, Box 126, Molotov Visit Folder; *Foreign Relations, 1942*, Vol. III, pp. 576-77, 587; Butler and Gwyer, *Grand Strategy*, Vol. III, pp. 596-97, 682-83; Anthony Eden, *The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon: The Reckoning*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1965, p. 383; Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1962, p. 197.

¹⁸Charles Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929-1969*, W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., New York, 1973, p. 128.

¹⁹Kimball, *Churchill & Roosevelt...*, Vol. I, pp. 503-04.

²⁰Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins...*, pp. 582-83; *Foreign Relations: The Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca, 1943*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1968, pp. 434-35, 468-69, 478-79; Kimball, *Churchill & Roosevelt...*, pp. 520-21. See also Steele, *The First Offensive...*, pp.

143-60, 180-82; Joseph L. Strange, "The British Rejection of Operation SLEDGEHAMMER: An Alternative Motive," *Military Affairs*, XLVI (Feb. 1982), pp. 6-14.

²¹Memorandum, Chief of Staff and Chief of Naval Operations to President, "Latest British Proposals Relative to BOLERO and GYMNAST," July 10, 1942, OPD 381 Gen. (Sec. II), 73, Record Group 165, National Archives; and minutes, JCS 24th meeting, CCS 334 (6-23-42), Record Group 218, National Archives.

²²Ernest J. King and Walter M. Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record*, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1952, pp. 390-91.

²³Chandler, *Eisenhower Papers...*, Vol. I, pp. 145-48, 205-08; Appendix II to JPS 2/6 in JCS 23, "Strategic Deployment of the Land, Sea and Air Forces of the U.S.," March 14, 1942, CCS 381 (30 Jan. 42), Record Group 218, National Archives.

²⁴Memorandum, G-2 to Chief of Staff, "Brief G-2 Estimate of the World Situation," Jan. 1942, SPD Series 3, Box 46, Naval History Division, Department of the Navy, Washington, D.C.; War Department and CCS Russian Combat Estimate, April 1, 1942, CCS 350.05 USSR (4-1-42); Akira Iriye, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941-1945*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Ma., 1981, pp. 89-91.

²⁵JCS Memorandum for Information #14, "Chinese Capabilities," July 4, 1942, CCS 381 China (4 July 42), Record Group 218, National Archives; Dallek, *Roosevelt...*, pp. 355-56; Thorne, *Allies of a Kind...*, pp. 156-58, 178; Michael Schaller, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-1945*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1979, pp. 107-14; Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, Viking, New York, 1966, pp. 365-66.

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²⁷Outgoing message 3546, Marshall to Eisenhower, July 13, 1942, OPD 381 ETO (Sec. 1), 2, Record Group 165, National Archives.

²⁸See Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins...*, pp. 602-05; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning...*, pp. 268-78; memoranda in OPD 381 (Sec. II), 73, Record Group 165, National Archives; and handwritten Roosevelt memoranda, July 10-14, 1942, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers, Map Room File, Churchill-FDR Messages Strays Box, Roosevelt Library.

²⁹Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins...*, p. 605.

³⁰Minutes, CCS 32nd meeting and attached JCS memorandum, July 24, 1942, CCS 334 (26 May 1942), Record Group 218, National Archives; Butler and Gwyer, *Grand Strategy*, Vol. III, pp. 635-36, 684-85; Michael Howard, *Grand Strategy*, Vol. IV, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1972, pp. XXIII-XXV, 207; Sherwood, *Roosevelt & Hopkins...*, pp. 611-12; Pogue, *Marshall...*, p. 347; Stimson Diary, July 25, 1942; outgoing message, McNarney to Marshall, July 25, 1942, and memorandum, Smith to JCS, "Notes on Conference Held at White House at 8:30 P.M., July 30, 1942," Aug. 1, 1942, OPD Exec. 5, Item 11, Tab 14, Record Group 165, National Archives.

³¹Memorandum, Roosevelt to JCS, Oct. 24, 1942, Henry H. Arnold Papers, Box 3, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; JCS 85 series, "Strategic Policy of the

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³²Dallek, *Roosevelt...*, p. 354; Thorne, *Allies of a Kind...*, p. 163; Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, "Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940-1943," in *U.S. Army in World War II: The War Department*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1955, p. 662.

³³Walter Scott Dunn, Jr., *Second Front Now 1943*, University of Alabama Press, University, AL, 1980, argues that a 1943 second front was not completely out of the question until the invasion of Italy in mid-1943.

³⁴Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, Doubleday and Co., New York, 1948, pp. 68-71.

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**A TALE OF THREE CITIES:
TRIPARTITE DIPLOMACY AND THE SECOND FRONT,
1941-1942**

The Anglo-American dispute over wartime strategy in mid-summer 1942 is a familiar theme to historians.¹ Less well understood is how military and political strategy evolved around the problem of future relations with the Soviet Union. With the passage of the Lend-Lease Act in early 1941, America began to exert a powerful role in postwar planning. Roosevelt expected a great deal in exchange for Lend-Lease aid, however, nothing less, indeed, than British, and eventually, Soviet cooperation in his postwar plans. British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden was left in no doubt on this point when he met with Roosevelt's representative, Harry Hopkins, in mid-summer 1941. Hopkins was in London to discuss the war situation and supply problems in the light of the changed conditions resulting from the German invasion of Russia on June 22, 1941.

There were already indications that the Russian front might hold out much longer than originally anticipated (both in Washington and London); and already, as well, the military advisers who accompanied Hopkins were expressing serious doubts about British concentration on the Middle East. Despite the desperate military situation, political questions were also on the agenda. Having "appeased" Hitler and brought on the war, American policymakers feared the British were once more seeking to buy off a potential rival with other people's lands. When FDR's special emissary hinted at these fears, Churchill told Hopkins dismissively that he was not interested in the peace; if he felt unduly concerned about British diplomacy, he should see Anthony Eden to be reassured.

That is exactly what took place. Roosevelt "was most eager." Hopkins began that there be no British commitments to postwar frontiers in Europe. The United States did not want to come into the war only to find out after the event that "we had all kinds of engagements of which they had never been told." "I was as eager to keep my hands free as anybody," Eden later recalled, but, "the spec-

tacle of an American President talking at large on European frontiers chilled me with Wilsonian memories."²

There was great concern in Washington that even the first Anglo-Soviet agreement of July 12, 1941, pledging mutual assistance and no separate peace, might contain hidden provisions governing the future of Eastern Europe.³ It did not. But American suspicions had been aroused by earlier hints from London in late April, 1941, that in order to improve relations with the Soviet Union, the British Government might recognize Russian incorporation of the Baltic states, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.⁴

On July 14, two days after the signing of the Russo-British agreement, Roosevelt warned the Prime Minister that it was "much too early for any of us to make any commitments" regarding the peace. The President added that such commitments were to be avoided "for the very good reason that both Britain and the United States want assurance of future peace by disarming all trouble makers..."

Then came this warning: "I am inclined to think that an overall statement on your part would be useful at this time, making it clear that no post war peace commitments as to territories, populations or economies have been given. I could then back up your statement in very strong terms."⁵

The famous Atlantic Charter was the result. To Stalin's several messages over the late summer and fall of 1941 demanding specifics to go with what had been promised about conferences on long-range planning, on the other hand, Churchill returned anodyne messages praising the heroism of Soviet fighting forces. These did little to assuage the Russian leader.

Churchill fended off the early demands for a second front with the basic argument that there simply were not the forces available, nor yet the means to get them to France, to accomplish anything on the scale Stalin envisioned. A premature assault on the heavily-fortified coast would instead end in a major disaster, postponing victory for months if not years. Only four months ago, he told Ambassador Maisky on one occasion in early September, His Majesty's Government did not know which way Russia would jump. Indeed, it was thought likely Stalin would choose Hitler again. "Whatever happens, and whatever you do, you of all people have no right to make reproaches to us."⁶

Maisky brought another letter from Stalin to the Prime Minister in early November, 1941. As the Prime Minister read Stalin's words, Churchill leaped from his chair, and pacing from corner to corner,

declared, "I can't understand what Stalin wants."⁷ Actually the letter was perfectly clear about what the Soviet Union wanted. The letter declared that Anglo-Russian relations lacked "clarity" because of two circumstances: "first, there is no definite understanding between the two countries concerning war aims and plans for the post-war organization of peace; secondly, there is no treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain on mutual military aid in Europe against Hitler."⁸

Once the Prime Minister calmed down, it was decided to send Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden to Moscow.⁹ Eden's main purpose was to indicate the seriousness of British intentions toward its Soviet "ally." But Stalin's recent message had hinted at serious political negotiations as a substitute for military action, a prospect American policymakers feared.

Eden's visit began on the eve of Pearl Harbor. William C. Bullitt, the "disillusioned" former Ambassador to the Soviet Union, warned Roosevelt, "Don't let Churchill get you into any more specific engagements than those in the Atlantic Charter. Try to keep him from engaging himself vis-à-vis Russia. The treaties—if made—will be as difficult for you to handle as the secret Treaties were for Wilson."¹⁰

That same day Secretary of State Cordell Hull cabled Winant in London, instructing him to read a lengthy message to Eden before he departed for Moscow. The Atlantic Charter delineated U.S. attitudes and policies toward the postwar world, Hull said, and it would be "unfortunate" if "any of the three governments, now on common ground in the Atlantic Charter, [were] to express any willingness to enter into specific commitments regarding specific terms of the postwar settlement... Above all there must be no secret accords."¹¹

Eden had planned to say that His Majesty's Government could not recognize Russian incorporation of the Baltic States on account of the Atlantic Charter. Eden also planned to postpone any discussion of reparations from Germany, offering as an alternative promises of British aid for postwar Russian reconstruction. Also included in the Foreign Secretary's list of topics was a vague plan for "confederation" of the weak Central European states, starting with a Czech-Polish agreement that might also eventually include the Balkan states.¹²

Sir Alexander Cadogan, an aide, called these papers, our "Volga Charter."¹³ There was little symmetry, however, between the At-

lantic Charter and the proposed Volga Charter, except in so far as both represented British efforts to avoid specific commitments until a more favorable time. But Stalin wanted to talk specifics. The Soviet leader opened the Kremlin talks on December 16, 1941, shortly after 7 p.m., with a bold proposal for an Anglo-Russian diarchy to rule postwar Europe.

He invited the British to establish postwar military bases in France and Holland. Russia would have similar fortifications in Finland. And there was more: British naval bases on the coasts of Norway and Denmark; Russian military and naval bases inside an enlarged Romania.

"It will be necessary to have some military force for this purpose and I think it is desirable that there should be a military alliance between the democratic countries which would be organized under a council of some sort and it will have an international military force at its disposal. If certain of the countries of Europe wish to federate, then the Soviet Union will have no objection to such a course."¹⁴

Eden appeared stunned. At one point, when the discussion became animated, Stalin became upset at Eden's constant pleas that he could not "go back upon my arrangement with President Roosevelt," and burst out. "I thought the Atlantic Charter was directed against those people who were trying to establish world dominion. It now looks as if the Atlantic Charter was directed against the U.S.S.R."¹⁵

Yet the foreign secretary returned home a convert to the idea of settling with Moscow.¹⁶ When he reported to the War Cabinet and to Prime Minister Churchill in Washington that he believed that Stalin considered his 1941 frontiers the "acid test" of British good will, and reminded his colleagues that "if we won the war, Russian forces would probably penetrate into Germany, and that at a later day she might well want more than her 1941 frontiers," he received a dressing-down like a subaltern in India might expect for overstepping his prerogatives.¹⁷

Churchill cabled from Washington on January 8, 1942, that to yield to Stalin's demands would "dishonor our cause." Roosevelt had several times expressed his pleasure, he went on, at the firm line taken in Moscow. What was the talk of an acid test about? Previous to Hitler's attack, the Russians were utterly indifferent to the fate of anyone besides themselves. And, finally: "No one can foresee how the balance of power will lie, or where the winning army

will stand. It seems probable however that the United States and the British Empire, far from being exhausted, will be the most powerfully armed and economic block the world has ever seen, and that the Soviet Union will need our aid for reconstruction far more than we shall then need theirs."¹⁸

Back in wartime London, things began to look different. In North Africa, for example, the Prime Minister was baffled that his military commanders "should stand idle for so long a period at enormous expense while the Russians were fighting desperately and valiantly along their whole vast front."¹⁹

Not only did this give General Rommel opportunity to replenish his supplies, as Churchill lectured his commanders, but there was a political fall-out as well. Churchill derided those who scrawled "Second Front Now!" on sidewalks and buildings. But he was forced to undertake a "considerable reconstruction" of the War Cabinet in mid-February, by including Sir Stafford Cripps, the recently returned ambassador to the Soviet Union.²⁰ Cripps was popular with those who thought he could bring something of the Russian spirit into the counsels of His Majesty's Government. He was even being spoken of as a successor to Churchill in a "People's Government."

The "Cripps for Premier" movement bore watching, agreed American officials. And Ambassador Winant reported that the Cripps appointment as government leader in the House of Commons had been widely hailed in the press: "Some commentators foresee intensification of efforts for closer relations with Russia as a result of his presence in the War Cabinet..."²¹

In addition to these visible alterations in the political environment, private efforts were being made to convince the Prime Minister to change his mind about settling territorial questions with the Russians. Eden had been joined by Ambassador Halifax, who thought that Winston had been "unnecessarily fierce." Anthony was not exaggerating, Halifax wrote Churchill on January 11, 1942, when he stressed Stalin's concern with postwar security. "[Q]uite apart from his great value in winning the war,... future peace is going to depend very much upon Joe and ourselves being prepared to think and act together, along with this country, afterwards."²²

Halifax proposed making protectorates of the Baltic States (much like what France offered Indo-China after the war). Eden thanked his predecessor for a "most helpful letter" about Russia. It was difficult to say what Stalin's real motives were in regard to propagating Communism, but there could be no doubt of his concern

for Russian national security. "He seemed to me a man with a complete 'Real Politik' outlook and a political descendant of Peter the Great rather than of Lenin."²³

Eden repeat these arguments to Churchill and the War Cabinet. All things considered, he said, it was wise to encourage Stalin to go on wearing Peter's fine leather boots, and not tempt him to don Lenin's cloth cap. What if he decided to wear both? Of course no one could foresee the political situation at war's end, or what other temptations would be put before Stalin then, but surely it was unwise to pass up an opportunity to settle with Russia because of what the Foreign Secretary called America's "exaggeratedly moral" posture, "at least where non-American interests are concerned."²⁴

What factor or combination of factors influenced Churchill to change his mind is not entirely clear, but he did, and on March 7, 1942, he cabled the President, "The increasing gravity of the war has led me to feel that the principles of the Atlantic Charter ought not to be construed so as to deny Russia the frontiers she occupied when Germany attacked her."²⁵

The Prime Minister wanted a free hand to sign the treaty with Russia because "there is very little else we can do to help the only country that is heavily engaged with the German armies."²⁶ But Roosevelt thought there was a lot *he* could do. Washington had been expecting something like the Churchill message. Lord Halifax had talked with Sumner Welles on February 18 and 20. When the Ambassador finished, Welles noted in disgust that his words "evidenced the worst phase of the spirit of Munich."²⁷

The President felt that the Soviet Union was entitled to obtain full and legitimate security at the end of the war, said Welles, when it would be known what kind of Germany there would be. The British should remember that the Atlantic Charter clearly called for German disarmament. Then this bombshell: "The President further desired me to say that he himself would discuss this matter directly with Stalin."

Nettled by American "moralizing," Halifax responded that the Baltic States had not been notably successful in their form of self-government during the interwar years. Admitting that he might sound cynical, the Ambassador added that counting the fate of the Baltic peoples higher than assurances of Soviet cooperation in the postwar world was hardly "realistic."

Word had also come to Halifax through Roosevelt's private secretary, General Edwin M. "Pa" Watson, however, that Soviet Am-

bassador Maksim Litvinov had been seeking an appointment with the President to talk about the importance of opening another front against the Germans.²⁸ It was also learned that Roosevelt tried to explain to Litvinov that if London and Moscow had gone ahead with a "secret" treaty, he would not have objected, but now he was obliged to consider public opinion, etc. Russia should get the security it was entitled to, of course, at the end of the war. Moscow simply took note of the American position.²⁹

Harry Hopkins was worried about an impasse. Just at this moment, moreover, Hopkins was in touch with Lord Beaverbrook, perhaps the strongest advocate of Anglo-Russian cooperation, who complained that the Prime Minister had no policy worthy of the name. Beaverbrook enjoyed special access to Churchill, but had not been successful on the "second front" issue. Resigning from the Cabinet, he took his arguments to American friends. "Britain has no foreign policy toward Russia," began his memorandum to Hopkins of March 25, 1942. Rehearsing all the grievances Stalin had uttered at one time or another, "Max" almost went farther than the Russian leader in denouncing the failure to respond to Moscow's repeated requests "for military help."

Half-way down the first page of his memorandum there was this: "Stalin says that Britain treats the Russians like natives or negroes." The basis of a successful Russian policy, said Beaverbrook, was to be found in equality, an equal voice in the conduct of the war, in pooling of supplies, and an "unconditional share" in determining the peace settlement.³⁰

Beaverbrook also included in this memorandum his recommendation that the Western allies recognize Russia's 1941 frontiers without further ado. Hopkins had another slant on these issues from a recent intelligence report that claimed there was a "distinct possibility of a Russo-German accommodation."

This danger, according to the head of Military Intelligence, General Raymond Lee, stemmed in part from the way that Lend-Lease had been handled, and, he concluded: "Poor Soviet-British relations and our dependence on the British for supply cooperation and information have marred our relations with the U.S.S.R. Information from British sources concerning the Soviet situation must be discounted; direct contact on high policy is desirable. The Russians have exploited our help, but they do not understand our altruism, are suspicious of our failure to get a war plans understanding, and fail completely to cooperate with us."³¹

On March 27, 1942, Secretary of War Stimson wrote the President, "John Sherman said in 1877, 'The only way to resume specie payments is to resume'. Similarly, the only way to get the initiative in this war is to take it." The President should send "a trusted messenger" to London with American plans for a European offensive.

The only objection he had heard from the British about an early cross-Channel operation was this matter of landing craft, Stimson continued. Thus it was well within Roosevelt's power to take charge of the situation, "while, on the other hand, so long as we remain without our own plan of offensive, our forces will inevitably be dispersed and wasted."³² As Roosevelt pondered these things, Ambassador Halifax asked for another interview to explain the British position. The word came back that the President saw no point in seeing him.³³

Roosevelt cabled Churchill on April 1 and again on April 3, 1942, informing him that he was sending Hopkins and General George C. Marshall, because he had come to "certain conclusions" about long range problems and the military situation facing the United Nations. He also advised Churchill that he proposed to ask Stalin to send him special representatives "to see me at once." The messages fairly crackled with Roosevelt's square-jawed determination to jolt the British out of the stiff-upper-lip mentality Americans thought still pervaded their war councils.

"Your people and mine demand the establishment of a front to draw off pressure on the Russians, and these peoples are wise enough to see that the Russians are today killing more Germans and destroying more equipment than you and I put together. Even if full success is not attained, the *big* objective will be."³⁴

What the "*big* objective" was, Roosevelt did not actually say, but obviously military success was not the only scale on which to measure the benefits of the operation. When he wrote Stalin, therefore, he tried to persuade the Soviet leader to send Foreign Minister V.M. Molotov to see him before he went to London for the final treaty negotiations.³⁵

He had in mind, he told Stalin, "a very important military proposal involving the utilization of our armed forces in a manner to relieve your critical western front. This objective carries great weight with me." As an added inducement to a prior Molotov visit, Roosevelt suggested that he needed Stalin's "advice before we determine with finality the strategic course of our common military action."³⁶

It was not enough. Molotov's schedule remained the same. On arriving in London, however, Hopkins greeted Eden with personal reassurances from Roosevelt that "our main proposal here should take the heat off Russia's diplomatic demands upon England."³⁷ In the War Cabinet things went well, and after a joint session with Hopkins and Marshall on April 14, Churchill promised that nothing would be left undone by the British government which could contribute to the success of the endeavor they were about to undertake.³⁸

But Churchill revealed his real opinion of the American plan by minuting on a cable from the Washington Embassy that the President was trying to find a means of satisfying Stalin without making any agreement on frontiers. "This seems to me a very foolish view," snorted the Prime Minister.³⁹

As British officials prepared for Molotov's visit, they reviewed all that Stalin had told Eden back in December, and drew up a list of fourteen Russian proposals concerning the future map of Europe.⁴⁰ When Maisky handed Eden the Russian response to British drafts of the military and political treaties, it was seen that the only issue stipulated was the 1941 frontiers. In an "annex," however, the Russians declared that Poland's future frontiers were subject, as per an agreement signed between Sikorski and Stalin, to Polish-Russian negotiations.⁴¹

Maisky then brought up Stalin's desire for a "secret protocol" to the treaty whereby London would agree to the negotiation of defense pacts between Russia and Finland, and Russia and Romania. The Russians, for their part, still encouraged Britain to do the same with Belgium and Holland. Eden asked, in turn, what had happened to the British-proposed article for a confederation of the smaller states of Eastern Europe? Maisky embarked on a long and involved explanation, the gist of which was that while not opposed to the idea, the Soviet Government believed it was the wrong time to declare that confederation was the proper solution.

To do that, he ended, would only encourage the activities of the exiled governments in all sorts of ways. Then Eden ended the conversation with remarks that foretold the shape of things to come: "I said this was most disappointing. Many people thought that we were prepared to hand over the smaller countries of Europe to Soviet domination, and, if no reference were made to confederation in some terms similar to those we suggested, I feared that the effect of the treaty would be very bad in those quarters."⁴²

This was blunt talk. From the British records, it is easy to see that interest in the treaty was rapidly diminishing. For five days, May 21 to May 26, 1942, Molotov and Eden rehearsed all the familiar arguments over the political treaty. The Russian Foreign Minister first attempted to persuade his British counterpart that the "secret protocol" was nothing more than a codification of the Stalin-Eden conversations. Failing in that, he suggested that it be embodied in vaguer terms in the political treaty itself. What they were arguing about, of course, was not simply the Russian desire for security treaties with Finland or Romania, or a position on the shores of the Black Sea, and symmetrical advantages for Britain in the West, but whether or not Europe could be re-organized between them.⁴³

Eden was happy to have Ambassador Winant standing by ready to offer Washington's opinion.⁴⁴ When it proved difficult for Eden to arrange a time for Molotov and Winant to meet, the American Ambassador telephoned Maisky that he had important information to convey before a treaty was signed. They met at the Russian Embassy at ten p.m. on May 24, 1942. Molotov had listened with great interest to his exposition of Roosevelt's attitude, Winant reported, and said the President's position warranted serious consideration. He would think about postponing the signing, therefore, until he had been to Washington and talked with Roosevelt.⁴⁵

Winant re-emphasized America's interest in an early Second Front, adding that the State Department had also advised him arrangements were being made to discuss commercial policy and "a program in the relief field..." Winant's intervention was important, but he had said little that was new. The promises of economic aid, as events would demonstrate, were contingent upon a prior political framework for postwar cooperation.

Two days later Molotov agreed to abandon the project for a political treaty, settling for a military alliance alone. Eden later heaped praise on Winant for his efforts. In fact, he was anxious to have it known that he had had a very great deal of help from others. Talking with Polish leader Wladyslaw Sikorski, Eden surprisingly gave him "all the credit" for the way things turned out. Sikorski said, no, Eden deserved "150%" of the credit for having the courage to take a sharp turn. "Yes," Eden continued in a more revealing manner, "but we succeeded because I took your advice. The Poles evidently know the Russians much better than we do."⁴⁶

Both Eden and Churchill believed the outcome boded well for postwar cooperation, "Our relations with the USSR were now on

an entirely different and far more satisfactory footing."⁴⁷ With his work accomplished in London, "Mr. Brown," the codename for V.M. Molotov, left for Washington. Harry Hopkins was distressed when the President chose to open this new chapter of Russo-American relations at his first meeting with Molotov late in the afternoon of May 29, 1942, by presenting the Soviet Foreign Minister with a gratuitous (if well-meaning) State Department proposal for American good offices in settling Iranian-Russian and Turkish-Russian disputes, and another somewhat difficult, if not controversial, proposal that the Russians should sign or adhere to the 1929 Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war.⁴⁸

Beginning with cocktails that evening the conference went much better. Roosevelt introduced his concept of the Big Four policemen, surprising Molotov somewhat by the vehemence of his argument that all other nations must be disarmed—even such a historic world power as France—because if there were too many policemen the great danger was that they might start fighting among themselves. "The President said he could not visualize another League of Nations with 100 different signatories; there were simply too many nations to satisfy, hence it was a failure and would be a failure."

When Molotov asked if the President was familiar with the treaty that had been negotiated in London, Roosevelt replied that he was, and that "he thought it was all to the good." Now was not the time to raise the questions of frontiers, but there might come a proper time later. Molotov said his government had very definite convictions in the opposite direction, but deferred to British preference and what he had understood to be the attitude of the President.⁴⁹

During dinner Molotov expanded on the need for a second front, leaving the impression that if an early Second Front was not launched, so that at least forty divisions were withdrawn from the Eastern Front, a Russian collapse might occur, or at least a withdrawal to the Volga.⁵⁰ The President observed that Molotov should bear in mind that both he and Churchill had to reckon with military advisers who preferred "a sure thing in 1943 to a risky adventure in 1942," but he recognized the force of the Foreign Minister's argument and the necessity of offensive action "at the earliest appropriate moment."⁵¹

After Molotov repeated his points in greater detail the next day, the President turned to General Marshall. Were developments

"clear enough so that we could say to Mr. Stalin that we are preparing a second front?" "Yes," came the reply. "The President then authorized Mr. Molotov to inform Mr. Stalin that we expect the formation of a second front this year."⁵²

Marshall quickly sought to qualify the President's statement by pointing out that there were serious problems of transportation to overcome. FDR's language, as recorded in the official minutes, was indeed ambiguous, moving from "preparing" a second front to "formation ... this year." The General could be excused for wishing to qualify the commitment.⁵³

But that was not to be—instead Roosevelt moved in the other direction at the final parley with Molotov on June 1, 1942. After some prickly exchanges on Finland, FDR expanded on what he conceived would be the Big Four's special responsibilities after the war, suggesting that Russia should take part in administering a trusteeship system for managing the transition of colonial territories to freedom.

After Roosevelt observed that an early second front might mean curtailing Lend-Lease convoys to Russia, Molotov retorted that the second front would be stronger if the first still stood fast, and "with what seemed deliberate sarcasm," asked what would happen if the Russians agreed to curtailed shipments and then there was no second front. Becoming still more insistent, he asked, "What is the President's answer with respect to the second front?"

Yielding to temptation, Roosevelt replied, "We expected to establish a second front." He had bought a huge stake in the great game of diplomacy. In fact, he was the dealer. The cards must be played.⁵⁴

EPILOGUE

On June 12, 1942, Hopkins wrote Ambassador Winant about how well things had gone with Molotov. He and the President got on "famously." "We simply cannot organize the world between the British and ourselves without bringing the Russians in as equal partners." For that matter, the Chinese, if things went well for them, would also have to be considered partners. The days of the "white man's burden are over."

The publicity releases about the second front told the story, Hopkins went on. "I have a feeling some of the British are holding back

a bit but all in all it is moving as well as could be expected.”⁵⁵ Readers of the *Washington Post* for June 18, 1942, could have learned from Walter Lippmann the essentials of the bargain that was struck in London, Washington, and Moscow, and which historians have waited four decades to learn from the archives in detail. Discussing the negotiation of the Anglo-Russian Treaty, Lippmann praised what he called the “Liberal” policy finally adopted by all three nations: “Yet it is necessary for us to understand that the liberal policy became a feasible policy only when it was clear that the United States is preparing to act strongly and constructively in the postwar period. If we had not ... we would have been in no position to express any opinions about what Russia ought to do to make her western borders strategically secure... By combining armaments and diplomacy, by weaving together the conduct of the war and the preparation of the peace, we are marching on our two legs to our goal.”⁵⁶

Four days later Hopkins and Litvinov appeared together at Madison Square Garden at a Russian War Relief Rally. “And what of our 3,000,000 trained ground troops with their modern mechanized equipment? I want to assure this audience that General Marshall, the great leader of our Army, is not training these men to play tidlywinks.

“A second front? Yes, and if necessary a third and fourth front, to pen the German Army in a ring of our offensive steel.”⁵⁷

So spoke Harry Hopkins. But there were other developments. On June 9, 1942, Roosevelt had a long talk with Admiral Louis “Dickie” Mountbatten. Churchill had sent Mountbatten to prepare the way for his own visit. The subject of their “long and interesting talk” was the second front. Mountbatten had argued the standard British position that the shortage of landing craft and the presence of twenty-five German divisions in France meant that “no landing we could carry out could draw off any troops...” In reply, FDR had asked Mountbatten to “remind the Prime Minister of the agreement reached last time he was in Washington, that in the event of things going very badly for the Russians this summer, a sacrifice landing would be carried out in France to assist them.”

In this conversation, moreover, Roosevelt gave every indication of being torn by suspicions (more than shared by his military advisers) that the British wanted to lure him into the “peripheral” strategy.⁵⁸ When Churchill himself arrived to make the case for GYM-NAST, the invasion of North Africa, the press talked about “Light-

ning Decisions” and the second front. But there were also reports that Tobruk had fallen to the Germans. News reports out of Washington began to suggest that the second front would now have to be limited to holding the line in Egypt.⁵⁹ No one was more distressed at this prospect than Stimson. On July 15, 1942, Stimson sent the President a handwritten note along with a book on the ill-fated World War I campaign in the Dardanelles. It offered a parallel with present “attempted diversions from Bolero by our British friends... I beg you to read it without delay and *before you decide upon your present action.*”⁶⁰

Hopkins and Marshall returned to London and heard the final no to a cross-channel attack in 1942. “I feel damned depressed,” Hopkins noted. FDR replied to their cables that he was not entirely surprised, and then repeated his directive that there must be an alternative offensive “for American ground forces in 1942.” He listed several, including North Africa, Norway, Egypt, or Persia to the Caucasus. But there must be a decision, he ended.⁶¹

Stimson would not yield his position, however, and sent the President a final memorandum recapitulating what had taken place: “These proposals bear on their face the inevitable results of an attempt to compromise fundamentally opposed principles and policies. The U.S. has been seeking to establish a prompt offensive to ultimately destroy Hitler in Europe and in the meanwhile to keep Russia in the war. The U.K., while professing the same purpose, is equally if not more insistent upon a present attempt to preserve its empire in the Middle East.”⁶²

Roosevelt was angered. Stimson’s reluctance to abandon SLEDGEHAMMER in the face of British objections, he wrote, gave “no help to Russian resistance in 1942”. In his own way, because he could manage no other, Roosevelt would keep his promise to Molotov. But the Americans would not land in Europe until 1944. Roosevelt’s “Liberal” policy, as Lippmann had called it, had failed to weave armaments and diplomacy, to combine warmaking and planning for the peace, so that the allied effort could march on two legs. Not yet anyway.

NOTES

¹See Mark A. Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn., 1977, and Richard W. Steele, *The First Offensive, 1942*, Indiana

University Press, Bloomington, 1973. Many statements in this essay that are not specifically cited to other sources are based upon these studies.

²Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (rev. ed.), Grosset & Dunlap, New York, 1950, pp. 311, 317; Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon, *The Memoirs of Anthony Eden: The Reckoning*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1965, p. 316.

³See Memorandum of Conversation with the British Ambassador by Sumner Welles, in Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941, Volume I, G.P.O., Washington, 1958, p. 182* (hereafter, *FR*, followed by year and volume.)

⁴See, for example, Eden to Lord Halifax, British Ambassador in Washington, April 20, 1941, Public Record Office, London, England, Foreign Office 371/29465 (N1667/3/38) (hereafter, *PRO*, FO 371, followed by piece number and file number.)

⁵*FR, 1941, I, p. 342*. The pact with Russia is not mentioned in this message, nor is Russia mentioned at all. Instead, Roosevelt's references are to rumored promises to Yugoslavia. This suggests that he felt an oblique approach was better under the circumstances, perhaps because he was already concerned not to put anything on the record that could be used to justify a separate peace on the Eastern Front. However that may be, there can be no doubt that the primary concern was Anglo-Soviet diplomacy. The message Roosevelt sent was drafted by him immediately after he received a memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle discussing British efforts to act as a go-between in negotiations between the Soviets and the Polish Government in exile in London, and the possibility that Churchill's government would accept Moscow's demand that its title to the Baltic countries be recognized. The file at the Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park consists of the memorandum from Berle to FDR, July 8, 1941, Roosevelt's draft, and memos between Roosevelt and his favorite adviser in the State Department, Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles. *President's Secretary's File, Great Britain* (hereafter, *Roosevelt Papers, PSF*).

⁶Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, pp. 457-58.

⁷Maisky, *Memoirs*, pp. 201-02.

⁸Stalin to Churchill, November 8, 1941, *Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the U.S.A. and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945* (2 vols.), Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1957, pp. 33-34.

⁹Churchill to Stalin, rec'd November 7, 1941, in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁰Bullitt to Roosevelt, December 5, 1941, *Roosevelt Papers, President's Personal File (PPF)*, 1124.

¹¹*FR, 1941, I, pp. 194-95*.

¹²W.P. (41) 288, November 29, 1941 and Eden's draft memo for Winant, December 4, 1941, FO 371/29472 (N6835/G).

¹³David Dilks, ed., *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, 1938-45*, Cassell, London, 1971, p. 414.

¹⁴The minutes of the Kremlin Conversations, December 16-20, and Eden's full report to the War Cabinet January 5, 1942, are all in FO 371/32874 (N109/G).

¹⁵This quotation was included in a truncated version of the talks that Eden gave to Ambassador Winant. It is interesting to look at the highlights Eden chose to

communicate, although these did include the Foreign Secretary's pledge to take up the matter of Russia's frontiers with the Dominions and the United States Government. See Winant to Hull, January 19, 1942, *FR, 1942, III, pp. 494-503*.

¹⁶Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 707-21.

¹⁷WM (42), 1st meeting, confidential annex, January 1, 1942, CAB 65/29, *PRO*.

¹⁸Churchill to Eden, January 8, 1942, FO 371/32874 (N109/86/G).

¹⁹(Boston, 1950), p. 291, *et passim*.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 81.

²¹Memorandum by Theodore Achilles, March 6, 1942, State Department Files, 841.00/1572, National Archives of the United States, Washington, D.C. (hereafter, *SD*, followed by file number); Hoover to Berle, February 16, 1942, SD 841.00/1547; and Winant to Hull, February 20, 1942, SD 841.00/1548.

²²Halifax to Eden, January 12, 1942, enclosing, Halifax to Churchill, January 11, 1942, both in *Eden Papers, FO 954/29*.

²³Eden to Halifax, January 22, 1942, *Ibid.*

²⁴"Policy Toward Russia." W.P. (42) 48, January 28, 1942, in FO 371/32875 (N563/G).

²⁵Kimball, *Churchill & Roosevelt, I, p. 394*.

²⁶Eden to Churchill, March 6, 1942, *PREM 3, 395/12*.

²⁷Memorandum of Conversation, February 18, 1942, *FR, 1942, III, pp. 512-21*.

²⁸Halifax to Foreign Office, February 12, 1942, FO 371/32876 (N897/5/G).

²⁹This paragraph is based on information Maisky gave to Anthony Eden, see Minute by V. Mallet, March 20, 1942, FO 371/32877 (N1486/5/38) and Eden to Clark-Kerr, March 23, 1942, FO 371/32878 (1526/86/G).

³⁰The memorandum is in the Sherwood Collection, taken from the *Hopkins Papers* at the Roosevelt Library.

³¹"Memorandum for the Chief of Staff," February 12, 1942, in *Hopkins Papers*.

³²Stimson to FDR, March 27, 1942, *Roosevelt Papers, PSF, 7*.

³³"Memorandum of Conversation," April 1, 1942, *FR, 1942, III, pp. 538-39*.

³⁴Kimball, *Churchill & Roosevelt*, pp. 437, 441.

³⁵*FR, 1942, III, pp. 536-42*.

³⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 542-43.

³⁷Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 528.

³⁸D.O. (42) 10th Meeting, in *PREM 3, 333/6*.

³⁹Halifax to Foreign Office, April 17, 1942 and Churchill's minute, April 18, 1942, FO 371/32907 (N2000/G).

⁴⁰Undated, Untitled Memorandum, ca. April 25, 1942, FO 371/32880 (N2182/G). An added complication were the territorial demands of the Polish Government in exile. If a treaty was signed with Russia, it was sure to cause trouble with Sikorski's provisional government, and, as both the U.S. and British governments were fully aware, spill over into the press. See, for example, Biddle to Roosevelt and Hull, April 24, 1942, SD 741.6111/7.

⁴¹Eden to Clark Kerr, May 1, 1942, FO 371/32880 (N2336/86/G).

⁴²Eden to Clark Kerr, May 5, 1942, FO 371/32880 (N2385/86/G).

⁴³The Minutes of these sessions are in *Churchill Papers, PREM 3, 333/8*.

⁴⁴Secretary of State Cordell Hull wrote in his *Memoirs* that Molotov's arrival in England led to the strongest protest yet being sent to London. "Our memorandum was so strong that we were in some fear lest the President disapprove it. Mr. Roosevelt, however, quickly returned it with his O.K., and we immediately sent

Winant a cable repeating its substance." See *FR, 1942, III*, p. 558, for a discussion of the circumstances.

⁴⁵Winant to Hull, May 24, 1942, *Ibid.*, pp. 558-63.

⁴⁶Richard C. Lukas, *The Strange Allies: The United States and Poland, 1941-1945*. University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1978, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁷WM (42), 68th Concl., minute 2, conf. annex, May 25, 1942, CAB 65/30.

⁴⁸Hopkins, "Memorandum of Conversation," May 29, 1942, *Hopkins Papers*, Sherwood Collection. For some reason the latter half of Hopkins's memorandum is not printed in *FR, 1942, III*, though it bears very strongly on the issues. The sentence quoted is from the unprinted section. The implication of that sentence is that Hopkins was truly depressed by Roosevelt's hunting around in the underbrush when the quarry was plainly in sight in front of him. In other parts of the unprinted section, Hopkins refers to friction between Litvinov and his superior, Molotov's desire to spend at least one night in the White House (as opposed to Litvinov's seeming wish to separate FDR and the Foreign Minister), and the latter's desire "that one of the girls he brought over as secretaries be permitted to come and that has been arranged." For the official minutes and the first half of Hopkins's memorandum, see *Ibid.*, pp. 566-68, 571-72.

⁴⁹These paragraphs are taken, in part, from both the official (Cross) minutes and Hopkins notes, in *Ibid.*, pp. 568-69, 572-74.

⁵⁰Once again this portion of the Cross minutes was not published with the records in *Ibid.*, pp. 569-70, and is available in ms form in the *Hopkins Papers*, Sherwood Collection. It is hard to explain this omission, for an understanding of Roosevelt's emphasis on making a firm commitment to Molotov later in the conference would seem to stem from this fear as much as anything else.

⁵¹FDR's comment is likewise excised from the printed minutes, and is in *Hopkins Papers*, Sherwood Collection.

⁵²Memorandum, May 30, 1942, 11 a.m., *FR, 1942, III*, pp. 575-78.

⁵³Yet again an important paragraph is omitted in the printed version, and one must go to the ms. in the *Hopkins Papers*, Sherwood Collection.

⁵⁴"Memorandum...., June 1, 1942," *Ibid.*, pp. 578-83.

⁵⁵*Hopkins Papers*, Sherwood Collection. Marshall made a last effort to qualify Molotov's proposed draft which mentioned 1942, but when Hopkins called this to FDR's attention specifically, "he, nevertheless, wished to have it included..." "Memorandum," June 3, 1942, *Ibid.*

⁵⁶A reader of the major American news publications for the week following the announcement of Molotov's visit and the signing of the treaties could almost piece together the whole story from December, 1941 to June, 1942. Here is another example of the failure of "secret diplomacy," a point historians should always keep in mind.

⁵⁷*New York Times*, June 23, 1942, p. 12.

⁵⁸Mountbatten to Roosevelt, June 15, 1942, *Roosevelt Papers*, Map Room File.

⁵⁹James Reston, in *Ibid.*, June 22, 1942, pp. 1, 8.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 609-10; Roosevelt to Hopkins, undated [July 23, 1942?], *Roosevelt Papers*, PSF.

⁶²Stimson to FDR, July 25, 1942, *Ibid.*

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IN AID OF AMERICA'S INTERESTS: THE PROVISION OF LEND-LEASE TO THE SOVIET UNION, 1941-1942

During a meeting between Ambassador Konstantin Umansky and Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles on January 21, 1941, a sharp exchange occurred over the troublesome issue of export licenses. Soviet representatives were encountering tremendous difficulties about obtaining licenses for the export of machine tools and other items ordered from American firms. Now Ambassador Umansky had learned that the United States government proposed "in certain instances" to issue "general" export licenses and that this policy was already being applied to various categories of Canadian purchases in the United States. The Ambassador stated that existing commercial agreements entitled the Soviet Union to most-favored-nation treatment and, thus, it was entitled to any arrangement that might be made for the issuance of general export licenses.

Under Secretary Welles replied that the provision of general export licenses to Canada had nothing to do with the question of most-favored-nation treatment. It resulted from the stated policy of the United States, as Ambassador Umansky already had been informed, to "give all possible assistance to the nations composing the British Empire, short of war, in their efforts of self-defence." When Umansky persisted in claiming that the arrangement with Canada was discriminatory, Welles stressed again that the United States was determined, as reiterated in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "arsenal of democracy" speech of December 29, 1940, to make available "every possible material assistance" to nations resisting aggression. Welles then said, "If the Soviet Union were now resisting aggression the Ambassador could appropriately urge that the same kind of mechanical methods employed in the issuance of licenses by the United States for the export of materials to these countries be granted also to the Soviet Union." Umansky frostily replied that

"the Soviet Union was fortunately not resisting aggression and that he did not believe that it would have to resist aggression." Welles remarked that "he hoped the Ambassador's highly optimistic expressions would be justified by future events."¹ On that note the conversation ended.

Soviet-American relations from June, 1941 to June, 1942, encompassing the epochal events flowing from Nazi Germany's surprise attack on the U.S.S.R. and the subsequent shock of Pearl Harbor which formally brought the United States into the Second World War, represent an especially convoluted chapter in the history of the wartime Allied coalition. At the beginning of this period, official relations between the Soviet Union and the United States were at perhaps their lowest point since 1933, snarled in diplomatic red tape and mutual suspicion.

On the American side, deeply entrenched hostility toward "communism" and Stalinist policies had been revived and reinforced by the public's perception of Russian behavior as callous and self-serving. The German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of August, 1939, and subsequent incorporation of eastern Poland into the territory of the U.S.S.R., the circumstances surrounding the Russo-Finnish War of 1939-40, and Soviet treatment of the Baltic States all fanned the embers of anti-Soviet feeling. By spring, 1941, the Roosevelt administration, increasingly committed to Britain's struggle for survival, was treating the Soviet Union as an active or unwitting ally of Nazi Germany.

Official Washington's determination to cooperate with the British blockade and, as well, to punish the Soviets for their perfidious conduct produced a hardline stance toward the U.S.S.R. Soviet efforts to purchase industrial equipment and certain raw materials were being blocked by the State Department, apparently acting on instructions from the White House.² Entry of Soviet publications and mail had been interfered with on several occasions.³ A dispute over control of Baltic States-registered ships in U.S. ports was dragging on, with State Department officials adopting the position that discussion of the disposition of these vessels might imply recognition of the Soviet "assimilation" of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. On June 14, assets of the Soviet Union (along with all occupied European nations and neutral states) in the United States were frozen by an Executive Order, an action which Ambassador Umansky termed blatantly discriminatory and which the U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Laurence A. Steinhardt, applauded "as best cal-

culated to maintain our prestige in Moscow."⁴ The prospects for any improvement in what had become a glacial relationship appeared bleak.

Two weeks later, thawing under the fierce blaze of battle between German and Soviet forces along a 1,500 mile front following Germany's treacherous invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, the great iceberg of American antagonism toward the Stalin regime was already beginning to break up. Rivulets of sympathy for the plight of the Russian people were manifesting themselves everywhere across the glaciated landscape of public opinion. By fall, 1941, under the warming glow of admiration for the courage and desperate determination of the Red Army, these small trickles had become freshets of support for all appropriate aid to the Soviet Union. By June, 1942, to all appearances, longstanding obstacles to Soviet-American cooperation had evaporated completely. The freshets had merged to produce a flood of enthusiasm for the cause of the Soviet Union, which the peculiar logic engendered by Pearl Harbor and a cascade of pro-Soviet propaganda persuasively argued was the cause of the United States. The clearest manifestation of what might be termed the end of an ice age was to be the provision of American military and economic assistance to the Soviet Union. Under the sponsorship of the White House, material help to Soviet forces seeking to slow the German onslaught was made available. Soon, through the ironies of war, Americans and Russians were being brought into close association in ways unimagined just a few years before.

One must, however, either abandon the geological metaphor at this point or extend (and perhaps seriously distort) it in order to deal with various of the flaws and complexities inherent in the notion of the Soviet-American rapprochement of 1941-42 as determined by climactic conditions. First, it is obvious that icy deposits of antagonism and suspicion remained. Second, the image of an ice sheet inexorably melting under the glare of strategic and political necessity does not entirely conform to the circumstances afflicting the Roosevelt administration and the United States in summer, 1941. It was a time of frustration and of drift for President Roosevelt. His master stroke, Lend-Lease, had intensified the national (and international) clamor for and against U.S. entry into the war. In that context, Hitler's decision to implement Operation "Barbarossa" may have rescued FDR from the dilemma his own reluctance to act had created.

What caused the United States government, while still a nonbeligent, to undertake an enormous program of military and economic assistance to the Soviet Union, a state whose basic precepts and recent behavior in the international arena were despised by many Americans? The answer is simple and yet also shot through with contradictions. FDR and his closest advisers reacted to the news of the German attack on the Soviet Union essentially as did Winston Churchill. (It will be remembered that the beleaguered British Prime Minister, renowned for his hatred of "Bolshevism," had said to an aide: "He had only one single purpose — the destruction of Hitler — and his life was much simplified thereby. If Hitler invaded Hell he would at least make a favourable reference to the Devil."⁵ Further, Churchill broadcast over BBC that same night and pledged to give "whatever help we can" to the Soviet Union.⁶) The President concluded that giving encouragement to the Soviet Union to resist the German onslaught conformed to the national interests of the United States.

The logic was plain. Nazi Germany posed a clear and present danger to the United States. Thus, any circumstance which arose that weakened Germany's military strength and made available more time for the United States to carry forward its plans for economic and military mobilization was to be welcomed. A German-Soviet war — whether it proved to be the "brief diversion" predicted by many British and American analysts or became the "second front" that Britain needed so desperately — more than met these conditions. Besides, while his military advisers could argue that every lathe or P-40 or antiaircraft gun promised to the Soviets was an irremediable loss to America's military preparedness, from the President's vantage the potential gains far outweighed any possible losses to the security of the United States.⁷

This is the background for a remarkable *volte face* on the part of the United States government in the days and weeks following the German attack on the Soviet Union. On June 23, Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles condemned Hitler's "treacherous attack" on the Soviet Union and, with an eye cocked to American opinion, emphasized: "...The immediate issue that presents itself to the people of the United States is whether the plan for universal conquest, for the cruel and brutal enslavement of all peoples, and for the ultimate destruction of the remaining free democracies, which

Hitler is now desperately trying to carry out, is to be successfully halted and defeated.

"That is the present issue which faces a realistic America. It is the issue which at this moment most directly involves our own national defense and the security of the New World in which we live.

"In the opinion of this Government, consequently, any defense against Hitlerism, any rallying of the forces opposing Hitlerism, from whatever source 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.

"Hitler's armies are today the chief dangers of the Americas".⁸

The next day President Roosevelt declared at his news conference that the U.S. government would help the Soviet Union to obtain war supplies. However, he warned that assistance would not be immediately forthcoming, for Soviet requests were certain to be huge. "You can't just go around to Mr. Garfinckel's and fill the order and take it away with you," FDR said.⁹ He shied away from any suggestion that the turn of events automatically made the Russians eligible for Lend-Lease, and he stressed that highest priority still would be given to aiding the British.¹⁰ Steps were taken to ease the way for Russian purchases. It was clear that, given the crosscurrents of political opinion regarding unconditional aid to the Soviet Union, President Roosevelt intended to move cautiously. Nonetheless, the order freezing Soviet assets was withdrawn, and the White House announced that the Neutrality Act was not applicable to the German-Soviet War.¹¹ Some \$9,000,000 in non-military supplies already purchased were immediately released for shipment.

Requests from the Soviet Union for military items and raw materials poured in. While accepting for the present the necessity of paying for any purchases (and, indeed, preferring at the outset a credit rather than inclusion under Lend-Lease), the Soviet Government besieged the Department of State, War Department, Office of Defense Aid Reports (which had been assigned administrative responsibility for Lend-Lease operations in May, 1941), and the White House with pleas for "speedy delivery" of essential materiel. Of highest priority were anti-aircraft guns, fighter, short range bombers, anti-tank guns, tools for airplane factories, cracking plants for aviation fuel, fully equipped tire factories, rolling mills, equipment for production of toluol, and toluol, aluminum, and other manufactured items and raw materials.¹² Meeting with Ambassador Umansky on July 10, President Roosevelt promised that the

U.S. government "would undertake to supply urgently" everything the Soviet Union wanted that could be shipped. He set a target date for insuring that all items "of an urgent character" reach the Soviet Union by October 1.¹³

The President's promise, offered so casually, proved impossible to keep, and evidence is lacking as to how seriously the October 1 date was intended. One component of FDR's "style" of administration was a whimsical willingness to set unrealistic goals (such as his call in 1938 for production of 50,000 airplanes per year), thereby motivating usually pragmatic subordinates to attempt to achieve the impossible. It does not appear that the President thought seriously about the breakthroughs that would be needed in terms of production priorities, negotiation of contracts, inspection arrangements, finance, and packaging and shipping to meet such a target.

A major problem was the bureaucratic confusion spawned by the tremendous demands on the embryonic administrative apparatus for Lend-Lease by the various nations already approved as recipients. FDR complicated this situation by assigning bits and pieces of the military and economic aid puzzle to first one agency and then another. He was especially meddlesome about administrative responsibility for the Soviet aid program, perhaps one measure of its importance to him. On June 30, a State Department committee on clearance of Russian requests was established. However, as the U.S. Army history of Lend-Lease acknowledged, "the Committee's procedure for referring Soviet requests to interested agencies proved to be cumbersome," and various people with a stake in the success of the aid program for the Soviet Union complained to the White House.¹⁴ Ambassador Umansky himself protested on July 17 that "there had been as yet absolutely no implementation" of orders on the various lists presented to the U.S. Government.¹⁵

The President then asked a confidant, General James H. Burns, to organize a "Soviet supply division." This was to be the origin of the separate administrative arrangement for aid to the Soviet Union that persisted until late in the war. Burns recruited a small staff including Colonel Philip R. Faymonville (recently returned from a four year stint as U.S. Military Attaché in Moscow) and Soviet expert John N. Hazard. On July 21, the agency General Burns directed, the Division of Defense Aid Reports, was charged with the task of obtaining "immediate and substantial shipments of assistance to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." Soviet representatives were pressing for results, as wit-

nessed by a sharp exchange between Umansky and Acting Secretary Welles on July 24.¹⁶

The Americans admitted in several meetings with Soviet representatives in late July that the requests for "military items" (which included 3,000 pursuit planes, 3,000 bombers, and 20,000 anti-aircraft guns) "could not be met" from munitions production programs currently in effect. As General George C. Marshall told the newly-arrived head of the Soviet Military Mission, General Philip I. Golikov, "the United States just did not have fleets of planes and tanks, stacks of guns and bombs, and great reserve stocks of machinery and raw materials to send to Russia."¹⁷ America's industrial mobilization was progressing far more slowly than projected and was yielding "insufficient production" for the U.S. rearmament effort and the munitions commitments previously made to the United Kingdom. Thus, it had been decided "at least for the time being" that "the production of the necessary basic weapons with which to combat German tanks and planes would have to be undertaken by the Soviets themselves, with help from the United States to be chiefly in the form of production machinery, raw materials, and aviation petroleum products."¹⁸ An embarrassed Burns had reported to the President on July 27 that only some \$22 million of the nearly \$400 million of Soviet requests presently could be found. Not until August 18, almost a month later, did it prove possible to inform General Golikov that another \$145 million in requests—which did involve critical items such as toluol, aviation fuel, brass strips for cartridges, 100,000 kilometers of field telephone wire, and 127,700 tons of armor plate—had been cleared for delivery.¹⁹

At this juncture, various shards of reality punctured the President's highflown rhetoric. The Roosevelt administration's quick decision to follow Britain's lead and to offer aid to the Soviet Union derived from considerations of short-term advantage rather than from long-term calculation.²⁰ If the Russians could be helped by good wishes and a squadron or two of P-40s, then by all means such aid should be provided. But by the end of July it appeared that much more could be at risk. Information from British intelligence and analysis of the course of the battle offered persuasive evidence that the Soviet Union might well be able to stave off total collapse until the coming of winter. And, further, removals of vital factories to new sites far to the east of the battlefield were proving remarkably successful. Should the Russians continue to hold out, military and

political imperatives required that a program of assistance to the Soviet Union offering much more than token aid be launched.

The fact that Harry Hopkins, the President's closest adviser, was then in Britain to work out the details of a secret meeting between FDR and Churchill to be held in early August proved of pivotal importance. Concerned about the persistent naysaying in Washington about Russia's ability to resist, Hopkins proposed that he go to Moscow to obtain "first-hand information" from Premier Joseph Stalin. Hopkins argued that his visit would demonstrate to the Soviet leadership "in an unmistakable way that we mean business on a long-term supply job".²¹ FDR was enthusiastic and immediately cabled Stalin to ask permission (given with alacrity) for the visit of the sickly Hopkins, often considered the President's alter ego.

A third source of the greatly increased intensity of American interest in large-scale military aid to the Soviet Union may well have been the blunt words of Umansky and Golikov regarding the disappointing trickles of materiel to date turned over to the Soviet Union. At a general meeting of persons concerned with the Soviet aid program on July 28, 1941, Ambassador Umansky emphasized that Soviet requests must be considered "against the background of the new situation" which had developed. Continuation of an arrangement by which the Soviet Union, which was sustaining "the longest and the deepest front and the fiercest fighting known in this or any other war," received only such munitions and other items as were left after all other needs were satisfied was unacceptable. Umansky stated: "He did not wish to cast a shadow on the good will of the United States, but wished to impress with all emphasis the fact that there exists today a new situation, that the scale of fighting could not be imagined and that the Soviet Union was bearing 95% of the brunt of the German might." It was time, he believed, for a "coordination plan" among the governments of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, and the United States that would allocate supplies on some more equitable basis. This suggestion, while intriguing, was a complete surprise to the American representatives present.²²

A fourth influence resulted from British anxieties about the potential impact of the growing U.S. interest in the strategic possibilities of the Eastern Front upon their own claims to the output of America's factories. Great Britain had followed its own version of the FDR policy of promising "all available aid," little of which could be dispatched in time to make a difference to Russia's short-term survival. By late July, however, the British government was becom-

ing convinced of the Soviet Union's chances and, thus, increasingly anxious about the implications of a major program of aid to Russia upon its own needs and plans. If military supplies had to be diverted from one theatre of operations to shore up the Red Army's resistance, the obvious target was the Middle East, an arena which the Americans considered a military backwater anyway.²³

The above is background to President Roosevelt's celebrated dressing down on August 1 of members of his Cabinet for footdragging with regard to help for the Soviet Union. The immediate cause of this presidential explosion was a War Department denial of a Soviet request for aircraft. Secretary of War Henry Stimson later defended this action: "I am the only man in the whole government that is responsible for the difficult decision of whether we can give up planes or other munitions with safety to our own defense. All of these other people are just hell-bent to satisfy a passing impulse or emotion to help out some other nation that is fighting on our side and they have no responsibility over whether or not our own army and our own forces are going to be left unarmed or not."²⁴ FDR was unmoved by such arguments. "I am sick and tired of hearing that they are going to get this and they are going to get that," he said. "Whatever we are going to give them has to be over there by the first of October, and the only answer I want to hear is that it is under way." Stimson was instructed to dispatch the aircraft immediately.²⁵

This presidential dictum did not end bureaucratic competition over control of precious armaments, for, as will be documented later, that was to prove endemic to the Lend-Lease program in general and Soviet aid in particular. However, the heated Cabinet meeting of August 1 may be viewed as a watershed in the history of the Soviet aid program. Thereafter, there would develop a serious effort to accommodate Soviet needs and to adjust Anglo-American priorities with regard to production and shipping to those needs. That this effort did not lead to three-power planning for waging coalition warfare in the broadest sense was the result of other factors.

* * *

As matters developed, the patterns of behavior exhibited during the frantic weeks of late June and July were to define the course of Soviet-American relations for at least the first critical year of Rus-

sian participation in the war. The report delivered by Harry Hopkins to a rapt audience at the Atlantic Conference only reaffirmed the correctness of President Roosevelt's decision to offer all available aid to the Soviet Union.²⁶ "From this point on, Roosevelt and Churchill ignored predictions of disaster on the Eastern front, stepped up their efforts to get immediate help to Stalin, and began to lay plans for massive long-range assistance," George Herring has written.²⁷

During several wideranging discussions with Stalin, Hopkins was given a thorough review of the military situation and of the prospects for the near future. He was stunned to learn that Germany currently deployed 232 divisions on the Eastern Front and that the Red Army had on the line some 240 divisions. Stalin stated that the Soviet forces were inferior to the Germans in various ways, but that winter would redress the balance. He proved a reasonably good prophet by stating that "the line during the winter months would be in front of Moscow, Kiev, and Leningrad." Kiev was to fall in mid-September.

Stalin described the circumstances affecting Soviet production of weapons and munitions and stated that "the outcome of the war in Russia would largely depend on the ability to enter the spring campaign with adequate equipment, particularly in aircraft, tanks, and antiaircraft guns." He pressed for the immediate shipment of military supplies already requested, especially antiaircraft guns and aluminum. Hopkins replied, "Our government and the British Government were willing to do everything that they possibly could during the succeeding weeks to send materiel to Russia." However, he was forced to point out that in all probability any aid yet to be dispatched would not reach the Soviet Union "before the bad weather closes in." In reality, aid from the United States was a long-term proposition and Hopkins proposed that steps be taken to coordinate "long range supply problems." He unofficially broached the idea of a three-power conference "at which the relative strategic interests of each front, as well as the interests of our several countries" could be jointly explored. Stalin was receptive to this idea, and Churchill and Roosevelt subsequently endorsed a Soviet-British-American supply conference to be convened as soon as possible.²⁸

It is notable that at the Atlantic Conference and in subsequent considerations of strategy by British and U.S. military planners no serious attention was given to reordering the priorities already es-

tablished for bringing the war against Germany to a victorious conclusion. With regard to its effects on Anglo-American strategy, the German invasion of Russia was a non-event, and this separation of the war into two distinct spheres would shape the development of Lend-Lease to the Soviet Union, freezing it in a configuration primarily relevant to the circumstances of summer-fall, 1941. The so-called Victory Program, a comprehensive survey of the economic and manpower resources required to defeat Nazi Germany, did not integrate the Soviet Union into the equation. Notably, however, the Victory Program made clear that America, the vaunted "arsenal of democracy," would not surpass British and Canadian war production until late 1942, at the earliest.²⁹

The conference on military supply questions (referred to usually as the Beaverbrook-Harriman Mission) followed the script. W. Averell Harriman, a maverick scion of a railroad magnate who was then serving as "Lend-Lease Expediter" in London, was named to head the American delegation to the Moscow supply conference. After intensive discussions in Washington about the extent of munitions and raw materials of all kinds available for the Soviet Union, Harriman departed for Britain. He reached London on September 15 and immediately undertook discussions with the Prime Minister, Lord Beaverbrook, named by Churchill to represent the United Kingdom, and representatives of the British Government. Harriman encountered tough going, for the British were extremely fearful that increased aid to the Soviet Union would reduce significantly the supplies otherwise coming to them under Lend-Lease. Those fears were intensified by FDR's letter to Churchill of September 8, which made clear the priority he was giving to helping the Russians.³⁰ The sacrifices the British were called upon to make were especially galling because of Stalin's just-launched campaign for the opening of a Second Front. Over a five day period, Harriman and British leaders succeeded in hammering out an acceptable compromise.

Carrying an agreed proposal to the Russians, the British and American delegations met with Premier Stalin and various of his military and economic advisers from September 29 to October 1, 1941. Since the purpose of the conference, according to Beaverbrook, "was to make clear beyond a doubt the British and American intention to satisfy Russian needs to the utmost in their power, whether the Russians gave anything or not," a tone of conciliation prevailed.³¹ Moments of tension did occur. Harriman and Beaver-

brook requested details of Soviet raw materials stocks and industrial production but did not press the issue. Stalin displayed "great impatience and annoyance" when told that various items could not be supplied.³² At one point he asked Harriman: "Why is it that the United States can only give me 1,000 tons a month of armor-plate steel for tanks—a country with a production of over 50,000,000 tons?" Harriman responded that America's steel production actually exceeded 60,000,000 tons but that there was tremendous demand for armor plate. Stalin was not satisfied with the explanation.³³

With the exception of a *tour d'horizon* by Stalin the first evening, no serious consideration of mutual strategic issues took place.³⁴ Beaverbrook preferred to avoid what he considered "military negatives" (discussions of strategy), and the U.S. delegation, which was required to maintain the subterfuge of nonbelligerency, went along with this decision.³⁵

The outcome of the Moscow Conference was satisfying to all concerned. On October 1, an agreement (known as the Moscow Protocol) spelled out the "items and quantities of supplies" to be provided by the United States and Great Britain to the Soviet Union over the next nine months. While failing to meet Russian requests for certain vitally important categories of war materiel (500 tanks per month were promised when 1,100 had been requested, 5,000 antitank guns and antiaircraft guns were included rather than the 18,000 requested), the overall commitments were impressive. The United States offering included such items of direct military utility as 100 bombers and 300 fighters monthly, 152 90-mm. antiaircraft guns, 5,000 scout cars, and 200 antitank rifles monthly. The Protocol also committed the United States to make available an array of processed metals, alloys, chemicals, uniforms and shoes, and foodstuffs. The total of all items promised by the United States was \$1,300,000,000. Significantly, the Protocol stipulated that "Great Britain and the U.S.A. will give aid to the transportation of these materials to the Soviet Union and will help with the delivery," a recognition that shipping requirements were beyond Soviet resources.

The final component in the jerry-built structure of U.S. military aid to the Soviet Union was financing these mammoth orders. Funds to American suppliers had come from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and the Treasury, stopgap solutions at best. Logic dictated that Lend-Lease be extended to the Soviet Union,

but politics dictated otherwise. An appropriations bill for Lend-Lease was under consideration by Congress and noisy opposition, especially among Catholic groups, to inclusion of Russia had resurfaced. However, public opinion polls, an important barometer for FDR, indicated that a majority of Americans favored aid to the Soviet Union "as long as it would help defeat the Axis." On October 30, 1941, President Roosevelt took a fateful step, informing Premier Stalin that he proposed to make available immediately "up to one billion dollars" under the Lend-Lease Act.³⁶ From that time forward, the Moscow Protocol enjoyed a unique status within the Lend-Lease Program.

As of November 1, shipments valued at \$41,000,000 had been made from the United States to the Soviet Union under the conditions of the Moscow Protocol. This was less than one-third of the arithmetical amount needed each month to maintain American commitments. This initial gap between commitments and deliveries was never made up, despite frantic efforts spurred by the White House. One estimate is that only about 50% of the total goods promised were actually delivered between October 1, 1941 and June 30, 1942.

Acknowledging that military and economic aid had become the principal instrument of United States policy toward the Soviet Union, the question naturally arises as to why and how America failed to honor its commitments under the Moscow Protocol. Any answer must deal with the difficulties which the effort to achieve full industrial and military mobilization experienced in fall, 1941. In many ways when the Japanese attack against Pearl Harbor propelled the United States into the Second World War, America was still a nation largely engaged in non-war related pursuits and enjoying the leisurely pace of peacetime. As George Herring has noted: "Throughout 1941, U.S. war production lagged behind the steadily rising demands of the United States, Britain, and Russia. Vital raw materials remained in short supply, and the administration had not established a workable system of priorities to govern the use of available stocks. In the uncertain atmosphere of non-belligerency, the industry hesitated to convert plants to the manufacture of war materials, and the President had not taken decisive measures to curtail civilian consumption."³⁷ Gradual improvement came in September with the creation of the Supply Priorities and Allocation, yet another agency charged with responsibility for mobilization.

Also of great importance was the administrative confusion and bureaucratic competition that intruded into every aspect of the Roosevelt administration's handling of wartime policies. One of Churchill's Private Secretaries, Colonel Ian Jacob, captured the essence of the American approach in a journal kept during the Washington Conference in December, 1941: "Personalities are of much greater importance in the American Government. ...The President is in the position of a patriarch, with a rather unruly flock, and much depends on the actual men who actuate or influence the various sections of that flock. The patriarch also relies to a great extent on sheep dogs, who are his stand-by, but are regarded with fear and suspicion by the sheep. ...The Americans are of course much hampered by their constitution which was expressly designed to prevent any rapid and high-handed action by officials, though giving almost dictatorial powers to the President in times of emergency."³⁸

The President steadfastly refused to designate one agency with responsibility for all aspects of Lend-Lease. Harry Hopkins received the authority to approve requisitions and allocate funds, while War, Navy, Agriculture, and Treasury shared the function of procurement. Paperwork thus wound its way through a maze of offices spread across Washington. One estimate is that prior to Pearl Harbor an average of ninety days was required to process an order.³⁹ Appointment of Edward Stettinius, Jr. to the post of Lend-Lease Administrator and assignment of broader powers to the Office of Lend-Lease Administration, established by presidential order on October 28, 1941, did bring improvements. But they were gradual, and Soviet representatives, among others, still found it useful to submit their requests to as many people as through as many offices as possible.

America's sudden plunge into the war only compounded these problems. An immediate result of Pearl Harbor was the stoppage of all aid shipments to other nations. FDR intervened to order resumption of munitions assignments to the U.S.S.R. on January 1, 1942. Nonetheless, the traumatic effects of Pearl Harbor and its aftermath required several months to sort out.

The final element disrupting the smooth dispatch and delivery of supplies to the Soviet Union was the shipping crisis. Not only were there not sufficient merchant ships to transport all of the munitions and other goods requisitioned by America's allies, but sinkings rose alarmingly in the first months after Pearl Harbor. Thereafter, heavy concentration of U-boats and German surface ships and aircraft in-

terfered greatly with the convoys to North Russia. Losses mounted so rapidly in April that Churchill attempted to ease the strain on the Royal Navy by limiting the number of convoys to Murmansk to three every two months. As much as possible, shipments were diverted to the Persian Gulf, but any hopes of catching up with the Moscow Protocol deficits prior to June 30, 1942 were ended by this decision.

What may be concluded about the influence on Soviet-American relations of the U.S. efforts to help Russia in the darkest phase of its struggle for survival? Clearly the aid itself was an important factor for both nations. Leaving to others the task of assessing the military significance of American aid during 1941-42, one may assert that the political and psychological effects were great. For the Roosevelt administration, giving material assistance to a Soviet Union that was bearing the full weight of German military power represented a tangible achievement at a time when Hitler was dominant everywhere else. Even were the United States to enter the European war, at least a year would have elapsed before substantial military operations involving American troops would have been possible. Thus, the Soviet Union, to employ an American slang phrase, "was the only game in town."

Also important was the interest on the part of some American officials in making use of Lend-Lease to obtain a "consideration" from the U.S.S.R. along the lines of that required of the British government. The aim of the Department of State was to establish the basis for an open economic world, based on liberal, free trade principles. While the campaign for concessions in return for Lend-Lease focused on Britain and the system of Imperial Preferences which the British maintained, concern for the place of the Soviet Union in the postwar world also periodically surfaced. Too, certain Americans in 1941 believed that a far more practical "consideration" for Lend-Lease was guaranteed access to various strategic materials produced in the U.S.S.R.

A final, speculative question of relevance to this issue is why the Soviet-U.S. relationship during World War II did not develop along similar lines to that of the so-called "special relationship" between Britain and the United States. Several responses are called for. The

U.S.S.R. and the United States were never as "intimately bound up together" as were Britain and America. The circumstances of 1940-41 partly explained the Anglo-American intimacy. Of great importance, too, was the multiplicity of relationships resulting from British-U.S. joint planning of military operations in the Mediterranean, the Far East, and Western Europe. The requirements of coordinating roles in Europe and the Pacific contributed to the development of institutions such as the Combined Chiefs of Staff and the various Combined Boards. These instances of mutual cooperation by no means produced the total pooling of resources which the logic of modern coalition warfare dictated, and it may be that they derived from the unequal economic and military strength of the partners. Britain was from the outset dependent for its survival on the United States. The Soviet Union, which had gone its own way prior to June 22, 1941, possessed the power to maintain itself. Assistance given by the United States to Russia was on grounds of equality not dependency and thus, potentially, was the basis for a fruitful collaboration. Other factors explain why lasting cooperation did not emerge from the forced intimacy of wartime.

NOTES

¹Memorandum of Conversation by the Under Secretary of State (Welles), January 21, 1941, U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941*, (Washington, D.C., 1958), Volume I, pp. 691-692.

²See, in particular, Memorandum for the Guidance of Appropriate Officers in Reviewing Russian Orders, April 11, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 737-739.

³The U.S. Post Office's position, acting on advice from the Justice Department, was that materials should not be delivered to persons or organizations not registered as agents of the Soviet government. However, there were instances of interference with delivery to such duly registered agents and even to the Soviet Embassy in Washington. See the unfolding of this question in *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 667-753.

⁴Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Ambassador Laurence A. Steinhardt, June 15, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 761-762; Memcon, by Assistant Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson, June 16, 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 763-764; Steinhardt to SecState, *ibid.*, pp. 764-66. Hardly a sympathetic observer, Steinhardt commented forcefully: "My observation of the psychology of the individuals who are conducting Soviet foreign policy has long since convinced me that they do not and cannot be induced to respond to the customary amenities, that it is not possible to create 'international good will' with them, that they will always sacrifice the future in favor of an immediate gain, and that they are not affected by ethical or moral considerations, nor guided by the relationships which are customary between individuals of culture

and breeding. Their psychology recognizes only firmness, power and force, and reflects primitive instincts and reactions entirely devoid of the restraints of civilization. I am of the opinion that they must be dealt with on this basis and on this basis alone." No wonder that British Ambassador Stafford Cripps and others noted that Steinhardt's often unconcealed hostility toward his hosts rendered him almost useless. However, the views espoused in this memorandum were widely shared. See Hugh De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence: The American Foreign Service, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War, 1933-1947* (Chicago, 1980) and Edward M. Bennett, *Franklin Roosevelt and the Search for Security: American-Soviet Relations, 1933-1939* (Wilmington, Del., 1985).

⁵Diaries of John Colville, June 22, 1941, quoted in Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill: Finest Hour, 1939-1941* (Boston, 1983), pp. 1118-1119.

⁶Churchill promised to "appeal to all our friends and allies in every part of the world to take the same course" and concluded with these words: "The Russian danger is therefore our danger, and the danger of the United States, just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his hearth and home is the cause of free men and free peoples in every quarter of the globe." Gilbert, *Finest Hour*, p. 1121.

⁷The majority opinion among U.S. military leaders was that any aid to the Russians would be wasted or even wind up in German hands, since Soviet resistance could not continue for more than three months at the most. Secretary Stimson, for example, considered the German invasion "an almost providential occurrence" that gave Britain a respite; however, he argued that the U.S. should seize the opportunity to press "with utmost vigor" current plans for such operations as the occupations of Iceland and the Azores. Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: an Intimate History* (New York, 1948), pp. 303-304.

⁸Acting SecState to Amb Steinhardt, June 23, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 766-767. See the interesting memorandum, "Policy with Regard to the Soviet Union in Case of the Outbreak of War Between the Soviet Union and Germany," June 21, 1941, for an assessment decidedly more restrained in tone from the Welles statement of the following day, *ibid.*, pp. 766-767.

⁹Transcript of President Roosevelt's Press Conference, June 24, 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.

¹⁰Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., *Lend-Lease: Weapon for Victory* (New York, 1944), p. 121.

¹¹See "Press Release," Department of State, June 24, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 768-69. The Neutrality Act announcement meant that American flag shipping would be free to use Russian ports, George C. Herring, Jr., *Aid to Russia, 1941-1946: Strategy, Diplomacy, the Origins of the Cold War* (New York, 1973), p. 10.

¹²See the summary in Amb Steinhardt to SecState, June 29, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 776-777. A Soviet Military Mission, headed by General Philip I. Golikov, arrived in late July with an even longer list, Stettinius, *Lend-Lease*, pp. 123-24.

¹³MemCon, SecState, July 10, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, p. 788. This memorandum noted that Roosevelt had commented: "If the Russians could hold the Germans until October 1 that would be of great value in defeating Hitler since after that date no effective military operations with Russia could be carried on and the consequent tying up of a number of German troops and machines for that period of time would be of great practical value in assuring the ultimate defeat of Hitler", *ibid.*, p. 789.

¹⁴International Division, Army Service Forces, "Lend-Lease as of September 30, 1945" (2 vols., unpublished history, n.p., n.d.), p. 1001.

¹⁵MemCon, Acting SecState, July 17, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, p. 794.

¹⁶MemCon, Acting SecState, July 24, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 795-796. Welles noted: "The Ambassador again complained vehemently and, for the first time in some weeks, in rather unmeasured terms of the delays he was encountering in regarding any specific information as to the attitude of this Government with regard to the supplies required by the Soviet Union."

¹⁷Stettinius, *Lend-Lease*, p. 123.

¹⁸ASF History, "Lend-Lease," II, p. 1003.

¹⁹International Division, Army Service Forces, "Lend-Lease Documentary Supplement," 4 vols., n.p., n.d., II, pp. 467-476.

²⁰This may be an appropriate point at which to address briefly the claims that the United States and Great Britain pursued a stance of studied detachment vis-à-vis the Soviet Union during the initial period of the German onslaught. Their aim was to bring about a struggle that would exhaust both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany and leave the Anglo-American countries as the winners. Works that pursue this line of reasoning most often refer to the comments of American isolationists and of such Congressmen as Senator Harry S. Truman. See Vilnis Sipols, *The Road to Great Victory: Soviet Diplomacy, 1941-1945* (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1985), for a balanced, comparatively moderate exposition of this viewpoint. However, while it is conceivable (though no solid evidence for this view has been offered to date) that British and American leaders would have preferred a stalemate on the Eastern Front, precisely what they did or what have been able to do to contribute to that aim during the fateful summer of 1941 is unknown. At best, the British might have contributed two divisions to the battle, a trivial addition to the titanic struggle taking place between Soviet and German forces.

²¹Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 318.

²²MemCon, Mr. Alexander Schnee, July 28, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 799-802.

²³These concerns are dealt with in a number of recent British works, such as Joan Beaumont, *Comrades in Arms: British Aid to Russia 1941-1945* (London, 1980), Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill: Finest Hour, 1939-1941* (Boston, 1983), and Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow, 1940-1942* (Cambridge, U.K., 1984). See also the messages on this issue in Warren F. Kimball, ed., *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence* (3 vols., Princeton, N.J., 1984), I.

²⁴Henry L. Stimson Diary, August 1, 1941, Henry L. Stimson Papers, Yale University Library, New Haven, Conn.

²⁵John M. Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938-1941* (Boston, 1965), p. 264. "Get the planes off with a bang next week," FDR is quoted as having demanded at this Cabinet meeting.

²⁶Hopkins returned to Britain by air and then accompanied Prime Minister Churchill aboard the *Prince of Wales* to the meeting with FDR. He briefed Churchill fully during the voyage. See the discussion of the Hopkins mission in Theodore A. Wilson, *The First Summit: Roosevelt and Churchill at Placentia Bay, 1941* (Boston, 1969) and Herring, *Aid to Russia*. Sipols, *The Road to Great Victory*, offers an interesting account from the Soviet perspective.

²⁷Herring, *Aid to Russia*, p. 12.

²⁸MemCons, Harry Hopkins, July 30, 31, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, pp. 802-814. See also Wilson, *First Summit*, pp. 122-126.

²⁹Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942* (Washington, D.C., 1953), pp. 58-62.

³⁰Kimball, ed., *Churchill-Roosevelt Correspondence*, I, pp. 239-240.

³¹Quoted in Joan Beaumont, *Comrades in Arms: British Aid to Russia 1941-1945* (London, 1980), p. 55. Harriman is also quoted as having agreed: "Give and give and give, with no expectation of any return, with no thought of a *quid pro quo*."

³²Herring, *Aid to Russia*, p. 17.

³³W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946* (New York, 1975), p. 89.

³⁴See *ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

³⁵Beaumont, *Comrades in Arms*, p. 56. The Soviets later complained that requests for direct military assistance had been ignored, and Churchill expressed surprise that no strategic discussions had taken place.

³⁶It is worth noting that this agreement stipulated that the indebtedness incur no interest and that repayment by the U.S.S.R. commence five years after the war's end. These arrangements were subsequently modified to bring them into conformity with other Lend-Lease Master Agreements. President Roosevelt to Chairman Stalin, October 30, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I, p. 851.

³⁷Herring, *Aid to Russia*, p. 33.

³⁸Journals of Colonel Ian Jacob, "Operation Arcadia," December, 1941, Papers of General Sir Ian Jacob.

³⁹Herring, *Aid to Russia*, p. 34.

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AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES ON EASTERN FRONT OPERATIONS IN WORLD WAR II

INTRODUCTION

Few twentieth century events have escaped the effects of parochialism and bias. Among the more important periods most severely affected by these phenomena is that of the Second World War, in particular the war on the Eastern Front—the Russo-German War.

This paper focuses on only a narrow segment of World War II experiences—experiences on the Eastern Front—within the context of the war in general. In particular, it describes the U.S. perspective on the war and how events on the Eastern Front fit into that overall view of war. Further it surveys the forces (sources) that have shaped the current American perspective on that important segment of World War II combat, specifically what Americans have been taught or have read about the war. Finally the paper investigates the accuracy of that perspective in light of existing source materials. Thus, in essence, this is a critique of Eastern Front war historiography, a critique which will hopefully broaden the perspective and understanding of American and foreign readers and historians alike.

THE AMERICAN VIEW OF WORLD WAR II

The American view of the war reflected the circumstances surrounding U.S. involvement in the war as well as long term historical attitudes toward European politics in general.¹ Despite strong public sentiment for assisting beleaguered Western democracies, after war broke out in 1939, equally strong neutralist sentiments blocked active U.S. participation in the war. As the American pub-

lic noted with growing concern the fall of France in 1940, the expulsion of British forces from the continent at Dunkirk, and the struggle for supremacy in the air over Great Britain, the U.S. government was able to lend assistance to England short of actually joining the war. The German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, while lamented as an extension of the war, in some quarters was also viewed positively as it clearly diverted German interest from Britain toward what most assumed would be a more formidable opponent for the hitherto undefeated German war machine to deal with. Additionally, Germany now faced a two-front war, and Anglo-Soviet war cooperation against Germany was bound to ensue. In a sense, the German decision to attack the Soviet Union strengthened the hand of American neutralists who could point to the reduced need for U.S. intervention, an argument quickly silenced by the extensive German advance in the East, which for a time seemed to threaten the viability of the Soviet Union. The war itself in the East was a shadowy affair. Little detail of the conflict was available, setting a pattern which would endure during the future years of war.

Only the brash Japanese surprise attack on U.S. facilities at Pearl Harbor overcame this initial American reluctance to become actively involved in war. This act unleashed Americans' emotions to an extent that earlier American lukewarm commitment to the survival of the Western democracies was converted almost overnight into a broad American commitment to rid the world of the menace posed by the Berlin-Tokyo axis. While early in the war the U.S. government's principal concern was for assisting in the defeat of Nazi Germany, the very fact that the Japanese surprise attack had catalyzed American war sentiments led to ever increasing U.S. attention to the war in the Pacific, a war which soon dominated U.S. newspaper headlines.

The combination of the U.S. government's focus on defeating Germany "first" and the reality of fending off Japanese advances in the Pacific set the tone for the U.S. perspective on the war and focused as well the attention of the U.S. press and public on those two themes. Hence U.S. military strategy involved the attaining of footholds on the European continent as a means for achieving the ultimate destruction of Germany while the realities of war in the Pacific and the overwhelming public sentiment to crush the nation which had provoked the hostilities in the first place drew American forces inexorably across the Pacific. The competing aims of America's two-front war, in the end, diluted the government's efforts to

first deal with Nazi Germany and perhaps attenuated the achievement of victory in Europe. At a minimum, it made the establishment of a "second front" a more formidable task and led to the series of Allied operations in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, preceded by a sobering test of Allied capabilities to land directly in France, conducted at Dieppe in August 1942.

Driven by popular demand and the inertia of ongoing operations, America's war in the Pacific in the summer of 1942 changed in nature from a defensive one to an offensive one complete with alternative strategies for the defeat of Japan.

It is axiomatic that where one's forces operate, one's attention follows; and where one's father, husband, or son fights and possibly dies, dominates a family's thoughts. Human ties usually dwarf geopolitical considerations.

Thus, America's perspective on war remained riveted to the path undertaken by American forces in Europe and across the Pacific. Throughout this process the war elsewhere, the real global context for American military operations, remained cloudy and obscure, the obscurity reinforced by a lack of specific information.

The war on the Eastern Front, however unfairly, was a part of this shadowy context. It is clear Americans knew in general about the war in the East. They knew it was a massive struggle with vast implications for the success of Allied strategy in the West. Americans could appreciate the impact of Soviet victories at each location. Certainly, there was little in the American military experience to condition Americans to conceive of operations as large as those occurring in the East, and what is not experienced cannot be fully appreciated. Hence, the tendency of Americans (and others) to equate Stalingrad with EL Alamein and Kursk with Anzio. The comparison in terms of result (victory) masked the issue of the contrasting scale and scope of these operations. As the issue of the second front became a focal point of dispute among the wartime Allies, this context plus the real Allied difficulties in effecting such a landing made the Allied decision to open such a front in France in 1944 reasonable and understandable to the American public.*

During the last year of war the American public's (and government's) attention was captured by the successful Normandy operation and the ensuing breathtaking advance across France. Like-

* Despite efforts by the Communist Parties of the United States and Great Britain to publicize the Soviet role in war.

wise, the German counterstroke in the Bulge and the 1945 Allied advance into Germany dominated American public awareness. Concurrent and massively successful Soviet operations in Byelorussia, Romania, East Prussia, Poland, and Hungary were noted as part of a continuous, slow, but inexorable Soviet advance toward Germany. As before, details of the Soviet operations were lacking, hence they tended to recede into the background as an adjunct to successful Allied operations in the West and in the Pacific as well. In a sense, America's attentions were focused on the two great oceans and operations adjacent to them. The struggle in continental Europe remained remote, geographically and psychologically. The same tendency helped to relegate to obscurity Soviet participation in the final stages of the war with Japan (the Manchurian operation).²

Thus the war on the Eastern Front was acknowledged but never fully appreciated in wartime by the bulk of Allied public opinion. The American public appreciated the role played by the Soviet people; and, in fact, genuine feelings of warmth resulted. Americans, likewise, seemed to understand the suffering involved in such a struggle. Yet, despite these feelings, the details of those operations in the East remained obscure; and, hence, a full realization of their importance was lacking. This tendency persisted into the postwar years when it combined with other factors to create a sort of mythology surrounding the events of the war in the East.

POSTWAR AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE ON EASTERN FRONT OPERATIONS

If American wartime impressions of combat on the Eastern Front were vague and imprecise, there was some improvement in that picture during the first decade and a half after war ended. However, during that period a new tendency emerged that colored almost all future works describing events on the Eastern Front. That tendency was to view operations in the East through German eyes and virtually only German eyes. From 1945 to 1958 essentially all works written in English or translated into English about events on the Eastern Front were written by German authors, many of whom were veterans of combat in the East, works moreover based solely on German sources.

This German period of war historiography embraced two genres of works. The first included memoirs written during those years

when it was both necessary and sensible to dissociate oneself from Hitler or Hitler's policies. Justifiable or not, the writers of these memoirs did just that and essentially laid blame on Hitler for most strategic, operational, and often tactical failures. Thus, an apologetic tone permeated these works.

The first of the postwar memoirs to appear in English was the by now classic work, *Panzer Leader*, by Heinz Guderian.³ Guderian's work, which casts considerable light on strategic and operational decisions while Guderian was a panzer group commander in 1941 and later when he became Chief of Staff in 1944, set the tone for future treatment by German generals of Hitler's leadership. Guderian laid at Hitler's feet principal responsibility for all failures of the German Army and for the dismantling of the German General Staff. Guderian's message was best conveyed by the chapter heading he chose for the section of the Polish War of 1939 which read, "The Beginning of the Disaster." As in most subsequent works, Guderian included little Soviet operational data.

One of the most influential postwar German war critiques was General von Mellenthin's *Panzer Battles* published in English in 1956.⁴ Mellenthin's work, an operational/tactical account of considerable merit, echoed the criticism of Hitler voiced by Guderian and showed how Hitler's adverse influence affected tactical operations. Beyond this, Mellenthin's work adopted a didactic approach in order to analyze operations and hence educate officers. As was in the case of Guderian, Mellenthin's experiences against the Red Army encompassed the period before spring 1944 and reflected impressions acquired principally during years of German success.

Mellenthin's work, written without benefit of archival materials, tended to treat tactical cases without fully describing their operational context.

Of equal importance to Mellenthin's work, but written from a higher level perspective, was the memoir of Eric von Manstein entitled *Lost Victories*.⁵ An important work by an acknowledged master at the operational level of war, Manstein's book viewed operations from 1941 to early 1944 at the strategic and operational level. Manstein's criticism of Hitler reflected active disputes which ultimately led to Manstein's dismissal as Army Group South commander. Manstein's account of operations is accurate although again Soviet forces are faceless, and opposing force ratios are in conflict with those shown by archival materials of *Fremde Heeres Ost* (Foreign Armies East), Gehlen's organizations, and of the OKH

(the Army High Command).⁶ Again Soviet superiorities are overstated.

These three basic memoirs dominated historiography of World War II in the 1950's and continue to be treated as authoritative works today even as unexploited archival materials challenge an increasing number of facts cited in the three works. Other works appeared in English during this period but were generally concerned with individual battles or operations.⁷ Whether coincidental or not, most of these unfavorable accounts of Soviet combat performance appealed to an American audience conditioned by the Cold War years. Notably, few German commanders of the later war years, a period so unpleasant for German fortunes, wrote memoirs; and the works of those who did (for example, General Heinrich) still remain as untranslated manuscripts in the archives.

The second genre of postwar works included the written monographs based upon debriefings of and studies by German participants in operations on the Eastern Front. For several years after war's end the Historical Division of USEUCOM supervised a project to collect the war experiences of these veterans relating to all wartime operations. Literally hundreds of manuscripts were assembled on all types of operations. All were written from memory without benefit of archival material. The Department of the Army published the best of these short monographs in a DA pamphlet series in the late forties and early fifties.

These pamphlets were of mixed quality. All were written from the German perspective, and none identified Soviet units involved in the operations. All require collation with actual archival materials. All are still in use. A few examples should suffice to describe the care that must be employed when using these sources.

In 1950 a DA Pamphlet appeared assessing Allied airborne operations. The distinguished group of German officers who wrote the pamphlet were directed by Major General Hellmuth Reinhardt. In its chapter on Allied airborne landings in World War II was a subsection entitled, "Reflections on the Absence of Russian Air Landings," which began with the following statement:

"It is surprising that during World War II the USSR did not attempt any large-scale airborne operations ... its wartime-operations were confined a commitment of small units...."⁸

A little over a year later Reinhardt discovered his error and put together another manuscript describing the extensive airborne operations the Soviets conducted within the context of the Moscow

counteroffensive and adding details to his description of the abortive Soviet Dnepr airborne drop in 1943.⁹ Recently the Office of the Chief of Military History republished the original pamphlet describing the lack of Russian airborne activity. Reinhardt's revised manuscript remains unpublished.

A DA pamphlet entitled *German Defensive Tactics Against Russian Breakthroughs* contained similar errors.¹⁰ In a chapter describing a delaying action conducted between 5-24 August 1943 the authors mistakenly stated that German forces abandoned the city of Khar'kov on 18 August when, in fact, the correct date was 23 August.¹¹ Such errors intermixed with accurate dates cast serious doubt on the validity of these works as a whole. Despite these errors, most pamphlets have been reprinted; and they remain one of the basic sources of data about the Red Army.

One of the principal deficiencies of all genres of German post-war accounts of fighting on the Eastern Front written during the 1950's was the almost total absence of Soviet operational data. The forces German army engaged appeared as faceless masses, a monolith of field grey manpower supported by seemingly endless ranks of artillery and, by the end of the war, solid columns of armor. The Soviet steamroller plod into eastern Europe leaving in its wake endless ranks of dead and wounded. That psychological image of the Soviets portrayed in German works has persisted ever since. Moreover, this panorama of operations against a faceless foe clouds the issue of correlation of forces and enables the writers to claim almost constant overwhelming enemy force superiority, whether or not it really existed. All of these memoirs and pamphlets appeared before German archival materials were available.

In the 1960's reputable trained historians began producing accounts of action on the Eastern Front. These works were better than the earlier ones but still lacked balance. They were based primarily on German sources but did contain some material on the Soviets obtained from German archival sources. Some were written by individuals who spent considerable time in the Soviet Union during the war.

Alexander Werth drew upon his experiences in the wartime Soviet Union to produce *Russia at War* and a number of shorter works.¹² Although these writings contained little operational data they did present the Soviet perspective as they focused on the suffering and hardship endured by the Russian people and on the resulting bravery as they overcame those conditions.

Alan Clark's survey account of the war in the East, entitled *Barbarossa*, contained more operational detail.¹³ However, it still lacked any solid body of Soviet data. Moreover Clark displayed a tendency others would adopt — that is to cover the first two years of war in detail but simply skim over events during the last two years of war. This reflected an often expressed judgment that there was little reason to study operations late in the war because the machinations of Hitler so perverted the ability of German commanders to conduct normal reasonable operations.

The U.S. Army Center of Military History made a commendable effort to correct this imbalance by publishing Earl Ziemke's work entitled *Stalingrad to Berlin*.¹⁴ This work was a sound and scholarly one. Ziemke surveyed operations from November 1942 to the close of war, generally from a strategic and high level operational perspective. While relying on German sources, he based his research on German archival materials and did include material from the Soviet accounts of operations. In so doing Ziemke expanded the American view of the war in the East and began to dispel some of the more serious errors found in earlier German accounts.

Ziemke and others who followed him with writings on the Eastern Front were helped immeasurably by Soviet historians' work on the war — work which began in the late 1950's and accelerated in the 1960's. Those new works added a new but essential dimension to historiography of the war. Most good historians took cognizance of them in their work. By the 1970's enough of these works existed to provide a more balanced vision of the war.

In the early seventies Paul Carell, a German author writing under a pen name, finished publication of a two volume study of Eastern Front operations entitled *Hitler Moves East* and *Scorched Earth*.¹⁵ These works, written in appealing journalistic style, contained more German operational detail and tapped numerous accounts by individual German officers and soldiers who served in tactical units. Although Carell's works were heavily German in their perspective, they did contain an increased amount of Soviet materials.

In a more scholarly vein, Col. Albert Seaton published two works, *The Russo-German War* and *The Battle of Moscow* which projected Ziemke's work down to the tactical level.¹⁶ By exploiting the official records of particular German divisions Seaton added a new dimension to the descriptions of war at the tactical level. Like Carell, Seaton tempered his German perspective somewhat by using data from a limited number of Soviet sources.

The works of John Erickson have been the most influential ones to appear since 1960. They have broken the stranglehold which the German perspective had over Eastern Front historiography and have integrated into that historiography a comprehensive description of the Soviet perspective on the war, particularly at the strategic and operational levels.

His first work, *The Soviet High Command*, for the first time shed light on the events of the summer of 1941.¹⁷ His subsequent two books, *The Road to Stalingrad* and *The Road to Berlin*, recounted in considerable detail the course of war from June 1941 to May 1945.¹⁸ The principal value of these works derives from the fact that they distill information from literally thousands of Soviet works on the war and create from that information a detailed account of operations in the East. The overwhelming impact of the narrative on the reader reflects the overwhelming scale and scope of war in the East.

Erickson's works critically assess the Soviet sources and reject those that conflict with the most influential and accurate German records. In some instances, Erickson's details do conflict with reputable German accounts. In addition, Erickson has accepted Soviet data concerning correlation of forces which, in some instances, have been inflated, in particular regarding German strength. Despite these minor faults Erickson's effort to produce a Soviet view of the war has accomplished the major feat of providing readers with more balanced sources upon which to reach judgments concerning combat in the East. Unfortunately the size and complexity of Erickson's works precludes their appeal to a broad readership among the general public.

Across the span of time from 1945 to the present, despite the work of Erickson and a few others, the German view of war on the Eastern Front has predominated. In part, this has resulted from a natural American parochialism that tended to discount or ignore the importance of operations in the East in the overall scheme of war. During the earlier postwar period the German view prevailed by default. By the 1960's, when Soviet accounts began to appear, the German view was firmly entrenched. Moreover, the cold war atmosphere often prompted out of hand rejection of the Soviet version of war. The German view, sometimes accurate, often apologetic or accusative, and usually anti-Soviet, prevailed. As a result, this view was incorporated into high school and college textbooks and into the curriculum of U.S. military educational institutions.

Most important, it provided a context within which to judge the contemporary Soviet military. Only today is that view increasingly being challenged. Those challenges are made possible by intensified Soviet publication efforts, which, however, must overcome serious barriers if they are to produce a view which can complement the German perspective and produce a more balanced picture of war on the Eastern Front.

SOVIET SOURCES: PERCEPTIONS AND REALITY

American perceptions of the war on the Eastern Front have been shaped in part by the course of Soviet historiography on the war. As stated earlier, the Soviet reticence of address operations in detail during the immediate postwar period left the field open for the German perspective, which in turn predominated. Soviet efforts to set the record straight began in the late 1950's and continue today but have only partially tempered that German view.

Three principal barriers exist to block or inhibit Soviet historical efforts from influencing the American perspective. The barriers are, in sequence: a lack of knowledge in the West concerning Soviet historical work, the language barrier, and a basic distrust of the credibility of Soviet works. The first two of these barriers are mechanical and can be easily addressed. The third is more fundamental and more difficult to overcome.

Most Americans and Westerners are soon unaware of the scope of Soviet historical efforts. In fact, Soviet historical efforts have increased geometrically, and Western audiences need to be educated to that fact. The fact that most of these works are only in Russian inhibits that education. To remedy this problem more Americans need to learn Russian (an unlikely prospect), or more Soviet works will have to appear in English. Increased research by American military historians using Soviet sources can also contribute to overcoming this first barrier. The second barrier is a physical one regarding language. If a source cannot be read, it makes little difference whether or not it is available or, for that matter, credible. The only remedy to this barrier is more extensive translation and a publicizing of Soviet sources by their use in more detailed historical monographs.

The third barrier, involving credibility, is more fundamental. It is, in part, an outgrowth of ideological differences which naturally

breed suspicion. It is also a produce of the course of Soviet war historiography which itself is subject to criticism, depending on the period during which the Soviet sources appeared.

In the immediate postwar years, from 1945 to 1958 few Soviet military accounts appeared about operations on the Eastern Front.¹⁹ Those that did appear were highly politicized and did not contain the sort of operational detail which would make them attractive to either the casual reader or the military scholar.

Beginning in 1958 more accurate and useful accounts began appearing in a number of forms. From its inception, Soviet *Military History Journal* has sought to publish high quality articles on relevant military experiences at all levels of war.²⁰ This journal after 1958 immediately began investigation of a series of burning questions, perhaps the most important of which was an investigation of the nature of the initial period of war (*Nachalny period voiny*). *Military History Journal* has since focused on practical, realistic questions within a theoretical context. It has personified the Soviet penchant for viewing military affairs as a continuum within which individual issues must be viewed in a historical context.

In 1958 the first Soviet general history of the war appeared, Platonov's *History of the Second World War*.²¹ This volume, for the first time, addressed Soviet wartime failures. For example, it openly referred to the abortive Soviet offensive at Khar'kov in May 1942. Platonov offered few real details of these failures but did break the ice regarding a candid reference to failures in general.

At the same time Soviet authors resumed a wartime tendency to teach by use of combat experience. Kolganov's *Development of Tactics of the Soviet Army in the Great Patriotic War*, published in 1958, contained a thorough review of wartime tactics by combat example.²² This didactic work sought to harness experience in the service of education and did so by drawing upon a wealth of tactical detail, some of it relating to failure as well as success. Kolganov's accounts seemed to affirm a Soviet belief that if one is to be educated correctly (scientifically), details must be as accurate as possible in both cases.

After 1958 a flow of memoir literature, unit histories, and operational accounts began that has continued, and, in fact, intensified, to the present. The Soviets have sought to capture the recollections of wartime military leaders at every level of staff and command. These include valuable memoirs of individuals at the *STAVKA* level (Shtemenko, Vasilevsky, Zhukov), *front* level (Rokossovsky,

Konev, Meretskov, Yeremenko, Bagramyan), army level (Moskalenko, Chuikov, Krylov, Batov, Galitsky, Grechko, Katukov, Le-lyushenko, Rotmistrov), and at the corps level and below.²³ Soviet military historians have logged the experiences of many Soviet units including armies, tank armies, corps (tank, mechanized, and rifle), divisions, and even regiments and separate brigades, although with a few notable exceptions.²⁴ Memoir literature has also extended into the realm of the supporting services (air, naval, engineer, signal, etc).

Over time some excellent operational studies have appeared focusing on major operations (Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk, Byelorussia), on lesser operations (Novgorod-Luga, Eastern Pomerania, Donbas), and on specific sectors in larger operations.²⁵ Written by academic historians (Samsonov) or military historians (Zhilin, Galitsky, Sidorenko) many of these are first rate works containing massive amounts of accurate detail. Building upon the memoirs, unit histories, and operational studies were valuable functional works which distilled the sum total of those experiences. These studies included general military histories and histories of operational art (Semenov, Stokov, Bagramyan, Krupchenko), operational and tactical studies based on combat experiences (Radzievsky, Kurochkin), studies on the use of armored and mechanized forces (Rotmistrov, Babadzhanyan, Radzievsky, Losik), treatises on operational art and tactics (Sidorenko, Savkin, Reznichenko), and studies on numerous other topics relating to combat support.²⁶

New general histories of the Great Patriotic War and World War II, have appeared since 1960. A six volume history of the war in the East provided a more candid view of political issues of the war than earlier war histories and added some operational details hitherto not revealed.²⁷ Its size, however, limited coverage of lower level operational or tactical detail. An eleven volume history of World War II was politically less candid but did add another measure of detail to accounts at the strategic and operational levels.²⁸

Thus it is apparent that massive amounts of Soviet military data concerning operations on the Eastern Front do exist. Moreover, the sum total of that information, as Erickson has demonstrated, forms an impressive picture of operations in the East. On balance much of that information is accurate as well.

There are, however, some problems with these sources.

First, Soviet works tend to contain a high political or ideological content. In theory, of course, war, in all its detail, is a continuum of

the political and, hence, ideological context. Thus the political content is understandable, if not obligatory. A critical reader must recognize what is political and what is not. He must also realize that many of these works are written to inspire. Thus, interspersed with operational and tactical facts are inevitable examples of individual or unit self sacrifice and heroism.

Soviet military works written before 1958 were politicized and focused heavily on the positive role of Stalin in every aspect of war.²⁹ Correspondingly, operational and tactical detail was lacking. After 1958 the political content of military works diminished leaving more room for increasing amounts of operational and tactical detail. First-rate operational and tactical studies limited political coverage to the role of the party structure in planning and conducting operations.

Soviet military writers also have tended to accentuate the positive, to cover successful operations in more detail than unsuccessful ones. Thus, until recently, little was written about the border battles of June-July 1941, about the Khar'kov and Kerch operations in May 1942, about the Donbas and Khar'kov operations of February-March 1943, and about the waning stages of many successful operations.³⁰ Likewise, few unit histories have appeared of armies which operated on secondary directions in the period 1943-1945.³¹

The Soviets in the early sixties began noting these failures. As time has passed more material has appeared concerning these failures (for example, a chapter from Moskalenko's *Na yugozapadnom napravlenii* (On the Southwestern Direction) provides considerably more detail on the Khar'kov disaster.)

A similar pattern emerged in Soviet treatment of their own airborne experiences. There were few references to those failures prior to 1964. Yet by 1976 most of the unpleasant details were public.

Very naturally Soviet interpretation of operations have often differed sharply from the German. In fact, over time differences in interpretation have appeared within the circle of Soviet military writers. In the case of memoir material this takes the form of debates over the rationale for and the outcome of operations.³²

One is struck in Soviet accounts by the accuracy of facts, principally concerning unit, place, and time. Soviet sources in this regard invariably match up with the operational and tactical maps found in German (or Japanese) unit archives.³³ Less unanimity exists over what actually occurred at a given place and at a given time.³⁴

Especially striking are those frequent cases where low level Soviet accounts precisely match German accounts. In a history of the 203rd Rifle Division the author described the operations of that unit in the frenetic post-Stalingrad days of December 1942.³⁵ It confronted an advancing force of German armor and infantry. This Soviet account did not mention the designation of the German unit.

In a casual interview with a former lieutenant from 6th Panzer Division, which fought along the Bystraya River in late December 1942, I asked the lieutenant about his unit's operations on the day of the events described by the Soviet account.³⁶ The accounts matched and complemented one another.

This isolated incident is often typical of the complementary nature of Soviet and German (and Japanese) accounts regarding unit, place, and time. It also vividly underscores the necessity, or at least the desirability of having both sides of the story.

A major discrepancy between Soviet and German sources concerns the number of forces at the disposal of each side. Examination of both sources and German archival material indicates several tendencies. First, Soviet accounts of their own strength seem to be accurate and reflect the numbers cited in documentation of *Fremde Heeres Ost*.³⁷ Conversely, Soviet sources tend to exaggerate the strength of German forces they opposed. Moreover, Soviet exaggeration of German strength regarding guns and armor is even more severe than in regards to manpower. In part, this results from the Soviet practice of counting German allies, auxiliary forces, and home guards (*Volksturm*) units.³⁸ The Germans exaggerate when they cite routine Soviet manpower preponderances of between 8:1 and 17:1, so also do Soviet sources exaggerate Soviet-German strength ratios as being less than 3:1 and often 2:1 up to 1945 when higher ratios were both justified and recognized by Soviet sources.

Soviet sources also adversely affect their own credibility with regards to wartime casualty figures. The earlier practice of totally ignoring casualties has begun to erode, but one must look long and hard to find any loss figures, indicating that this is still obviously a delicate question for Soviet writers. Gross figures do exist for large scale operations (Berlin, S.E. Europe, Manchuria), and one can infer casualties from reading divisional histories which sometimes give percentages of unit fill before and after operations and company strengths.³⁹

Thus, in addition to the general American (and Western) ignorance of the existence of Soviet source material and the presence of

an imposing language barrier, Americans question the credibility of Soviet sources. While this questioning was once valid, it is increasingly less valid as time passes. Soviet sources have some inherent weaknesses; but these weaknesses, over time, have been diminishing. Unfortunately, the American perception of Soviet sources remains negative; and, hence, the American perception of the Eastern Front has changed very little. Only time, more widespread publication of candid operational material (some of it in English), and more extensive use of those materials by American military historians will alter those perceptions.

CONCLUSIONS: THE RECONCILIATION OF MYTHS AND REALITIES

The dominant role of German source materials in shaping American perceptions of the war on the Eastern Front and the negative perception of Soviet source materials have had an indelible impact on the American image of war on the Eastern Front. What has resulted is a series of gross judgments treated as truths regarding operations in the East and Soviet (Red) Army combat performance. The gross judgments appear repeatedly in textbooks and all types of historical works, and they are persistent in the extreme. Each lies someplace between the realm of myth and reality. In summary, a few of these judgments are as follows:

- Weather repeatedly frustrated the fulfillment of German operational aims.
- Soviet forces throughout the war in virtually every operation possessed significant or overwhelming numerical superiority.
- Soviet manpower resources were inexhaustible, hence the Soviets continually ignored human losses.
- Soviet strategic and high level operational leadership was superb. However, lower level leadership (corps and below) was uniformly dismal.
- Soviet planning was rigid, and the execution of plans at every level was inflexible and unimaginative.
- Wherever possible, the Soviets relied for success on mass rather than maneuver. Envelopment operations were avoided whenever possible.
- The Soviets operated in two echelons, never cross attached units, and attacked along straight axes.

— Lend-Lease was critical for Soviet victory. Without it collapse might have ensued.

— Hitler was the cause of virtually all German defeats. Army expertise produced earlier victories (a variation of the post World War I "stab in the back" legend).

— The stereotypical Soviet soldier was capable of enduring great suffering and hardship, fatalistic, dogged in defense (in particular in bridgeheads), a master of infiltration and night fighting, but inflexible, unimaginative, emotional and prone to panic in the face of uncertainty.

A majority of Americans probably accept these judgments as realities. In doing so they display a warped impression of the war which belittles the role played by the Red Army. As a consequence, they have a lower than justified appreciation for the Red Army as a fighting force. Until the American public (and historians) perception of Soviet source material changes, this overall perception of the war in the East and the Soviet (Red) Army is likely to persist.

Close examination of Soviet sources as well as German archival materials cast many of these judgments into the realm of myth. Recent work done on Eastern Front operations has begun to surface the required evidence to challenge those judgments.⁴⁰

It is clear that no really objective or more complete picture of operations on the Eastern Front is possible without extensive use of Soviet source material. Thus definitive accounts of operations in the East have yet to be written.

In the interim it is the task of American historians, drawing upon all sources, Soviet and German alike, to challenge those judgments and misperceptions which are a produce of past historical work. It is clear that the American (Western) perspective regarding war on the Eastern Front needs broadening. Scholarly cooperation among Soviet and American historians, research exchange programs involving both parties, and expanded conferences to share the fruits of historical research would further this end and foster more widespread understanding on both sides.

NOTES

¹This view is drawn from a review of newspaper coverage of the war by the *New York Times* but, more important, by local newspapers as well. It is also based on

ten years' experience in teaching and listening to a generation of postwar students at the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the U.S. Army War College.

²Americans also believed, and still believe, the use of the atomic bomb in early August 1945 rendered Soviet operations in Manchuria superfluous.

³H. Guderian, *Panzer Leader*, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1957). First edition published in 1952.

⁴F. von Mellenthin, *Panzer Battles: A Study of the Employment of Armor in the Second World War*, (Norman, Okl: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972). First edition published in 1956.

⁵E. von Manstein, *Lost Victories*, (Chicago, Ill: Henry Regnery, 1958).

⁶Manstein cites force ratios as being 8:1 in favor of the Soviets opposite Army Groups Don and B and 4:1 against Army Groups Center and North. *Fremde Heeres Ost* documents dated 1 April 1943 give the ratios of just over 2:1 against Army Groups South and A and 3:2 against Army Groups Center and North. The overall German estimate of Soviet superiority on that date was just under 2:1. See *Fremde Heeres Ost Kraftgegenueberstellung: Stand 1.3.43*.

⁷For example, H. Schroter, *Stalingrad*, (London: Michael Joseph, 1958).

⁸*DA Pamphlet No. 20-232*, Airborne Operations: A German Appraisal, (Department of the Army, October 1951), p. 36.

⁹H. Reinhardt, "Russian Airborne Operations," *Foreign Military Studies MS No. P-116*, Reproduced by the Historical Division, U.S. Army, Europe, 1953.

¹⁰*DA Pamphlet No. 20-233*, German Defensive Tactics Against Russian Breakthroughs, (Department of the Army, October 1951).

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 64-70. This article treated German defensive operations between Belgorod and Khar'kov from 5-23 August 1943 and subsequent delaying actions in late August and early September 1943 as a continuous delay, when, in fact, the Germans attempted to hold the Khar'kov area until forced to withdraw by heavy Russian attacks east and west of the city.

¹²A. Werth, *Russia at War 1941-1945*, (New York: E. P. Dutton Co., 1964).

¹³A. Clark, *Barbarossa: The Russo-German Conflict 1941-1945*, (London: Hutchinson, 1965).

¹⁴E. Ziemke, *Stalingrad to Berlin: The German Defeat in the East*, (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1968).

¹⁵P. Carell, *Hitler Moves East and Scorched Earth*, (New York: Little, Brown, 1965, 1966).

¹⁶A. Seaton, *The Russo-German War 1941-1945*, (London: Arthur Barker, 1971); A. Seaton, *The Battle of Moscow*, (New York: Playboy Press, 1980), original edition 1971.

¹⁷J. Erickson, *The Soviet High Command: A Political-Military History 1918-1941*, (London: St. Martins, 1962).

¹⁸J. Erickson, *The Road to Stalingrad: Stalin's War with Germany*, (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1984), first edition in 1975; J. Erickson, *The Road to Berlin: Continuing the History of Stalin's War with Germany*, (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1983).

¹⁹General histories of the war included I. V. Anisimov, G. V. Kuzmin, *Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna Sovetskogo Soyuzha 1941-1945 gg* (The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1952), and F. D. Vorobiev, V. M. Kravtsov, *Pobedy Sovetskikh vooruzhennykh sil v Velikoi Otechestvennoi*

voine 1941-1945 (The Victory of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1953). All were highly political, focused on the role of Stalin, and lacking in any useful military details. A notable exception was one monograph, V. P. Morozov, *Zapadnee Voronezha* (West of Voronezh), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1956), a work whose factual content and candor set the tone for subsequent studies published after 1958. During this apparently sterile period in terms of military details, substantial articles did appear in some Soviet military journals, in particular in the *Journal of Armored and Mechanized Forces* (*Zhurnal Bronetankovykh i mekhanizirovannykh voisk*), and in *Military Thought* (*Voennaya Mysl*), but both of these journals were unavailable to the American reading public and historians as well.

²⁰*Military History Journal* (*Voенно-istoricheskii Zhurnal*) is the official organ of the Soviet Ministry of Defense.

²¹S. P. Platonov, ed., *Vtoraya mirovaya voyna 1939-1945 gg* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1958).

²²K. S. Kolganov, ed., *Razvitie taktiki Sovetskoi Armii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny (1941-1945 gg)* (The Development of Soviet Army Tactics in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1958). A companion book related the experiences of armored forces.

²³Among the front and army commanders who did not write memoirs, either because they died during wartime or in the immediate postwar period or because of other reasons were Vatutin (Voronezh and 1st Ukrainian Front commander who died in early 1944), Chernyakhovsky (3rd Byelorussian Front commander who died in February 1945), Bogdanov (2nd Guards Tank Army), Rybalko (3rd Guards Tank Army), and Kravchenko (6th Guards Tank Army). Rotmistrov (5th Guards Tank Army) wrote half of his memoirs before death interrupted his work.

²⁴Among which are most of the armies which operated on secondary directions, in particular in 1944 and 1945.

²⁵These include operational studies by a single author or by a "collective" of authors or anthologies made up of articles written by distinguished participants in the operation from all command and staff levels.

²⁶All of these highly technical studies have been periodically updated to include the results of subsequent research. Most are used in the Soviet military education system.

²⁷*Istoriya Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny Sovetskogo Soyuzha 1941-1945* (History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945) in 6 volumes (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1960-1965).

²⁸*Istoriya vtoroi mirovoi voiny 1939-1945* (History of the Second World War 1939-1945) in 12 volumes (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1973-1982).

²⁹Stalin himself contributed to the military writings in the form of a short general history of the war. In the same period he established his claim as military theorist by enunciating his "permanent operating factors" which he claimed governed the conduct and outcome of war.

³⁰Recently *Military History Journal* has published several articles on mechanized forces in the border battles of 1941. Moskalenko was the first to cast light on details of the Khar'kov debacle in his work *Na yugozapadnom napravlenii* (On the Southwestern Direction), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1972). A. G. Yerшов revealed details of the Donbas operation in his work *Osvobozhdenie Donbassa* (The Liberation of the Donbas), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1973), but cloaked the

material on the Soviet February-March 1943 defeat in details concerning the Soviet victories in the same area later in the year. Characteristically bits and pieces of details about these operations are found in individual unit histories. It is left to the historian to fit the pieces together into a coherent whole.

³¹Such as 3d, 3d Guards, 27th, 28th, 31st, 40th-49th, 52d, 53d, 60th, 70th, and other armies.

³²For example, the debate between Zhukov and Chuikov over the feasibility of Soviet forces advancing on Berlin in February 1945 at the end of the Vistula-Oder operation and the manner of Zhukov's conduct of the penetration phase of the Berlin operation.

³³In Soviet studies involving airborne operations west of Moscow in early 1942 Soviet accounts contain German order of battle data unobtainable in German secondary accounts. See I. I. Lisov, *Desantniki—vozdushnye desanty* (Airlanding troops—airlandings), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1968).

³⁴For example, a German account of the seizure of Barvenkovo in the Donbas in February 1943 talks of the Germans using a ruse to frighten Soviet defenders from the city without a fight. In actuality, Soviet accounts and German records indicate it took several days of heavy fighting to expel Soviet forces from the city. Conversely, what the Soviets described as "heavy street fighting" to secure Khar'kov in August 1943 turned out to be lighter action against German stragglers left behind as the Germans deliberately abandoned the city (albeit against the orders of the German High Command).

³⁵This action is described in G. S. Zhdanovich, *Idem v nastuplenie* (On the Offensive), (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1980), pp. 47-53.

³⁶Interview with Oberst (Formerly Lt.) Helmut Ritgen at the U.S. Army War College in March 1984. Both accounts of the action are confirmed by *Lagenkarte XXXXVIII pz. kps.*, 29.12.42; *Kriegs-Tagebuch, Gen. Kdo, XXXXVIII Panzer Korps*, 28.12.42, 29.12.42.

³⁷For example, *Tremde Heeres Ost* (Foreign Armies East) assessed Soviet strength on the Eastern Front on 1 November 1944 to be 5.2 million men. Soviet sources claim the strength of their operating forces on the Eastern Front was 6 million men.

³⁸OKH (Army High Command) strength reports show roughly 2.1 million German soldiers on the Eastern Front on 1 November 1944 plus about 200,000 men in Allied forces. The Soviets claim they were opposed by 3.1 million men. On January 1945 Soviet sources cite German armor strength at 4,000 tanks and self-propelled guns. German records show about 3,500 tanks and self-propelled guns. The Soviets credit the Germans with 28,500 guns and mortars while German records show a figure of 5,700. Similar discrepancies between Soviet and German data exist throughout the war.

³⁹For example, the Soviets claim they suffered 32,000 killed and wounded in Manchuria and have cited precise figures for some other operations or percentages of losses in particular units during specific operations. Similar figures are usually unobtainable for operations occurring earlier in the war. One can reach gross conclusions about losses from unit histories such as that of the 203rd Rifle Division which, by the end of the Middle Don operation, had losses which reduced the strength of rifle companies to 10-15 men each. In this case full TOE strength would have been 76 men, but most divisions began operations with from 40-60 men per company. Obviously, in this instance losses were high.

⁴⁰This includes extensive analysis of operations done within the context of the U.S. Army War College Art of War symposium which has completed a three year analysis of selected Eastern Front operations from late 1942 through 1945. New ultra information and material from the *Fremde Heeres Ost* archives cast new light on the actual intelligence picture upon which Hitler and the Army High Command based their decisions. New German works by such historians as H. Boog, G. Ueberscharl and W. Wette are also challenging traditional views concerning the rationale for German strategic and operational decisions. Most of these works, however, are not available in English.

THE U.S.S.R. AND THE U.S.A.: TWO COURSES IN WORLD POLITICS 1933-1938

The beginning of the 1930s was marked by two troubling events: the Japanese occupation of Manchuria and the coming into power of the National Socialist Workers' Party in Germany. Soon afterwards both Japan and Germany quit the League of Nations and began to prepare for redividing the world relying on armed force. As a result hot-beds of war sprung up in the Far East and in the center of Europe. The system of international relations that had emerged in the wake of Versailles and Washington conferences quickly began to crumble, and in its place appeared new military and political alliances, acts of armed aggression and the steady slide of states toward world war.

In the face of a growing threat of war the Soviet Union worked consistently and earnestly to preserve peace. The best guarantee of peace in the view of the Soviet Government was disarmament. With this in mind, it drafted a plan that was presented in February 1932 at the World Disarmament Conference in Geneva calling for universal, total and immediate disarmament. However the Soviet proposal was rejected by the leading capitalist states. The Soviet Government also tabled at the Geneva conference a draft Declaration on the Definition of Aggression, which would have made it more difficult for an aggressor to attack another state. But the Western powers rejected this proposal as well, shunting the matter to a commission of the League of Nations which for all intents and purposes buried it.

Convinced that the Declaration on the Definition of Aggression would never be approved at the Geneva disarmament conference, Soviet diplomats took steps to have this important document signed by states bordering on the Soviet Union or adjacent to it. The Convention on the Definition of Aggression was eventually signed on July 3-5, 1933 by ten states. A year later Finland added its signature to the convention. At the World Economic Conference the Soviet

Government unveiled a wide-ranging program for the protection of peace and security, the application of principles of peaceful coexistence to relations between states with different socio-economic systems, the normalization of relations between the Soviet Union and capitalist countries, and the expansion of economic cooperation.¹ The Soviet Union also proposed the signing of a protocol on economic non-aggression.² These documents bear witness to the constructive character of the Soviet peace program aimed at ensuring and strengthening the security of nations.

The Soviet program pursued the aim of improving relations between states and embodied the principles of peaceful coexistence and cooperation of states in the name of peace and collective security.

In an effort to reinvigorate the activity of all forces serving the interests of universal peace, the Soviet Government developed a program for creating an effective system of collective security that would accord with the fundamental interests of all nations. The program was founded on the principle of the indivisibility of the peace and the need for its collective defense. In December 1933 the Soviet Government endorsed a plan for launching a campaign to create a collective security system in Europe aimed at preserving peace and averting aggression. It provided for the signing between the Soviet Union and a number of other European states such as France, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland, of mutual assistance treaties (diplomatic, moral, and possibly material) in the event of a military attack on any of the signatories. At the same time the Soviet Union agreed to join the League of Nations and sign under its auspices, regional treaties on mutual assistance in the event of a German attack.

In November 1933 the Soviet Government offered to sign a Pacific regional pact together with the United States, China and Japan.

In 1934 the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in the hope that it could help invigorate the body's efforts to avert war and support those League members that acted to protect the peace. By joining the League, the Soviet Government increased the opportunities for intensifying the struggle against the threat of war, the danger of which was recognized by many European nations.³

After a period of fervent diplomatic activity, the Soviet Government in 1935 managed to sign a mutual assistance treaty with France. A similar treaty was signed with Czechoslovakia. These two

agreements helped to consolidate the positions of peace-loving states, strengthened their military and strategic position, promoted their confidence in the possibility of preserving peace, and reaffirmed the presence of objective conditions for creating a system of collective security in Europe.

The Seventh Comintern Congress, held July 25-August 25, 1935 in Moscow and attended by 510 delegates from 65 Communist parties, was a major international event. The Congress convened against the background of the political and military onslaught of fascism on a national and world scale, predetermining its focus on the development of a wide-ranging program of struggle against fascism and war. The Congress unanimously adopted a plan to form a common anti-fascist front under the leadership of the working class and to rally all forces to fight against the threat of war. The Congress also developed a Popular Front policy that influenced the further development of international events.⁴

Amid rising international tensions and a growing threat of war, the Western powers rejected the Soviet proposals for ensuring peace. England and France set out on a course of appeasing Germany, Italy and Japan. The United States rejected the idea of collective security and proclaimed its neutrality. On August 31, 1935 the U.S. Congress passed the Neutrality Act, which was signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. This law gave the president the right, in the event of the outbreak of war between two or more countries, to prohibit the export from the United States of weapons, ammunition and military equipment to the belligerent states; the penalty for violating the embargo was a fine of up to ten thousand dollars or up to five years in prison. The law also forbade the shipment of munitions to the belligerents on American vessels. U.S. citizens who travelled on the vessels of belligerent countries did so at their own risk. The law was enacted originally for six months but later extended.⁵

The enactment of the law meant that the United States was formally forsaking international cooperation in the name of peace. The American administration was provided the opportunity to shun joining alliances calling for joint efforts in the face of acts of aggression, thereby giving the Axis powers a free hand in recarving the political map of Europe and Asia.

The enactment of the Neutrality Act was preceded by a bitter debate in the pursuit of more effective means for bolstering the position of the United States in the international arena.

President Roosevelt and his advisers assumed that by using to advantage its geographic position and relying on the country's economic and financial might, the United States could exercise influence over the development of international events and in the meantime conduct a flexible wait-and-see policy while building up its army and navy. There were also those who clamored for the rejection of all military or political alliances with European countries and for non-interference in the affairs of Europe and Asia in the hope that the aggressive designs of the Axis powers would ultimately be directed against the Soviet Union. Skilfully manipulating the antiwar sentiments of the American people, the isolationists managed to have Congress adopt the Neutrality Act which made a significant impact on U.S. foreign policy for many years to come and had an effect on the events leading up to World War II.

Thus, two tendencies, two conceptions of how to preserve peace had existed side by side in international relations in the 1930s. The Soviet Union had consistently called for the creation of a system of collective security, but the Western powers, especially England and France, had thought it possible to safeguard peace by making concessions and appeasing the aggressors, putting their stake in the final analysis on Germany and Japan launching war against the Soviet Union.

The struggle between these two tendencies in world politics was vividly manifested in the countries' attitude to acts of aggression in Europe and the Far East. It made a certain impact on the development of the world situation, including the course of Soviet-American relations.⁶ It is the purpose of this paper to examine Soviet-American relations against the backdrop of three events: the Italo-Ethiopian war, the Italian-German aggression in Spain, and Nazi Germany's seizure of Austria. The Munich Conference and the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations conducted in Moscow in 1939 are not examined in this paper because of space limitations.

Italy attacked Ethiopia on October 3, 1935, having resolved by force of arms to expand its colonial holdings in Africa. Italy had prepared for the attack many months. On May 8, 1935 the Ethiopian chargé d'affaires in Turkey called on Soviet envoy L. M. Karakhan and told him that Italy had concentrated on the Ethiopian border a large army and around 250 aircraft. Italy "had decided to seize Ethiopia with France's consent."⁷

The League of Nations, whose purpose it was to guarantee the integrity and sovereignty of states, protect peace, insure compliance

with treaties and agreements, and respect international law, was supposed to combat aggression, tyranny and lawlessness—in a word, act in accordance with its Covenant. As the Italo-Ethiopian crisis was building momentum, Maxim M. Litvinov, the head of the Soviet delegation to the League, stated in a speech during a session of the League Council that the Soviet Union had joined the League of Nations for the sole purpose and with the sole promise to work together in every way with other nations for the sake of preserving indivisible peace. He implored the members of the Council to make every effort and use every means available to them to arrest the escalating armed conflicts between two of the League's members—Italy and Ethiopia.⁸

Attaching primary importance to this issue, Litvinov, speaking at a session of the League of Nations Assembly on September 14 of that year, once again drew the attention of the participants to the disquieting international situation and implored the League members to protect the peace by collective means. The Soviet Government, Litvinov stated, was of a negative opinion of the colonial system and the policy of spheres of influence and was prepared to defend the League of Nations Covenant as a means of peace.⁹ He added that the Soviet Union condemned aggression and was calling on the League of Nations to impose economic sanctions on Italy, which would serve as a warning to other states as well.

On October 7, 1935 the League of Nations Council recognized Italy as the aggressor and resolved to impose financial and economic sanctions on it. In accordance with Article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant, 52 countries imposed economic sanctions on Italy. On October 10 a member of the Soviet delegation, V.P. Potemkin, announced at a session of the League Assembly that the Soviet Union was prepared to fulfill all of the obligations placed on it by the Covenant. He also said that concerted actions and a collective security system were necessary in order to quell the armed conflict between Italy and Ethiopia.¹⁰ On October 19 Litvinov read an official Soviet statement before the League of Nations Coordination Committee in which he underscored the importance for all members of the League to comply strictly with the economic sanctions imposed on Italy.¹¹

On November 3, 1935 Potemkin, speaking before the Coordination Committee, noted that the war in Africa was continuing, that blood was being spilled in Ethiopia, one of the League's members. This, he stated, was a violation of the Covenant. The League of Na-

tions was obliged to take every possible measure to restore peace, to act together, firmly, decisively and quickly.¹²

But England and France, instead of carrying out the decision adopted by the League, began to seek out an agreement with Italy. On December 5, 1935 the French Premier Pierre Laval and British Foreign Secretary Samuel Hoare signed a secret accord in Paris which recognized large sections of Ethiopian territory captured by Italy. In essence, this amounted to the division of Ethiopia which contradicted the Covenant of the League of Nations. Several members of the League came out in support of England's and France's conciliatory policy toward Italy. But Soviet representative Potemkin pointed out that world public opinion, influential political groups, members of parliament and high-ranking members of the British and French governments had already condemned the mission of the appeasers and the accord signed by them.¹³

In the House of Commons the policy of the British Cabinet was subjected to sharp criticism, forcing Foreign Secretary Hoare to resign.

Following suit with England and France, other members of the League of Nations used various pretexts so as not to impose sanctions on Italy. As a result, the League of Nations failed to guarantee Ethiopia either territorial inviolability or political independence. The League did not invoke Article 16, which was an important instrument of peace. The economic sanctions were limited in scope and not applied by all of the League members. Four countries refrained from imposing sanction altogether, seven states decided against imposing a weapons embargo against Italy and eight abstained from financial measures; ten refused to bar exports to Italy and thirteen refused to prohibit imports. The majority of Latin American countries refused to join the economic sanctions against Italy.¹⁴

The League of Nations was thus powerless to enforce its decision to impose sanctions on Italy. On July 4, 1936 the League decided against further enforcement of the sanctions. This decision was to have an adverse effect on the outcome of the Italo-Ethiopian war. The resistance of the Ethiopian troops was broken, and the emperor and government went into exile. The Italian army now occupied a large part of Ethiopian territory.

What position did the United States take in respect to the Italo-Ethiopian war? A number of researchers have attempted to answer this question.¹⁵ For several months before Italy's attack on Ethio-

pia Washington had been receiving reports on Italy's preparations for the invasion of Ethiopia. On February 8, 1935 the U.S. Ambassador to Rome Breckinridge Long sent a lengthy report to President Roosevelt describing the alarming situation in Ethiopia, Italy's preparations for war and the growing inevitability of military conflict between these two countries.¹⁶ A week later Roosevelt received another letter from his ambassador. On February 21 Long informed Roosevelt that Italian leader Benito Mussolini had already placed 350,000 to 400,000 men under arms. Meanwhile, numerous reports had already appeared in the American press about Italy's preparations for war.¹⁷ On August 19, 1935 Alexander C. Kirk, a councillor at the U.S. Embassy in Rome, handed Mussolini a message from U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull drafted on instructions from the president. After reading the message, the duce told Kirk that avoiding a war with Ethiopia was no longer possible. Mussolini explained that Italy had already mobilized an army of one million men and spent two billion lire; a force of 200,000 had already been dispatched to Eastern Africa, and another 150,000 men were ready to be sent at a moment's notice. Possessing a formidable air force, Italy could count on a swift victory over Ethiopia.¹⁸

Roosevelt was dissatisfied with the reply from Rome, having justly noted that an armed conflict could be avoided if it were desired.¹⁹ The General Secretary of the French External Affairs Ministry, Alexis Léger, and the British Cabinet secretary responsible for the League of Nations affairs, Anthony Eden, were officially informed of Mussolini's opinion.

In the U.S. State Department the question was debated as to what position to take in the event that an armed conflict broke out between Italy and Ethiopia. Stanley K. Hornbeck, chief of the Far Eastern Division of the State Department, and the U.S. representative to the arms limitation and reduction conference in Geneva, Norman H. Davis, were in favor of joint action with the League of Nations, for in their view any sanctions would be ineffective without U.S. participation. This viewpoint was outlined in a special memorandum written by Hornbeck and presented to the Secretary of State on July 31.²⁰ But his views were shared by very few others in the State Department. Lined up against this proposal was, among others, the U.S. Ambassador to Rome Breckinridge Long, an admirer of Mussolini and the fascist regime in Italy. Back in 1933 Long wrote that under way in Italy was "the most interesting experiment

in political science ... under the guidance of a remarkable man, ... one of the most interesting personalities."²¹ Long regarded Germany and Italy as the "bulwark against the spread of Bolshevism,"²² which were called on to defend European civilization. In September 1935 he presented to the State Department a memorandum in which he proposed to give Italy Ethiopia without war, satisfy all of Rome's demands and avoid cooperation with the League of Nations at all costs.²³

When word of the Ethiopia's invasion by Italian troops reached Washington, President Roosevelt instructed the Secretary of State to draft a proclamation announcing a weapons embargo. On October 5 the President issued a statement on this account.²⁴ On the following day the majority of American newspapers published the President's address and approved of the Government's action. Meanwhile Secretary of State Hull held a special news conference. In Rome, according to Ambassador Long, news of the proclamation was received calmly.²⁵

Secretary of State Hull, citing the Kellogg-Briand Pact, was also against coming into contact with the League of Nations. On September 20 he informed the U.S. embassy in London that the United States would not join sanctions in the event of a military conflict between Italy and Ethiopia.²⁶

Having adopted on October 7 a resolution on the imposition of economic sanctions against Italy, the League asked the United States to support this action. However Washington declined, citing the U.S. Neutrality Act. Washington's unwillingness to help put Ethiopia in a difficult position: the Ethiopian Government was unable to purchase weapons in the United States, which helped to assure its defeat. The State Department went out of its way to avoid giving the impression that the United States was connected in any way to the collective efforts to restore peace in Ethiopia.

The United States was faced by the issue of what trade, apart from arms sales, to conduct with the belligerent nations. On October 4 President Roosevelt asked the State Department for its opinion on this matter. But the State Department was divided. Some officials were proposing that the United States confine itself to moral appeals or even cut trade entirely with the belligerents, while others objected to this, insisting that trade should be continued although at reduced levels.²⁷ Herbert Feis, an economic adviser to the State Department, pointed out that "Italy would be affected more than Ethiopia."²⁸ On November 15, 1935 Secretary of State Hull issued

a statement in which he said that oil, copper, trucks, tractors, scrap iron and scrap steel were essential war materials and that their export would contradict the spirit of the country's Neutrality Act.²⁹ This statement demonstrated the firm desire of the United States to avoid the impression that its actions were directed against Italy or taken in conjunction with the League of Nations.

At the end of November British Foreign Secretary Samuel Hoare told U.S. Ambassador Bingham that the British Government was satisfied with Washington's position in respect to the Italo-Ethiopian war, especially with the decision to impose an embargo on armaments and war materials.³⁰

In assessing the U.S. position in regard to the Italo-Ethiopian crisis, historian Howard Jablon notes that "finally, the department refused all invitations for collective action."³¹ Thus, on October 9 American envoy in Geneva Hugh R. Wilson sent a cable to the State Department reporting that the United States had been invited to participate in the League of Nations Coordination Committee on sanctions. The reply that came from Washington the same day stated that from all points of view U.S. participation in the Committee was unwise and undesirable.³² Wilson was instructed to explain this to the members of the sanctions committee. When articles surfaced in the European press alleging that the United States intended to take part in the collective efforts against Italy, Hull ordered his consul in Geneva Gilbert to explain to League representatives that the United States was planning to strictly abide by the Neutrality Act, not impose sanctions, conduct a policy independent of the League and stay clear of the war.

This move by Hull greatly satisfied the U.S. Ambassador Long. In his diary he wrote: "Hull made an excellent reply to the League of Nations enquiry."³³

In November the Secretary of State once again issued a statement affirming that U.S. policy was independent of the League. On November 23 President Roosevelt asked his envoy in London Hiram Bingham to assess the effectiveness of British and French sanctions against Italy. Bingham replied that the British Government was not intending to comply with the sanctions and was not going to encourage the other League members to do so.³⁴

Meanwhile Ambassador Long sent from Rome to Washington a note demanding that Italy be supplied with oil. Otherwise, he said, a war would break out in Europe. Soon afterwards Standard Oil announced that it was going to supply Italy with oil regardless of the

Neutrality Act.³⁵ On November 29 Long sent the State Department a cable in which he argued that the American oil embargo could draw the United States into war. Long was extremely displeased with the fact that the State Department did not always heed his recommendations. The same day Long cabled President Roosevelt complaining that he had to call the State Department until he was "blue in the face" to get them to accept his recommendations, which they did not always do.³⁶

However such assertions by Long were not in accord with reality, for his insistent, categorical demands that the United States avoid working together with the League of Nations, pursue a policy of neutrality and try to appease Italy were supported by many other officials within the State Department. Confirming this was Secretary of State Hull's negative reaction when he was asked by the British ambassador what the United States thought about the League of Nations' imposition of an oil embargo against Italy. Hull added that the United States was going to conduct a policy independent of the League of Nations and refrain from any kind of agreements with other states.³⁷

On November 1, 1936 the noted jurist and President of the League of Nations Association, Thomas G. Chamberlain, sent a special missive to President Roosevelt calling his attention to the correctness of the League's decision to impose sanctions on Italy, whose behavior he referred to as gangsterism.³⁸ In reply the President stated that the United States strictly adhered to the Neutrality Act and acted independently and on its own initiative. Thereby it was once again repeated that the United States did not intend to enter into contact with the League of Nations.³⁹ Secretary of State Hull answered the president of the League of Nations Coordination Committee on sanctions in the same vein.⁴⁰

Italy's seizure of a significant part of Ethiopia in May 1936 confronted Washington with the issue of what official stance to take in this regard. A debate broke out in the State Department in which contrasting viewpoints were expressed. Some were against immediate recognition. State Department adviser Green H. Hackworth recommended against making a quick decision. On May 7 he submitted a memorandum which was supported by Under Secretary of State William Phillips.

On May 9, 1936 the State Department requested the opinion of the U.S. mission in Addis Ababa on how long the Ethiopian people could hold out against the Italians.⁴¹ The mission replied that the

Ethiopians were continuing to resist, preventing the Italian troops from establishing control in the country's southern and southwestern parts. The Italians controlled only the territory along the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railroad.⁴² On May 18 the chief of the State Department's Far East Division Stanley Hornbeck, drafted a special memorandum in which he recommended that the United States hold off making any formal statement while hostilities between Ethiopia and Italy still continued.⁴³ On June 18 the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Addis Ababa Cornelius Van. H. Engert confirmed that the war was still on and insisted that no formal recognition be given yet. His position was supported by Hackworth.⁴⁴ However on June 20, despite the fact that the U.S. Ambassador to Germany, William H. Dodd, thought Roosevelt would never recognize the Italian conquest of Ethiopia, the United States with the blessing of Hull extended its formal recognition.⁴⁵

Italy's conquest of Ethiopia undermined the people's belief in the League of Nations. The Soviet Union insistently called on the members of the League to apply the articles of its Covenant allowing for collective measures to be taken against attempts to divide the world by force. But the Western powers, especially England and France, refused to listen to the Soviet appeals.

Following the conquest of Ethiopia on July 17, 1936 generals Francisco Franco and Emilio Mola and others rose up in arms against the legitimate republican government of the Popular Front in Spain.⁴⁶ Berlin and Rome mounted an armed intervention in Spain for the purpose of toppling the republican government and establishing a fascist regime headed by Franco.⁴⁷

On July 26, 1936 the French Government announced that it would remain neutral to the fighting in Spain and imposed a ban on the export of munitions there. England followed suit, and an agreement was signed between London and Paris pledging that both countries would not interfere in Spain's affairs.⁴⁸ On the basis of this agreement all aid to the Spanish republic was suspended. On August 2 the French Government offered to sign with other states an accord on non-intervention in Spain and create for this purpose a special committee. The Soviet Union agreed to the offer in the hope that it would help bring an end to German and Italian interference in Spanish affairs.

The Non-Intervention Committee was set up in London headed by Lord Plymouth.⁴⁹ The Soviet Government appointed I.M. Maisky to represent the Soviet Union.

In such a way jurisdiction over Spain was taken away from the League of Nations and handed to the Non-Intervention Committee, which, at its numerous sessions, signed agreements that were immediately broken, adopted resolutions that were not complied with and elaborated plans that were not carried out. In the first two months of its existence the committee demonstrated its total ineffectiveness; meanwhile the German-Italian intervention expanded and weapons deliveries to the rebels increased. On October 4 Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. V. P. Potemkin called Maisky's attention to the fact that "not only the British but the French, too, don't want to give the Madrid Government any kind of real aid."⁵⁰

Three days later Maisky, the Soviet representative on the committee, cited many instances of German and Italian aid to the rebels and warned on behalf of the Soviet Government that "if these violations of the non-intervention agreement are not immediately stopped, the Soviet Government will consider itself completely free of its obligations ensuing from the agreement."⁵¹ On October 26 Maisky read another statement before the Non-Intervention Committee, this one pointing out that Germany's and Italy's intervention in Spain was continuing, turning the non-intervention agreement into an empty piece of paper which virtually had no force.⁵²

Since Italy and Germany continued to supply the rebels with armaments and munitions, the Soviet Government came to the conclusion that the non-intervention agreement had lost its force and that, under international law, the legitimate Spanish Government had a right to buy weapons. With this in mind, on December 21 the Soviet Government, in a message to the head of government of the Spanish republic, Largo Caballero, stated its readiness to render the Spanish people all-round selfless assistance.

Throughout the national-revolutionary war in Spain the Soviet Government consistently and decisively stood up for the interests of the Spanish republic, giving it political and diplomatic support and military and economic aid. In the fall of 1936 the governments of the U.S.S.R. and the Spanish republic signed an agreement under which Spain deposited a part of its gold reserves valued at 131 million dollars in the U.S.S.R. State Bank to pay for goods purchased in the Soviet Union.

In July 1938 the Soviet Government provided Spain with a credit of seventy-five million dollars and extended it a loan worth one hun-

dred million dollars at the end of the year. The Soviet Union delivered to Spain armaments and munitions despite a blockade of Spanish ports enforced by the rebel navy and German and Italian aircraft and the periodical closing of the French-Spanish border. Because of this Soviet deliveries were not uniform. From the beginning of hostilities until September 1937 52 transport ships loaded with military cargo had left Soviet ports headed for Spain; in the course of 1938 only 13 vessels sailed for Spain, and only three in 1939. Meanwhile the Soviet Union supplied Spain with fuel oil, raw materials, food and industrial goods weighing nearly 1.5 million tons and worth more than 216 million roubles.

The Soviet Union also helped the Spanish republic train military personnel. In 1937 and 1938 600 Spanish pilots and technicians graduated from Soviet aviation academies. Also, around three thousand Soviet civilian and military advisers were sent to Spain. The Soviet people raised from private donations more than 275 million roubles with which they bought and sent to the Spanish patriots food, clothing and medicines.⁵³ In addition the U.S.S.R. delivered to Spain 648 aircraft, 347 tanks, 60 armored vehicles, 1,186 guns, 20,648 machine guns, 497,813 rifles and also a large quantity of shells, ammunition and gun powder.⁵⁴ And finally, Soviet military advisers provided assistance to the Republican Army.

Meanwhile, a formidable mass movement sprung up throughout the world in defense of the Spanish republic. Forty-two thousand volunteers from 54 countries — three thousand of them from the Soviet Union — arrived to help the Spanish people. Two hundred of them died a hero's death, and many others fought courageously.⁵⁵

The position of the U.S. Government on the Spanish war influenced to a certain degree the course of military and political events and the Spanish people's struggle for independence.⁵⁶ President Roosevelt was on vacation when word of the Spanish revolt reached Washington. The news was received with heightened interest at the State Department, for a decision had to be made on what position the United States would take.

In one of the first messages on the events in Spain U.S. Ambassador to Madrid Claude G. Bowers reported to President Roosevelt that the Spanish generals' rebellion against the legitimate government could not be justified in any way. The Republican Government had sought to conduct limited democratic reforms and modernize the country's political institutions, Bowers reported. The rebels' goal, he continued, was to establish a military

dictatorship, repeal constitutional rights and restore the privileges of the Catholic Church. Their cause had the support of Italy and Germany.

Bowers, it seemed, was favorably inclined toward the Republicans. However he advised the President to not interfere in Spanish affairs.⁵⁷ What's more, Bowers seemed pleased that American consuls had established friendly relations with the rebels on territory held by them.⁵⁸ The ambassador informed Washington also that the British had contacts with the rebels as well as with the Spanish Government.⁵⁹

On August 5 Secretary of State Cordell Hull called a conference of his advisers attended by Welles, Moore, Phillips, Hackworth and others, at which they discussed the would-be official U.S. position toward the events in Spain. Hull and his advisers decided on non-intervention.⁶⁰ Two days later the State Department cabled American representatives in Spain informing them that the United States Government was not going to intervene in Spanish affairs. The same information was released to the press.

However not everyone agreed with the State Department's decision on neutrality. Stanley K. Hornbeck submitted a memorandum on August 11 in which he argued that every legitimate government, including the Spanish Government, had the right to buy weapons abroad. The American administration and citizenry, he maintained, could sell arms to the Spanish Government.⁶¹ On August 4, 1936 a group of U.S. senators and congressmen sent a letter to the President asking "to prevent shipment of war supplies to Spain."⁶² An American company from Baltimore petitioned the Government for permission to sell aircraft to the Republican Government in Spain. In reply the State Department explained that it was necessary to abide by the Neutrality Act.⁶³

On August 14, 1936 Roosevelt delivered a carefully worded election campaign speech devoted to domestic and foreign policy. The thrust of his speech was that the United States should strictly abide by the letter and spirit of the Neutrality Act and not get involved in the war.⁶⁴ Throughout July and August Roosevelt intentionally avoided making any official remarks on the U.S. position on the Spanish Civil War. However on August 31 *The New York Times* published a statement by the President expressing his concern about the events in Spain.

The very same day the leader of the U.S. Socialist Party, Norman Thomas, addressed a letter to President Roosevelt asking him to

allow the Republican Government in Spain to buy armaments and munitions and prevent the rebels from doing so.⁶⁵ In another letter it was pointed out that the Spanish Government was elected by the people and recognized by the U.S. Administration and thus had the right to count on the purchase of armaments and munitions in the United States.⁶⁶ However the State Department recommended strictly adhering to a policy of neutrality.

In September, when fighting between the Republicans and rebels had become heavy, Ambassador Bowers wrote to Hull that a serious European war was being fought in Spain and that the United States should without hesitation pursue its policy of non-intervention.⁶⁷ The Japanese envoy in Madrid told Bowers with a hint of satisfaction that in the opinion of many members of the diplomatic corps, only the United States was adhering to strict neutrality in respect to Spain. Tokyo approved of it and was going to follow suit.⁶⁸

On October 19 Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles gave a speech in New York before members of the Foreign Policy Association in which he noted that the U.S. Government intended to abide by the Congress-approved Neutrality Act.⁶⁹ In December the governments of England and France proposed that the United States join the Non-Intervention Committee or give it moral support. However, Washington declined that invitation. On December 5 the French ambassador to the United States in a conversation with assistant Secretary of State Moore suggested that the United States mediate in the national-revolutionary war in Spain, a demarche that was supported by the British ambassador too. Four days later State Department Western European Division chief James C. Dunn informed the French and British ambassadors that the United States had no intention of becoming a mediator or taking any other steps toward a settlement of the military conflict in Spain.⁷⁰

The U.S. Congress did not remain uninvolved in the Spanish events. At a press conference on January 5, 1937, Roosevelt disclosed that Chairman Key Pittman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would present to Congress a new bill concerning the civil war in Spain which had been discussed at length by the President, acting Secretary of State Moore and Senator Pittman.

On January 6 the bill, which prohibited the export of arms and ammunition to Spain, was sent to the Senate for action. The bill was passed by the Senate on the same day by a vote of 81 yes with 12 abstentions. In the House of Representatives the bill was approved by

a vote of 411 to 1 with 22 abstentions.⁷¹ On January 8 President Roosevelt signed the new act into law. Several weeks later, on January 25, 1937, Roosevelt sent a letter to Norman Thomas in which he remarked that the State Department with his full approval had taken a definite position in regard to U.S. non-intervention in Spanish affairs and the ban on exporting arms to this country. The decision had been made, the President noted, before the European states had formulated their positions on the Spanish events. He added that the United States had acted independently guided by the letter and spirit of the Neutrality Act.⁷²

Keeping tabs on the mood within the U.S. Congress, Soviet envoy A.A. Troyanovsky dictated a letter to Maxim M. Litvinov on January 9, 1937 in which he noted that the United States was pursuing an isolationist policy but would intervene in international affairs as soon as the balance changed to its disadvantage. In the meantime the United States was rearming, Troyanovsky noted. He pointed out that the Congress had been hasty, almost panicky, in passing the amendment to the Neutrality Act.⁷³

The enactment of the amendment infringed upon the right of the legitimate government of Spain and played into the hands of the rebels and interventionists—Italy and Germany. General Franco, commenting on the U.S. move, remarked that the American “neutrality legislation, stopping export of war materiel to either side—the quick manner in which it was passed and carried into effect—is a gesture we nationalists will never forget.”⁷⁴

Ambassador Bowers called Washington’s passage of the amendment to the Neutrality Act “the collaboration with the Axis powers in the war of extermination against democracy in Spain.”⁷⁵ On May 1, 1937 Congress passed a new neutrality bill which, while preserving for a certain period the main provisions of existing legislation, established the so-called buy and export principle in respect to purchases by foreign states of war materiel in the United States to remain in effect for two years.⁷⁶ This provision of U.S. neutrality legislation infringed even more upon the interests of the non-aggressors, since they often possessed neither ready cash to pay for the arms nor vessels to transport them.

The extension of the Neutrality Act to countries involved in a civil war deprived the Republican Government of Spain of the possibility to purchase American armaments. The State Department annulled agreements signed earlier with Spain for the purchase of weapons in the United States. This came at a time when the Span-

ish rebels under Franco were receiving unlimited supplies of weapons from Germany and Italy.⁷⁷ Also, the Non-Intervention Committee took no concrete measures against the interventionists. Washington was certainly aware of this. In a private conversation with Soviet Ambassador Maisky, the banker and diplomat Norman Davis, who headed the American delegation at the Geneva arms limitation and reduction conference, while condemning the actions of the Spanish fascists and criticizing the position of the British Government, stated unambiguously that the United States did not intend to support the Republican Government of Spain. He said that Washington was prepared to promote the pacification of Europe by means of arms control and limitation and the expansion of trade.⁷⁸ On May 3, 1938 the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Paris Wilson informed French External Affairs Minister Georges Bonnet that Washington had decided against a mediator role in Spain since General Franco would probably win.⁷⁹

The position occupied by the U.S. Government in respect to the national-revolutionary war in Spain was a cause for dissatisfaction in the country. Throughout 1938 proposals were made in Congress to review the Neutrality Act. In early February Senator William H. King introduced a motion to repeal the neutrality legislation, arguing that the Neutrality Act benefited the aggressors and worked to the detriment of smaller and weaker countries.⁸⁰ On March 18 the *New York Herald Tribune* noted that the Neutrality Act aided the aggressors in Spain. Two days later *The New York Times* called for the repeal of the Act, contending that it put at a disadvantage countries forced to defend themselves against fascist aggression.

In May a bill was introduced in Congress proposing to lift the embargo on the export of arms to the Republican Government in Spain. The draft resolution had broad public support. Back in February former American Ambassador to Germany William E. Dodd and 60 prominent political and public leaders addressed a letter to the President requesting permission to send war materiel to the Spanish Government.

Twenty-six Senators and 34 Congressmen sent a telegram to their embattled Spanish counterparts. In June, Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Pittman announced that the Neutrality Act would be reconsidered. However in May a conference was held in the White House at which it was decided to wait a while before repealing the Act.⁸¹

Indignation grew in the United States over the aggressive acts of Germany and Italy. Spearheading the campaign to support the Republican Government in Spain was the American League for Peace and Democracy, an organization that numbered some eight million members by the end of 1938.⁸² Committees were formed throughout the country to aid Spanish democracy, and up to 3,800 Americans ventured to Spain to fight against the fascists. The most noted group of volunteers was the Abraham Lincoln International Brigade, which lost more than half of its members in the fight for freedom and democracy.⁸³ The American authorities, however, tried to paralyze the pro-Republican movement. The State Department refused to issue passports even to medical workers who had volunteered their services to Spain. This brought the neutrality policy under increasing criticism and crystallized support for rescinding the Act.

Taking into account the policy of England, France and the United States, Litvinov stated in a speech to the Sixth Political Commission of the League of Nations on September 29, 1938 — the day the Munich Conference opened — that for more than two years Spain had been subjected to blatant armed intervention. The Spanish people were waging an unparalleled heroic struggle, which had already taken a toll of hundreds of thousands of Spanish soldiers and tens of thousands of civilians, he continued. Cities and villages were demolished. Spain had appealed to the League of Nations for help, but its plea was turned down. The Non-Intervention Committee had failed to carry out its functions, foreign intervention continued unabated. The rebels blocked deliveries of arms to the Republican army and of food to the civilian population. Spanish ports were sealed off, and the Spanish-French border was closed.

Litvinov urged the members of the commission to come to the aid of Spain.⁸⁴ However the Soviet appeal was rejected. What's more, in early December 1938 French External Relations Minister Bonnet told Ribbentrop that the French Government had nothing against General Franco and that it had taken steps to curtail the civil war in Spain by cutting off the shipment of war materiel via the Pyrenees.⁸⁵

In the beginning of 1939 the Spanish patriots began to be overwhelmed. They fought courageously, but they were vastly outnumbered. The territory held by them was now encircled by rebel forces. Fascist aircraft continuously bombed cities and strafed refugees who fled northwards toward the French border.

Meanwhile, in January 1939 British and French representatives to the League of Nations openly spoke against the imposition of sanctions in accordance with Article 16 of the League Covenant against the Italo-German aggressors in Spain. The move was spearheaded by Great Britain, where the Chamberlain Government was trying to come to an agreement with Germany and Italy. During the debate of this issue one of the League members angrily shouted, "You killed Spain!" Later, Under Secretary of State Welles wrote: "Of all our blind isolationist policies, the most disastrous was our attitude on the Spanish civil war." This conclusion was echoed by historian Jablon, who wrote that the U.S. policy of non-intervention in Spain and the State Department recommendations had tragic consequences.⁸⁶

In the struggle for freedom and to save the Republic the Spanish people fought heroically and bore grave losses, with more than one million people having been killed either in bombing raids or at the hands of the interventionists.⁸⁷ Despite fighting courageously, the Spanish patriots were vastly outnumbered and eventually defeated. This was a heavy blow to the anti-fascist, democratic forces. The frontiers of fascism now stretched to the Iberian Peninsula. The governments of Great Britain, France and the United States hurriedly recognized the Franco regime and established diplomatic relations with it.

While the dramatic events were unwinding in Spain, on March 12, 1938 German troops crossed over into Austria. A day later Austria was already a part of the Third Reich. One more sovereign state ceased to exist on the political map of Europe. To prepare for the Anschluss Ribbentrop travelled to London where on March 10 he met with British Foreign Secretary Irwin Halifax. Afterwards Ribbentrop reported to Berlin that England would probably do nothing if Germany annexed Austria and that London would exert a restraining influence on the other powers.⁸⁸

The Soviet Union resolutely condemned Hitler's aggression in respect to Austria.⁸⁹ On March 17 People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Litvinov made a statement on behalf of the Soviet Government in which he pointed out that an act of violence had been committed in the center of Europe and that "the international situation places before the peace-loving states, in particular the great powers, the question of responsibility for the further fate of the peoples of Europe, and not only of Europe."⁹⁰ The Soviet Union, Litvinov stated, was prepared to take part in collective efforts together with

other states to curb the further escalation of aggression. Litvinov proposed that the situation be urgently discussed at the League of Nations and that practical measures be worked out. He also suggested that the great powers should declare an unambiguous position on the issue of collective efforts to preserve peace.⁹¹

The text of Litvinov's statement was sent to the governments of Great Britain, France, the United States and Czechoslovakia.⁹² London refused to enter into any kind of negotiations, arguing that collective action against aggression would not have a beneficial effect on the prospects of peace in Europe.⁹³ It also contended that the convening of a conference on that matter was impossible and untimely.⁹⁴

The Soviet statement provoked a lengthy debate in the State Department on how the U.S. should respond. This is how Secretary of State Hull recalls this debate in his memoirs: "For several weeks we debated at the State Department whether to reply to this statement. I decided, however, that, in view of the fact that no formal reply was called for, and that our response, under the limitations of our policy against entanglements, must be negative and might therefore discourage Russia, we would not send an answer."⁹⁵

On April 2 Great Britain recognized Germany's annexation of Austria. France followed suit.

The annexation of Austria was a general rehearsal for the seizure of Czechoslovakia. In the above-mentioned Soviet Government statement it was noted that as a result of the seizure of Austria "a threat to Czechoslovakia would arise."⁹⁶

This was obvious to many. On the night of March 12, 1938 the Czechoslovak envoy in Moscow telephoned American Ambassador Joseph Davies and said in an agitated and confused voice: "The worst has happened, Hitler has invaded Austria."⁹⁷ The next day Davies visited the Czechoslovak mission in Moscow where he had a long conversation with envoy Zdenek Fierlinger about Germany's occupation of Austria and the political consequences for Europe of this aggressive act. Fierlinger told the American ambassador that the same sad fate would soon befall Czechoslovakia. Davies agreed.⁹⁸

Foreseeing Hitler's next moves, the Soviet Government took specific steps to check Germany. On March 15, 1938 Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Potemkin assured the Czechoslovak envoy that the Soviet Union was prepared to fulfill all of its commitments in respect to Czechoslovakia in the event of Ger-

man attack. The very same day Litvinov passed on this information to the British ambassador in Moscow, and the Soviet ambassador in Paris informed the French Government. On March 16 Hitler made a statement in regard to Czechoslovakia. The following day Litvinov met with Davies to discuss the situation in Europe and urged the United States to take joint actions with the Soviet Union for the sake of preserving peace.⁹⁹

Meanwhile in Washington news of the Anschluss was received calmly. The State Department made no official statements to protest the annexation.

According to historical documents, Hitler's plan to annex Austria was no secret to official quarters in the United States. As early as 1935 the German envoy Franz von Papen told American envoy in Vienna George S. Messersmith, that he considered his mission as a diplomat the establishment of German political control over southeast Europe; in accomplishing this mission, he said, special attention would be accorded to undermining and weakening Austria and establishing control over it.¹⁰⁰ Other leaders of the Third Reich also were open about their plans and intentions. In November 1937 Hjalmar Schacht and Hermann Goering told the American Ambassador to Paris William Bullitt that Germany was determined to annex Austria.¹⁰¹

Observing Berlin's aggressive actions, Assistant Secretary of State Messersmith wrote on October 11, 1937 that Nazi Germany was planning to seize Austria and Czechoslovakia, establish its dominance over southeast Europe, seize the Ukraine and isolate Russia.¹⁰²

In February 1938 former U.S. President Herbert Hoover set out on a 15-nation tour of the Old World that would last until mid-March. The purpose of his trip was to acquire personal knowledge of the economic and political situation in Europe. During his tour he met with dozens of leaders and public figures who received him as an influential person well connected politically and to the Wall Street financial community. In France Hoover met with President Albert Lebrun, in Belgium with King Leopold III, in Austria with President Wilhelm Miklas, in Czechoslovakia with President Edward Beneš, and in Germany with Hitler and Goering.

On March 8 Hoover, accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Germany Wilson, met with Hitler for forty minutes. The same day the ambassador gave a dinner in honor of the former president attended by Hjalmar Schacht, who thanked Hoover for erasing all German

debts to the United States in 1931. Hoover spoke with enthusiasm of the "achievements" of the Third Reich and noted that "one cannot but sympathize deeply with all these peoples and the different groups within them in their hundreds of acute problems, their inheritances from the World War."¹⁰³ The following day Goering gave a breakfast in honor of Hoover over which German economic development was discussed.

Before departing from Berlin Hoover announced that he was not going to reveal what he spoke about with the European leaders. This was at a time when the Hitlerite Government was making its final preparations for invading Austria. Hoover never once protested the Anschluss. On March 18 he headed back to the United States, where soon after his arrival he announced that the United States should remain outside of the war and avoid an alliance with the bourgeois-democratic countries against the fascist states. He also spoke against supporting Great Britain and France in the event of war.¹⁰⁴

On March 6, 1938, on the eve of the Anschluss, Senator Robert La Follette urged in a radio address that the United States should not involve itself in a collective security system, or oppose the aggressor states, but should strive to promote trade with all countries deriving high profits.¹⁰⁵

On March 12 the German Ambassador in Washington Hans H. Dieckhoff paid a call on Secretary of State Hull at the State Department. Dieckhoff later observed that during their conversation Hull showed no outward signs of irritation at the Anschluss or made an attempt to censure the German move.¹⁰⁶ This led Dieckhoff to believe that Hull "thoroughly understood our [Germany's — *Auth.*] action."¹⁰⁷ Leaving the State Department, Dieckhoff rushed to reveal to the press the sensational news that the Austrian ambassador in Washington had already hung on the building of the Austrian mission a fascist flag with a swastika. The reporters sped off to the Austrian mission to get a look for themselves. Photographs in evening newspapers proved that was really so. The same day Secretary of State Hull made a statement to the press announcing the Anschluss and said "there was nothing the United States intended to do about it."¹⁰⁸

On March 14 German Ambassador Dieckhoff handed Hull a note announcing that Austria was now part of the Third Reich.

On April 6 the Government of the United States formally recognized Germany's annexation of Austria.

How did members of the U.S. Congress respond to the Anschluss? In a radio address in Cleveland, Ohio, Congressman Martin L. Sweeney urged that a policy of non-interference in European affairs be conducted and that the United States stay away from any collective actions. On the following day isolationist Senator William E. Borah also gave a radio address and held a press conference, at which he underscored: "That which happened to Austria would appear natural, logical, inevitable, and a thing which is not of the slightest moment to the Government, as a government, of the United States."¹⁰⁹

A short while later Senator Borah gave another radio address on U.S. foreign policy in which he tried to justify the annexation of Austria, contending that Austria had always been only formally independent, that it had been economically, politically and financially helpless and that from the moment the Treaty of Versailles was signed its transfer under the control of another power was to be expected.

Isolationist Senator Lewis B. Schwellenbach, who was known for his far-right conservative views, openly justified Germany's expansionist policies in a radio address on March 13. He also said that after the annexation of Austria, Hitler would probably take Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary and the Ukraine.¹¹⁰

For the sake of fairness it must be said that many Americans were indignant about Germany's aggressive acts. This anger was reflected in letters to newspapers and petitions sent to the President from religious organizations.¹¹¹

In early April 1938 U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes, in a speech in Chicago, condemned fascism, which, he stressed, posed a threat to many states. He said: "More and more people are coming to recognize the danger even to America of this ruthless political monster."¹¹² And in June a *New York Times* editorial commented that "American opinion was just as definitely aligned against the seizure of Austria by force of German arms."¹¹³

Assessing Washington's response to the seizure of Austria, Soviet envoy to the United States Troyanovsky in a letter to Litvinov reported that "the fate of Austria is not of much concern here. Isolationists of all stripes are prepared to be reconciled with all conquests by the fascists. Their only concern is that America not become actively involved in international affairs, not bind itself by any kind of alliance with England and not leave itself open to the risk of becoming involved in the war."¹¹⁴

Troyanovsky's report realistically reflected the U.S. position, which was largely shaped by the fact that the Anschluss made easier Nazi Germany's penetration into southeastern Europe with outlets to the Mediterranean and Black seas. The U.S. view was shared by politicians in London and Paris.

Germany's devouring of the Austrian state went completely unnoticed at the League of Nations. Republican Spain, as a result of the German and Italian intervention, also fell victim to fascism. All this was evidence that the League failed to carry out its obligations to preserve peace and guarantee the sovereignty of its members.

Such were the ruinous consequences of the policies of appeasement and non-intervention conducted by Great Britain, France and the United States, all of whom rejected the Soviet proposal for the creation of a collective security system. Two different courses in international relations were observed in the Far East as well, where China fell victim to aggression and foreign intervention.

Soviet foreign policy activeness was not confined to the European continent, where the main seat of military danger in the person of Hitlerite Germany was located. The Soviet Government considered it important also to preserve peace in Asia, where with each year Japanese aggression took on ever larger dimensions. The international situation in the Far East and the Pacific was of concern to many states. For this reason the Soviet Union, as it did in Europe, took specific steps to conclude a regional Pacific pact so that the expansion of Japanese aggression could be checked by collective action. Regarded as possible signatories of this pact were the United States, the U.S.S.R., China and Japan.

On November 16, 1933 Litvinov discussed with President Roosevelt the idea of a Pacific pact. The President endorsed this idea and instructed William Bullitt to take up this issue. Meanwhile Roosevelt broached the subject of the United States and the Soviet Union signing a non-aggression pact. Litvinov responded approvingly.¹¹⁵ Attaching great significance to this issue, Litvinov before departing from Washington suggested to acting Secretary of State Phillips that they discuss the question of the signing of a non-aggression pact between the U.S.S.R., the United States and Japan, or, in the event Japan declined the offer, between the U.S.S.R., the United States and China. Phillips, displaying extreme caution, did not appreciate the idea. When William Bullitt, who was recently appointed ambassador to the Soviet Union, arrived in Moscow, Litvinov once again

raised the issue of concluding a Pacific pact for the sake of safeguarding peace in the Far East. To the amazement of Litvinov, Bullitt stated that the United States had no intention of signing a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. He also indicated that Washington was basically against the idea of a Pacific pact.¹¹⁶

Seeing that Washington was being evasive, the Soviet Government proposed that the White House should initiate the signing of a Pacific pact. This could facilitate the whole thing. However the United States, while not outright rejecting the idea of signing a regional agreement in the Pacific, began to place conditions on the reaching of an agreement. It demanded that Great Britain, France and the Netherlands also be included in the pact. The U.S.S.R. did not object to this. However the American position became more clear when the Roosevelt Administration refused to submit the Pacific pact proposal for consideration by potential signatories. Meanwhile London also refrained from giving a clear answer to the Soviet proposal for a Pacific pact.

Over nearly a four-year period, from November 1933 to mid-1937, the Soviet Union repeatedly tried to get the Western powers to sign a regional pact relevant to the Far East and Pacific for the sake of preserving peace in this region. Soviet envoy in the United States Troyanovsky sought to convince President Roosevelt of the importance of collective efforts to check Japanese aggression. During talks with the President he repeatedly emphasized the necessity of bringing together the concerned states, above all the United States, the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and China, to guarantee peace in the Far East.

In assessing the character of lengthy negotiations on the issue of a Pacific pact and estimating the further course of events in the Far East and the growth of tensions in the region, the Soviet Government steadily moved toward the conclusion that the reaching of a regional pact was possible only with U.S. participation. On June 21 Litvinov wrote to Troyanovsky: "The pact, of course, is unthinkable without the United States. This is why it is so important to clarify Roosevelt's position."¹¹⁷

At one point the President accepted this idea in theory, but then he foresaw no opposition from Congress, the Supreme Court, industrialists, financiers and Catholics. Since that time much had changed. It was now important to know how Washington would respond to the proposal by the Australian prime minister to sign a non-aggression pact among the countries in the Pacific.¹¹⁸

On instructions from above, before departing for Moscow Troyanovsky met with President Roosevelt to talk about the international situation. Troyanovsky asked the President what he thought of the idea of a Pacific pact and a system of collective security which he had earlier discussed with Litvinov, and of the Australian prime minister's proposal for the signing of a non-aggression pact. The President replied that he was in favor of demilitarizing a number of American and Japanese islands in the Pacific, but opposed the creation of any pacts since "pacts don't provide any guarantees, they cannot be trusted."¹¹⁹ He also said that the United States had no intention of joining any alliances, and that a pact without Japan was inconceivable. Roosevelt stressed that "the main guarantee is a strong navy. We'll see how the Japanese will hold out in a naval contest."¹²⁰ At the time the Roosevelt Administration's attention to the building of a powerful navy, the construction of new ships and the increase of men under arms had grown considerably. The U.S. defense budget was becoming larger and larger each year.

The American Government's negative attitude toward a regional pact in the Pacific impelled Soviet diplomacy to seek out various possibilities for an alliance of states to protect the peace in Asia. The situation required statesmen from the Pacific area to take urgent steps in this direction. On May 14, 1937 Australian Prime Minister Joseph A. Lyons proposed at a conference of British dominions the signing of a non-aggression pact among interested states in the Far East and the Pacific.

The Soviet Government immediately supported his proposal, although it was apparent that it was limited in comparison with the proposed Pacific non-aggression pact. Nevertheless, a non-aggression pact would have helped to isolate the aggressor, bolster China's position and set up a system of collective security in Asia. On June 10, 1937 Soviet envoy Ivan Maisky spoke with British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden about the possibility of signing the pact proposed by the Australian prime minister. Eden said that in principle he was not against and promised to study the question.¹²¹ The same day on instructions from Litvinov Maisky met with Lyons. The two exchanged opinions on the prospects of signing a Pacific non-aggression pact and came to a mutual understanding on this issue.¹²²

On June 15, 1937 a cable was received from London reporting that Lyons was also in favor of a mutual assistance pact, which he

thought was even more preferable than a non-aggression pact. However he felt that neither Great Britain nor the United States were ready for this. Therefore, Lyons suggested, the discussion at first should be confined to the conclusion of a non-aggression pact in the Pacific involving Australia, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, China, the Soviet Union, Japan, the United States and Portugal, many of whom were favorably disposed toward the idea.¹²³

U.S. indifference toward a Pacific pact forced the Soviet Union to conduct negotiations simultaneously with Nanking in an effort to force the Chiang Kai-shek Government to take an active stand on the creation of a united front against Japanese aggression. China had a big interest in such efforts, for it was extremely important that its international position be bolstered at a time when the risk of a Japanese invasion loomed large. On March 8, 1937 the Chinese Ambassador to the Soviet Union Qiang Tingfu in a meeting with Soviet envoy in China D. V. Bogomolov in Moscow raised the issue of a Pacific pact. He pointed out that the Chinese Government supported the idea, but doubted that "America or England would agree to sign such a pact."¹²⁴

Three days later Litvinov also met with Qiang Tingfu drawing his attention to the fact that the conclusion of a regional pact for the Pacific would provide a guarantee of peace in the Far East. Litvinov noted that it was important for the Government of China take an active stand on this issue, adding that the U.S.S.R. was prepared to support the idea. The main thing, he said, was to get the consent of the United States and Great Britain. Litvinov stressed that the signing of a regional pact for the Pacific would "once and for all put an end to Japanese aggression and ensure peace in the Far East." Japan would not dare try to array itself against the proposed coalition of Pacific states. An important role in resolving this issue would belong to the United States and Great Britain, he concluded.¹²⁵

However the Kuomintang Government failed to take decisive steps in this direction and confined itself to a general discussion of the issue. Meanwhile it sought to reach a compromise with Japan. Soviet envoy Bogomolov drew the attention of China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Chonghuoi to the necessity and desirability of starting up negotiations on a non-aggression pact. It was suggested to the Chinese Government to take the initiative in negotiations with other interested states — particularly with Great Britain,

the Soviet Union, Japan, the United States and France. Wang Chonghuoi promised to pass on the suggestion to the head of the Kuomintang Government Chiang Kai-shek.¹²⁶ On May 15, 1937 Litvinov met with Vice-President of the executive council Kong Xiangxi during which he stressed the importance of concluding a regional pact.¹²⁷ Two days later an adviser to the Chinese Government Feng Yuxiang told the Soviet envoy that the Chinese Government was unable to take upon itself the initiative for concluding a Pacific pact. The latter remarked that the primary mistake of the Chinese Government was its underestimation of its own potential and the overestimation of Japan's might.¹²⁸

Meanwhile, as futile efforts were being made to get negotiations started on a Pacific pact which were adamantly resisted by Great Britain, China and the United States, Japan was feverishly making preparations for expanding the war. On July 7, 1937 Japanese troops began combat operations against China. Japanese aircraft bombed cities after which the army moved in to capture them.

On July 16 Bogomolov reported to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs: "The Chinese Government has apparently lost its head and is dashing about not knowing what to do."¹²⁹ During a meeting with the chairman of the Chinese legislative council Sun Fo Bogomolov considered it necessary at this critical hour to draw the Chinese attention once again to the fact that the Soviet Government had repeatedly offered the Nanking Government to take up the initiative in reaching a regional non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. But the Chinese Government was evading the issue, saying that Japan would not agree to it or would demand the recognition of Manchu Kuo.¹³⁰

On July 19 a member of the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee Chen Lifu paid a visit on Bogomolov and explained to him why the Chinese Government was not able to initiate the signing of a regional pact for the Pacific. Bogomolov answered that the situation at present was auspicious for the Chinese Government to take this diplomatic step.¹³¹ Then Bogomolov drew Chen's attention to the fact that U.S.S.R. policy was built on a consideration of its own strength and assured him that Japan, which was militarily weaker, would not think of attacking the Soviet Union which was ready to help China. Bogomolov pointed out that it was therefore important that negotiations be begun relative to the signing of a non-aggression treaty.¹³²

In August China and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression treaty which was of great significance for the strengthening of Sino-Soviet relations.

However the treaty worried Tokyo.¹³³ Soviet envoy in Japan M. M. Slavitsky wrote in his diary: "The signing of the Sino-Soviet treaty made a great impression here.... The Japanese were not able to hide their agitation and concern regarding the pact. The Foreign Ministry was clearly embittered and did not conceal this fact."¹³⁴

Thus, despite persistent and continuous efforts in Europe and the Far East, the Soviet Union did not succeed in getting the majority of states to unite for the sake of preserving peace. As a result, in 1937 the international situation became even worse. Both London and Paris rejected Soviet proposals to organize a collective rebuff of aggression, and the United States continued to stand by its position of neutrality.

The Soviet press drew the attention of the world public to the harmfulness of the policies conducted by the British and French Governments to appease the aggressive powers. Of particular harm was the British policy. The British and French willingness to make concessions only encouraged the aggressors and undermined the belief of smaller countries in the League of Nations and the principle of collective security.

The efforts of the Soviet Government to create a system of collective security found support neither in London nor in Paris. The Soviet proposals were branded as either "premature," "too radical" or even "unrealistic." Yet in fact the Soviet Union pursued one goal: by joint efforts to check the growing threat of war. Laying at the basis of the Soviet proposals was the sincere, profound and constant striving for peace and friendship among peoples.

To be sure, the danger of war could have been checked if Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union had reached an agreement on mutual assistance, as the Soviet Union repeatedly proposed, or formed a league with countries whose independence was threatened by Germany. The United States could have exercised influence over the way world events developed and promoted the creation of a united front against aggression. But it did not do so.

Speaking at the plenary session of the League of Nations Assembly on September 27, 1937, Litvinov stated: "All of us do not forget for a single moment and sincerely regret the absence in the League

of Nations of such a mighty great power as the United States of America. We are aware of the profound love for peace of the American people, of their sincere loathing of war."¹³⁵ In this context it is appropriate to speak about missed opportunities. Subsequent events confirm this to an even larger degree. The Munich deal signed by Western powers to the detriment of Czechoslovakia struck a fatal blow to the idea of collective security both in Europe and in the Far East. The appeasers in London and Paris gratefully noted the activeness of American diplomacy during the days of the so-called September crisis.

The political actions of the United States during these fretful days were directed at creating an international situation that would allow it with greater ease to achieve its foreign policy objective — that of expanding the position and influence of American capital in the world. Many had counted on channeling German expansion to the East against the U.S.S.R. The Soviet-French-British negotiations in 1939 were also unsuccessful because of the unwillingness of the British and French governments to set up a united front together with the Soviet Union against the threat of German aggression.

At this critical time the Administration in Washington continued to stick to its policy of neutrality. As a result, the Axis powers could act without fearing U.S. opposition. After World War II was already a reality, President Roosevelt told the Democratic and Republican leaders gathered at the White House on September 20, 1937: "I regret that the Congress passed the Neutrality Act and I regret equally that I signed that Act."¹³⁶ These words can serve as a final judgment on the U.S. policy of neutrality which realistically helped to promote the onset of one of this century's most tragic political and military crises.

NOTES

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²The Soviet Draft Protocol on Economic Non-aggression, June 20, 1933, *SFPD*, Vol. 16, Document No. 187, pp. 357-358.

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⁵*Peace and War. United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1943, pp. 266-271.

⁶See: Yuri M. Melnikov, *The U.S.A. and Hitlerite Germany, 1933-1939*, Moscow, 1959; V.K. Furayev, *Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1939*, Moscow, 1964; V.A. Valkov, *Soviet-U.S. Political and Economic Relations*, Moscow, 1965; G.N. Tsvetkov, *U.S. Policy Toward the U.S.S.R. on the Eve of World War II*, Kiev, 1973; Y.I. Krutitskaya and L.S. Mitrofanova, *Ambassador Alexander Troyanovsky*, Moscow, 1975 (all in Russian).

⁷Cable of Soviet Ambassador to Turkey L. M. Karakhan to U.S.S.R. People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Maxim M. Litvinov dated May 8, 1935, *SFPD*, Vol. 18, Document No. 214, p. 323.

⁸Speech of chairman of the Soviet delegation Maxim M. Litvinov at the session of the League of Nations Council, September 5, 1935, *SFPD*, Vol. 18, Document No. 357, pp. 494-496.

⁹Speech of chairman of the Soviet delegation Maxim M. Litvinov at the session of the League of Nations Assembly, September 14, 1935, *SFPD*, Vol. 18, Document No. 362, pp. 506-512.

¹⁰*Izvestia*, October 11, 1935.

¹¹Statement by chairman of the Soviet delegation Maxim M. Litvinov before the League of Nations Coordination Committee, October 19, 1935, *SFPD*, Vol. 18, Document No. 384, pp. 532-533.

¹²Speech by member of the Soviet delegation V.P. Potemkin before the League of Nations Coordination Committee, November 3, 1935, *SFPD*, Vol. 18, Document No. 400, pp. 548-549.

¹³Cable of a member of the Soviet delegation to the League of Nations to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, December 19, 1935, *SFPD*, Vol. 18, Document No. 452, pp. 598-599; The U.S. Ambassador to London Robert W. Bingham informed Roosevelt that the actions of Foreign Secretary Hoare had been approved by the British Cabinet and were necessitated by the desire of the British Government not to aggravate relations with Italy and not to impose on it economic or military sanctions. See: *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, *September 1935-January 1937*, edited by Edgar B. Nixon, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1969, pp. 141-142.

¹⁴Speech by chairman of the Soviet delegation Maxim M. Litvinov at a session of the League of Nations Assembly, June 1, 1936, *SFPD*, Vol. 19, Document No. 206, pp. 331-332.

¹⁵D.R. Voblikov, *The Italo-Ethiopian War of 1935-1936 and U.S. Policy*, Paper on new and recent history at the Institute of World History, the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Issue 3, Moscow, 1957; D.R. Voblikov, *Ethiopia in the Struggle for Preserving Independence, 1860-1960*, Moscow, 1961; J.G. Najafov, *The American People Against War and Fascism (1933-1939)*, Moscow, 1969; T.T. Burova, U.S. 'Neutrality' During the Italo-Ethiopian War (1935-1936), *Transactions of Tomsk University*, Vol. 207, 1970, pp. 155-167; T.T. Burova, *The U.S. Position on the League of Nations' Sanctions against Italy; Questions of the History of International Relations and the International Youth Movement*, Tomsk, 1971, pp. 2-23; *History of*

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¹⁶*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. II, March 1934-August 1935, pp. 401-404.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 404, 426-429.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 610-612.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 614.

²⁰Howard Jablon, *Crossroads of Decision. The State Department and Foreign Policy, 1933-1937*, The University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, 1983, pp. 104, 158.

²¹*Ibidem.*

²²*Ibidem.*

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

²⁵*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1935*, Vol. I, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1953, p. 803.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 837.

²⁷Howard Jablon, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 102.

²⁹*Ibidem.*

³⁰*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, p. 105.

³¹Jablon, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

³²*FRUS*, 1935, Vol. I, p. 843.

³³Howard Jablon, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

³⁴*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, p. 142.

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 3-6.

³⁶Howard Jablon, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

³⁷*FRUS*, 1935, Vol. 1, pp. 872, 873.

³⁸*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, p. 88.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴⁰*FRUS*, 1935, Vol. 1, pp. 852-854.

⁴¹*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1936*, Vol. III, 1953, pp. 194-195.

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 205-206.

⁴³*Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 210-211.

⁴⁵Howard Jablon, *op. cit.*, pp. 111, 159. In May 1936 Mussolini expressed to a diplomat at the American Embassy in Rome Italy's gratitude to Washington for remaining neutral during the Italo-Ethiopian war. And on June 23 an influential Italian newspaper in an editorial expressed thanks to the U.S. administration for observing strict neutrality. See: *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, p. 461.

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the Spanish Sky, Moscow, 1968; *We Are Internationalists*, Recollections of Soviet Volunteers in the National-Revolutionary War in Spain, Moscow, 1975 (all in Russian).

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⁵⁰*History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1980*, 4th edition, edited by Andrei A. Gromyko and Boris N. Ponomarev, Vol. I, Moscow, 1976, p. 329 (in Russian).

⁵¹*Ibid.*, pp. 329-330.

⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 330.

⁵³*Argumenty i facty*, No. 29, July 15-20, 1986, p. 8.

⁵⁴*History of the Second World War, 1939-1945* in twelve volumes, Vol. II, Moscow, 1973, p. 54.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 55, 57.

⁵⁶F. Jay Taylor, *The United States and the Spanish Civil War*, Bookman Associates, New York, 1956.

⁵⁷*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, pp. 399-400.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 481.

⁵⁹*Ibidem.*

⁶⁰*The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, Vol. I, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1948, p. 477.

⁶¹Howard Jablon, op. cit., p. 127.

⁶²*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 376.

⁶³*FRUS*, 1936, Vol. 2, pp. 475-476.

⁶⁴*The New York Times*, August 15, 1936.

⁶⁵*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. II, pp. 408-409.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 565-566.

⁶⁷Howard Jablon, op. cit., p. 118.

⁶⁸*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, p. 465.

⁶⁹Howard Jablon, op. cit., p. 129.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁷¹*Peace and War...*, pp. 353-354; *Congressional Record. Proceedings and Debates of the 1st Session, 75th Congress*, Vol. 81, Part I, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1937, pp. 71, 73-75, 76-80, 90-99.

⁷²*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, Vol. III, pp. 592-593.

⁷³*SFPD*, Vol. 20, Document No. 5, pp. 19-23.

⁷⁴Robert Bendiner, *The Riddle of the State Department*, Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., New York, 1942, p. 56.

⁷⁵Claude G. Bowers, *My Mission to Spain. Watching the Rehearsal for World War II*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1954, p. 326.

⁷⁶*Peace and War*, op. cit., pp. 357-358.

⁷⁷*History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1980*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 332.

⁷⁸Cable of Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain I. M. Maisky to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, April 16, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 20, Document No. 107, pp. 171-172.

⁷⁹*FRUS*, 1938, Vol. I, p. 48.

⁸⁰V.I. Lan, *The U.S.A.: From the First to the Second World Wars*, Moscow, 1976, p. 466 (in Russian).

⁸¹*Ibidem.*

⁸²*U.S. Congress. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings on Neutrality, Peace Legislation and Our Foreign Policy, 76th Congress, 1st Session, Part 22*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1939, p. 630.

⁸³N.V. Mostovets, "American Volunteers in Spain, 1936-1939," *Novaya i noveishaya istoria*, No. 5, 1987.

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⁸⁷*History of the Second World War, 1939-1945*, Vol. 2, p. 63.

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⁹¹*Izvestia*, March 18, 1938.

⁹²Cable of U.S.S.R. People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs to Soviet envoys I.M. Maisky in Great Britain, Y.Z. Surits in France, S.S. Aleksandrovsky in Czechoslovakia and A.A. Troyanovsky in the United States, March 17, 1938, *SFPD*, Vol. 21, Document No. 81, pp. 127-128.

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⁹⁴Cable of Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain I.M. Maisky to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, March 24, 1938, *SFPD*, Vol. 21, Document No. 102, p. 149; *The U.S.S.R. in the Struggle for Peace...*, Essay on British Foreign Policy in 1938, by U.S.S.R. Ambassador to Great Britain, February 25, 1939, Document No. 132, p. 210.

⁹⁵*The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, pp. 658-659.

⁹⁶*Izvestia*, March 18, 1938.

⁹⁷*The Library of Congress. Manuscripts, Joseph Davies Papers, Box 7, Chronological File*, March 6-10, 1938.

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¹¹¹M. Baturin, op. cit., p. 84.

¹¹²*The New York Times*, April 4, 1938, p. 2.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, June 15, 1938, p. 22.

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¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, Vol. 20, p. 732.

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¹¹⁹Cable of U.S.S.R. envoy in the United States to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, June 29, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 17, Document No. 218, pp. 337-338.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 338.

¹²¹Cable of U.S.S.R. envoy in Great Britain to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, June 10, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 17, Document No. 195, pp. 304-305.

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¹²³Cable of U.S.S.R. envoy in Great Britain I. M. Maisky to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, June 15, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 17, Document No. 201, pp. 310-311.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 709.

¹²⁵Transcript of the conversation of the U.S.S.R. People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs with Chinese Ambassador to the Soviet Union Qiang Tingfu, March 11, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 17, Document No. 64, pp. 117-118; *History of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Vol. 1, p. 322.

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¹²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 712.

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 736.

¹²⁹Cable of U.S.S.R. envoy in China to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, July 16, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 20, Document No. 246, p. 385.

¹³⁰Analyzing the policy of the Chinese Government D.V. Bogomolov remarked on July 16, 1937 that earlier the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Chonghuoi had spoken favorably of a Pacific pact but now opposed the idea. The Chinese Government feared that the signing of any pact would legitimize Japan's annexation of Manchuria and, more importantly, would provoke the displeasure of Japan and close the door to a bilateral agreement with it for good, a possibility that Chiang Kai-shek had still not given up. See: *SFPD*, Vol. 20, p. 738.

¹³¹Cable of the Soviet envoy in China to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, July 19, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 20, Document No. 253, pp. 392-394.

¹³²*Ibidem.*

¹³³Cable of U.S.S.R. envoy in Japan M. M. Slavitsky to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, August 30, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 20, Document No. 316, pp. 482-483.

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¹³⁵Speech of Chairman of the Soviet delegation Maxim M. Litvinov at the Plenary Session of the League of Nations Assembly, September 21, 1937, *SFPD*, Vol. 20, Document No. 331, p. 515.

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CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S.S.R. AND THE U.S.A. IN THE 1930s

The 1930s, which were marked by acute social upheavals, the growth of the fascist threat and the inexorable approach of war, were an important and productive page in the history of Soviet-American cultural contacts in literature, theater and cinema, the fine arts and music. The mutual interest in each other's cultural achievements had several explanations. The economic crisis of 1929 and the depression that followed coupled with a resurgence of the strike movement took place against the backdrop of the successes of the first Soviet five-year plans and rapid economic growth. During the 1930s, which were dubbed the "Red," "roaring" or "stormy," literary circles in the United States were exposed to the strong influence of radical and socialist ideas and displayed an animated interest in the cultural life of the Soviet Union, where, although at times agonizingly and with great difficulty, new frontiers were being explored and a socialist society was being created. The restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1933 stimulated cultural contacts. In January 1934, the social activist and writer Corliss Lamont told a meeting of the Friends of Russia Society: "For the first time in sixteen years we are really free to do the job we ought to do, and that is to educate the American people about what is going on in Russia and to counteract many untruths about that great country which are still prevalent."¹

Cultural contacts between the two countries have a rich and long history.² In the 1930s memories were still alive of Maxim Gorky's visit to the United States in 1906, the vivid accounts sent by John Reed and Albert Rhys Williams from revolutionary Russia, the Moscow Art Theater's triumphant tour in 1922-1924, and of Mayakovsky's travels across the United States in 1925. In turn, several American writers had travelled to the Soviet Union in the 1920s, including Lincoln Steffens, who met Lenin in 1919 and returned in 1923 to see how the New Economic Policy was being im-

plemented; Albert Rhys Williams came to study the life of the Russian peasantry, which he described in *The Russian Land*, published in 1928; Anna Louise Strong was fascinated by the transformations taking place in Central Asia, resulting in *Red Star in Samarkand*, published in 1929, and *The Road to the Grey Pamir*, coming out in 1931; Theodore Dreiser with his uncompromising devotion to truth came to see for himself the "Communist experiment," which he described in his *Dreiser Looks at Russia*, published in 1928. In the 1920s Upton Sinclair was the most widely read foreign author in the Soviet Union.

Significantly, contacts between Soviet and American people were so substantial that they became a frequent theme in novels of that period. Dreiser's novel *Ermita* was centered on an American girl who went off to a Siberian coal mining center to work. In Nikolai Pogodin's *The Pace*, Valentin Katayev's *Time, Forward!*, Yakov Ilyin's *The Great Conveyor* and Bruno Yasensky's *A Man Changes His Skin* can be glimpsed portrayals of American specialists who after visiting the Soviet Union alter their views under the influence of what they see. Upton Sinclair had for many years been gathering material for a novel depicting the role of Americans such as Reed, Williams and others in the Russian Revolution. Later, Sinclair began to correspond with Soviet writer P.A. Pavlenko, having become intrigued by the idea of writing a novel with him, which he planned to call *Red Gold*, on the life of an American gold miner in the U.S.S.R. and his love for a young Soviet girl Komsomol member. And although the novel was never written, the very fact that it was planned is significant. Even such an apolitical writer as Thomas Wolfe had contemplated in the mid-1930s the writing of a major novel which he had intended to call *Success of Russian Communism*.

The 1930s were a time when people felt an inherent need to work together, to get to know one another better and join hands against the common fascist enemy. Many Americans, including, of course, engineers and workers who had worked in the Soviet Union, were convinced of the inaccuracy of the predictions made in the West regarding the first Soviet five-year plan, which was called unrealistic and utopian. Anna Louise Strong in her autobiography, *I Change Worlds*, testified: "The world outside the Soviet Union first heard of the Five-Year Plan as a wildly extravagant scheme of Moscow. We who traveled the distant parts of the Soviet country saw it take form in villages, factories, cities, provinces."³

When Soviet writers Ilya Ilf and Yevgeny Petrov, who had journeyed across the United States and later recorded their impressions in *Little Golden America*, stopped off in Carmel, California, to see the seriously ill Steffens, "journalist number one" of America said that it was his cherished wish to visit Moscow one more time in order to see the "dawn of a new world."

Steffens was not alone in expressing such sentiments. A distinguishing feature of the literary process of the 1930s was the appearance of an entire series of documentary books written by U.S. writers and journalists who had sought to record the dynamics of the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. During these years the "Soviet factor" played a major role in the public consciousness; people analyzed what they saw and mentally compared the two systems of life and moral values. These writers did not close their eyes to the difficulties of growth, to the extreme efforts required from the people and the sacrifices they made to promote industrialization so as to turn that backward agrarian country into a modern industrial power capable of defending itself. Toward the close of the 1930s they bore witness to the repressions which resulted from Stalin's personality cult. But what was most amazing, even to those who had no sympathies for socialism, was the grandiose scale of the labor involved, the optimism of the masses, the patriotic feelings of the people, their readiness to endure deprivation for the sake of the common good.

Ella Winter, the radical American journalist, first visited the Soviet Union in 1930. She devoted her 1932 book, *Red Virtue*, to a description of the new family relations and the changes in culture and the moral atmosphere of society ushered in by the first five-year plan. Images of a country traversing a new path, its industrial landscape and people — whether an old grain reaper or a mechanic at a factory, a steel worker or tram conductor, an actress or assembly-line worker — were reflected in the book *Eyes on Russia* produced by the photographer and journalist Margaret Bourke-White. Books combining vivid photo illustration with very readable text were widespread in American literature at the time. Ella Winter and Margaret Bourke-White ventured to the Soviet Union during the war years.

Waldo Frank, the distinguished American novelist and philosopher, set down his impression of his 1931 visit to the U.S.S.R. in *Dawn in Russia*, a 1932 book written in the then popular genre of a travel diary. In it, he expressed the conviction that in the process of

building socialism, the New Russia would overcome the "chaos" inherent to Western countries. "Russia is our time's conspicuous stronghold in the country of the human spirit,"⁴ Frank concluded.

The authors of the 1933 book, *Russia Day by Day*, Corliss and Margaret Lamont, largely shared Frank's conclusion. Prominent critic Edmund Wilson revealed the deep impression his visit to Russia made on him in the 1938 book, *Travels in Two Democracies*. While in the Soviet Union, Wilson felt "at the moral top of the world,"⁵ for it was there that the first genuine human culture was being created.

Fixed interest in the new social relations born of the Revolution was displayed by Dorothy Myra Page, whose 1933 documentary account, *Soviet Main Street*, depicted the life of workers of a sewing machine factory in Podolsk. To Myra Page also belongs the sole work of fiction of those years devoted to Soviet Russia. The novel, *Moscow Yankee*, published in 1936, described the life of a team of American engineers and technicians employed at the Red Star factory in Moscow.

For Black American poet Langston Hughes, his trip to Central Asia in 1932-1933 was a major event in his life. He visited Bukhara and Tashkent, journeyed to the construction sites of irrigation canals and collective farms, and witnessed first hand how nations which for centuries had been kept in ignorance and oppressed by the tsars grew accustomed to a new life. Hughes was strongly impressed by the way nationality problems were resolved in the Soviet Union. The meaning of the processes that were under way was revealed to him in the words of a simple peasant, which he cited in his 1934 brochure, *A Negro Looks at Soviet Central Asia*: "Before, there were no schools for our children; now there are. Before, we lived in debt and fear; now we are free. Before, women were bought and sold; but that is gone. Before, the water belonged to the beys; today it's ours."⁶

Later, in 1946, a series of articles by Hughes on the Soviet Union was published in *The Chicago Defender*. In his 1956 autobiography, *I Wonder as I Wander*, Hughes revealed more interesting details of his trip to the U.S.S.R.

Following in the footsteps of Strong and Hughes was publicist Joshua Kunitz, who travelled to Central Asia accompanied by French writer Paul Vaillant-Couturier, Soviet novelist Bruno Yasensky, and Czech journalist and the "ardent reporter" Egon Erwin Kisch. In his *Dawn Over Samarkand. The Rebirth of Central*

Asia, a sociological and historical study that came out in 1936, Kunitz dealt with the wide-ranging revolutionary processes in industry, agriculture, culture and spiritual life that had occurred in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan during the years of Soviet power.

Returning to the Soviet Union in the 1930s, Albert Rhys Williams gathered material on which he would later base his 1937 sociological study, *The Soviets*, which he called a sort of "guidebook to the Soviet way of life." Williams employed his favorite question-and-answer format to deal in exhausting detail with the most important aspects of Soviet reality. At the 1937 Second Congress of the League of American Writers, Williams, in his report, "Billions of Books," told of the scale of the cultural transformations in the U.S.S.R. and noted the successes of the country's book publishers.

Sociologist and social activist Harry F. Ward, in his 1933 book, *In Place of Profit*, described the new work incentives that had taken hold in Soviet society, singling out job enthusiasm and the spirit of socialist competition. And the poet Genevieve Taggard created a cycle of poems, *Coast of the New World* and *For Pushkin*, devoted to the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile scores of Soviet writers were attracted by the challenge of describing American life. In this respect it is hard to overestimate the importance of Iif's and Petrov's *Little Golden America* (1936), a classic example of the travel diary genre. This highly studious and sober analysis interlaced with humor and irony paid tribute to American technology, efficiency, enterprise and democracy and stressed that America had something to teach the world. However certain American features, such as pragmatism that turns into narrow-mindedness, unemployment, standardization and the sweat-shop system at Henry Ford's auto factories, disillusioned the authors. The English translation of the book was received with interest in the United States.

During these years direct contacts were strengthened between writers of both countries. The more radical of American writers attended meetings of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers (IURW) which was in existence between 1925 and 1935. The 1930 IURW conference in Kharkov was attended by a CPUSA member and distinguished critic Michael Gold and by the novelist and publicist Josephine Herbst; in the early 1930s the John Reed Clubs were associated with the IURW.⁷

In the 1930s Americans began to acquaint themselves more fully than before with Soviet literature. In 1930 was published *Voices of*

October, an anthology of literature and art from Soviet Russia compiled by Joseph Freeman, Joshua Kunitz and Louis Lozowick. The anthology belied many of biased, negative assumptions concerning Soviet literature that were widely voiced in the works of some American Sovietologists. The *New Masses*, a magazine that became a weekly in 1934, devoted many of its pages to cultural life in the U.S.S.R. In the 1930s the magazine became a focal point for writers who campaigned against fascism. Vast interest in the U.S.S.R. made necessary the founding of *Soviet Russia Today*, a monthly that regularly reviewed the latest Soviet literature, films and drama.

Shirley Graham, the prominent Black American social activist, told how in the 1930s the works of Gorky and Sholokhov, as well as translations of certain of Mayakovsky's poems, and later those of Simonov, began to appear in the homes of American intellectuals. During the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the influence of Russian works on world literature was openly acknowledged.

Speaking at the Fourth Congress of the League of American Writers in 1941, critic Michael Gold dubbed the 1930s "a Maxim Gorky decade, instead of a T.S. Eliot or lost generation decade."⁸

The author of *Mother* was received in the United States not just as a master of the word but as a man with a civic conscience, a humanist and anti-fascist. In 1932 the fortieth anniversary of Gorky's literary pursuit was widely celebrated in the United States, with his articles and speeches systematically reprinted on the pages of the American press. News of Gorky's death in June 1936 caused pain in the hearts of many American writers. Theodore Dreiser eulogized Gorky's literature as one that "arrests and holds a thinking world," while the poet Carl Sandburg received the news of Gorky's death "as though a beloved and close friend is vanished." The poet and publicist Archibald MacLeish called upon his colleagues not to canonize Gorky, but to follow his example in the broadest respect. The influence of Gorky was felt during this decade on the works of many left-wing American writers. Gorky's theme of motherhood was in one way or another reflected in such novels as Michael Gold's *Jews Without Money*, Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited*, in Richard Wright's *Bright and Morning Star*, and in the character of Ma Joad in John Steinbeck's illustrious *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers, held in 1934, aroused great interest in the United States. The Congress proceedings were covered for the *New Masses* by critic Moissaye J. Olgin, who remarked that the congress had done a giant chore by forging

Soviet literature into a single, mighty force, thus lending it historical significance.⁹

The idea of bringing together literary celebrities, as was practiced in the U.S.S.R., served as an incentive to writers in the United States who in the 1930s began to strive for unity on a broad democratic, anti-fascist basis. This striving materialized in the founding in 1935 of the League of American Writers. Waldo Frank was elected the League's first president. Among the members of its honorary presidium elected at the League's first congress in April 1935 in New York were the Soviet writers Maxim Gorky, Mikhail Sholokhov, Fyodor Gladkov, Sergei Tretyakov and S. Dinamov. Maxim Gorky sent the congress a message of greetings on behalf of the U.S.S.R. Writers' Union.

In the 1930s works by Soviet authors were published widely in the United States. Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* came out in 1934 to the unanimous praise of critics, who noted the novel's irresistible literary force. The release of *Virgin Soil Uplifted* in 1935 reinforced the authority of Sholokhov in the eyes of American critics, who began referring to him as one of the "great Russian artists."

The 1930s also saw the publication in English of Alexey Tolstoy, Ilya Ehrenburg (whose articles were also published in the *New Masses*), Valentin Katayev and Leonid Leonov; Nikolai Ostrovsky's novel *How the Steel Was Tempered* was received with interest as a "heroic epic." Vladimir Mayakovsky's poems, translated into English by Langston Hughes among others, enjoyed remarkable success. Critic and publicist Joseph North, an editor of the *New Masses* in the 1930s, wrote of Mayakovsky: "...there was an echo of the Soviet poet in much that we received and printed; a sense of the gigantic in life, a flaunting of youth's passion to live, within the context of a total acceptance — nay, fiery dedication — to the Revolution."¹⁰ North added that two names hovered invisibly over American poetry of the 1930s: Mayakovsky and Walt Whitman.

America marked the tenth anniversary of Mayakovsky's death in 1940 with a series of articles dedicated to the poet, and also by the publication of a collection of his poems translated by Isidor Schneider, the noted philologist and Slavist Alexander Kaun, and by the artist and Mayakovsky's friend David Burlyuk. The collection of poems was accompanied by articles about Mayakovsky. In one of them, Kaun wrote that according to Mayakovsky "the form in which the revolution could be expressed was to be as fresh and

new as the very contents of the new life." After the revolution, Kaun continued, Mayakovsky's style matured, as "The October Revolution filled him with a purpose."¹¹

The 1930s were also a time when American literature began actively penetrating the spiritual life of Soviet people. It was during this period that the influence waxed of Theodore Dreiser, whose articles and essays were regularly published on the pages of Soviet periodicals. In 1928 a 12-volume collection of his works edited by S. Dinamov, the critic and Dreiser specialist, was published in the Soviet Union. In 1931 the Soviet public commemorated the 60th birthday of the writer, who in the 1930s began to grow more radical, eventually embracing Communism shortly before his death. Throughout his life Dreiser had harbored warm feelings for the Soviet Union and the Soviet people. He professed his love for Russian literature and admitted the enormous influence that Tolstoy with his uncompromising dedication to the truth had had on his writings. During the war years Dreiser energetically campaigned for rendering effective aid to the Soviet Union and for the immediate opening of a second front.

In addition to celebrated masters of the word such as Upton Sinclair, Sinclair Lewis and Sherwood Anderson, Soviet readers in the 1930s were introduced to a generation of American writers who began their literary careers in the wake of World War I and particularly in the first decade after the economic depression of 1929. Credit for this belongs mainly to a group of Soviet literary critics who specialized in contemporary American literature, including I. Anisimov, S. Dinamov, Ye. Yelistratova, I. Kashkin and V. Startsev. Bearing witness to their authority is the fact that Anisimov corresponded with Theodore Dreiser, Dinamov with Waldo Frank, and Kashkin with Ernest Hemingway. Startsev published in 1934 one of the first Soviet monographs on American literature devoted to John Dos Passos, whose vast literary experience and experimentation with forms attracted the attention of Soviet writers. The April 1933 issue of the Soviet literary journal *Znamya* conducted a discussion on the subject "Soviet Literature and Dos Passos" in which took part, among others, A. Fadeyev, V. Vishnevsky, I. Selvinsky, V. Kirpotin and V. Pertsov.

Meanwhile a decisive improvement occurred in Soviet translations of English language prose primarily owing to the efforts of Ivan Kashkin, who conducted seminars on translating. Translations of Hemingway, Steinbeck, Erskine Caldwell and others carried out

by Kashkin's students (M.F. Loriye, N.A. Voloshina, Y.D. Kalashnikova, et al.) accurately conveyed the stylistic richness of contemporary American prose.

The journal *International Literature*, which before 1934 was called *The Journal of World Revolution*, also played a considerable role in popularizing American literature in the Soviet Union. The journal overcame the narrowness and dogmatism characteristic of Soviet literary critics' treatment of literary phenomena in the 1920s and early 1930s. It covered extensively the contemporary literary scene in the United States and published, in addition to left-wing authors such as Dreiser, Hughes and Gold, mainstream American writers who advocated humanistic principles and were opposed to fascism. Regularly appearing in the journal were such authors as Hemingway, Steinbeck, Caldwell, Waldo Frank and Richard Wright.

Several of the journal's publications were received critically by the public and evoked a broad response, testifying to their interest in everything important that happened in U.S. literary life. Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* was received warmly; among those who were enraptured by the novel were the celebrated chemist and would-be Academician Semyon Volfkovich and Andrei Platonov, one of the most original and talented Soviet prose writers. Richard Wright's *Native Son*, published in *International Literature*, also drew favorable reviews in the Soviet press. The journal also gave broad coverage to the efforts of U.S. literary figures to aid the Spanish Republic and lauded the firm anti-fascist positions occupied at the time by Ernest Hemingway, Upton Sinclair, Dorothy Parker, Josephine Herbst and other writers. Soviet writers Ilya Ehrenburg and Mikhail Koltsov visited the Spanish front lines and met with Hemingway in besieged Madrid during the Spanish Civil War.

In general, the majority of best works by American writers in the 1930s, particularly those devoted to the socio-political issues of the day, appeared in Russian translation. Among them were Sherwood Anderson's *Beyond Desire*, Waldo Frank's *The Death and Birth of David Markand*, Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not*, the first two parts of Dos Passos' trilogy *U.S.A.*, novellas by Caldwell from the *American Stories* collection, Pearl Buck's novels *The Mother and Sons*, Sinclair Lewis' celebrated anti-fascist novel *It Can't Happen Here*, and works by Upton Sinclair, Josephine Herbst and others. However, other prominent American writers of the generation such as William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Thorn-

ton Wilder were properly appraised and translated only in the 1960s and 1970s.

Worthwhile of mention is the 1934 anthology *The American Novella of the 20th Century*, which featured Faulkner and Ring Lardner for the first time in Russian translation. Of no less importance was the publication of the anthology *American Poets of the 20th Century*, compiled by Ivan Kashkin and Mikhail Zenkevich, who also translated some of the selections and wrote introductory articles on the poets. This anthology introduced Soviet readers for the first time to a panorama of 20th century American poetry, featuring such poets as Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, Edgar Lee Masters, Archibald MacLeish, Lewis Hughes and Countee Cullen. In the introduction to the anthology, Kashkin and Zenkevich wrote that it was their hope that the anthology "would satisfy at least in part the interest of the Soviet reader in full-blooded, clearly democratic 20th century American poetry," and would promote "the creative rapprochement of Soviet and American poets."¹² Kashkin and Zenkevich, pioneers in the study of 20th century American poetry, provided an incentive for further scholarship in this field.

It was in the 1930s that Hemingway was discovered in the U.S.S.R.¹³ Credit for this is due primarily to Ivan Kashkin, who reviewed, popularized, and translated Hemingway into Russian. He helped translate and edit the first works of Hemingway published in the Soviet Union. Kashkin's 1934 article on Hemingway, *The Tragedy of Talent*, caught the writer's attention and initiated a correspondence between the two that lasted for years. In a letter to Kashkin dated August 19, 1935 Hemingway, who was no friend of critics, wrote: "It is a pleasure to have somebody know what you are writing about. That is all I care about. What I seem to be myself is of no importance."¹⁴ Hemingway was pleased to learn that the translation of his works in the U.S.S.R. was in the hands of so competent a person as Kashkin, whom he called "the best critic and translator I ever had."¹⁵

The 1930s also saw the flourishing of contacts between U.S. and Soviet stage actors, contributing to which was the emergence of new trends in U.S. theater during what was called the Red Decade. In the United States radical theater associations such as the Theater Union and the Group Theater were founded, and a so-called Federal Theater Project was launched. In many theatrical schools and studios throughout the country the Stanislavsky sys-

tem, named after the Soviet director whose influence in the United States greatly increased after tours by the Moscow Art Theater in the early 1920s, began to be applied and Soviet stage art began to be studied.

In the mid-1920s prominent U.S. stage actors such as Lee Simonson, Hallie Flanagan and Joseph Wood Krutch visited the Soviet Union. While in the country they closely observed the work of leading Soviet stage directors such as Yevgeny Vakhtangov, Vsevolod Meyerhold and Alexander Tairov. Theater critic Huntley Carter, wrote in 1924: "No other country has developed a theatre so new and so strong, so life-centred and so unified, yet so varied in human interest as that of Soviet Russia."¹⁶ In 1929 Carter's *The New Spirit in the Russian Theatre, 1917-1928*, was released simultaneously in New York, London and Paris. In 1933 and 1935 Harold Clurman, the director of the Group Theater, visited Moscow where he met with Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, the film director Sergei Eisenstein and the playwright Alexander Afinogenov, and went to several plays. Clurman was impressed by the breadth of the repertoires and the multiformity of artistic styles on stage and noted the charged feedback of the spectators. In January 1933, actors from the Group Theater wrote to Stanislavsky on his 70th birthday that his system was becoming for them a "lodestar."

In 1934 Stella Adler and Lee Strasberg, two leading directors from the Group Theater, came to Moscow. Strasberg had taught in an experimental theater group in the United States where certain stage methods practiced at the Moscow Art Theater were in vogue. Hallie Flanagan, who was a director of the Federal Theater Project, visited the U.S.S.R. in 1926, 1932 and 1936. Influenced by Soviet theater, several theatrical groups under the project began to employ novel stage forms such as agitation and propaganda and "live newspapers." Elements of these forms could be found in one of the best-known plays of the Red Decade Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty* (1934). In the eyes of Flanagan, Moscow was a real Mecca for Western stage directors, actors and artists.¹⁷

The theater historian Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, who authored a series of studies on Soviet theater, was another frequent visitor to Moscow. Lee Simonson summed up the feelings of those years: "For the artist all roads once led to Rome... Today, ...the road leads to Moscow and the theaters of the U.S.S.R."¹⁸ Norris Houghton in his 1936 book, *Moscow Rehearsals*, lauded the state of theatrical life in Moscow in the 1930s, contending that Soviet

theater was successful "not because it was a propaganda theater, but because it used propaganda and converted it into art."¹⁹

Between 1920 and 1947 more than fifty Russian and Soviet plays by such masters as Chekhov, Tolstoy, Gogol, Andreyev, Gorky, Kattayev, Tretyakov, Kirshon and Pogodin were performed in American theaters. Meanwhile in the U.S.S.R., thanks to the efforts of translators and critics, plays by Eugene O'Neill, Elmer Rice, John Howard Lawson and Lillian Hellman were performed widely.

In Hellman's plays, particularly in *The Little Foxes*, critics saw a Russian influence and several motives ascending to Chekhov and Gorky. In the 1929-1930 theater season Gorky's *The Lower Depths* went through more than seventy performances on Broadway. Playwright Eugene O'Neill called it a "great revolutionary play." Scholars have discovered what they believe to be a subtle dialogue between Gorky's *The Lower Depths* and O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*. For his part, O'Neill found a talented interpreter of his plays in the person of Alexander Tairov, whose productions of *The Hairy Ape*, *Desire Under the Elms*, and *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, which, incidentally, were all approved by O'Neill personally, at the Moscow Chamber Theater were landmarks in the theater life of the Soviet capital.

The 1930s were also a time of continuing cinematographic exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union. Following the triumphant success of *The Battleship Potemkin* in the United States, word spread of a "cult of Russian cinema." The film director David Wark Griffith stated that a new era of cinema art had begun with the emergence of Soviet cinematography. V.I. Pudovkin's classic film "Mother" and A.P. Dovzhenko's "Earth" and his later works, "Chapayev," "Schors" and "Alexander Nevsky"—all enjoyed success in U.S. cinemas. Sergei Eisenstein, the world-renowned Soviet film director, visited Hollywood in 1930 where he met with Charlie Chaplin. Unable to come to terms with Hollywood film producers, Eisenstein went to Mexico, where he filmed "Long Live Mexico". Later American historian Jay Leyda would make a documentary for teaching film students from archive materials left by Eisenstein.

Meanwhile Soviet movie-goers continued to fill movie houses to watch the latest American films. Among their favorites were Charlie Chaplin's "City Lights" and "Modern Times." The first works about Chaplin by Soviet film historian G. Avenarius also began to appear at this time. The film montage methods used by Eisenstein

and Pudovkin came to be called in Hollywood "Russian montage." Scholars of literature maintain that in writing his trilogy *U.S.A.*, Dos Passos, who liked Soviet cinema, borrowed elements of Soviet documentary film-maker Dziga Vertov's "cinema eye" and Eisenstein's montage methods.

Soviet-American contacts in the field of music also flourished in the 1930s. The Soviet composer Sergei Prokofiev directed his opera "Peter and the Wolf" in Boston while on a tour of the United States in 1938. The Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy performed Prokofiev's cantata "Alexander Nevsky" from the film of the same name. The Soviet theme was developed by several contemporary American composers.

The German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 caused an outpouring of support for the Soviet cause from a broad cross section of cultural figures in the United States. Hemingway, in a telegram to Moscow five days after the start of the war, wrote: "I am one hundred percent behind the Soviet Union in its military rebuff of fascist aggression."²⁰ Similar support was expressed in telegrams, letters and statements to the press by such leading American intellectuals as Theodore Dreiser, Albert Rhys Williams, Upton Sinclair, Richard Wright, Michael Gold, Erskine Caldwell, Pearl Buck, Clifford Odets, Lillian Hellman and John Howard Lawson, the musicians and actors Charlie Chaplin, Paul Robeson, Yehudi Menuhin, Arturo Toscanini, Serge Koussevitzky and Leopold Stokowski. Later many of them actively campaigned for the urgent opening of a second front in Europe.

On the tragic day of the German invasion of the U.S.S.R., American writer Erskine Caldwell and his wife, the photojournalist Margaret Bourke-White, found themselves in the Soviet Union. Caldwell immediately accepted offers from several American publishers to be their correspondent in Russia and began to file his reports to the United States. He also appeared on Moscow Radio in broadcasts for American audiences. Caldwell recorded his impressions of the first stage of the war in his 1942 book, *All-Out on the Road to Smolensk*. While the West was predicting the imminent and irreversible defeat of the Soviet Union, Caldwell, who lived in Moscow and among Muscovites during the dark summer of 1941 and witnessed the efforts to defend the capital and front-line battles, firmly believed that the Russians would stop Hitler and, in the end, gain victory. His opinion was shared by Maurice Gerschon Hindus, author of the 1941 book *Hitler Cannot Conquer Russia*, who arrived

at this conclusion on the basis of years of observations of the Soviet Union. American correspondents Henry Clarence Cassidi (*Moscow Dateline, 1941-1943*) and James Edward Brown (*Russia Fights*) described the German forces' first defeat in the battle outside Moscow in the fall and winter of 1941. Margaret Bourke-White, who was the only Western correspondent in the Soviet Union during the war allowed to photograph, in her 1942 book, *Shooting the Russian War*, photographed Moscow and Muscovites and dramatic scenes from the summer and early fall of 1941. She also recorded on film the meeting between Joseph Stalin and Harry L. Hopkins in September, 1941.²¹

The Soviet people, for their part, expressed sympathy for Americans, who had begun to help them. In the fall of 1941, which was one of the darkest periods in the war, the journal *International Literature* published a large selection of articles devoted to Anglo-American Literature, to which major Soviet authors contributed. These included Korney Chukovsky's "How I came to hike Anglo-American Literature," A. Novikov-Priboi's "What I Owe (Harriet Beecher Stowe)," P. Antokolsky's "My Friends Across the Ocean," I. Selvinsky's "Images of America," and N. Pogodin's "Our Will Must Be Common." Despite acute shortages of paper during the early war years, enough was found to publish works by Mark Twain, Jack London, Erskine Caldwell, Irwin Shaw, Upton Sinclair, Ernest Hemingway and others. Meanwhile in the United States there was observed an increasing interest in the Russian classics and in new Soviet literature. The 1942 New York edition of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* was accompanied by a map of Napoleon's campaign against Russia in 1812 and that of the Soviet-German front in 1941. The editors expressed the conviction that Hitler would meet the same fate as Napoleon. In the summer of 1941 the third and fourth volumes of Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* were issued in English translation, creating a major literary sensation.

A large role in dissemination of truthful information about the Soviet Union was played by the American journal *Soviet Russia Today*; among its contributors were such American writers as Theodore Dreiser, Langston Hughes, Stephen Vincent Benet and Clifford Odets.

From the beginning of the war Soviet films were shown rather frequently on cinema screens throughout the United States. A special program devoted to Vladimir Lenin and Abraham Lincoln was shown at New York's Evening Palace cinema house in 1942. Holly-

wood-produced films about the Soviet Union, including "Song of Russia" and "Northern Star," were watched with interest by American viewers. Meanwhile, American films enjoyed success in the Soviet Union, and film critics published articles on the cinema art of Charlie Chaplin.

Dmitry Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony*, known as the *Leningrad Symphony*, whose score was flown to the United States aboard a special flight, was an immediate sensation in America. On July 19, 1942 the symphony was broadcast from the United States on short-wave radio and heard all around the world.

In 1942 an exhibition entitled "Life in the U.S.S.R." by artists Louis Lozowick (who was a contributor to the anthology *Voices of October*) and Frank Horowitz opened in a New York art gallery. In the same year Americans listened to a radio play by Norman Rosten about Nikolai Gastello, the first Soviet pilot to ram the enemy aircraft.

From the first days of the war cultural celebrities from both countries made tangible contributions to the defeat of fascism and to mutual understanding between the Soviet and American peoples. The atmosphere of trust and cooperation that obtained at the time provided a fresh impetus for further cultural exchanges, which Soviet literary critic and translator Ivan Kashkin called a "dialogue across the ocean."

NOTES

¹*New Masses*, Vol. 10, No. 6, February 6, 1934, p. 24.

²See: *The Interaction of U.S. and Soviet Cultures, XVIII-XIX Centuries*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1987; B. A. Gilenson, *Russian-American Literary Ties*, in: *History of the United States of America* in four volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1985; idem., "Cultural Contacts," in: *History of the United States of America* in four volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1985; V. A. Libman, *American Literature in Russian Translations and Criticism. Bibliography 1776-1975*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1977; A. N. Nikolyukin, *Literary Ties Between Russia and the United States. The Formation of Literary Contacts*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1981 (all in Russian); *A Look into History, A Look into the Future, Russian and Soviet Writers, Scholars and Cultural Figures on the United States*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987.

³Anna Louise Strong, *I Change Worlds. The Remaking of an American*, Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1935, p. 278.

⁴Waldo Frank, *Dawn in Russia. The Record of a Journey*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1932, p. 272.

⁵Edmund Wilson, *Travels in Two Democracies*, Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1936, p. 321.

⁶Langston Hughes, *A Negro Looks at Soviet Central Asia*, Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Moscow-Leningrad, 1934, p. 19.

⁷See: A.N. Nikolyukin, "American Division of the IURW (The John Reed Clubs)" in: *From the History of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers, Literary Inheritance*, Vol. 81, Moscow, 1969 (in Russian).

⁸Mike Gold, *A Literary Anthology*, Edited by Michael Folsom, International Publishers, New York, 1972, p. 250.

⁹*New Masses*, Vol. 13, No. 3, October 16, 1934, p. 18.

¹⁰*New Masses. An Anthology of the Rebel Thirties*, Edited by Joseph North, International Publishers, New York, 1969, p. 25.

¹¹Alexander Kaun, "Vladimir Mayakovsky, 1894-1930," in: *The American Quarterly on the Soviet Union*, Vol. III, No. 1, July 1940; *Vladimir Mayakovsky, 1894-1930. Essays in Commemoration of the Tenth Anniversary of His Death*, The American Russian Institute, New York, pp. 28, 37.

¹²*American Poets of the 20th Century*, Moscow, 1939, p. 6 (in Russian).

¹³See: *Ernest Hemingway. Bibliographic Index*, Compiled by I. Levidova and B. Parchevskaya, Moscow, 1970 (in Russian); B. Gilenson, "Hemingway in the Soviet Union," in: *Hemingway Notes*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 1974.

¹⁴*Ernest Hemingway. Selected Letters 1917-1961*, edited by Carlos Baker, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1981, p. 417.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 609.

¹⁶Huntley Carter, *The New Theatre and Cinema of Soviet Russia*, Chapman and Dodd, Ltd., London, 1924, p. V.

¹⁷Jane De Hart Mathews, *The Federal Theatre, 1935-1939. Plays, Relief and Politics*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1967, p. 19.

¹⁸Morris Houghton, *Moscow Rehearsals. An Account of Methods of Production in the Soviet Theatre*, Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1936, p. XI.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 258.

²⁰Ernest Hemingway, *An Old Newspaperman Writes*, Moscow, 1983, p. 158 (in Russian).

²¹These and other materials can be found in the anthology published in 1985 on the 40th anniversary of victory in the war: *The Road to Smolensk. American Writers and Journalists on the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet People, 1941-1945*, edited by Savva Dangulov, compiled and with an introduction by Boris Gilenson, Moscow, 1985 (in Russian).

THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE U.S.S.R. ON THE EVE OF THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR (1941-1945)

At the end of the 1930s the international situation in the world was very complicated. The visit to Moscow in August 1939 of German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop and the resultant nonaggression pact signed by the two countries—relations between which were at the time strained if not hostile—came as a shock, and many people were unable to understand what the pact meant. The signing of the pact set in motion a stream of slanderous attacks against the Soviet Union designed to blacken the world's first socialist state in the eyes of the world public and present things as though Moscow had committed nothing short of treachery by dealing with Berlin.

The propaganda machines of Britain and France were particularly vociferous in this respect. But oddly enough, it was the ruling quarters of these two countries who bore the brunt of the responsibility for this turn of events. It was their fault that the persistent efforts of the Soviet state to establish a system of collective security in Europe and rebuff fascist aggression were unsuccessful.

Even today, more than forty years later, some people keep harping on the same old propaganda line alleging that the Soviet Union delivered a blow at democratic forces by having signed a pact with Hitler Germany in 1939. To this day it is alleged that Moscow "unexpectedly" and "without any reason" refused to enter an alliance with England and France and, pursuing some kind of "malicious goals," signed a pact with Berlin.

But there are other people who, in dealing with historical events of the past, truly care to understand the meaning of the 1939 Soviet-German pact. Sometimes it is not easy, for a mountain of disinformation has grown up around this issue.

It is sometimes asked, particularly by young people who are poorly informed and have no idea of the international situation that

existed at the time, whether it would not have been better to reject outright the idea of such a pact, whether the pact was really needed.

In 1939 the ruling quarters of Britain and France saw their mission primarily in directing Hitler's aggression against the Soviet Union. They counted on the Nazis to destroy the hated socialist power. What is more, both combatants would be considerably weakened in the process, thus allowing London and Paris to act as arbiters at the closing stage of the war and impose their own peace conditions upon Europe. In the end, however, Britain and particularly France had to pay a dear price for their shortsighted policies.

Let me briefly recall certain events of that period. In the spring and summer of 1939 negotiations were conducted in Moscow involving delegations from Britain, France and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government had made repeated calls for the creation of a system of collective security and for joint efforts to rebuff fascist aggression. Western powers, however, raised various obstacles to an agreement and avoided its conclusion, despite the steadily worsening situation in Europe.

It was clear to everyone that the Soviet Union was the primary target of Nazi aggression. This confronted the Soviet Government with the difficult task of either preventing or delaying at least the German attack on the U.S.S.R. for as long as possible. Meanwhile Britain and France put forth conditions which essentially opened the way for an eastward march of the Hitler hordes through the Baltic states.

According to the plan proposed by Britain, the Soviet Union was supposed to render assistance—or in other words to declare war on Germany—if it attacked any of the Soviet Union's European neighbors, provided, of course, this assistance was "desirable." At the time, the Soviet Union bordered on Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. Because Poland and Romania also had guarantees from Britain and France, the Soviet Union could count on British and French support in repelling a German invasion of these two countries. But if Germany attacked the Soviet Union through Finland or the Baltic states, Moscow would have to stand alone against the enemy. And one final reason for the breakdown of an accord was that Poland refused to give Soviet troops the right of passage through its territory.

The British and French proposals in fact tipped off Hitler as to how he could impel the Soviet Union to enter the war while in total

isolation. The Soviet Union was being asked for unilateral guarantees to come to the aid of Britain and France and some of their allies without any kind of reciprocal guarantees from these countries to come to the aid of the Soviet Union in the event of a German attack.

As far as the Soviet Union was concerned, it sought a military alliance that would be able to protect the interests of all the European countries and safeguard peace and security on the continent. On April 17 and 19, 1939, the Soviet Government sent the British and French governments, respectively, diplomatic notes containing a proposal for an equitable tripartite treaty on mutual assistance in the event of a German attack. The Soviet proposal stated:

"1. England, France and the U.S.S.R. to conclude with one another an agreement for a period of five to ten years by which they would oblige themselves to render mutually forthwith all manner of assistance, including that of a military nature, in case of aggression in Europe against any one of the contracting Powers.

"2. England, France and the U.S.S.R. to undertake to render all manner of assistance, including that of a military nature, to Eastern European States situated between Baltic and Black Seas and bordering on the U.S.S.R. in case of aggression against these States."¹

The British Government's reply, received only on May 8 of that year, bore witness to the fact that London's position had essentially not changed. It was not until July 1 that the British Government finally agreed to the Soviet proposal to grant guarantees to the Baltic states and Finland. But these guarantees came too late, for on July 7 Estonia and Latvia signed accords with Hitler Germany.

The British and French demonstrated their unwillingness to sign an agreement with the Soviet Union by sending low-ranking officials to Moscow who lacked the authority to sign any pact that might be concluded. Heading the British delegation at the Moscow talks was William Strang, a low-level Foreign Office official known for his anti-Communist views. And while the war clouds were gathering over Europe and there was no time to lose in organizing a rebuttal to the aggressor, the British military delegation to the talks, headed by Admiral Reginald Drax, plucked from retirement, set sail from London aboard a slow-moving freighter. (In the fall of 1938 British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain considered it necessary to use an airplane when he flew to Munich to sign a deal with Hitler that ceded Czechoslovakia to Germany.) In contrast, the Soviet delegation was headed by People's Commissar for Foreign

Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov, and conducting the negotiations on behalf of the military was Marshal Klement Voroshilov, People's Commissar for Defense. The delegation was vested with the necessary authority for signing a corresponding agreement.

Let us now take a look at the alternatives the Soviet Union faced in the late summer of 1939 when the negotiations with Britain and France were deadlocked and it was now clear that London and Paris had no intention of signing an agreement with Moscow. It was then that an offer arrived from Berlin for signing a Soviet-German non-aggression pact.

In making this offer, the German Government was well aware of the huge risks involved in declaring war on the Soviet Union. In 1939 Germany had not yet possessed the resources that it would possess in 1941 after it had seized control of nearly entire Western Europe. And the Nazis had yet to be overwhelmed by their easy victories in the West. And Germany would not dare to satiate its expansionist ambitions by means of war with so formidable an enemy as the Soviet Union. From recently disclosed sources it is evident that Hitler was prepared to go to Moscow himself if Ribbentrop's mission had failed. The consensus in Berlin at the time was that for the time being Germany would be better off by seeking out a prey for plunder in other parts.

What is more, in early 1939 the German Government offered the Soviet Union a trade agreement. But the Soviet Government found it rather difficult to expand economic relations with Germany at a time when German policy toward the Soviet Union was openly hostile. On May 10, 1939 Molotov informed the German ambassador of this circumstance. Twenty days later German Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Ernst von Wieszäcker in a conversation with the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Berlin G.A. Astakhov probed the possibility of negotiations to improve relations. The German Ambassador to Moscow Werner Schulenburg was even more categorical during a meeting with Astakhov in Berlin on July 17. Julius Schnurre, a high-ranking German foreign ministry official, citing conversations he had had with Ribbentrop, told Astakhov on July 25 that an improvement of political relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R. was necessary.

The Soviet Government left all of these diplomatic feelers unanswered. Schulenburg reported to Berlin on August 4, 1939 that it was his general impression that the Soviet Government was "determined to conclude an agreement with Britain and France if they ful-

fill all Soviet wishes.”² Yet the negotiations with Britain and France soon took away all hope from the Soviet Government of signing a satisfactory agreement. How was it to proceed now?

The Soviet Government could have, of course, rejected the German offer of a pact. But in that case Hitler would have portrayed the Soviet refusal as evidence of Moscow’s “aggressive intentions.” He then would have told the German population that his efforts for reconciliation were “rudely rejected” and that Germany had no other choice than to launch a pre-emptive strike on the Soviet Union, in which case the leaders of England and France, who harbored rabid hatred for the Soviet Union, would have only rubbed their hands with satisfaction. Their dream of pushing Hitler against the U.S.S.R. would have been close to coming true.

Could the Soviet Union have counted on aid from London, Paris or Washington had it taken on the well-armed German army single-handedly? All evidence points to the conclusion that the Soviet Union could even hardly have counted on the Western powers remaining neutral. Most likely there would have emerged an anti-Soviet rather than an anti-Hitler coalition in the early 1940s. The Soviet Union would probably have had to repel the German invasion alone, and Western powers, had they not entered the war directly on the side of Germany, would have supplied her with strategic raw materials and armaments. And even after the Soviet Union and Britain became allies in 1941, influential quarters in London and Washington did not want to see the Soviet people win. Given such attitudes, it is not difficult to guess on whose side the sympathies of the Western ruling quarters would have been if Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in 1939. Moreover, one could hardly have counted on the noninvolvement of the Japanese militarists, who had long been coveting the Soviet Far East.

The Soviet leadership also had to take into account the growing aggressiveness of the Japanese at the time. The Japanese invasion of Mongolia was in effect carried out to sound out Soviet military might. The aggressive designs of Japan together with the attempts by Western powers to get Hitler to attack the Soviet Union threatened the Soviet Union with a war on two fronts. The Soviet-German pact, if it did not completely eliminate this threat, at least postponed it for several years.

Had Hitler begun his march on the Soviet Union not in June 1941 but two years earlier, this country would have found itself in a quite unfavorable situation. In the years 1940-1941 alone, the

Soviet Union began production of several major weapons systems such as anti-tank guns, the T-34 tank and dive-bombers. Also in these years Soviet forces gained valuable experience in the war with Finland.

The areas across which Hitler’s armies could have attacked in 1939 were also important. Soviet borders with then hostile bourgeois Poland ran not far from Minsk and Kiev, the White Finns were located close to Leningrad, and monarchal Romania shared a border with Odessa. In that situation it was very likely that among Germany’s allies would have been not only Finland and Romania, like in 1941, but Poland and the bourgeois Baltic states as well.

There is no doubting that even in those rather inauspicious conditions the Soviet people would have ended up the victor in a one-on-one fight with Nazi Germany. But then Soviet casualties and losses would have been even more monstrous, and the war could have lasted much longer. Let us assume for a minute that the Soviet Union would not have withstood a German attack — after all, this was exactly what the “Western democracies” had wanted. In that case Hitler would have easily defeated France and Britain and then, together with Japan, would have turned on the United States. The history of our planet would have been turned back by several centuries owing to the nearsighted policy of Western powers.

Finally, it can be concluded from Germany’s offer to sign a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union that Hitler at first had other victims in mind. Hence one could have expected a protracted war in Western Europe. But at the time it was difficult to predict that France would fall apart so quickly after only several months of fighting with Germany and Great Britain would choose a humiliating flight from Dunkirk in order to save its troops and dig in on the British Isles beyond the British Channel. On the contrary, there were reasons to expect a protracted conflict between the imperialist powers in which the Soviet Union could remain on the sidelines for some time, if not for the whole period of war. This might also have influenced the decision to accept Berlin’s offer of a pact in 1939.

All of these circumstances have to be carefully weighed and analyzed before deciding whether the proper answer was given to Berlin. We also have to take into account the advantages that the signing of the pact gave the Soviet Union — in particular, extra time to prepare for rebuffing the aggressor.

It is important in this respect to recall how Soviet leader Joseph Stalin saw this pact. In a radio address on July 3, 1941 he said: "Some people might ask how could it happen that the Soviet Government agreed to sign a nonaggression pact with such treacherous people and monsters as Hitler and Ribbentrop? Hasn't the Soviet Government made some kind of mistake here? Of course not! A nonaggression pact is a pact of peace between two states. This is exactly the kind of pact that Germany offered us in 1939. Could the Soviet Government have rejected such an offer? I think that no peace-loving state could reject a peace treaty with a neighboring power even if at the head of that country stood such monsters and cannibals as Hitler and Ribbentrop. And this, of course, implies one indispensable condition, namely that the peace treaty does not affect, directly or indirectly, the territorial integrity, independence and honor of the peace-loving state. As is known, the nonaggression pact between Germany and the U.S.S.R. is just such a pact."

In recent years scores of documents have been made public, disclosing the true designs of Western politicians at the end of the 1930s. In particular, many interesting confessions are contained in official documents of the British Foreign Office which have been recently published. These confessions serve to confirm what was known earlier: that Western politicians had no intention of entering in league with the Soviet Union to repel Hitler. On the contrary, they went out of their way to push Hitler Germany against the Soviet Union and calculated on remaining in the sidelines of such a confrontation.

To be sure, the Soviet Government could not and did not count on the Nazis remaining true to their commitments. Nevertheless, even a short-term prolongation of peace was of major importance to the Soviet Union. Had the war begun in the summer of 1939, the circumstances would have been extremely unfavorable to it. As I have already noted, the Soviet Union would have been in total isolation with two enemies—Japan and Germany—pressing it from two directions at once.

In delivering the Soviet people from war in such severe circumstances, the Soviet Government carried out its duty not only to its own people but to the international proletariat as well—it resorted to the sole possible means available to it to guarantee the security of the U.S.S.R.

The Western powers were to blame for the fact that in 1939 events did not lead to the signing of a collective security pact, which

the Soviet Union advocated. However, events did not lead in the opposite direction either, as was desired by the Western powers: a war of the imperialist states against the socialist Soviet Union. The Nazis came to the conclusion that it would be much easier for them to fight Britain, France and Poland than the Soviet Union. This is why they preferred to launch a war namely against them. The war started within the capitalist world between two antagonistic groupings of imperialist powers.

The delayed entry of the U.S.S.R. in the war gave it time to build up its military power. However, the respite was not used as well as it could have been from the standpoint of building up the country's military. The international situation at the beginning of the war was such that when the Soviet Union was forced to enter the war in 1941, it no longer faced the kind of foreign isolation that it did in 1939. Britain was at war with Germany, and the imperialist contradictions between the United States, on the one hand, and Germany and Japan, on the other, were now so acute that the possibility of a deal between the U.S. Government and the fascist aggressor was no longer realistic. Thus, the stage was set for an alliance in an anti-Hitler coalition of three of the world's most important countries—the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain.

On November 13, 1940 a Soviet governmental delegation headed by Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov arrived in Berlin at the invitation of the German Government to take part in bilateral talks. These negotiations, held in the imperial chancellory, were of major significance.

At the talks, Hitler's reasoning boiled down to the fact that Britain had already been defeated and that its final capitulation was only a question of time. Soon, Hitler averred, Britain would be destroyed from the air. He then gave a brief assessment of the military situation, stressing that the German Reich already controlled all of Western Europe. Together with their Italian allies, Hitler continued, German troops conducted successful operations in Africa and soon would squeeze out the remaining British contingents. From all this Hitler concluded that the victory of the Axis powers was already decided, and that it was already time to begin thinking about a postwar arrangement of the world.

Here Hitler expounded the idea that the inevitable fall of Great Britain would leave the scattered remains of the British Empire "in abeyance". These possessions would have to be managed. The German Government, Hitler stated, had already shared its opinions on

this matter with the governments of Italy and Japan, and now it would like to know any thoughts the Soviet Government might have. He had planned to make a more specific proposal on this matter later.

When Hitler had finished his speech, which together with the translation lasted almost an hour, Molotov took the floor. Without addressing Hitler's statements in detail, Molotov noted that more specific practical questions needed to be discussed. In particular, could the Reichs chancellor please explain what the German military mission was doing in Romania and why was it despatched there without consulting the Soviet Government? After all, Molotov noted, the 1939 Soviet-German nonaggression pact provided for consultations on important questions affecting the interests of each of the sides. Molotov said that the Soviet Government also wanted to know for what purposes German troops had been sent into Finland and why Moscow wasn't consulted about this.

Hitler explained that the German military mission was sent to Romania at the request of the Antonescu Government in order to help train Romanian troops. As far as Finland was concerned, Hitler said that German units would not be there long, that they were merely passing through on their way to Norway.

However, this explanation did not satisfy the Soviet delegation. The Soviet Government, Molotov stated, had formed an entirely different impression based on reports from its representatives in Finland and Romania. The troops that had landed on the southern shore of Finland were not moving anywhere and in all appearances they were planning to stay in the country for a long time, Molotov continued. In Romania it was more than just a matter of a single military mission. New German units were arriving there every day. Their numbers were already too large for one mission. To what end was this transfer of troops? Molotov asked. He said such actions could only cause concern in Moscow and demanded that the German Government give straight answers.

Here Hitler attempted a well-known diplomatic maneuver: claiming his ignorance of the matters. Having promised to inquire about the questions raised by the Soviet side, Hitler stated that he considered all this of minor importance. Now, he said, returning to his original thought, the time had come to discuss the problems associated with the forthcoming victory of the Axis powers.

Then Hitler began to lay out his fantastic plan for dividing the world. Britain, he averred, would in the coming months be laid

waste to and occupied by German troops, and the United States would not be able for many years to come to pose a threat to the "new Europe." For this reason it was time to think about creating a new order for the entire world. As far as the Italian and German governments were concerned, Hitler continued, they had already marked out their spheres of influence in Europe and Africa. Japan was to take possession of East Asia. Proceeding from this, Hitler explained, the Soviet Union could display an interest in areas to the south of its borders in the direction of the Indian Ocean. This would give the Soviet Union access to warm-water ports....

At this Molotov interrupted Hitler, having noted that he didn't see any sense in discussing such schemes. The Soviet Government was interested in securing the tranquility and security of areas directly bordering on the Soviet Union.

Hitler, who showed no reaction to this statement, once again began to lay out his plan for dividing the supposedly abeyant British colonies. The conversation began to take on a somewhat odd character, as if the Germans did not hear what was being said to them. Molotov insisted on discussing only specific issues concerning the security of the Soviet Union and other independent European states, and demanded that the German Government explain its latest actions which threatened the independence of countries directly bordering on Soviet territory. But Hitler kept on directing the conversation back to the subject of dividing the world and tried to oblige the Soviet Government to take part in the discussion of these preposterous plans.

Molotov stated that Moscow was quite unhappy about the delay in the deliveries to the Soviet Union of important German equipment. Such behavior was all the more impermissible, he said, since the Soviet side was strictly fulfilling all of its obligations under the Soviet-German economic agreements. The failure to meet earlier-agreed delivery dates for German equipment was causing serious difficulties for Soviet industry, he said.

Hitler once again dodged the issue. He stated that the German Reich was presently locked in a mortal fight with Britain, and that Germany had mobilized all of its resources for this final battle.

Thus, Hitler was unwilling to reckon with the legitimate interests of the Soviet Union dictated by the demands of U.S.S.R. security and peace in Europe.

We now know from the secret German Government archives and also from the diaries of former highranking Nazi officials and the

records of the Nuremberg trial that even after the signing of the Soviet-German nonaggression pact in the fall of 1939 Hitler continued to make plans for war with the Soviet Union. Two months after the pact was signed Hitler ordered the military to consider the Polish districts occupied by Germany as a "staging area for future German operations." This conclusion is confirmed by an entry in the diary of the chief of staff of German land forces General Franz Halder dated October 18, 1939.³

In a session with his generals on November 23, 1939, Hitler outlined new German operations on the Western front and touched on the subject of military operations against the Soviet Union: "We can attack the Soviet Union only after we untie our hands in the West."⁴

Although Hitler made the start of operations against the Soviet Union conditional on victory in the West, that is, the defeat of Britain, he had already decided the matter of war with the Soviet Union. According to the diary of German army chief of general staff General Alfred Jodl, already by the time of the campaign in the West Hitler had firmly made up his mind to attack the Soviet Union in the spring of 1941. At a meeting of the German military command on July 29, 1940, Hitler stated that he planned to attack the Soviet Union in the spring of 1941. This time he made no reservations. On the contrary, he began to lean toward attacking the Soviet Union before the total defeat of Britain. On July 31, 1940, at his mountain retreat in Berghof, Hitler told his Wehrmacht generals that he had decided to postpone the planned invasion of the British Isles. He said: "England's hopes are on Russia and America. If its hopes on Russia disappear, its hopes on America will also disappear, for Russia's collapse will alter to a large degree the role of Japan in East Asia. When Russia is defeated, England's last hopes will collapse."

General Halder summed up the conference in his diary in the following way: "It was resolved that in order to solve the problem, Russia must be destroyed in the spring of 1941. The quicker we defeat Russia the better."⁵

Following this, that is, three months before the Berlin meeting, secret preparations were launched for attacking Russia. Hitler had decided first to defeat the Soviet Union and then destroy Britain. But he had miscalculated. The Soviet people's heroic resistance to fascist aggression and the subsequent collapse of the Third Reich buried these plans for good.

Thus, Hitler was double-dealing. Having already decided to attack the Soviet Union, he tried to buy time by making the Soviet Government think that he was prepared to cooperate even more closely with Moscow.

That was what the Nazis apparently intended to achieve at the Berlin meeting in which the German Government had shown great interest beginning in the summer of 1940.

In the correspondence between Berlin and Moscow conducted during those months, the Germans hinted that it would not be a bad idea for highranking officials from both countries to meet and discuss the outstanding issues. In one of those letters the Germans pointed out that serious changes had taken place in Europe and the world since Ribbentrop's last visit to Moscow. They then stated that they would not object if a highranking Soviet delegation was sent to Berlin for conducting further negotiations. The Soviet Government, which had invariably advocated the peaceful settlement of international problems, agreed to Berlin's offer and dispatched a delegation to attend the November 1940 conference in the German capital.

Hitler treated the 1940 Berlin conference as a way of deflecting the Soviet Government's attention away from his real intentions. Secret Directive No. 18 issued by him on November 12, 1940, or on the eve of the Soviet delegation's arrival in Berlin, confirms this. The directive states: "Political discussions have been initiated with the aim of clarifying Russia's attitude for the coming period. Regardless of what results these discussion will have, all preparations for the East which already have been orally ordered, are to be continued."

"Directives on this will follow as soon as the outline of the Army's plan of operations is submitted to, and approved by me."⁶

What Hitler meant by "preparations for the East" is already clear.

As far as the Soviet Union was concerned, its purpose in attending the conference was also clear. The Soviet Government strove to avert a war or at least postpone as long as possible a military clash with Hitler Germany.

The Soviet Government continued to maintain diplomatic contacts with the German Government while probing its intentions. On November 26, 1940, or less than two weeks after the Berlin meeting, the German Ambassador in Moscow, Werner Schulenburg, was informed that a number of conditions would have to be met by the German side before Moscow would continue the negotiations

begun in Berlin. Among other things, these conditions stipulated that German troops would have to immediately leave Finland, and that mutual assistance pact would have to be signed between the Soviet Union and Bulgaria in the next few months to insure the security of Soviet borders.

Schulenburg promised to pass on the Soviet statement to his government at once. But no answer was ever received from Berlin. Even then the silence seemed significant. Today we know why Berlin preferred not to answer. Learning of the Soviet demands, Hitler rejected them and began in earnest to prepare for the attack on the Soviet Union.

Hitler ordered his general staff to move up the deadline for presenting their plan for operations against the Soviet Union. On December 5, after a four hour consultation with Field Marshal Walter von Brauchitsch, commander in chief of ground forces, and General Halder, Hitler endorsed the plan, which was initially code-named Operation Otto. However in Directive No. 21 signed by Hitler on December 18, the plan was renamed Operation Barbarossa. The directive, which officially launched the Soviet campaign, began: "The German Wehrmacht must be prepared to *crush Soviet Russia in a quick campaign* (Operation Barbarossa) even before the conclusion of the war against England. For this purpose the Army will have to employ all available units, with the reservation that the occupied territories must be secured against surprises...

"Preparations ... are to be completed by May 15, 1941.

"It is of decisive importance, however, that the intention to attack does not become discernible."⁷

The Soviet side saw the 1940 Berlin meeting as an opportunity to feel out the position of the German Government and clarify the further plans of the Third Reich.

Hitler's position at these negotiations, in particular his stubborn unwillingness to take into consideration the security interests of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and his refusal in effect to withdraw German troops from Finland and Rumania, showed that Germany, despite the broad gestures in respect to the Soviet Union's "global interests," was already committed to preparing a staging area in Eastern Europe from which to attack the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that Hitler sought the Berlin meeting in order to impose unfavorable terms on the Soviet Government which would tie its hands and give Germany freedom of movement, including the possibility of reaching agreement with Britain.

On the night of June 22, 1941 the Soviet Ambassador to Berlin, V.G. Dekanozov, was summoned to the foreign ministry building on Wilhelmstrasse by Ribbentrop. I accompanied the ambassador as his interpreter. Ribbentrop read the text of Hitler's memorandum in which the Soviet Union was accused of having designs to attack Germany. Ribbentrop said that to avert this threat, the Führer had decided to take measures to protect the security of the German people. Ribbentrop added that one hour ago German troops had crossed the Soviet border. Before leaving the German foreign minister, Ambassador Dekanozov said: "This is brazen, totally unprovoked aggression. You will regret your treacherous attack on the U.S.S.R.. You will pay a dear price for this."

We turned around and headed for the door. But then the unexpected took place. Ribbentrop started coming toward us. In a rapid whisper he assured us that he personally was against this decision by the Führer, that he even had tried to dissuade Hitler from attacking the Soviet Union. Ribbentrop said that he considered it madness, but there was nothing he could do about it. Hitler had already decided, and he refused to listen.

The Germans attacked the Soviet Union with an enormous force. The invasion's unexpectedness and scale handed the Wehrmacht early successes and forced the retreat of Soviet troops. A large part of Soviet territory was occupied by the enemy.

Why did the German invasion come as a surprise?

Published documents and also Soviet memoirs gave an accurate assessment of the situation that had obtained on the eve of the Great Patriotic War. However, a number of factors that had emerged during the course of the invasion gave the Germans a temporary advantage.

Important here are also miscalculations that were made concerning the possible date of the German invasion of the Soviet Union and blunders in preparing for the defense. In a multi-volume publication on the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, it is pointed out that Joseph Stalin, who headed the Party and Government, while striving to postpone a military confrontation with Hitler Germany in order to buy time for building up the army and getting the country ready for war, did not give his consent to bringing Soviet border troops to full combat readiness in the belief that such a step would be used by the Nazis as a pretext for war.

In the spring of 1941 it became clear that Germany was not planning to mount an invasion of the British Isles. This news, to

be sure, was disturbing. Yet Stalin could have assumed that before mounting a war in the East, Hitler would try to reinforce his rear lines in the West. However, further developments showed that the absence of a German-British political deal made the ruling quarters in London see the advantages of entering in league with the Soviet Union against the Third Reich, which for Germany made war on two fronts a reality. Stalin also could have assumed that Hitler, who had a reputation for planning his diplomatic moves adroitly, would still try to strike up such a deal at the expense of the Soviet Union, which would demand a certain amount of time. The flight of Hitler's deputy Rudolf Hess to Britain indicated that Berlin was conducting just such a strategy. Despite Hess' mission misfiring, other attempts in that same direction could have been expected, with diplomatic feelers and negotiations lasting many months, especially considering the political infighting in Britain and the strong anti-Hitler sentiment among broad segments of the British public. This sentiment had to be neutralized before reactionary forces within Britain could strike a deal with Hitler.

All of this perhaps led Stalin to conclude that Hitler would not attack the Soviet Union until the spring or summer of 1942 at earliest. Stalin's passionate desire to avoid war also inclines one to support this version. Stalin apparently had believed that, with Britain still standing firmly and supported by American might, Hitler was not planning to attack the Soviet Union in June 1941. He later told Harry Hopkins this. Stalin had probably assumed that the Wehrmacht generals wanted war and were trying to provoke the U.S.S.R. into it, but that Hitler himself, as an adroit politician, knew that fighting a war on two fronts would be suicidal. However history shows that this was not the case.

Even after the start of the invasion, Stalin ordered that the German Ambassador to Moscow Count Schulenburg be contacted before the U.S.S.R. took countermeasures against Germany. Stalin had still hoped that the violation of Soviet borders and the bombing of Soviet cities were a provocation of German military brass and that a conversation with the German ambassador would clear up the situation. But the answer was not the one Stalin expected. After talking with Schulenburg, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Molotov informed Stalin: "The German Government has declared war on us."

NOTES

¹*Documents on British Foreign Policy. 1919-1939. Third Series. Vol. V. 1939, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1952, p. 228.*

²*Documents on German Foreign Policy. Series D (1937-1945), Vol. VI, The Last Months of Peace, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1956, p. 1062.*

³Generaloberst Halder. *Kriegstagebuch*. Bd. I, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1962, S. 107.

⁴*International Military Tribunal. Trial of the Major War Criminals. Nuremberg, November 14, 1945 - October 1, 1946, Vol. 26, Nuremberg, 1947, p. 331.*

⁵Halder, op. cit., Bd. II, S. 49.

⁶*Documents on German Foreign Policy, Series D, Vol. XI, p. 531.*

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 899.

GERMAN INVASION OF THE U.S.S.R. AND THE U.S. POSITION

As one American historian put it, the German invasion of the Soviet Union in the early hours of June 22, 1941 was, for the United States, "long-awaited."¹ Why was this invasion expected by the United States? To answer this question would mean to understand the American reaction to the Soviet-German war. But in order to understand it, we first of all have to take into account the main ingredients to the international situation at the time which to a significant degree shaped this reaction.

America's anticipation of the Soviet-German war can be interpreted in two ways, according to two distinct tendencies in international relations, which could not have failed to affect both U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union and its overall foreign policy strategy during the critical years of the 1930s.

The first tendency reflected the objective need for international cooperation in order to contain the spread of fascism which threatened the entire world. The Soviet Union took into account this tendency in 1934 when it joined the League of Nations and in 1935 when it signed mutual assistance treaties with France and Czechoslovakia. The policy of the Popular Front against war and fascism, proclaimed in the summer of 1935 at the 7th Congress of the Communist International, also served to rally anti-fascist forces at a national and international level. This trend later led to the formation of the Anti-Hitler Coalition of 1941-1945.

The second tendency was an outcome of numerous international contradictions. It enables us to understand why the prewar foreign policies of Western bourgeois-democratic governments were so strongly swayed by narrow, egoistical interests. Betting that they could remain on the sidelines of the war, having met the demands of Hitler Germany and other aggressors through making concessions at the expense of other countries, and ignoring or not under-

standing that the fundamental national interests of the non-aggressors coincided rather than differed — that is what stood in the way of stopping fascist aggression at an early stage and what led to the Second World War.

Despite the prewar American neutrality declared in August 1935, a clash between U.S. interests and those of the Axis powers was growing increasingly inevitable. This was borne out by their rivalry in politics, diplomacy, economics and ideology, although this rivalry had yet to reach its peak. But the Japanese-German threat to American national interests, a threat which touched a broad public nerve, loomed ever larger. George H. Gallup, the director of the American Institute of Public Opinion which has conducted polls of the U.S. population since 1935, recalled in an interview with a Soviet journalist on the subject of the American people's common sense that the people had sensed the danger of Hitler long before people in the government sensed it.

Prior to the war a polarization had appeared between fascism and anti-fascism with the specter of a probable armed conflict between them. An analysis of the circumstances leading to the formation of the Anti-Hitler Coalition warrants the conclusion that its roots should be sought in the struggle against fascism which had been launched before the war by Communists, progressive workers and intellectuals. This struggle steadily grew into a worldwide mass movement involving millions of people and becoming a significant political factor in international relations.

And if there was a difference between bourgeois democracy and fascism, as was pointed out at the 7th Congress of the Communist International, then there was even greater difference between socialism and fascism!

In *Mein Kampf* Hitler wrote that he considered the socialist Soviet Union his main enemy. What's more, he long gambled on the anti-Communist sentiments of certain quarters in the West, making himself out as the man who would save Europe from Bolshevism and contain the spread of Communism.

The so-called Anti-Comintern Pact, signed between Germany and Japan in November 1936 (and which fascist Italy joined a year later), was called on to convince the entire world of just this, although hardly any of the Western leaders had doubted that the intentions of the newly formed aggressive bloc went much further than the stated anti-Communist goals. The Tripartite Pact, concluded by the aggressors in September 1940, divided the world into

spheres of influence, removing all doubts about the global character of the aggressors' claims.

For this reason the Soviet-German non-aggression pact of August 23, 1939, which Hitler had agreed to out of tactical considerations, "weighed heavily" on him, as he later confided to Mussolini in a letter telling of his decision to attack the Soviet Union. Continued Hitler: "I have had the impression that it was a break with my past, with my ideas and my former commitments."²

The Soviet-German negotiations held in Berlin in November 1940, at which the Soviet Government rejected provocative Nazi proposals, convinced the German leadership that "the Soviet Union would actively conduct its policy of rebuffing the claims of fascist Germany."³

At around that time Operation Barbarossa, the plan for attacking the Soviet Union, was nearing completion. Much later, as Germany lay in ruins and the end was near, Hitler would still assert that the destruction of Bolshevism was "the ambition of my life and the *raison d'être* of National Socialism."⁴

Thus, farsighted statesmen of the West such as Franklin Roosevelt could not fail to consider in their strategic calculations the possibility, if not the probability, of a confrontation between the Soviet Union and Germany. In extending diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union in 1933, the American President saw Moscow "as a potential ally against Japanese aggression in the Orient or German resurgence in Europe."⁵

President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his Secretary of State Cordell Hull operated on the assumption that a world war was inevitable.⁶

Nevertheless, everyone is aware of the notorious "Munich policy" that the Western powers pursued in the prewar period. The Western governments, especially that of Great Britain which sought to preserve the British colonial empire and to keep for it the role of the state holding the key to European balance, actually encouraged Germany and Japan to attack the Soviet Union.⁷

It is worthwhile recalling that certain influential quarters within the United States also supported the Munich policy. Their support grew out of the belief that "the 20th century must be to a significant degree an American Century,"⁸ for which purpose the other great powers should be left to exhaust one another. Sumner Welles, former Undersecretary of State and a close friend of Franklin Roosevelt, wrote in his memoirs: "In those prewar years, great financial

and commercial interests of the Western democracies, including many in the United States, were firm in the belief that war between the Soviet Union and Hitlerite Germany could only be favorable to their own interests."⁹

Walter Lippmann, the American columnist and author who wrote much about the events of the 1930s, was of the same view. Listing Germany's acts of aggression from the time Hitler took power in 1933 up to the invasion of Poland in September 1939, which, strangely enough, did not cause America to begin arming, Lippmann explains: "The nazi aggression appeared to be directed towards the east, away from the oceanic world."¹⁰

Thus, for the United States, Hitler's attack of the U.S.S.R. on June 22, 1941 was "long-awaited," proceeding from U.S. strategic objectives that go back to the middle of the 1930s, no matter from what point of view we look at them. But the invasion was "long-awaited" by the United States in a tactical sense, too, for Washington had had access to detailed information about the preparations for the attack. According to Sumner Welles, the American Government had possessed such information as early as late December 1940,¹¹ or soon after Hitler had approved Operation Barbarossa on December 18, 1940.¹²

Today, many years after the end of the war, we have access to facts that testify how well informed the belligerents were about each other's secret plans. For instance, since late in 1940 American cryptoanalysts had been able to read the most secure Japanese diplomatic codes.¹³ And the Americans had informants among the staff of the German Ambassador to Moscow, Count Friedrich Werner von Schulenburg.¹⁴ Thus, Washington's knowledge of Operation Barbarossa, a copy of which it had received through intelligence channels, was not an isolated case.

Soviet intelligence also managed to receive much advanced knowledge about the German armed forces' plans to attack the Soviet Union. Soviet intelligence had learned of the contents of Operation Barbarossa a mere eleven days after it was approved in its final form.¹⁵ According to Soviet Marshal Georgy K. Zhukov, the Red Army General Staff had possession of "information of the greatest importance," which, as was later learned, "accurately summarized the work on the Barbarossa Plan of the German Command, while one of the variants, in fact, contained the essence of the plan."¹⁶ Yet, policy makers could not base their decisions solely on knowledge obtained from intelligence sources.

How did the Roosevelt Administration act after receiving such valuable information about the impending German invasion? The United States attitude toward the Soviet Union can be judged by the way it utilized this information. Plenty of time remained before May 15, 1941 — the date the German secret plans had set for completing preparations for the invasion—to conduct political and diplomatic maneuvering, especially considering that Hitler attached decisive importance to his plans to attack the Soviet Union remaining secret.¹⁷

Meanwhile talks were started in Washington in the summer of 1940 between Undersecretary of State Welles and the Soviet Ambassador K.A. Umansky for the purpose of improving bilateral relations.¹⁸ The sudden switch in U.S. policy from raw hostility to normalization was provoked by the understanding that the Soviet Union opposed the fascist-militarist bloc which was a threat to the United States as well. It was for this same reason that the Churchill Government in England which, after the defeat of France in the summer of 1940, was on the edge of ruin and desperately sought new allies in the person of the United States or the Soviet Union, began to repair its relations with Moscow.¹⁹

Yet the talks in Washington, London and Moscow dragged on without yielding concrete results. Both England and the United States, in pursuing their goals, would not have objected to securing unilateral advantages. The Soviet side, taking into account the interest of the United States and especially of England in an early armed confrontation between Berlin and Moscow, was impelled to act cautiously in order to postpone as long as possible the German invasion. Moreover, the Soviet Government had to reckon with the possibility of attack on two fronts — from Germany in the West and from Japan in the East — all the way up to April 1941, when the Soviet Union and Japan signed a neutrality pact.

Nevertheless, the Soviet-American talks, like the British-Soviet parleys, were a manifestation of the formation of the underpinnings of the Anti-Hitler Coalition, a process that began in the late 1930s and lasted into the early stages of the war.²⁰

As soon as Washington learned that an attack was being prepared against the Soviet Union (the information was immediately confirmed), President Franklin Roosevelt, Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles agreed that Moscow should be informed of it immediately. Chosen to convey the news was Welles, who as he later related did so during a meeting

with Soviet Ambassador Umansky in early January 1941.²¹ But Welles' assertion that he conveyed this news in early January of that year has never been independently confirmed.

Doubts about Welles' statement have been raised by two American historians, William Langer and S. Everett Gleason, whose two-volume study, *The World Crisis and American Foreign Policy*, constitutes the most authoritative analysis of American foreign policy in these two years ever to be written.²² The study, commissioned by the Council on Foreign Relations, was compiled on the basis of official documents, including those stored in the U.S. State Department archives. Rummaging through the State Department files, the authors discovered that the earliest reference to informing the Soviet ambassador about U.S. knowledge of Operation Barbarossa was in a memorandum written by Welles in early March 1941. In other words, the information was relayed to the Soviet Union not in January 1941 but two months later. Considering the importance of the information, the time difference was significant. Coming across this rather large discrepancy in time, Langer and Gleason sought out Welles for an explanation. Yet they never got a persuasive answer.²³

The official record of correspondence between Secretary of State Hull and the American Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. Laurence Steinhardt shows that the relaying of the information about Operation Barbarossa could not have occurred before March 1941.

On March 1, 1941 Hull sent a cable to the American ambassador in Moscow instructing him to urgently convey orally to People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav M. Molotov that it was the intention of Germany to attack the Soviet Union in the not distant future. The cable also noted that the American Government was confident in the reliability of the information being conveyed and that the decision to pass it on was made only after "considerable hesitation."²⁴ In a reply Ambassador Steinhardt said that he was personally opposed to passing on the information under the pretext that it might be considered "as having been merely an attempt to drive a wedge between the Soviet Union and Germany, at British instigation."²⁵ In a subsequent cable to the ambassador on March 4 Hull regarded the question as already moot since, according to him, Welles had already passed along the information to Umansky in Washington at midday on March 1. What's more, the authors made a note that the archives were missing a separate transcript of Welles' meeting with Umansky.²⁶

The assumption can be made that differences between the President and the State Department over how closely to cooperate with the Soviet Union had something to do with the delay in relaying the information about Operation Barbarossa to Moscow. In any case one fact is indisputable: the possession of such valuable information could not but have strengthened the American leaders' resolve to press ahead with the so-called undeclared war with Germany which they had begun to wage soon after the capitulation of France in the summer of 1940.

The collapse of France and the establishment of German control over almost all of Western Europe plunged the United States into a state of frenzy bordering on panic. According to the then Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, the United States had faced the biggest crisis in American history.²⁷ Indeed, in the event of the total defeat of England, Hitler would have been presented with the possibility of conducting a direct attack on the United States, for which he could have sought Japanese assistance. According to information that became known at the Nuremberg Trial, by late 1940 "the leaders of Germany were planning war against the United States from its Atlantic as well as instigating it from its Pacific approaches."²⁸

A radical change in the strategic situation in the world dispelled the illusion of American neutrality²⁹ and at the same time showed that the United States was being dangerously late in coming to the aid of the Western bourgeois democracies.

The United States reacted to the capitulation of France by pursuing a number of foreign policy actions directed against Germany. The consequential of them came in September 1940, when the United States gave England fifty destroyers desperately needed to protect its shipping from German submarine attacks in exchange for eight bases on British territories in the Western hemisphere. In giving Great Britain 50 warships, the United States was openly declaring its support of England and in effect marking the end of its neutrality and the beginning of its "undeclared war" against Germany.³⁰ Amid an unprecedented world crisis U.S. presidential elections were held in November, giving Franklin Delano Roosevelt his third straight term in office.

Starting in late 1940 the Roosevelt Administration's opposition to Germany and Japan began to harden. The President began to underscore publicly the incompatibility of American bourgeois democracy and fascism and formulated a number of positive foreign

policy objectives. Most historians link this new hard-line approach to Germany and Japan to the rapid changes in Europe and Asia, which posed a threat to the United States, and to Roosevelt's election to a third term, which was interpreted by him as an endorsement of his policies. But in trying to explain why President Roosevelt conducted a policy of war on fascism long before Pearl Harbor, it is important to remember that many of U.S. acts directed against Germany and Japan were mounted only after the United States had grown confident that Hitler would soon attack the Soviet Union.

We may recall that President Roosevelt and his aides learned of Operation Barbarossa soon after it was approved by Hitler. In the following weeks Roosevelt made a series of public addresses which drew much attention at home and abroad.³¹ In a December 29, 1940 radio address, the President appealed to Americans to transform the United States into "the great arsenal of democracy" and to give assistance to countries fighting the Axis powers "for their liberty and for our security."³²

According to a public opinion poll conducted shortly after Roosevelt's radio address, eighty percent of Americans supported his appeal. Also drawing great response was the President's message to Congress on January 6, 1941 in which he insisted on the importance of defending the free world founded upon four essential human freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom to worship God, freedom from want and freedom from fear.³³

At secret Anglo-American staff talks held in Washington between January and March of 1941 the famous ABC-I plan was adopted which spelled out the common Anglo-American strategy in World War II. Under this plan, war with Germany in the Atlantic and Europe was given preference over war with Japan in the Pacific where largely defensive operations could be conducted for the time being. In March 1941 the U.S. Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act allowing U.S. war materiel to be lent or leased to "the government of any country whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States."³⁴

This was the law whose operation was extended to the Soviet Union in late 1941 and under which the Soviet Union received weapons, materiel and food from the United States during the war years.

Finally, in December 1940-January 1941, after a lengthy public campaign, all exports to Japan of metal scraps and steel and copper blanks were banned.

To be sure, the United States undertook these moves in response to the quickly changing international situation and in conformity with its long-term political and strategic considerations. But the spurt in this activity, beginning in late December 1940 and continuing into the early months of 1941, at around the time when the American leadership had obtained information of Hitler's secret intentions in regard to the Soviet Union, can hardly be called a coincidence.

However, as was mentioned earlier, the prewar policy of the United States was not clearly anti-German or anti-Japanese. It was strongly influenced by purely nationalistic interests which diluted the positive effect of those American actions that objectively (and sometimes subjectively) promoted the cause of the world movement against fascism. American foreign policy was still confined within an isolationist framework which impeded a rapprochement with the Soviet Union as well as with Great Britain, to which it wanted to and did offer assistance.

In the winter and spring months of 1941, right before the German attack on the Soviet Union, much hinged on the United States as the most formidable Western power. But the United States, which had in effect abandoned its policy of neutrality that no longer provided protection of its national interests, refused to formally renounce the Neutrality Act, thereby fueling Hitler's hopes that he could enslave Europe before America intervened. In the meanwhile, the United States continued to appease Japan in the Far East, taking no action beyond containing Japanese penetration southwards. This was done not only in the hope that an open confrontation with Japan could be delayed but with the calculation that time could be bought in the event Japan chose to direct its aggression northwards. Japan nevertheless continued to buy American oil which it so desperately needed.

Besides, the U.S. Government showed no willingness to radically review its relations with the Soviet Union although this was the purpose of the talks between Undersecretary of State Welles and Soviet Ambassador Umansky.

However, immediately before the German invasion of the Soviet Union, different attitudes toward Moscow re-emerged within American governmental circles. On the one hand, President Roosevelt, through his ambassador in London, John G. Winant, who had replaced the appeasement advocate Joseph P. Kennedy, assured Prime Minister Winston Churchill (in reply to his cable sent on June

15) that he would immediately support publicly "any announcement that the Prime Minister might make welcoming Russia as an ally." Churchill, to whom the message was conveyed orally, appraised the information as an "important reassurance."³⁵

On the other hand, the U.S. State Department's position in regard to the Soviet Union, formulated by Secretary of State Cordell Hull in cables to the U.S. ambassadors in Moscow, London and Tokyo on June 14,³⁶ is characterized by American historians themselves as "uncompromising."³⁷ In a State Department cable dated June 14, 1941, sent in reply to Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt's lengthy cable from Moscow of June 12 which was devoted to a single question—the impending German attack on the U.S.S.R.,³⁸ the case was stated for strengthening the U.S. position at the Soviet-American talks playing on the Soviet Union's interest in closer relations with the United States. In Hull's cable, which consisted of six tightly worded points, Ambassador Steinhardt was instructed "to give the Soviet Government to understand that we consider an improvement in relations to be just as important to the Soviet Union as to the United States, if not more important to the Soviet Union."³⁹

These differences in positions also affected official statements made in the United States subsequent to June 22, 1941.

The first public reference to the U.S. position was made in a radio address given by British Prime Minister Churchill on the evening of June 22, 1941. Calling for the unconditional support of the Soviet Union in its struggle against Germany, Churchill added: "We shall appeal to all our friends and allies in every part of the world to take the same course and pursue it, as we shall faithfully and steadfastly to the end."⁴⁰ His mention that Hitler had miscalculated in thinking that the war against the Soviet Union would divide the United States and Great Britain was not accidental. Having enlisted the support of the American President, Churchill intoned: "The Russian danger is, therefore, our danger, and the danger of the United States, just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his hearth and home is the cause of free men and free peoples in every quarter of the globe."⁴¹ Churchill's speech, in which he referred directly to the United States as an ally of Great Britain and the Soviet Union, played a large role in clarifying the American position in the Soviet-German war.⁴²

When word of Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union reached Washington, the ailing Secretary of State Hull immediately tele-

phoned the President and then Undersecretary of State Welles and other high officials.⁴³ The decision to support the Soviet Union was unanimous.

Julius W. Pratt, Cordell Hull's biographer whose two-volume study of the Secretary of State was published in the series "The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy," writes that Hull's response to Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union differed greatly in tone from State Department documents such as his memorandum of June 21, 1941.⁴⁴ The text of the official statement dealing with the invasion was written by Sumner Welles in his capacity as acting Secretary of State. The President was handed the statement on the morning of June 23, and that noon it was read by Welles at a press conference at the State Department.

The statement said that if additional evidence was required to prove Hitler's intention of world domination, "Hitler's treacherous attack upon Soviet Russia" provided just such evidence. It then went on to condemn "the principles and doctrines of communistic dictatorship," on a par with the "principles and doctrines of Nazi dictatorship," which it said were equally repugnant and dangerous to the United States. It continued: "But the immediate issue that presents itself to the people of the United States is whether the plan for universal conquest, for the cruel and brutal enslavement of all peoples, and for the ultimate destruction of the remaining free democracies, which Hitler is now desperately trying to carry out, is to be successfully halted and defeated.

"That is the present issue which faces a realistic America. It is the issue at this moment which most directly involves our own national defense and the security of the New World in which we live.

"In the opinion of this Government, consequently, any defense against Hitlerism, any rallying of the forces opposing Hitlerism, from whatever source 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." The statement ended with the phrase written in Roosevelt's own hand: "Hitler's armies are today the chief dangers of the Americas."⁴⁵

It is worthwhile noting that in the statement Communism was not only rejected as unacceptable for the United States but condemned on a par with fascism. In Washington's view, such candidness was supposed to win the trust of the Soviet Union. But this attempt to place Communism and fascism in the same row at such a crucial moment of World War II when Hitler was attacking the Soviet

Union was hardly in keeping with the objectives of the official statement which was, in the words of its author Sumner Welles, to "make plain the vital importance of this tremendous event to the people of this country."⁴⁶

President Roosevelt had apparently understood this. According to Langer and Gleason, who base their conclusion on a study of the above-mentioned State Department documents of the 14th and 21th of June, Roosevelt's position in regard to the Soviet Union "was more flexible than that of his professional advisers."⁴⁷ At a press conference on June 24, when asked to comment on the State Department statement, the President said: "Of course, we are going to give all the aid we possibly can to Russia."⁴⁸ But in doing so, he made clear that Great Britain would receive priority in U.S. military orders and sidestepped a question on the scale and forms of aid to the Soviet Union.

On the same day it was announced that the sequester had been lifted off 40 million dollars in Soviet funds frozen since the time of the Soviet-Finnish war. A day later it became known that the President was not going to apply the Neutrality Act to the Soviet-German war, meaning that American ships could deliver military cargoes to Vladivostok.⁴⁹ Finally, on June 26, when Soviet Ambassador Umansky visited the State Department and officially informed Sumner Welles of Hitler's attack, he was given assurances that "any request which the Soviet Government might make of the United States for material assistance would be given immediate attention and such further consideration as might be found possible in the light of our own defense program and in the light of our policy of assisting Great Britain and other countries which had already suffered German aggression."⁵⁰

These official American statements made in connection with Hitlerite Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union were assessed in Moscow as an expression of the readiness of the United States to render aid to the Soviet Union.⁵¹ Together with Churchill's statement of June 22, 1941, they put a practical beginning to the Anglo-Soviet-American alliance against Hitlerite Germany and to the Anti-Hitler Coalition of 1941-1945. Hitler's hopes that he could isolate the Soviet Union internationally and deceive the leaders of the Western countries with anti-Communist slogans disintegrated.

Yet, the official American response to the Soviet Union's entry into the war "was much more ambiguous"⁵² than that of Great

Britain. There are several explanations for this. First, the United States still remained a non-belligerent. Other factors were the ongoing tense debate within governmental circles on foreign policy issues, and the bitter memories of Soviet-American relations in 1939-1940.

* * *

An examination of the political and diplomatic postures occupied by the United States immediately preceding Hitler's invasion of the U.S.S.R., and of its official response to the Soviet Union's entry into the war allows us to make the following conclusions.

By this time U.S. attitudes toward the belligerents and the potential belligerents in World War II had to a significant degree already been formed. Of great importance was the fact that the threat of fascism, being a global problem, revealed an interconnection between the events of that time wherever they may have taken place. The internationalist tendency in world politics was given a powerful impetus in conditions of war. It had become more than evident that fascism could be stopped and its danger eliminated only by joint efforts and a common front of non-aggressive, peace-loving states. It was this that made up the foundations of the Anti-Fascist Coalition that took shape soon after the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941.

At the same time international relations continued to be swayed by various negative manifestations of a nationalistic tendency. Even during a world war, amid a growing polarization of fascist and anti-fascist forces, U.S. foreign policy continued to be focussed primarily on the protection of American interests, on the pursuit of national security outside the framework of universal security, although the course of events dictated quite the opposite.

NOTES

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AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION AND THE FORMATION OF SOVIET-AMERICAN COOPERATION JUNE-DECEMBER 1941

Early in the morning of June 22, 1941 Nazi army units crossed into Soviet territory along the entire Soviet-German border without a formal declaration of war. Thus began the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people, marking a new stage in World War II.

On the next day a statement was distributed in Washington written by acting U.S. Secretary of State Sumner Welles expressing the Roosevelt Administration's position on the Soviet Union's entry into the war. The statement read, in part: "In the opinion of this Government ... any defense against Hitlerism, any rallying of the forces opposing Hitlerism, from whatever source these forces may spring ... will therefore redound to the benefit of our own defense and security."

The statement ended with a phrase that was later found out to have been written by President Roosevelt: "Hitler's armies are today the chief dangers of the Americas."¹ On the next day the President issued a statement saying that the United States Government was prepared to "give all the aid it could to the Soviets."²

The U.S. response to the Soviet Union's entry into the war against Germany has been described abundantly in both American and Soviet works of history. Taking into account this circumstance, I will devote most of my attention to a subject that has been given less study: to the shaping of American public opinion with respect to Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union.

This study is based on an analysis of articles published in American newspapers and magazines of various political leanings, of addresses, appeals and resolutions contained in bulletins and pamphlets issued by various U.S. public organizations, and on a survey of the findings of public opinion polls conducted in the United States between June 22 and December 7, 1941.

My choice of this time frame was decided by the fact that within these five months there occurred events which decisively influenced the fates of the peoples of our planet. These events were the beginning of the Great Patriotic War in the Soviet Union and the entry of the United States into the war, which meant that the balance of forces had finally tipped in favor of the peace-loving countries and that the war had taken on a clearly expressed anti-fascist, liberation character. The emergence of the coalition against Hitler predetermined and accelerated the military and political defeat of the aggressor states.

At the start of World War II Soviet-American diplomatic and trade relations were to a certain degree frozen.³ The poor state of relations between the two countries during this time was reflected in public opinion polls⁴ and on the pages of bourgeois newspapers and magazines both hostile and well-disposed toward the Soviet Union.⁵

Judging by the headlines of newspapers, appeals to Americans aired by various radio stations and speeches in Congress, isolationist sentiment dominated during that period. Looking back upon these articles and speeches a half century later, I could not help being amazed by the degree of narrow-mindedness and provincialism expressed in them by people who took upon themselves the responsibility to speak on behalf of the American people. I was also struck by their pragmatism and at the same time their unwillingness to recognize that the danger hanging over the Soviet Union at the end of June would be likely in the foreseeable future to threaten their own country.

Here are just a few examples of the kind of thinking that predominated during that period. "If ever such a thing as a good war was waged, the one between Communist Russia and Nazi Germany is it.

"It gives us in the United States the opportunity and the time to speed our arms production."

"Let them fight it out. We should not join up with either one at any time or at any place ... regardless of the motive of any other nation. We should look after the Americas."⁶

Such sentiments were voiced not only in the halls of the U.S. Congress. A statement by the America First Committee — a mass organization advocating isolationism — issued on June 23, 1941 said that "the entry of Communist Russia into the war certainly should settle

once and for all the intervention issue here at home. We must ... take no part in this ... European conflict."⁷

The statement went on to say that the victory of either of the belligerents would not be to the benefit of Americans. The President of the America First Committee, General Robert E. Wood, noted in this regard that in these circumstances "the war party can hardly ask the people of America to take up arms behind the Red flag of Stalin."⁸

Similar arguments were voiced on the editorial pages of leading American newspapers, with local papers echoing them.⁹

Not wishing to see the polar difference between Germany the aggressor and the Soviet Union, which was fighting a war to defend its national sovereignty, these newspapers persuaded their readers that peace could be restored only after the two had bled themselves white.¹⁰

The attitude of the conservative press and public to the Soviet Union and their insistence on equating the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany conditioned their fear of a possible Soviet victory. If the Soviet Union won, wrote the *Washington Times-Herald*, "the structure of Hitler-controlled Europe will crack up, and there will be nothing left to keep communism damned back in Russia."¹¹

The fact that the "structure of Hitler-controlled Europe" represented a system of the cruel repression of European nations, the physical destruction of ethnic and religious minorities and the liquidation of all anti-fascist forces and democratic institutions, apparently did not bother the newspaper's editors. What bothered them was something else. Drawing a gloomy picture of Western Europe and the British Isles, the newspaper in conclusion warned its readers: "The repercussions in this country of a Europe-wide engulfment by communism would be enormous... We'd better take notice of these possibilities before we rush to the aid of Stalin."¹²

This type of prophesy was voiced not only on the pages of newspapers and magazines. It could be heard in the addresses of former U.S. President Herbert C. Hoover and the speeches of the pilot Charles A. Lindbergh, who was a leading advocate of isolationism.¹³

Hatred of Communism and the desire to see it destroyed deprived American reactionaries of the ability to make a sober assessment of the situation in the world and in essence led them to continue pursuing the long-failed policy of appeasing the aggressors. It also made them believe that Germany, after its invasion of the So-

viet Union, would enter into negotiations with Great Britain under U.S. mediation in order to conclude a peace in the West. What such a policy could lead to was of little concern to these people.¹⁴

Naturally, the persons, public organizations and mass media who advocated such positions were categorically against giving the Soviet Union any kind of aid. General Wood of the America First Committee proposed the suspension of military aid to Great Britain if its Government could not give the United States firm guarantees "that everything we send will not be relayed to Stalin in accordance with Mr. Churchill's pledge."¹⁵ And the Committee of One Million, an isolationist organization which subsidized numerous radio programs that condemned the Roosevelt Administration's foreign policy, sent a petition to members of Congress demanding that no alliance be signed with or aid given to the Soviet Union.¹⁶ The demands of the isolationists were supported not only by such prominent national dailies as the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Daily News* and the *Washington Times-Herald*, which were controlled by the Robert R. McCormick family,¹⁷ but also by such mainstream publications as the *Saturday Evening Post*, which nearly six weeks after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union continued to advocate an independent role for the United States in the war.¹⁸

A number of union leaders and newspapers, who during the period of the "strange war" had opposed the Administration's defense program and U.S. involvement in the war, continued to call for U.S. isolationism several months after Hitler's attack on the U.S.S.R. For instance, O.M. Orton, the leader of the Timber Workers' Union, was "opposed to armed participation in any foreign war."¹⁹

And John L. Lewis, the chairman of the United Mines Workers and president of the C.I.O. until November 1940 who had criticized the Roosevelt Administration's defense program and aid to Great Britain and France in 1939-1940 and who had been opposed to Roosevelt's election to a third term,²⁰ signed together with fifteen leaders of the Republican Party (Hoover, Landon, Dawes, to name a few) an appeal to Congress opposing the granting of American aid to the Soviet Union.²¹

A number of public organizations were also against U.S. entry into the war. William A. White, the publisher and chairman of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, issued a lengthy statement three days after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in which he rejected the possibility of entering into an alliance with Moscow.²²

Some American newspapers, although they espoused essentially isolationist views, employed somewhat different tactics to sabotage American-Soviet cooperation. Without rejecting outright the idea of joining together with the Soviet Union against Germany, these publications either clamored for increased military aid to Great Britain and China, which they argued would strengthen the ability of these countries to resist aggression and thereby ease the position of the Soviet Union, or tried to persuade their readers that the United States at present could do little to help the Red Army.²³ The argument was also made that the United States would not have time to aid the Soviet Union before its inevitable defeat, and that providing Moscow with American armaments was not without its risks as they could fall in the hands of the Nazis should the Soviet Union be knocked out of the war.²⁴

Similar arguments were voiced on the pages of other leading American publications.²⁵ The new American policy toward the Soviet Union, wrote the *U.S. News* expressing the opinion of U.S. business circles, should "encourage Russia to try hard for a stalemate." As for aiding Moscow, the magazine noted, "actually, there is next to nothing that the United States is able to supply to Russia that would aid in resisting the present German drive."²⁶

In other words, according to *U.S. News* editors, the Soviet Union was supposed to fight until it exhausted all of its men and resources and to tie up at the front as many enemy units as possible but it should not count on any aid at all from the United States.

The main thing that set these American publications apart from isolationists such as Herbert Hoover, Charles Lindbergh and Robert Wood, was that they based their opposition to helping the Soviet Union fight the Axis powers and granting it economic and military aid on the supposed lack of real possibilities for doing so and on the belief that the military defeat of the Soviet Union was imminent, a view that was supported by numerous military experts and expressed frequently in the American press.²⁷ In their desire to persuade public opinion that the United States was unable any time soon to provide the Soviet Union real help, the advocates of this view also cited the fact that American industry was not capable of supplying war materiel simultaneously to the U.S. Army and Navy, to Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union. They argued that diverting a part of these weapons to the Red Army would weaken the defense of the other countries. Another view was that the best way of helping the Soviet armed

forces was to increase deliveries to Great Britain and China.²⁸ Some people even argued that after his conquering of the U.S.S.R. "Hitler will ... have so much territory he will have plenty of trouble handling it."²⁹

* * *

If we confine ourselves only to newspaper and magazine reports and editorials and to the public addresses and published articles of those opposed to the United States aiding the Red Army, we would get the impression that the majority of Americans were against cooperating with the Soviet Union. Yet public opinion polls conducted in the United States during this period provided quite a different picture.

In a poll conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion two days after Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union only four percent of those surveyed wanted to see Germany win, while seventy-two percent wanted to see the Soviet Union win. The same poll showed, however, that only thirty-five percent of the Americans were in favor of extending the operation of the Lend-Lease Act on the U.S.S.R. while fifty-four percent were against.³⁰ However, a growing awareness of the increasing danger to the United States and the importance of the Red Army's struggle against the common enemy caused a swift and significant shift in public opinion. The results of a survey conducted on August 5 showed that seventy percent of Americans were now in favor of selling the Soviet Union weapons and war materiel. The percentage of those in favor of giving the U.S.S.R. Lend-Lease aid had increased to thirty-eight while of those opposed had declined to fifteen. A poll conducted in September of that year showed that forty-nine percent of Americans approved giving the Soviet Union credits.³¹

Konstantin Umansky, the Soviet ambassador to Washington, noted in his first report to Moscow after the Soviet Union's entry into the war that a clear jump in Soviet popularity could be noticed; in an eighteen-hour period after news of the invasion reached the United States the Soviet embassy was flooded with dozens of calls and cables in support, including a number of requests to be accepted as Red Army volunteers.³²

One of the first American organizations to support the Soviet Union's fight for freedom and independence was the Communist

Party of the U.S.A. Two days after Hitler's attack on the U.S.S.R. the CPUSA National Committee issued a program demanding that the United States Government extend to the U.S.S.R. the action of the Lend-Lease Act, eliminate all restrictions and obstacles to Soviet-American trade and pool efforts with the Soviet Union in the fight against the common enemy—fascism. Local CPUSA branches in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Buffalo and a number of other cities organized mass rallies and demonstrations in support of the Soviet Union. At a rally, held in Madison Square Garden in New York, around twenty thousand people attended. The resolution of the meeting, published in the *Daily Worker*, stated that the criminal aggression against the people of the Soviet Union and all of progressive mankind clearly demonstrated that the peace, freedom and security of the American people demanded that the Hitler war machine be crushed and that his supporters in the United States—the Lindberghs, Hoovers, Thomases and other advocates of appeasement—routed.³³ In an appeal to American workers, the Communist Party of the U.S.A. stated that it was a sacred duty of American workers to manufacture each tank, airplane, ship and weapon with the maximum possible speed for every front on which the battle against Hitler was being waged.³⁴

The American Communists were well aware of the kind of effort the war with the Nazis and their allies would demand from the people of the United States. "To the question of how far should we go in the struggle against Hitler, the answer must be an emphatic—ALL THE WAY! Any policy short of this invites national disaster," said CPUSA Chairman William Z. Foster in a speech in Los Angeles.³⁵ The Communist Party of the U.S.A. was the first to call for the opening of a second front, stressing that such a move by Great Britain and the United States would provide encouragement to the people of countries occupied by the Nazis.

In addition to the Communist Party of the U.S.A., playing an active part in promoting aid to Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union were the Workers Party of New York, the left and liberal-minded intellectuals, various people from the arts and sciences, certain local organizations of the American Federation of Labor and unions affiliated to the C.I.O. Despite the fact that the A.F.L. leadership took an openly reactionary and anti-Communist position, a significant number of the rank-and-file members of affiliated unions and many A.F.L. locals virtually from the very start of

the Soviet-German war supported the granting of military aid to the Soviet Union.

A different picture had emerged within the C.I.O. After the election of a new governing council at the C.I.O. Third Convention in November 1940, auspicious conditions appeared for displaying solidarity with the Soviet Union's struggle against aggression. In the first half of July 1941 delegates to the Third Annual Convention of the National Maritime Union of America (C.I.O.) issued a statement in support of "Britain's and the Soviet Union's struggle against fascism."³⁶

Between July and October 1941 numerous American labor organizations joined in the movement in support of aiding the Soviet people in the struggle against fascism, including the Auto Workers Union and the Meat Packers Union.³⁷ In September at the Eighth Convention of the International Hod Carriers', Building and Common Laborers Union of America in St. Louis, the delegates adopted a resolution committing themselves to render all possible aid to Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union in their war with fascism.³⁸ In the beginning of October, the Bridgeport (Connecticut) Industrial Union Council decided to "endorse the present moves of our President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and of our Congress in their joint efforts to provide England, Russia, and China with all the aid necessary to resist further Nazi aggression."³⁹

Moreover, local branches of those organizations whose leaders had opposed cooperation with and aid to the Soviet Union, began to change their attitudes. On October 10 the Hartford branch of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, despite the anti-Communist views of the committee's national chairman, passed a resolution demanding that the Neutrality Act be revised and Lend-Lease aid be given to the Soviet Union. Later, they sent the resolution to Connecticut Senator Francis T. Maloney.⁴⁰ The Hartford branch of the committee was made up mostly of workers of local factories.

Later, unions affiliated with the A.F.L. also began to come out in favor of aiding the Soviet Union. In late October delegates to the 51st Convention of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor held in International Falls, Minnesota, adopted a resolution endorsing fully the foreign policy of the Government. In early November, on the eve of the A.F.L. national convention, members of the Metal Trades Department of the A.F.L., which represented a number of

large metal workers and machine tool industry unions, voted in favor of sending aid to the Soviet people.

The mood of rank-and-file union members and the demands of A.F.L. and C.I.O. locals could not help but influencing positions of leaders of the national unions. The 61st Convention of the A.F.L. held in mid-October in Seattle unanimously adopted a resolution calling for material, financial and moral support to be rendered to Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union.⁴¹ And, despite the fact that speeches of the A.F.L. leaders contained much anti-Soviet rhetoric, the very fact that the country's largest confederation of unions adopted such a resolution was very significant. A month later, at its fourth convention in Detroit, the C.I.O. also expressed its support of the Soviet Union. In the convention's resolution it was stated that it was vitally important for the security of the United States to immediately render "all possible aid to Great Britain, Russia and China."⁴²

The American workers' aid to the Soviet people was not limited to political or moral support. Even before the United States was drawn into the war, a number of American unions began to collect money for the Soviet cause. At a public mass meeting in Madison Square Garden in November 1941, the leader of the New York fur workers union gave a magnificent demonstration of war solidarity by presenting two checks of 50,000 dollars each for British and Soviet war relief.⁴³

A large role in shaping an awareness among the U.S. public of the need to cooperate with the Soviet Union militarily in its fight with the Nazis was played by American writers and artists. "For us in America the issue is clear. We cannot afford to see Hitler's brutalitarians conquer the U.S.S.R.,"⁴⁴ wrote Corliss Lamont, the social activist and political commentator. These words fairly accurately reflected the views of the country's left and liberal intellectuals. During the summer and fall of 1941 the writers Ernest Hemingway, Theodore Dreiser and Michael Gold, the Moscow correspondent Erskine Caldwell, the writer Richard Wright, the screen writer and political columnist John Howard Lawson, the playwright Clifford Odets, the artists Raphael Soyer and Rockwell Kent, and the newspaper columnist Walter Duranty — all came out in favor of supporting the Soviet Union in its struggle with fascism. The writer Upton Sinclair throughout the course of war refused to receive royalties from his books published in the U.S.S.R. and asked that they be donated to the Soviet defense fund.

Other public figures—including Colonel Raymond Robins, the former head of the Red Cross in Russia, and long-time friends of the Soviet Union Albert Rhys Williams and former ambassador to Moscow Joseph E. Davies—played major roles in convincing the American public that, in stubbornly defending their hearth, the Soviet people were also helping to save Americans. Ambassador Davies was particularly influential in turning public opinion toward the Soviet Union. His opinion was heeded to by correspondents and editors of major American newspapers as well as rally participants and people in the State Department and the White House.⁴⁵ His much-talked-about book, *Mission to Moscow*, which was published in late 1941 and helped convince the readers of the solidness of the Soviet Government and society, did much to fortify the belief that the Red Army could turn back the Nazi offensive and defeat the aggressor.

The participation of the American intelligentsia in the movement to establish an American-Soviet coalition against the Nazis and their allies and to provide aid to the Soviet Union was also reflected on the pages of publications which shared the American intelligentsia's opinions and views.

For instance, the *New Republic*, a New York publication, virtually from the very outset of the Soviet-German war consistently called for U.S.-Soviet cooperation and the sending of military aid to the Soviet Union. In the July 21, 1941 issue, the *New Republic* advocated a joint effort by the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, warning its readers that "when France and Britain fought their great battle on the Continent, there was no Eastern front. Now, when Russia is fighting her great battle, there is no real Western front. And when the United States fights its own great fight, there may be neither an Eastern nor a Western front anywhere, except in our own Eastern and Western states."⁴⁶ Like no other American magazine, the *New Republic* kept its readers informed about the course of war on the Soviet-German front, the emergence and development of the partisan movement and the morale of Soviet troops.⁴⁷ In doing so, the magazine's reporters and editors continually underscored the Red Army's need for urgent aid. The *New Republic* was one of the first American publications to call for the opening of a second front and for the United States declaring war on Germany.⁴⁸

Another major New York weekly, *The Nation*, soon began to echo the *New Republic* in regard to the Soviet Union. Since early

August it had called for cooperation with the U.S.S.R. and giving it the necessary aid.⁴⁹

The heroic struggle waged by the Red Army led to the breakdown of Operation Barbarossa. By the second half of July the pace of the German invasion had been slowed considerably and the losses of men and equipment exceeded the most gloomy predictions of the German general staff.

All this could not fail to affect the American public's opinion of the Soviet people and their armed forces and Government. Whereas in the first weeks of the war the majority of American newspapers and magazines contained mostly speculation on what turn events would take on the Soviet-German front and in the Soviet rear and on how long it would take the Nazis to rout the Red Army and capture this or that area, and also an assessment of the ramifications of Soviet defeat for Great Britain and the United States, by the fall the tone of the American press had changed noticeably. More and more newspapers and magazines began to display greater respect of the Soviet officers and men for their bravery and stubbornness. Alongside reports by their Moscow correspondents, the newspapers and magazines began to carry excerpts from the speeches of Soviet leaders and articles and essays by Soviet journalists.⁵⁰ The distribution in the United States of reports by TASS and the Soviet Information Bureau also to a certain degree helped to shape American public opinion in favor of the Soviet Union.⁵¹ Another indicator that American public opinion was changing, and quickly at that, in favor of the Soviet war effort was that publications which had earlier loathed the idea of cooperating with the Soviet Union and doubted Moscow's ability to withstand the Nazi offensive were now beginning to publish articles and editorials in favor of a joint Soviet-American effort.

The country's largest and most influential daily, *The New York Times*, also began to gradually change its position. Whereas at the end of June it suggested that a miracle would have to take place in order to save the Red Army from total defeat, in early August it acknowledged that the United States had an interest in seeing the Soviet Union fight as long as possible and admitted that "it is Hitler and not Russia that constitutes the immediate threat to us."⁵²

A vivid example of how the American press changed its attitude toward the Soviet Union is provided by the evolution of views of the weekly *U.S. News*. Whereas in its July 4, July 11 and August 8 issues the common denominator of its coverage of the Soviet-German

war was its scepticism about the ability of the Red Army to withstand the Nazi offensive, in its August 22 issue the advisability of coming to the aid of the Soviet Union was no longer questioned, and in its November 14 issue U.S. aid to the Soviet Union was written about as if it were taken for granted.⁵³

U.S. awareness that the Soviet Union would be able to hold its own against Hitler's armies and of the need for U.S.-Soviet cooperation was reinforced after consecutive trips to Moscow by Harry Hopkins, W. Averell Harriman and other American statesmen and diplomats. Another cause of greater American trust in the Soviet Union was the worsening of U.S. relations with Japan and Germany. As was noted by *The New York Times*, people in the United States began to clearly recognize that "we are not formally at war with Hitler... But we are already at war with him in the sense that we are mobilizing our entire economy in order to beat him."⁵⁴

Although opposition to a coalition with Moscow and providing it with military and economic aid continued to exist—it was mostly the Catholic Church and a number of other religious and public organizations⁵⁵ that continued to hold out—its influence on public opinion within the country had grown considerably weaker. This was noticeable even in the position occupied by American Catholics: while many of the clergy continued to oppose aiding the Soviet Union, several Catholic newspapers expressing the views of the laity wrote in late September that "from the viewpoint of moral principles, aid to Russia need not be opposed," and that "there is certainly nothing wrong in the mere act of supplying munitions and food to a nation engaged in the laudable business of self-defense."⁵⁶

The position of some members of isolationist quarters also began to change. George C. Herring notes that the Roosevelt Administration's decision to extend Lend-Lease to the Soviet Union, announced on November 7, 1941, the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, evoked "surprisingly little opposition."⁵⁷

In November 1941 even those isolationists who had not considered Germany a threat to the United States became aware that a successful campaign against the Nazis by the Soviet Union provided the last chance for the United States to not enter the war. Hence the aid provided the Soviet Union began to be seen as payment for U.S. non-participation in the war.

However, the results of opinion polls conducted at the time characterized best of all the changes that had taken place in public attitudes to the issue of cooperating with the U.S.S.R. and providing it

military aid. A poll, conducted by *Fortune* magazine in October 1941, showed that 21.9 percent of those surveyed were willing to accept Moscow as a full partner along with England in the fight against Hitler. A total of 51.4 percent of respondents were for working along with Russia and giving it some aid, while only 13.5 percent were against.⁵⁸

The growth of respect for the Soviet Union over a period from the end of June to the beginning of December, 1941—caused mainly by the courage and heroism displayed by the Soviet people in their fight with Nazi aggression—was noted also by the American press. *Time* magazine, for instance, stressed that U.S. public opinion made a complete about-face in its attitude toward the Soviet Government and individual members of the country's leadership.⁵⁹ The fact that many Americans continued to have deep-rooted distrust toward Communism, as *Fortune* noted, did not mean that they allowed it "to soften appreciably their attitude toward Hitler."⁶⁰

The battle waged by the foes of U.S.-Soviet cooperation, designed to make the idea of a Soviet-American coalition against Hitler unacceptable to the American citizenry, ended in defeat. Their arguments and proofs of the "danger" to America's future of cooperating with a Communist country did not evoke the desired response among the majority of Americans. "Why should we refuse to send a gun to the Communist from Stalingrad with which to shoot our Nazi enemy, just because we don't like a street-corner orator in Peoria?" reasoned the newspaper *P.M.* at the end of September.⁶¹

The biased coverage of the domestic situation in the U.S.S.R. and Soviet foreign policy that was typical of the American press in the prewar years and the initial months of the war as well as the lack of truthful information about the U.S.S.R. could not have failed to influence the attitude of the American public toward the U.S.S.R. Yet, as Gabriel A. Almond pointed out, "while the distrust of Russia was strong in the prewar period, it was hardly a rigid hostility."⁶² Moreover, the common sense for which the American people are famous told them that ideological differences and dissimilarities in the social and political systems of the two countries did not have to be insurmountable obstacles to the formation of an alliance against the common enemy.

The courageous resistance of the Soviet people in the first months of the war and a feeling among Americans that a severe test for the United States was not far off were the two main reasons why the majority of Americans supported the Roosevelt Administration's policy of cooperating with the Soviet Union.

NOTES

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³*History of the United States*, Vol. III, p. 320 (in Russian).

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⁵*New Republic*, Vol. 104, No. 25, June 23, 1941, pp. 844-845.

⁶*Congressional Record. Proceedings and Debates of the 77th Congress, 1st Session*, Vol. 87, Part 5, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1941, pp. 5460, 5461.

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²³*The New York Times*, June 26, 1941, p. 22; *The Washington Post*, June 28, 1941,

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²⁶*United States News*, Vol. 11, No. 1, July 4, 1941, pp. 9, 11.

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 9-11; also see George C. Herring, *Aid to Russia 1941-1946. Strategy, Diplomacy, the Origins of the Cold War*, Columbia University Press, New York, London, 1973, p. 7; *The New York Times*, June 26, 1941, p. 22; *Sioux Falls Argus-Leader*, June 26, 1941; *The Washington Post*, June 27, 1941.

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⁵⁵*Congressional Record...*, Appendix, Vol. 87, Part 14, pp. A4676-A4677; Part 8, pp. 8172-8173; Part 7, p. 7845.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, Vol. 87, Part 8, p. 8700; Appendix, Vol. 87, Part 14, p. A5445.

⁵⁷George C. Herring, op. cit., p. 21.

⁵⁸*Fortune*, Vol. 24, No. 4, October 1941, p. 105.

⁵⁹*Time*, Vol. 38, No. 22, December 1, 1941, p. 25.

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FORMATION OF THE ANTI-HITLER COALITION AND THE QUEST FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF THE SECOND FRONT, 1941-1942

The history of the second front continues to arrest the attention of statesmen and politicians, historians and writers, military experts and the broad public. Various, sometimes contradictory, opinions are given on the events surrounding this issue, and not without reason. The intricate problem of the second front was solved with great difficulty during the war. Nonetheless, reviewing the history of this problem should help us better understand the current international situation and find effective means for the cooperation of states with different social systems, for averting a nuclear catastrophe and insuring a stable peace.

On December 18, 1940 Hitler signed Directive No. 21, launching what was to become known as Operation Barbarossa. The plan, based on the strategic concept of Blitzkrieg, provided for the defeat of the Soviet Union as a result of a short campaign in the summer and fall of 1941, before the final capitulation of England.

The main targets of the Nazi attack were to be Leningrad and Moscow, the central industrial region, and the Donets Basin. Special significance was attached to the capture of Moscow. According to Hitler's plan, with the capture of Moscow the war would be over.

For conducting the war an aggressive military bloc was formed on the basis of the Tripartite Pact signed by Germany, Italy and Japan in 1940. Romania, Hungary and Finland were also encouraged to take part in the war with the Soviet Union. The Nazis had enlisted the assistance of the reactionary regime in Bulgaria and of the puppet governments in Slovakia and Croatia. Sympathizing with the German cause were Spain, Vichy France, Portugal and Turkey. The Nazis exploited intensively the economic and manpower resources of the countries they occupied, among which were Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Luxembourg, Holland, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia and Greece. Also, the econ-

omies of the neutral states in Europe were, in essence, subordinated to the interests of Germany.

Thus, for carrying out Operation Barbarossa Germany in fact marshaled the resources of virtually every country in Europe—those of its allies as well as those of the occupied, dependent and neutral states, which together had a population of more than 300 million people.¹

From the East the Soviet Union had to contend with the threat from Japan, which had well-developed capabilities for conducting offensive warfare. It is known from Japanese wartime documents (now made public) that Japan was planning to launch an attack on the U.S.S.R. on August 29, 1941.²

The Nazi leadership was so confident in the success of Operation Barbarossa that already in the spring of 1941 they began to draw up detailed plans for the next stage of their scheme to achieve world dominance. In special staff rail cars named Asia and America, the German high command mapped out the next targets of the German army, spread across the globe. An entry in the official diary of the German high command dated February 17, 1941 tells of Hitler's demand that following the completion of the eastern campaign sights be set on the capture of Afghanistan and the mounting of an invasion of India. Proceeding from these instructions, the German high command began planning military operations for the end of 1941 and for 1942. The gist of these plans was contained in draft Directive No. 32, "Preparations for the Period After the Completion of Operation Barbarossa," distributed among the commanders of the German Army, Navy and Air Force on June 11, 1941.

After defeating the Soviet armed forces, the Wehrmacht was to begin the conquering of British colonial possessions and independent states in the Mediterranean, Africa, and the Near and Middle East, to launch an invasion of the British Isles, and to start military actions against America. By the fall of 1941 Hitler's strategists planned the conquests of Iran, Iraq, Egypt, the Suez Canal and then India where Nazi and Japanese troops were to join hands.

The German leadership hoped that with the annexation of Spain and Portugal, it could quickly capture Gibraltar and thereby cut Great Britain off from its sources of raw materials and begin the siege of the island. Draft Directive No. 32 and other documents witness that after routing the Soviet Union and solving the "British problem," the Germans intended to "eliminate the influence of

Anglo-Saxons" in North America. The conquest of Canada and the United States was to be accomplished by landing large amphibious units, stationed in Greenland, Iceland, the Azores and Brazil, on America's eastern coast and forces stationed in the Aleutians and Hawaii on its west coast. Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, commander of the Japanese Navy, averred: "It is not enough that we should take Guam and the Philippines, or even Hawaii and San Francisco. We should have to march into Washington and sign the treaty in the White House."³

According to the aggressors, the key to the enslavement of the world was a "lightning" campaign against the Soviet Union.

On June 22, 1941 a huge German invasion force consisting of 190 divisions, more than 4,000 tanks, around 5,000 aircraft and more than 200 warships unexpectedly attacked the Soviet Union. The Soviet people's titanic struggle with the aggressor was a major milestone in world history. The war was a severe test for the Soviet Union. In extremely difficult conditions the Soviet people managed to overcome the tragic consequences of the surprise attack, alter the balance of forces and smash the aggressor.

In the very first days following the German invasion the Soviet Government stated that the purpose of the Great Patriotic War, as the Soviet war against Germany was called, was not only to remove the danger confronting the country, but to help all occupied countries. In his address to the Soviet people on July 3, 1941 Joseph Stalin said: "In this great war we will have true allies in the peoples of Europe and America, including the German people enslaved by Hitlerite bosses. Our war for the freedom of our homeland will merge with the struggle of the peoples of Europe and America for their independence, for democratic liberties." Stalin thus unveiled a program for the creation of a united front of nations in the struggle against fascism, of a powerful anti-Hitler coalition of nations.

The historical bases for the formation of an anti-Hitler coalition were laid by the consistent efforts of the U.S.S.R. to set up a system of collective security before the war. And although Western governments did not then support Soviet efforts, the working people of these countries saw the need of working together with the Soviet Union to rebuff fascism.

For the freedom-loving nations of the world, the struggle of the Soviet people against the Nazi invaders was of decisive importance from the outset.

In Europe and Asia, in North and South America, in Africa and Australia, workers, peasants, the intelligentsia, labor unions and other public organizations came out in support of the Soviet Union and called for joining forces with it in the war against the common enemy.

The Soviet Embassy in Washington, in a report to the U.S.S.R. People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, said that following the German attack on the Soviet Union it had received scores of supportive letters and telegrams from various U.S. organizations and individuals, including a number of requests to join the Red Army as volunteers. In a statement of support for the Soviet cause, the American Communist Party proclaimed: "The American people—the workers, toiling farmers, the Negro masses, the middle-classes—all those who hate fascism and oppression and cherish peace and liberty, will see in the cause of the Soviet Union and its peoples the cause of all advanced and progressive mankind."⁴

Residents of New York city staged a huge rally on July 2, 1941 under the slogan "For American-Soviet Cooperation to Stop Hitler."⁵ According to a public opinion poll conducted in the United States on October 1, 1941, more than seventy-three percent of Americans were in favor of U.S. cooperation with the Soviet Union and giving it aid in the war against the Nazis. What's more, twenty-two percent of those surveyed thought this aid should be at the same level as that given to Great Britain.⁶ In 1941, *Mission to Moscow*, a book by former American ambassador to Moscow Joseph E. Davies, became a bestseller.

The Soviet Embassy in London also received scores of letters and telegrams which contained expressions of admiration at the Soviet people's struggle against the Nazis and offers of help. For example, London construction workers wrote: "We are bound to bring up the issue with our government of helping you by launching an offensive on the Western front without delay."⁷

The governments of Great Britain and the United States were impelled to cooperate militarily and politically with the Soviet Union in the face of the common enemy.

The first Western leader to publicly support the Soviet cause was Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain. Because England was faced by the threat of a Nazi invasion, Churchill had no other choice than to ally England with the Soviet Union against Germany. For England, the Soviet Union represented a formidable

ally. On June 22, 1941 Churchill announced in a radio address that Great Britain would render the Soviet Union all possible aid.⁸

The following day, on June 23, acting U.S. Secretary of State Sumner Welles issued a statement on behalf of the United States Government in which he stressed that the fascist bloc presented the chief danger to the United States and the entire world.⁹

In short, the governments of the United States and Great Britain expressed their willingness to work together with the Soviet Union because of the decisive importance of Soviet-German front in the war.

Great Britain, which faced the direct threat of a German invasion, was more willing than the United States to cooperate with the Soviet Union. In late June, 1941 Moscow and London exchanged military missions. A British economic mission arrived to Moscow together with the military. In early July the Soviet Government proposed to the British Government the signing of a military alliance against Nazi Germany. The British leadership instead proposed the signing of a statement of intent in this regard. However after further negotiations both sides agreed to sign an accord on joint actions against Germany. The agreement, signed in Moscow on July 12, 1941, established the obligations of both sides in the war and prohibited the signing of a separate peace. And although the agreement was only of a general nature, it laid the foundation for wartime allied relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union and was highly acclaimed by the British and Soviet public.

Another important agreement between the two countries was that on the exchange of goods, on credit and on a clearing, signed August 16, 1941. Under the agreement, Great Britain provided Moscow a credit of ten million pounds sterling.¹⁰

The U.S.S.R. Government believed that a broad-ranging military and political treaty was needed in addition to the Anglo-Soviet agreement signed in July 1941, to cover the war years and also the postwar period. It believed that such a treaty would encourage the broad popular masses to rise up against fascism and undermine the position of anti-Sovietees in the ruling quarters of Great Britain and the United States. A dialogue on this issue was begun in December 1941 at the initiative of the Soviet Union. As a result, an Anglo-Soviet treaty was signed on May 26, 1942 on a military alliance against Germany and its allies in Europe and on cooperation and mutual assistance after the war.

Soviet diplomacy had to surmount numerous difficulties in an effort to embark on cooperation with the United States. Despite the statement in support of the Soviet Union, Washington basically took a wait-and-see position. In the Government's statement on June 23 were reflected the doubts of U.S. political and military leaders in the ability of the Soviet Union to withstand the German invasion. The U.S. Government was not in a hurry to make a commitment to Moscow. It was not until June 11, 1942 that Moscow and Washington signed an agreement on principles applicable to mutual aid in the conduct of the war against the aggressors.¹¹ Although this agreement regulated the economic and financial questions concerning mutual aid during the war, its significance was much broader. Put in juxtaposition with the Anglo-Soviet treaty, it was an important step in the creation of a coalition to counter the fascist bloc.

In its efforts to establish an anti-Hitler coalition the Soviet Union counted on the desire of the American people for working together with the Soviet Union to jointly combat fascism. The Soviet initiative was supported by members of the U.S. ruling elite who recognized that only by teaming with the Soviet Union could the United States defeat the aggressors. This faction was led by President Roosevelt and some other members of his administration.

The Soviet Union established contact with the Free France National Committee, an organization of Frenchmen willing to fight Germany. In September 1941 the U.S.S.R. declared its readiness to aid and abet the French people in the common struggle against Germany and its allies.¹² Soviet recognition of the Free France movement was tantamount to the establishment of allied relations with it during wartime.

After the entry of the United States and a number of other countries into World War II, the question naturally arose of formalizing military cooperation of nations fighting against the Axis powers. On January 1, 1942 in Washington 26 nations, which included the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, China, Czechoslovakia, Poland, India, Canada, Yugoslavia and other countries, signed an agreement known as the United Nations Declaration.

The preamble to the Declaration contained the important principle that the total victory over the enemy was necessary for defending life, liberty and independence and for protecting human rights and justice. The formulation was adopted at the urging of the U.S.S.R. The position of the Soviet Union was also reflected in the

part of the Declaration that spoke about the necessity of employing all means — military and economic — to defeat fascism. The Declaration committed the signatories to, first, employ all of their resources against the Axis powers and the countries allied with them; and, second, to cooperate with each other and not sign a separate armistice or peace with the hostile countries.¹³

The Declaration of the United Nations was of tremendous importance for cementing the anti-fascist alliance of peoples and states.¹⁴

Despite the clearness of the allied objectives in the war, differing views existed within the emerging coalition as to the conduct of the war and the postwar world arrangement. The Soviet Union sought the complete liquidation of the Hitlerite regime in Europe and guarantees against the future enslavement of nations by fascism. However the United States and Great Britain saw the defeat of Germany primarily as a means of getting rid of an imperialist rival. Yet some high-ranking officials in the United States and Great Britain were against cooperating with the Soviet Union and proposed waiting until Germany and the U.S.S.R. ground each other down so as to have leverage over them. These and other differences in opinion could not fail to affect the progress of the diplomatic and legal efforts to formalize the anti-Hitler coalition, which demanded much time and energy.

The Soviet Union played a leading role in the shaping of the anti-Hitler coalition and made a large contribution to the armed struggle against the common enemy. On February 11, 1942 Winston Churchill wrote Stalin: "Words fail me to express the admiration which all of us feel at the continued brilliant successes of your armies against the German invader, but I cannot resist sending you a further word of gratitude and congratulation on all that Russia is doing for the common cause."¹⁵

The anti-Hitler coalition that was created by the efforts of freedom-loving nations was a powerful weapon in the struggle against the common enemy. It differed from all previous military and political alliances in that it teamed together states with differing social systems which fought the anti-fascist war of liberation. The anti-Hitler coalition had both uniting and disuniting tendencies. The former stemmed from the common threat to all the coalition members posed by the fascist aggressors and the common war objectives and efforts of the allied powers. The latter emerged from the differing views of the Soviet, U.S. and British governments on the postwar

shape of the world and tended to compound cooperation and the common struggle against the fascist bloc.

The Soviet Union was always true to its duties as an ally and unswervingly fulfilled its commitments. However the governments of the United States and Great Britain now and then tried to gain unilateral advantages and postponed the fulfillment of a number of important agreements. Nonetheless, the tendency toward unity dominated in the anti-Hitler coalition and helped it withstand the test of war. In the U.S.S.R. all due credit is given to the contribution of the other allied powers, and also of the Resistance Movement, in the defeat of the common enemy. All due credit is also given to the exploits of those who fought against fascism in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Pacific and on other fronts, to the heroic allied sailors who protected military convoys, to the pilots who attacked Hitlerite Germany from the air. The Soviet people remember well how Soviet and American soldiers embraced at the Elbe during the moment of victory over Hitlerism.

The tendency toward unity in the anti-Hitler coalition was also displayed in the numerous joint undertakings by the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain to marshal and distribute resources, in the coordinated actions of the allied armies against the common enemy, in the achievement of victory and the drafting of democratic principles for a postwar world.

The U.S.S.R. and the Western allies successfully resolved the problem of defending the convoys bringing military cargoes to the Soviet Union and cooperated in exchanging information on strategies and military operations.

Overall, the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain did resolve many common problems during the war years, and this serves as a confirmation of the vast possibilities for states with differing social systems to work together. Yet on many questions serious disagreements were revealed. Serving as a source of friction within the anti-Hitler coalition was the striving by reactionary quarters in the West to subordinate the conduct of the war and the settlement of postwar problems chiefly to their own countries' interests. This striving was particularly manifest in the cardinal issue of the opening of a second front, which was a touchstone of the sincerity and willingness of the Western allies to render effective aid to the Soviet Union in its struggle against the fascist bloc.

The question of opening a second front was first raised officially in a letter from Soviet leader Joseph Stalin to Prime Minister Churchill

dated July 18, 1941. Welcoming the establishment of allied relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union and expressing confidence that both states would find enough strength to rout the common enemy, Stalin added: "It seems to me ... that the military position of the Soviet Union, and by the same token that of Great Britain, would improve substantially if a front were established against Hitler in the West (Northern France) and the North (the Arctic).

"A front in the North of France, besides diverting Hitler's forces from the East, would make impossible invasion of Britain by Hitler."¹⁶ However Churchill declined the Soviet proposal, citing a lack of troops and the risk that a landing force would encounter a "bloody repulse."¹⁷

In September 1941, as the military position of the Soviet Union worsened, Stalin raised the issue again. In letters dated September 3 and 13, 1941, Stalin wrote Churchill that Hitler had deployed on the Eastern front more than thirty fresh infantry divisions and a large number of tanks and aircraft and activated forty-six divisions belonging to its allies, as a result of which the Soviet Union had lost more than half of the Ukraine and faced the enemy at the gates of Leningrad. He added: "The Germans look on the threat in the West as a bluff, so they are moving all their forces from the West to the East with impunity, knowing that there is no second front in the West nor is there likely to be one. They think it perfectly possible that they will be able to beat their enemies one at a time — first the Russians and then the British."¹⁸

Churchill, although acknowledging that the Soviet Union was carrying the main burden in fending off the fascist invasion and agreeing that Hitler counted on defeating the enemies one at a time, nonetheless repeated his view about the impossibility of opening a second front.¹⁹

At issue was the conduct of a limited operation against Germany on the European continent. Such an operation was possible and would have been a real help to the Soviet Union. Lord Beaverbrook, the British Secretary for Supplies during the war, told Churchill's war cabinet: "Russian resistance has given us new opportunities... It has created a quasi-revolutionary situation in every occupied country and opened 2,000 miles of coastline to a descent by British forces. But the Germans can move their divisions with impunity to the East. For the Continent is still considered by our generals to be out of bounds to British troops."²⁰

Soviet scholars rightly note the objectivity of this assessment by a prominent member of the British wartime cabinet, who was well apprised of the military situation and of Great Britain's capabilities.²¹

In December 1941 an event occurred which had major military and political significance. In the early days of December Soviet troops mounted an offensive leading to the defeat of German forces outside Moscow. Taking part in the battle on both sides were more than 2.8 million men, up to two thousand tanks and self-propelled guns, more than 1,600 aircraft and some 21,000 guns and mortars. During the course of the Soviet counter offensive German army group Center consisting of thirty-eight divisions was nearly totally destroyed. By the end of the battle more than 1.5 million Germans were killed or wounded on the Soviet-German front. In addition, the Nazis lost some four thousand tanks and assault guns and more than seven thousand aircraft. This exceeded by more than five times the losses of Germany in Poland, North-Western and Western Europe and the Balkans. The Soviet victory in the battle for Moscow spelled out the collapse of Hitler's Blitzkrieg strategy against the Soviet Union and was a major turning point in the war.

The Japanese air attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. chief naval base in the Pacific, on December 7, 1941 brought the United States into the war. Subsequent Japanese naval and air attacks on British Malaya, Indochina, Thailand, Singapore, Guam, Hong Kong and the Philippines seriously undermined the strategic positions of the United States and Great Britain in this region. By the spring of 1942 Japan asserted its dominance over the Pacific and Southeast Asia. General Douglas MacArthur, the commander of U.S. forces in the Far East, told his troops shortly before their capitulation on the Philippines: "The world situation at the present time indicates that the hopes of civilization rest on the worthy banners of the courageous Russian Army."²²

MacArthur, in assessing the combat operations of the Red Army in the first months of the war and the Soviet counter offensive outside Moscow, said: "During my lifetime I have participated in a number of wars and have witnessed others, as well as studying in great detail the campaigns of outstanding leaders of the past. In none have I observed such effective resistance to the heaviest blows of a hitherto undefeated enemy, followed by a smashing counter-attack which is driving the enemy back to his own land. The scale

and grandeur of the effort mark it as the greatest military achievement in all history."²³

It was around this time that military leaders in the United States were at work on plans for primarily mobilizing U.S. resources for an attack on Germany that provided for the concentration of troops and hardware in England for the mounting of an invasion of Northern France. This strategy was discussed at a meeting in the White House on April 1, 1942 and approved by President Roosevelt, who attached great political significance to the plan. He believed it necessary to give the Soviet Union assurances on the Western allies' intention of opening a second front at a time when Germany was preparing for a fresh offensive in the East. The plan took into account U.S. public opinion which was demanding the opening of a second front. With Congressional elections scheduled for the fall of 1942, this issue was important for the Democratic Party.

Another consideration facing the President and his advisors in their decision on the opening of a second front was the possible future participation of the Soviet Union in the war against Japan. General John R. Deane, who headed the American military mission in Moscow between 1943 and 1945, later recalled: "In those days, and indeed almost until the final collapse of Japan, the President and the Chiefs of Staff attached the greatest importance to Soviet participation in the Pacific War."²⁴

Roosevelt decided to send his personal adviser Harry Hopkins and U.S. Army Chief of Staff General George Marshall to London to brief the British Government on the U.S. plan.

In a letter to Churchill dated April 3, 1942, Roosevelt wrote: "What Harry and Geo. Marshall will tell you all about has my heart and *mind* in it. Your people and mine demand the establishment of a front to draw off pressure on the Russians, and these peoples are wise enough to see that the Russians are today killing more Germans and destroying more equipment than you and I put together. Even if full success is not attained, the *big* objective will be."²⁵

Hopkins and Marshall in principle received the consent of the British Government to open a second front in 1942 (Operation Roundup) and land an allied infantry force in 1943 (Operation Sledgehammer).

On April 11 Roosevelt summoned Andrei A. Gromyko, who was then a counsellor at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, and handed him a personal letter addressed to the head of the Soviet Government. In it Roosevelt suggested that the Soviet Union send a dele-

gation headed by the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs to Washington to discuss the issue of the opening of a second front. On April 20 Stalin sent Roosevelt a reply in which he indicated that the Soviet Government agreed to the Soviet foreign minister and a military representative meeting with the President to discuss the issue of a second front in Europe in the near future. In his letter Stalin noted that the Soviet envoys would also visit London for an exchange of opinions with the British Government.²⁶ President Roosevelt, in the letter to Churchill in which he argued the case for the opening of a second front in 1942, wrote: "Because of weather conditions the operation cannot be delayed until the end of the year."²⁷

After intense and complicated negotiations between Molotov, Churchill and Roosevelt in which other high military and diplomatic officials took part, agreement was reached on the opening of a second front. In the Soviet-American and Anglo-Soviet communiques issued following the negotiations, it was stated that "full understanding was reached with regard to the urgent tasks of creating a second front in Europe in 1942."²⁸

Soviet leaders understood that in order to open a second front, the allies would have to overcome many obstacles. However the defeat of German forces outside Moscow, the subsequent counteroffensive by the Red Army and Germany's concentration of its own and its allies' main forces on the Soviet-German front provided the underpinnings for a successful offensive against the German Reich from the West. The Soviet Union was right to expect that the United States and Great Britain, which had more than ten million men under arms, would mount military operations in Europe and thereby deflect some of Hitler's divisions away from the Soviet-German front. This would not only have provided considerable help to the Soviet Union but reduced the length of the war and the total number of victims.

The U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union reported back to Washington: "In view of the manner in which the Soviet Government and people have accepted what would appear here to be a solemn obligation on the part of the United States and Great Britain to create a second front in 1942, I feel convinced that if such a front does not materialize quickly and on a large scale, these people would be so deluded in their belief in our sincerity of purpose and will for concerted action that inestimable harm will be done to the cause of the United Nations."²⁹

Attempts are often encountered on the part of Western historians to justify the non-execution by the United States and Great Britain of their obligations to create a second front. They either maintain that the United States made every effort to open a second front as promised but was hindered by British intransigence, or argue that the creation of a new front against Germany in 1942 or 1943 was impossible owing to the lack of the necessary forces and equipment.

In a government-sponsored study, *Global Logistics and Strategy 1943-1945*, Robert Coakley and Richard Leighton write: "Churchill had been the real architect and Roosevelt only a pawn in the postponement of the cross-Channel invasion in the summer of 1942, in violation of British pledges made in April. As a consequence, invasion preparations had been suspended, the British Isles stripped of U.S. troops, and U.S. resources diverted, with attendant confusion and waste, into the development of a new line of communications and a new invasion base in North Africa."³⁰

Interesting in this respect is the assessment of the U.S. attitude toward the opening of a second front expressed by Michael Howard in the official British study, *Grand Strategy*. Howard shows that while advancing plans for the opening of a second front in 1942-1943, the Americans basically supported the British policy on this issue. Commenting on the American wartime strategy involving the opening of the second front, Howard writes: "American resources, originally earmarked for 'Bolero,' [shipment of U.S. troops to Britain for a cross-Channel invasion - Auth.] had flowed towards the Pacific, the Mediterranean and even the Middle East for the 1943 assault to be a practical proposition. Guadalcanal and 'Torch' had between them ruined the simplicity of Marshall's original grand design, and on its ruins a new strategy had now to be planned."³¹

The alternation between unity and disunity in the anti-Hitler coalition was predictable. For the political objectives of the Soviet Union and its real contribution to the defeat of the German invaders were largely different from the political objectives and contribution of the other members of the coalition. However, and most importantly, the designs of the Nazi leadership to cause a split of the anti-fascist forces and prevent their coordinated actions fell through.

The anti-Hitler coalition demonstrated the vast possibilities for states with differing social systems to work together to accomplish grand objectives.

NOTES

¹*History of the Second World War, 1939-1945*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1974, p. 255 (in Russian).

²*Daitoa Senso Kokan Sen Shi*, Vol. 73, Part 2, Tokyo, 1974, pp. 19, 23; *The Second World War. A Short History*, Moscow, 1984, p. 164 (in Russian).

³*American Military History*, Edited by Maurice Matloff, Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, Washington, 1969, p. 528.

⁴*Daily Worker*, June 23, 1941.

⁵*Daily Worker*, July 1, 1941.

⁶Ralph B. Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, 1939-1945*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1976, pp. 60-61.

⁷I.N. Zemskov, *Diplomatic History of the Second Front*, Moscow, 1982, p. 11 (in Russian).

⁸*The Unrelenting Struggle. War Speeches by Winston S. Churchill*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1942, p. 174.

⁹*Foreign Relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers, 1941*, Vol. 1, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1958, pp. 767-768.

¹⁰*Soviet Foreign Policy During the Great Patriotic War*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1946, pp. 148-149 (in Russian).

¹¹*History of Diplomacy*, Vol. 4, Moscow, 1975, p. 262 (in Russian).

¹²*Soviet-French Relations During the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945. Documents and Materials*, Moscow, 1959, p. 47 (in Russian).

¹³*Soviet Foreign Policy During the Great Patriotic War*, Vol. 1, pp. 170-171.

¹⁴*History of the Second World War, 1939-1945*, Vol. 4, Moscow, 1975, p. 178 (in Russian).

¹⁵*Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the U.S.A. and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, Vol. 1, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1957, p. 39.

¹⁶*Correspondence...*, Vol. 1, p. 13.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

²⁰Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins. An Intimate History*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1950, p. 394.

²¹I.N. Zemskov, op. cit., p. 37.

²²William Manchester, *American Caesar*, Dell Books, New York, 1979, p. 283.

²³Frederick L. Schuman, *Soviet Politics. At Home and Abroad*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1946, pp. 432-433.

²⁴John R. Deane, *The Strange Alliance. The Story of Our Efforts at Wartime Co-operation with Russia*, The Viking Press, New York, 1943, p. 41.

²⁵*Roosevelt and Churchill. Their Secret Wartime Correspondence*, edited by Francis L. Lewenheim et al., Saturday Review Press, New York, 1975, p. 202.

²⁶*Correspondence...*, Vol. 2, pp. 23-24.

²⁷*Churchill and Roosevelt. The Complete Correspondence, Vol. 1, Alliance Emerging, October 1933-November 1942*, edited by Warren F. Kimball, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1984, p. 503.

²⁸*Foreign Relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers. 1942*, Vol. 3, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1961, p. 594; *History of Diplomacy*, Vol. 4, p. 265. Western historians often maintain that the United States and Great Britain never gave the Soviet Union firm promises to open a second front in 1942. They base this assertion on a June 10, 1942 memorandum by Churchill to Molotov in which the British Prime Minister conditioned the opening of a second front on the availability of special landing vehicles, the guarantee of the success of the operations and so forth.

"However Soviet scholars rightly point out that the British Prime Minister's memo resembled a unilateral statement, and cannot be considered separately from the joint communiques and the negotiations as a whole, during which the Soviet delegation made a number of major concessions (such as the reduction of British wartime deliveries and the removal from the text of the Anglo-Soviet agreement of the question of the recognition of the Western boundaries of the U.S.S.R.) in order to reach agreement." I.N. Zemskov, op. cit., p. 91.

²⁹*Foreign relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers. 1942*, Vol. 3, p. 598.

³⁰Robert W. Coakley, Richard M. Leighton, *Global Logistics and Strategy 1943-1945*, in the series: *United States Army in World War II*, Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, Washington, 1968, pp. 272-273.

³¹Michael Howard, *Grand Strategy, Vol. 4, August 1942-September 1943*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1972, p. 221.

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SOVIET MILITARY-ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN, 1941-1942

The Soviet state planned to achieve victory over the fascist bloc relying mainly on its own resources. However the temporary successes of the Nazi invaders and the loss of important industrial regions complicated the Soviet Union's efforts to build up its defense industry, which adversely affected the country's military and economic might and the capability of the Soviet armed forces. In these conditions deliveries from the allies could have somewhat lessened the burden of converting the Soviet economy over to a wartime footing and creating a sturdy rear capable of supplying all that was necessary for the army in the field.

The scale of war production of the United States and Great Britain and the state of their armed forces allowed them to render the necessary support to the Soviet Union. In the second half of 1941 the United States and Great Britain produced 6,568 tanks while in the same period Germany turned out only 1,890.¹ The allies, especially the United States, had much experience behind them in rendering such assistance and well-developed channels for doing so. Prominent among them was the Lend-Lease Act passed by the U.S. Congress on March 11, 1941. It gave the President the right to lend or lease to any country whose defense was considered vital to the security of the United States armaments, military hardware and strategic materials. Congress set aside special funds for granting assistance under the Lend-Lease Act.

On June 22 and 24, following the invasion of the Soviet Union by Nazi Germany, the heads of the British and U.S. governments stated that they would support the Soviet Union against Hitler's armies and offered to give "whatever help we can to Russia and the Russian people."² However much time passed before these promises were turned into real aid, a circumstance behind which lay several causes.

The poor performance of the Soviet armies at the outset of the war served to reinforce the view among British and American quarters that a Soviet defeat at the hands of Germany was inevitable. The former Soviet wartime ambassador to London I.M. Maisky wrote in his memoirs that the British defense ministry believed that "the Germans would march through Russia like a knife through butter." The pessimists, he added, maintained that Hitler would take Russia in six weeks, while the optimists asserted that he would need three months.³

Uncertainty over the Soviet ability to hold out against Hitler's armies triggered a debate among policy makers in London and Washington as to the purpose, scale and promptness of assistance to the Soviet Union. Faulty assessments of the military and economic potential of the Soviet Union impelled them to look for compromises which would, on the one hand, prolong the resistance of the Red Army for as long as possible, and at the same time reduce the risk to their own interests while giving military aid to the Soviet Union. Such a compromise was reflected in the policy of promising aid but actually giving it only when absolutely forced to do so. The bottom line is that contrary to their stated intentions, the United States and Great Britain were in no hurry to carry out their promises. As Winston Churchill himself admitted, in 1941 he tried "to fill the void by civilities."⁴

Throughout June and July 1941, negotiations were held in the U.S.S.R., the United States and Great Britain on the issue of wartime deliveries. However from the outset the negotiations were snarled by considerable opposition to granting aid to the Soviet Union, making progress at the talks slow and unsteady. In July the United States and Great Britain shipped only 27,500 tons of materials to the Soviet Union, most of it non-military in nature. In September, despite a deterioration of the situation on the Soviet-German front, the allies delivered even less aid than in August.

In a letter to Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, dated August 15, 1941, Roosevelt and Churchill wrote: "We are at the moment cooperating to provide you with the very maximum of supplies that you most urgently need. Already many shiploads have left our shores and more will leave in the immediate future..."

"We realize fully how vitally important to the defeat of Hitlerism is the brave and steadfast resistance of the Soviet Union, and we feel therefore that we must not in any circumstances fail to act

quickly and immediately in this matter of planning the program for the future allocation of our joint resources."⁵

But on September 4, 1941 Churchill told Soviet Ambassador Maisky that "until winter we cannot give you any kind of serious assistance — either by opening a second front or by providing broad deliveries of the types of weapons you need."⁶

In August 1941 Roosevelt pointed out at a war cabinet meeting that "nearly six weeks had elapsed since the Russian war had begun and that practically none of the materials Russia needed were actually on the way."⁷

In the fall of 1941 the Soviet Government made fresh efforts to receive real military aid from its allies.

On September 29 a tripartite three-day conference began in Moscow on military aid, resulting in the signing of the Confidential Protocol of the Conference of the Representatives of the U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and Great Britain. The protocol was valid for the period from October 1, 1941 to late June 1942 and embodied two different approaches to the rendering of aid. The Soviet side had included in the protocol a well-considered list of requirements which showed that the U.S.S.R. was looking beyond the temporary setbacks experienced in the early stages of the war to the prospect of a long and tedious struggle against the primary enemy. Out of the 70 items included in the Soviet draft of the protocol only 15 concerned armaments (not counting requests by the Navy). The rest were mostly made for industrial technology and strategic raw materials. Edward Stettinius later wrote that the Soviets "wanted many things that no nation which thought itself on the verge of defeat would have worried about."⁸

Although the Soviet requests were relatively modest, the allies declined to immediately okay the delivery of sixty percent of the strategic raw materials and industrial equipment requested by Moscow and all requests by the Soviet Navy and for medicines, saying that London and Washington needed additional time to study them. The requests for arms were also trimmed back or altered. Instead of the 300 bombers and 100 fighter aircraft a month the Soviet Union asked for the allies agreed to deliver 300 fighters and only 100 bombers. Likewise, instead of 1,100 tanks requested only 500 were to be delivered, only 152 of the requested 300 anti-aircraft guns, 5,000 of the needed 10,000 heavy vehicles and 2,000 jeeps and so forth. Soviet requests for communications equipment were at first totally denied. Deliveries were to be less than requested also

for strategic raw materials: instead of the 4,000 tons a month of aluminum only 2,000 tons, and only 1,000 tons of armored plating as opposed to the 10,000 tons that were needed.⁹

The conference also resolved the issue of Soviet raw materials deliveries to the United States and Great Britain. The head of the U.S. delegation, Averell Harriman, noted in a speech to the Moscow conference that "the Soviet Government is supplying Great Britain and the United States with large quantities of raw materials which are urgently needed by those countries."¹⁰

The Moscow conference was an important nexus in the development of Soviet-Anglo-American relations, including the military field. It dispelled the hopes of the Hitlerites that the Soviet Union could be isolated internationally. In his speech at the closing session of the conference, Vyacheslav Molotov, the head of the Soviet delegation, expressed the hope that "the deliveries of weapons and strategic materials for the defense of the U.S.S.R. that were already being made would take on a broad and systematic character."¹¹

However the deliveries from the allies were made with frequent disruptions and in smaller than expected quantities.

In a speech delivered October 27, 1941, President Roosevelt said: "Nobody who admires qualities of courage and endurance can fail to be stirred by the full-fledged resistance of the Russian people. The Russians are fighting for their own soil and their own homes. Russia needs all kinds of help ... toward the successful defense against the invaders. From the United States and from Britain, she is getting great quantities of those essential supplies."¹²

Three days later Roosevelt approved deliveries under the Confidential Protocol and ordered that the Soviet Union be given one million dollars in Lend-Lease money. This decision was of great importance since it in effect made the country a solid ally of the Soviet Union to which it was bound by major military, political and economic interests and helped the Soviet Union to preserve its foreign currency reserves.

Despite Lend-Lease aid, allied deliveries to the Soviet Union, in light of the growing requirements of the Soviet Army and war economy, continued to remain insignificant. The terms of the Confidential Protocol were not duly fulfilled. Of the 800 aircraft Great Britain was supposed to deliver between October and December only 669 were in fact delivered. The same was true of tanks, with the Soviet Union receiving only 487 of the 1,000 promised big tanks and 330 of the 600 promised whippet tanks.¹³ "Delivery of supplies to

Russia in the latter part of 1941 and the early months of 1942 was disappointingly slow," wrote former chief of the American military mission to the U.S.S.R. General John R. Deane.¹⁴ And historian Robert H. Jones observed that "although the American Lend-Lease officials made every effort ... to deliver Russian goods on schedule, they fell far behind in the last part of 1941 and the first part of 1942."¹⁵ Thus, the aid rendered by the allies could not have been of much significance.

The resistance of Soviet forces in 1941, including the defeat of Nazi troops in the Battle for Moscow, was accomplished using Soviet arms and equipment. By the beginning of December 1941, for instance, Soviet troops defending Moscow had 1,376 aircraft, 678 tanks, 52,904 vehicles and 415 rocket launchers. The allies were represented by some 200 aircraft and a few Matilda and Valentine tanks.¹⁶

Organizing deliveries of allied supplies to the U.S.S.R. posed a difficult problem. Throughout 1941 and 1942 three sea routes—through the North, the Far East and Iran—and two air routes—across Siberia and via South Africa and Iran—were worked out.

The most economical route was through the North—from ports in Britain and Iceland to Murmansk and Arkhangelsk in the Soviet Union. The location of these ports—relatively close by sea from the British Isles and not far from the center of the country—made it possible to quickly supply weapons and war materiel to the front and raw materials to industrial regions. But it was also the most dangerous route since it lay close to German air and naval bases in Norway. The most hazardous period was between April and September, when the sun never sets in the polar region.

The Northern route was divided into two zones—one British, one Soviet. Cargo was delivered by British, American and, until 1943, Soviet vessels grouped in convoys ranging in size from 6-10 ships in 1941 to 30-40 in subsequent years. The convoys were protected by a cruiser, two to three destroyers, and from ten to sixteen escort ships, which stuck with the convoy throughout its journey, and a cluster of battleships, cruisers and aircraft carriers, which escorted it to the half-way point. As the convoy crossed into the Soviet zone it would be accompanied by Soviet vessels from the Northern Fleet. Owing to the courage of Soviet pilots and seamen, losses among the convoys in the Soviet zone were minimal. Convoy PQ-13, which left Iceland on March 20, 1942, lost five transport ships before entering the Soviet zone. After entering the Soviet zone it was again attacked

by enemy vessels. In the battle the British cruiser *Trinidad* was damaged when one of its own torpedoes exploded. All escort ships except for two—the Soviet destroyers *Sokrushitelny* and *Gremyashchy*—were ordered to escort the *Trinidad* to Murmansk. The two Soviet vessels successfully repulsed attacks from the sea and air, put out of action an enemy destroyer, sunk a submarine and downed a torpedo bomber, all the while not letting a single transport ship be harmed.

However certain people in British military and political quarters sought to use the difficulties encountered in the Northern passage to reduce aid to the Soviet Union. The British naval command considered the convoys "a regular millstone round our necks" and thought it unwise to risk large warships for the sake of it. The result was the chaotic organization of deliveries illustrated by the sad fate of convoy PQ-17.

In planning this operation, the British Admiralty's main concern was destroying the German battleship *Tirpitz* which they were deathly afraid of. Because of faulty planning of the operation during which the escort ships abandoned the convoy, twenty-five of the thirty-four vessels making up the convoy were lost and 99,316 tons of cargo sunk to the bottom, including 430 tanks, 210 aircraft, 3,350 motor vehicles and other valuable equipment.¹⁷ Meanwhile the German squadron was encountered by a submarine commanded by Captain N.A. Lunin of the Soviet Navy, who despite being at a great disadvantage attacked the *Tirpitz*, forcing the Germans to retreat.

Since the Northern Fleet command had not been warned about the catastrophe, it had a difficult time arranging the rescue of the ships and men. The search continued for more than twenty days and encompassed a thousand-mile area from Spitsbergen to Novaya Zemlya. Around three hundred allied sailors were eventually rescued. Only eleven transport ships from the convoy made it to Soviet ports on their own power.¹⁸

The PQ-17 disaster combined with the faulty planning of the British naval command served as a tragic testimony to the general organizational shortcomings, poor discipline, frequent absence of a willingness to help, and insufficient training in saving the impaired ships that encumbered the convoy operations. A crew would often abandon ship upon the first torpedo strike or bomb attack. The vessel would then be sunk by the escort ships to prevent it from falling into the hands of the enemy, even though it

could have remained afloat and been steered. Nine ships were lost that way in convoy PQ-17. Meanwhile the Soviet tanker *Azerbaijan*, which had caught fire, and the transport ship *Donbass* were saved by their crews and brought back to port. The *Donbass* crew even repulsed six air attacks and saved an allied vessel. A similar feat of heroism was displayed by the crew of *Stary Bolshhevik* sailing with convoy PQ-16. The crew put out a fire that had broken out on the ship and at the same time beat back 47 air attacks, an accomplishment for which the ship's captain, I.I. Afanasiev, his deputy M.P. Petrovsky and sailor V.I. Aksenok were decorated with the Hero of the Soviet Union titles and the ship itself received an Order of Lenin.¹⁹

The passage of the convoys was sometimes slowed down by the inclusion in them of slow-moving, obsolete vessels. And at times insufficient concern was shown toward the make-up of the crews.

In comparison the Far Eastern sea route was long (1,290 miles) and slow (from 15 to 22 days). Shipping the freight by rail to the center of the country also took up much time. For this reason it was used mostly for the delivery of non-military cargoes. The Japanese Government, in a bid to aid its German ally, did its best to block the arrival to the Soviet Union of ships bound from Great Britain and the United States. In December 1941 the Japanese Navy sunk three Soviet ships and captured two others. Between 1941 and 1944 the Japanese sunk thirteen Soviet vessels and seized another 178.²⁰

Following the arrival of Soviet and British forces on Iranian territory in August 1941 a new supply route was created from the Persian Gulf ports across land to the Soviet Union. It took vessels several months to complete the 15,000 to 18,000 mile journey from the United States to the Persian Gulf. The Iranian ports and railroads had limited capacity and needed to be reconstructed to handle the large amounts of cargo intended for the Soviet Union. Under the terms of an agreement between the U.S.S.R. and its allies, the railways and roads from the Persian Gulf to Tehran were to be operated by Great Britain and then the United States, and the stretch from Tehran to the Soviet border by the Soviet Union.

An air link was opened in 1942 between Alaska and Siberia for delivering aircraft from the United States to the U.S.S.R. The route stretched for 6,000 kilometers over sparsely populated regions and dangerously past the Aleutian Islands, some of which had been occupied by Japanese forces.²¹

A small part of the aircraft were flown to the U.S.S.R. via South Africa and Iran: this route was used limitedly.

In July through September a small percentage of U.S. supplies, mostly cargo for the maintenance of the trans-Siberian air route, was shipped to the Soviet Union across the Bering Strait to the ports of Igarka and Ambarchik.

According to American data, altogether between 1941 and 1945 3,964,000 tons of freight, or 22 percent of all deliveries, was shipped to the Soviet Union through the Northern route, 8,243,000 tons, or 47 percent, through the Pacific corridor, and 4,159,000 tons, or 23 percent, through the Persian corridor.²²

Through the Siberian corridor was delivered 43 percent of all aircraft sent to the Soviet Union, with another 33 percent arriving through Iran and 23 percent via the Northern corridor.²³

It should be mentioned that the criteria by which the allies judged the fulfillment of their obligations under the aid agreements did not reflect the real situation. For their purposes, they counted all the supplies handed over to Soviet representatives in the United States and Britain as deliveries. In actual fact, many of the supplies at best waited in warehouses for months before they were shipped and often sunk to the bottom of the sea aboard transport ships. Supplies that were not delivered before the expiration of the first protocol were included in the second protocol, and thus the first protocol was formally considered fulfilled.

The Soviet rout of German troops in the battle for Moscow and the winter offensive of the Soviet Army showed to the entire world the kind of role that the U.S.S.R. would play in the defeat of Nazi Germany. In the first months of 1942 Anglo-American aid began to increase.²⁴

Meanwhile the defeat of the Nazi forces outside Moscow helped to reassure the ruling quarters of the United States and Great Britain but at the same time made them uneasy for the first time regarding the possible victory of the U.S.S.R.

In 1942 the Soviet wartime economy began to achieve its first successes, supplying increasing amounts of modern armaments and equipment to the Soviet armed forces. Nevertheless shortages of certain items such as transport vehicles continued to exist. Under these circumstances supplies from the allies, especially in view of the imminent summer offensive of the Germans, could have eased the task of the Soviet forces.

However in the spring of 1942, as news of an impending German offensive reached the West, the fears of the allies resurfaced once again. Deliveries to the Soviet Union, instead of increasing, were reduced.

In the spring of 1942 the Soviet Government took steps to reinforce the anti-Hitler coalition by negotiating several important agreements with Great Britain and the United States. Among them was the Second Protocol Between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States and Great Britain Covering the Period of July 1, 1942 to June 30, 1943. However because of the inability to come to agreement on a number of provisions within the protocol the signing was not held until October 6, 1942. Under the new protocol, the allies were to deliver to the Soviet Union over the agreed time period 4,200 aircraft, 5,250 tanks, around 3,500 anti-aircraft and 2,100 anti-tank guns, 240,000 Thompson sub-machine guns, 120,000 heavy trucks, and assorted communications and other equipment. Whereas armaments were to be delivered as requested, supplies of other goods such as industrial equipment and strategic raw materials were significantly cut. For instance, 24,000 tons of aluminum were to be delivered instead of the 48,000 tons requested and only 12,000 tons of armored plating against the 48,000 tons requested. What's more, the protocol was considered to have gone into effect July 1 although it was not signed until October.²⁵

The first protocol on aid expired on June 30, 1942 without it being fully carried out. Instead of the 1,800 aircraft that were supposed to be delivered the United States supplied only 545, or 30 percent of the total. Likewise only 34 percent (545 tanks) of the agreed-on tanks were delivered and 19.4 percent of the promised vehicles (16,502 trucks instead of 90,000).²⁶

In June 1942 the allies, citing the PQ-17 tragedy, suspended deliveries through the Northern corridor almost until December, and despite promises to increase deliveries through the Persian corridor as compensation not only did not do so but reduced them. Mostly responsible for this was Winston Churchill. Stalin wrote to him: "I never imagined that the British Government would deny us delivery of war materials precisely now, when the Soviet Union is badly in need of them in view of the grave situation on the Soviet-German front."²⁷

In reply to an Associated Press correspondent, who asked whether the allied aid to the U.S.S.R. was effective and what could be done to expand this aid, Stalin answered that in comparison to

assistance the Soviet Union was rendering to the allies by drawing the brunt of German aggression upon itself, allied aid to the Soviet Union was up to then little effective. Stalin stated that only one thing was needed to make this aid more effective: the allies' full and timely fulfillment of their obligations.²⁸

It is worthwhile noting that, as in 1941, allied deliveries over the course of 1942 were carried out rather irregularly. Deliveries dropped off in the summer of 1942 as the situation on the Soviet-German front deteriorated as a result of the Nazi offensive and began to increase only in December, when the outcome of the battle on the Volga had already been decided.

An examination of allied deliveries over 1941-1942 shows that although their composition changed in accordance with the demands of the war, they were mainly made up of industrial equipment and strategic raw materials.

The quality of military equipment received from the allies was not always high. In the summer of 1942 Stalin pointed out to U.S. President Roosevelt that American tanks burned quickly after being hit by enemy anti-tank projectiles.²⁹ Many Soviet soldiers who had fought in the front lines confirmed this. Commander of a tank battalion V.G. Shashko, who was decorated with the Hero of the Soviet Union title for his wartime exploits, later wrote of the British Valentine tanks: "These tanks in all respects are worse than ours — in cross-country ability, fire power and maneuverability. Inside they are comfortable as a sitting-room, but in battle they work poorly."³⁰

The importance of Anglo-American deliveries to the Soviet Union can be judged by comparing them with the Soviet production of analogous armaments and materiel. Throughout the war years the Soviet Union produced 489,900 guns, 136,800 aircraft and 102,500 tanks and self-propelled guns, whereas deliveries from the United States and Great Britain amounted to 9,600 guns, 18,753 aircraft and 11,576 tanks and self-propelled guns. Thus, the deliveries from the allies accounted for less than two percent of artillery pieces, around 12 percent of aircraft and ten percent of tanks received by the Red Army during the war.³¹

On the whole, allied deliveries of industrial goods during the war period made up some four percent of total Soviet industrial output.³²

Nevertheless, the assistance received by the Soviet Union under Lend-Lease, especially during 1941 and 1942 when the Red Army

was engaged in a life or death struggle against invading German armies, played a positive role.

NOTES

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²⁵*Soviet Supply Protocols*, pp. 19-24, 15.

²⁶*History of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Vol. I, p. 394.

²⁷*Correspondence...*, Vol. 1, p. 54.

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Georgy Baidukov

Colonel General, U.S.S.R.

MISSION IN THE U.S.A., 1941

On a balmy summer day in August 1941, several months after the start of the Great Patriotic War against fascist Germany, two large twin-engined seaplanes taxied for take off on the Khimki Water Reservoir outside Moscow. On board each of the planes were thirty men: one group was commanded by Mikhail Gromov, the overall mission commander, the other by me. Our destination was the United States.

The crews of the seaplanes were made up of airmen who had served in the Arctic region. Piloting the planes were Ivan Cherevichny and Zadkov.

I sat next to Cherevichny in order to supervise his flight.

Cherevichny, sitting in the pilot's seat to my left, was visibly nervous as he tried to smoke. I grabbed his pack of cigarettes and tossed them out the door of the cockpit. He gave me a dissatisfied look, but then calmed down.

"Comrade Cherevichny," I barked. "Get the taxiing over with and take off. Don't you hear the German bombs and our artillery shells bursting? If you tarry too long they'll postpone our flight because of the air alert."

Mikhail Gromov, who had decided to fly with us, stuck his head inside the cockpit door and repeated, "Take off—and hurry it up!"

Cherevichny executed the take off flawlessly. Zadkov followed him into the air. The engines were running smoothly. I looked over to Cherevichny and noticed that he was wearing around his neck a fine silk kerchief. Back in Khimki I had watched how four young girls had kissed Cherevichny goodbye, each of them tying a kerchief on his neck. Cherevichny would barely have time to

remove and hide in his pocket the latest gift before submissively bowing his neck in expectation of the next offering, which would be fastened with a clever knot and a kiss to boot. This was my first meeting with Cherevichny, though before then I had heard and read much about him.

Our journey would take us northwards along the Arctic Ocean, across Alaska and Canada to the United States. The two groups consisted of combat pilots, navigators, air force engineers and industrial experts, all travelling in civilian clothing but armed with pistols.

A war was going on, and we were headed for America. For what purpose? I can still remember our meeting with Joseph Stalin in his Kremlin study, his haggard, slightly age-worn face.

Stalin shook Gromov's and my hand and asked us to have a seat. As was his custom, he began to pace back and forth along a strip of carpeting. He then turned around, walked up to his desk and said, "Our aviation has suffered a great misfortune. A large number of aircraft has been destroyed on the ground in a sudden raid across the border."

"This should have been expected," Gromov inveighed calmly. "The commanders were continually told to expect some kind of provocations instead of being ordered to treat seemingly peaceful overflights as hostile. Or at least they should have been taught how to camouflage properly. Many of the planes stood out in the open in a straight line, like in a parade."

Stalin replied, clearly displeased: "Now we will find out the reasons for the mistakes. They should have been learned earlier. Cases are known when our fighters became airborne momentarily and fought with the 'guests,' while others were saved precisely because of the kind of camouflage you told about. Now that the war is on, things will fall into place."

Stalin then paced up and down his study one more time and said: "I am thinking of sending you, Comrade Gromov, and you, Comrade Baidukov, to America to conduct negotiations with Roosevelt on supplying us immediately, either on credit or for cash, a certain number of bombers and fighter aircraft suitable for modern warfare."

Stalin paused, grew pensive, and then added: "You were given a warm reception by Roosevelt in 1937, when he noted the historical significance of the ANT-25 flights. I believe that Roosevelt will receive you warmly this time, too."

We sat listening in silence. Stalin inquired, "Have you any doubts?"

Gromov replied: "Personally I have no doubts. Roosevelt is a decent person, although I know nothing about diplomacy."

I suggested that we take with us pilots, navigators and engineers who had seen combat. Stalin added: "And knowledgeable men from the aviation industry."

As I was watching Cherevichny I thought to myself: the flights across the North Pole in 1937 would surely have an impact on the U.S. President's decision; the Soviet Embassy in the United States would probably also do something to persuade him, although now our enemies would try to block our efforts both openly and in secret. Stalin was probably right in trying to derive capital from our achievements of four years ago.

On the way to Anadyr the weather alternated between dense fog descending all the way to the ground and bright sunshine.

Cherevichny, as he was wont to do, flew close to the ground under the low layer of clouds, admiring the large herds of reindeer as they fled huge packs of pursuing wolves and the unfamiliar gnawing sound of the seaplanes' engines. I looked at the map and saw that many of the altitudes marked on it were only approximate. Flying low, a pilot could easily bump into one of the taller or lower peaks. The result would be tragic.

"Ivan, make an effort to climb above the fog and clouds," I ordered.

Cherevichny glanced at me in bewilderment. I repeated my order, and Cherevichny once again cast a quick, bewildered look.

I knocked at the small door connecting the cockpit and the passenger cabin. Gromov's head appeared in it, and I explained the problem to him.

"We'll look into this at once," he said, closing the door.

At the door the navigator soon appeared carrying a note, which he handed to me. It read, "Altitude 2,500 meters, compass bearing as before."

"Correct," I replied.

Cherevichny was displeased, but he could do nothing about it. As soon as we had broken through the first layer of clouds I took the controls.

"Go and take a break," I ordered Cherevichny.

He in fact had fallen off to sleep before even finishing smoking his cigarette.

Leaving the clouds at an altitude of 1,500 meters, I spotted several uncharted peaks which could have been very dangerous in poor weather.

While Cherevichny slept the weather got better. He sensed that the seaplane was already flying along the rocky coast of Alaska, the mirror-like surface of the Pacific becoming increasingly visible. Far inland could be seen the gray, gloomy outlines of mountain ranges, their peaks covered with a white blanket of snow. Scattered puffs of clouds made their way inland, driven by southerly ocean winds.

I handed the controls over to Cherevichny. Soon we spotted on the coast the small town of Nome. The ocean waves, their furious white caps visible from afar, pounded the shore, sending up columns of foamy water.

The uninclosed waters off Nome did not provide the best conditions for our seaplanes to land, forcing us to conduct a prolonged search for a suitable landing site. Gromov recalled that once the American pilot Post landed his plane to the east of Nome in a small lagoon.

We circled a small, dark-green lake several times. Its bottom could be seen clearly, which made us conclude that it was too shallow to attempt a landing lest we risk damaging the underside of the seaplane.

As we headed back in the direction of Nome, we noticed that Zadkov was no longer following us. We knew that he had made it as far as Nome. But now he was nowhere in sight. I was certain that he had landed in some lagoon.

Gromov consulted with Cherevichny. I recalled that the American fighters, in greeting us, often dived toward the water. I pointed this fact out and said, "We have to land right here in the ocean. If the Americans had seen Zadkov land safely, they would have tried to lead us to him."

The three of us — Gromov, Cherevichny and I — decided to land on an ocean wave.

The engines were cut. Beneath us could be seen the motley roofs of miniature houses, cisterns of fuel oil, the wharf and waves. As we descended the waves appeared increasingly powerful and frightening. The seaplane struck the crest of a wave. The wave shook it violently and forced upwards. Cherevichny held tightly, increasing the speed of the engines. We came down again, hitting a second wave, the strike being more violent than the first one. We continued to go up and down, up and down.

The waves struck the seaplane so violently and so frequently that it was difficult to stay in one's seat. However our speed was soon reduced and the twin-engined seaplane settled firmly into the water. Two rescue boats circled close to the craft, unable to decide whether to dock.

It wasn't until two hours later that we finally boarded one of the boats, and this with some difficulty. Cherevichny and his crew stayed behind on the seaplane.

After our departure, Cherevichny flew off to search for a more suitable location to moor the seaplane.

A boisterous crowd of local people welcomed us ashore. We were met by the port supervisor, a respectable-looking man, who escorted us to the customs house to fill out declaration forms. After completing these formalities we were led to awaiting cars which took our entire group into town.

We were accommodated in barracks that were just finished and still smelled of fresh wood.

In Nome we saw how quickly and skillfully the Americans were able to build their air bases. Scores of barracks were erected practically in a matter of days. Next to them rose up just as quickly kitchens, mess halls, shower areas and toilets. All the barrack facilities were built according to strict standards.

We also witnessed in Nome how the Americans had superbly built air strips in locations seemingly unsuitable for this. In order to achieve a large enough area, they would fill in river beds and ravines and level off other areas. All obstacles were overcome quickly. Despite the large scope of the work, very few workers would be involved. All the military construction sites that we had the opportunity to see in America were highly mechanized.

The facilities at the American air bases we saw were well-built and aesthetically pleasing. It was reasonable enough to demand that they be well-built, but being aesthetically pleasing was not always smart. The lack of camouflage might have caused the Americans great dismay in the first days of the war in the event of a sudden attack.

During our stay in Nome we met with scores of American officers, rank-and-file soldiers and air base employees.

We were greeted warmly and repeatedly asked about the war with the Nazis. We encountered these warm feelings and goodwill toward us in Kadiak, Sitka and all the other American cities that we visited after Nome.

From Nome we set off on a path that took us along the fairy-tale-like shores of Alaska and Canada. On the flight to Kadiak and Sitka we watched as Japanese submarines sailed undeterred off the coast of Canada and the United States. Upon landing, we asked naval officials why the Japanese submarines were allowed to act so freely near major U.S. naval bases. In reply we were told that it didn't matter since the Japanese were preparing to attack the U.S.S.R. and not the United States.

It is difficult to say how sincere and competent such answers were in light of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 which caused the United States to enter the war.

I recall that at the American naval bases we visited the cooks and waiters were mostly of Japanese descent.

We pointed this strange fact out to the American commanders. In reply we were told that Japanese were also U.S. citizens. Later it became known that many of them had been officers of the Japanese General Staff.

Seven days after leaving Moscow we were in Seattle, where we said goodbye to our charming dare-devil pilots, Cherevichny and Zadkov, who returned home via Soviet Chukotka. Here began our introduction to American aviation.

The civil aviation of the United States made a strong impression on us. The large network functioned smoothly and punctually throughout the country. Passengers often preferred flying to other forms of transport. The all-metal Douglasses, fast-flying Lockheeds and Stratoliners became everyday phenomena for Americans. The number of airports had grown substantially since our last visit in 1937.

The presence of a large fleet of civilian airliners and experienced pilots constituted an indisputable plus for the U.S. air force. Civilian pilots were already suitably trained to fly bombers or troop transports, and civilian airplanes could be utilized to carry out various military missions. This amounted to a large reserve force that could be easily mobilized in time of war.

I had already experienced the journey southward from Seattle in 1937, but then the plane flew in the clouds and I was not able to see the natural beauty of the terrain below. This time the weather was excellent.

Landing in Portland, the airport looked entirely unfamiliar. And enormous area was covered by asphalt, the landing strips were large.

In the evening we reached San Francisco. It was foggy and visibility was so poor that we weren't able to see even the lights lining the Golden Gate Bridge across the bay.

At the Soviet Consulate our arrival was awaited impatiently. The consular employees were anxious for news about the situation at the front and in Moscow and wanted to hear about the bombing raids. From the numerous questions that were asked we realized how difficult it was to live so far away from the Motherland at this critical time and how poor was the information about events in the U.S.S.R.

Several Russian-language newspapers were published then in the United States. Standing out among them was *Russky Golos* (Russian Voice), which supported the cause of Soviet victory over Germany. The newspaper reprinted many articles from the Communist Party daily *Pravda* and the military paper, *Red Star*. Each day *Russky Golos* would give an accounting on its last page of donations by Americans to the Soviet war effort. In carefully reading line after line you would get the feeling that a sewing-machine factory worker in New York was donating more than just twenty dollars—he also was contributing his violent hatred of fascism.

Many church organizations in America were sympathetic to the Russian cause. But there were also some church leaders who refused to conduct prayer sessions in support of Russian victory because of the Russian Bolsheviks being Godless. One such priest was furiously assailed by patriotic-minded *Russky Golos* and by Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian public organizations.

Our struggle against Hitler seized the attention of the entire world and united people of various social backgrounds and views.

Our next stop after San Francisco was Los Angeles, from where we set off for Washington. In comparison with other U.S. cities such as New York and Chicago, the American capital was rather small and quiet. Everywhere you looked was greenery, making the city resemble a giant garden.

In Washington we had many interesting meetings with prominent Americans. We were received by President Roosevelt at his residence in the White House. He received us as old friends, recalling our visit in 1937. Our meeting had been scheduled to last fifteen minutes, but we talked for more than an hour. Roosevelt looked much better than he had in 1937. Our conversation touched on various subjects. Roosevelt was an excellent conversationalist; he was well versed in military matters and had a good understanding of the details. He had a good sense of humor despite his respectable age

and enormous work load. On his desk we spotted models of aircraft and warships of the latest design.

Secretary of War Henry Stimson joined in the talks, and the conversation soon turned to the main purpose of our visit. When we told of the perfidious attack of Goering's Luftwaffe on the forward-based air strips along the Soviet border and the extent of the damage, the President said unhesitatingly, "If you see anything you like from among our fleet of modern aircraft, we are prepared to give you as much help as we can."

The Secretary of War nodded his head in agreement. We made it known that it was our desire to receive Kittyhawk, Tomahawk and Aerocobra fighters, B-25 and B-26 medium bombers, and also the B-17 long-range bomber.

The President smiled and said, "It's a pity that I'm not Stalin."

Then Roosevelt told us that the B-17 was equipped with the North American bomb sight whose export was categorically forbidden, although it was known that the Nazis had stolen the blueprints for this top-secret targeting device, built a more perfected model of it and installed it on their Condor heavy bombers, which were now trying to break through to Moscow.

Roosevelt said once again, "Were I Stalin this question could be solved in a matter of minutes. But it would take the Secretary of War and myself months to persuade Congress. The opposition particularly would be clamorous."

Stimson inquired: "How many B-17s are you asking for?"

Gromov glanced at me, and I conveyed through Soviet Ambassador Umansky: "Initially, ten."

The President chuckled and began to assure us that hundreds of B-17s would soon be transferred to bases in England and that the Nazis would be punished for their inhuman policies.

It became clear to Gromov and me that we would not be getting the B-17s. Noticing our despair, Roosevelt suggested that we pay a call on the chief designer of the bomber and consult with him about installing a Soviet-designed sight and determine how much time would be required for this, keeping in mind that the B-17s would soon appear in the air over Germany flown by American pilots.

The procedure of viewing the different American aircraft, selecting the models and determining the quantity, as well as deciding where and when the crews were to be trained, was to be handled through our embassy in conjunction with the U.S. Department of War.

At the Department of War I met with General George Marshall, who was chief of the general staff. In 1937 he served in Vancouver, where he took us under his wing after the completion of our transpolar flight. We reminisced about Valery Chkalov and Alexander Belyakov, and I passed on regards from Belyakov to the general and his family. Marshall in turn conveyed his best wishes to Belyakov.

We visited the Department of War several times. It must be said that in America we were not forgotten—neither the deceased Valery Chkalov nor the others who had flown to America with Gromov and me across the North Pole in 1937.

The former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Joseph Davies invited us to his country estate to what proved to be a very interesting and useful meeting. That evening we mingled with cabinet members, senators, generals and other celebrities. Davies, who was a noted collector of Russian art works, showed us his paintings, chinaware and sculptures. His house resembled more a museum of Russian art than the estate of a rich American.

We talked with the American officials late into the evening, discussing the matter of aiding the U.S.S.R. and joining the fight against fascism. We told them about the combat operations of the Red Army and answered their many questions. We left Davies' estate in a good mood.

While in Washington we went to the cinema often. Most of the films we saw were second-rate adventure films that differed little from each other. However there were a few exceptions, one of which was Charlie Chaplin's "The Great Dictator." Chaplin's rendition of Goering caused the audience to break out into laughter, and his portrayal of Hitler provoked a torrent of abusive language, whistles and derogatory laughter. We sensed that the average American hated the Nazis.

Finishing up our business in the capital, our next stop was in Ohio, in the American middle west.

Our airplane landed at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base outside the city of Dayton, the site of a major aviation research complex. The airfield had excellent take-off and landing strips, many new buildings and hangars and a large tube for testing the aerodynamic qualities of airplane designs.

A considerable area of the airfield was taken up by various models of aircraft. We had no time to view them as we were immediately whisked off to Dayton.

There we were given accommodations on the sixth floor of a hotel. But we soon discovered that even on the sixth floor we were not sheltered from the noises of the street below. It was especially noisy on days when wedding parties, their cars decorated with multi-colored silk ribbons, flowers, and horseshoes, would initiate a chorus of horns, attracting the attention of bystanders and blocking traffic. According to some unwritten rule, the wedding parties would be given the right of way, and no matter how hard the traffic police would try, order would not be restored until the squealing, honking of horns and merry-making stopped on its own.

Once I had the opportunity to attend the wedding of an American test pilot from the air force base. There I discovered that some American customs are very similar to Russian ones. Like Russians, Americans are also friendly, outgoing and talkative. This circumstance enabled us to find a common language and establish contacts with pilots and technical personnel both at the aviation complex and the air-force base, where we examined advanced American aircraft.

Gromov, Yumashev and I asked for permission to test fly the Aerocobra fighter plane. But before we were allowed to do so it was decided to test the plane in the air. Upon descent the landing-gear failed to move into position. Ambulances and fire trucks scurried toward the runway. The duty officer invited the three of us to watch from the control tower. We were informed that all attempts to lower the landing gear, including manually, had failed, and that the pilot had been instructed to ditch the plane outside the city limits and parachute to safety.

At this moment we noticed darting across the air field a car in which sat a woman and two children. I asked why the family had been aroused and was told that close members of the family had the right to know and see everything for themselves.

Much to our surprise, we were asked our opinion of what should be done in this situation. Knowing that the engine of the Aerocobra was located in the plane's rear, we advised that as much fuel as possible be burned up, after which the pilot should fly as low as possible over the chain-link fence enclosing the air field and try to land on the grassy area at the base of the asphalt runway.

Following our advice, the pilot landed safely with only slight damage to the plane. There was an outpouring of joy mixed with tears as the wife and children hugged the courageous captain, a handsome red-headed Irishman.

We were thanked for our advice and celebrated the triumph two days in a row, though we did not forget to instruct our engineers to find out the cause of the malfunction.

A week later the suggestions of the chief designer were accepted and the modifications were made. At the beginning of September we completed the entire flight program and the Aerocobra was certified as among the best U.S. fighters suitable for waging aerial warfare on the Soviet-German front.

Back at the Wright-Patterson base, we began to fly the B-25 and the B-26. We had already been finishing the flight program when we were told that a wing had come off a B-26 during a practice dive. As a result, further test flights on this type of aircraft were suspended. Our burning curiosity to learn the cause of the mishap prompted us to ask that one of our engineers be included in the commission that was appointed to investigate the crash.

The commission found out that when the plane was assembled, the bolts fastening the wing on to the body of the bomber were improperly tightened. A check was ordered on all the planes assembled at the factory, which was carried out promptly and with a high degree of organization. To alleviate our concern, we were specially invited to the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base to watch as a test pilot guided the plane into a prolonged dive and performed other maneuvers that pressed the limits of a plane of that class.

We were struck by the attachment of the American designers to a three-wheeled chassis. This design highly impressed us since it allowed the pilot room for error in landing the plane and also made it easier to take off and land on soft runways. Other advantages it offered were improved braking ability, easier handling and greater stability.

The designers of the fighter aircraft experimented with placing the engines and guns in different locations on the plane body. The Aerocobra's engine, for example, was placed behind the cockpit in order to make room for more fire power and give the pilot a better view. The engine drove an elongated combined drive shaft, freeing up the plane's nose section for placement of cannons or machine guns.

The cockpit of the two-seater Lockheed fighter was wedged between two narrow fuselages above the wing, which made for excellent visibility and allowed plenty of space for various-calibered guns. Its twin engines allowed the plane to develop high speeds.

The B-25 and B-26 bombers, manufactured by the Glen Martin and North American corporations, respectively, boasted engines that developed high thrust at take off, thus allowing them to be used on short runways. Unlike other twin-engined planes, which could stay in flight only if both engines were running, the B-25 and B-26 could continue to fly on one engine. The reason for this was that the new bombers were fitted out with an all-new propeller mechanism designed by engineers at North American and Hamilton that enabled the propeller blade to turn freely after the engine died out, thus reducing destabilizing drag on the plane. The bombs on the advanced bombers were contained inside the fuselage, where they encountered less air resistance.

Of course, the American bombers were not entirely flawless, but they were constantly modified to meet modern aerial warfare conditions. We were highly impressed by the capabilities of the four-engined B-24 Consolidated bomber and the B-17.

The B-24 and the B-17 both possessed excellent flight characteristics: they were fast, had a large lift capacity and could fly at high altitudes. In bombing runs over Berlin, the Flying Fortress, as the B-17 was called, demonstrated its ability to remain far out of range of German fighter planes guarding the city. In one incident, a German fighter, stripped of all armaments except for a lone machine gun, managed to climb to the same altitude as a Boeing but was unable to hit the well-armed American bomber.

Other notable features of the B-17 were its unidirectional targeting system that operated all guns, and radios that connected the pilot simultaneously with ground control and other planes in the area.

During the war Soviet pilot Alexander Pokryshkin, who was a three-time hero of the Soviet Union, flew an American Aerocobra. The long-range air force, commanded by Marshal Alexander Golovanov, included B-25 and B-26 bombers.

Looking back after many years, I am able to state that our mission to the United States in 1941 was not in vain.

Returning home in November 1941, we reported that the mission had been fulfilled. It was our firm belief that the U.S. President — as well as the absolute majority of Americans — was sympathetic to the Soviet Union.

The Lend-Lease aid that our country soon began to receive was not able, of course, to satisfy our enormous requirements for weapons — nor was it expected to do so. Only thanks to our own efforts

at the home front was the miracle made possible. In the final two years of the war the Soviet defense industry supplied the country's army with more than enough weapons to drive out the Nazi invaders.

Nonetheless, the American planes acquired by us in 1941 helped us beat back the hard-pressing enemy.

Zinovy Sheinis

public affairs writer, U.S.S.R.

**MAXIM LITVINOV AND FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT
(FROM THE HISTORY OF SOVIET-AMERICAN
RELATIONS)**

I believe it important to highlight the contribution made by Soviet diplomat Maxim Litvinov to bring about the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the United States and to describe the relationship he had cultivated with U.S. President Roosevelt at two different stages in his career: in 1933 and in 1941-1943, when he was reinstated as a diplomat and served as the Soviet wartime ambassador in Washington.

By the late 1920s, the United States, impelled by the inexorable logic of world events, had slowly begun to move toward the idea of formally recognizing Moscow and establishing closer relations with the Soviet Union. Books about the Soviet Union began to appear in America along with articles in the press. In July 1929 the prominent American writer and social activist Johnson, who had written a series of articles about his earlier travels in the Soviet Union, again visited Moscow, where he was received by the Soviet chief of state Mikhail Kalinin. Johnson and the Soviet leader discussed the state of Soviet agriculture and raised the subject of a possible rapprochement between Moscow and Washington.

He also discussed the development of Soviet industry with Valerian Kulibyshev, the chairman of the All-Union National Economic Council, and had talks with Anastas Mikoyan on Soviet-American commercial relations. Upon his return to the United States Johnson wrote a series of articles on his visit.

Amid the economic crisis in the United States interest in the Soviet Union increased. Thousands of Americans came to the Soviet Union in search of work. Letters poured in to President Kalinin and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Litvinov from Americans of all walks of life, who told of their goodwill toward the Soviet people and expressed the hope that diplomatic relations would soon be established between the two countries.

Joseph Stalin, who had always paid great attention to foreign policy, particularly during the late 1920s, conferred frequently with Litvinov, whose advice and practical activities he valued highly. He particularly was pleased with Litvinov's efforts to bring about a normalization of relations with the United States of America, which eventually became a major objective of Soviet foreign policy. Stalin, who rarely granted audiences to foreign correspondents, at the behest of Litvinov received prominent American journalist Ralph Barnes. During the course of the interview Barnes asked Stalin whether it was not possible to convince Americans and Russians that an armed clash between the two countries would never occur under any circumstances. Stalin replied that there was nothing easier than convincing the people of both countries of the harm and criminality of mutual annihilation.

The interview took place on the eve of a trip by Litvinov to America to hold talks with President Roosevelt, the groundwork for which was laid by an exchange of letters between Roosevelt and Soviet President Kalinin. Without getting into the details of the talks, which are now public record, I would like to say that Litvinov considered the establishment of diplomatic relations with the United States the biggest accomplishment of his career, overshadowing even his success, together with Chicherin, in breaking up at the Genoa conference the foreign policy blockade of Soviet Russia and the Soviet Union's acceptance as a member of the League of Nations. Always sparing of words in conversation, even with his few close friends — a habit that he had acquired during his years as a revolutionary in the underground, this time Litvinov did not conceal his satisfaction and even pride that he had been entrusted to carry out this important mission in Washington.

Litvinov spent much time preparing for the mission, pouring over archive documents on the relations between tsarist Russia and the United States, investigating the roles played by U.S. statesmen in shaping these relations, and studying biographical sketches of contemporary U.S. leaders. Not overlooking anything, he discovered that Roosevelt was an ardent stamp collector — and asked that an album of postage stamps issued in the U.S.S.R. between 1917 and 1933 be prepared to present to the President.

He carefully followed American press reports, which speculated about the possibility of the Foreign Minister visiting Washington. The word "Papasha" (Daddy. — Z.S.) began to increasingly figure in these reports — it had been one of Litvinov's aliases while in the

underground. Not only the tabloids but the mainstream press as well published biographical sketches of Litvinov which contained much speculation.

Looking back today, one could only imagine the kind of dossier that was compiled for Roosevelt on his partner in the upcoming talks: Litvinov, Maxim Maximovich, real name Max Vallah, joined the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1898, served jail terms in Kiev, Berlin, Paris and London, organized an armed rebellion against the tsarist regime in the Caucasus, headed a group that expropriated a Tiflis (now Tbilisi) bank of several million roubles, appointed People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of Soviet Russia in 1930, ingregarious, married to British born Ivy Low, the daughter of a Hungarian couple, followers of Kossuth, who had emigrated to England after the failure of the 1848 rebellion in Hungary, had two children, a 16-year-old boy and a 14-year-old girl.

I call your attention to this biography to bring home the stark contrast between Litvinov and Roosevelt. But it was Litvinov who in 1933, and later as the Soviet ambassador in Washington, impressed Roosevelt more than any other diplomat accredited in the U.S. capital. The two became very close, and not just because Litvinov represented the country that bore the brunt of the war effort against fascist Germany. I will talk more of this phenomenon later, but for now I'd like to return to the events directly bearing on Litvinov's historic trip to Washington.

While sailing to America aboard the ocean liner *Berengaria*, Litvinov agreed to be interviewed by American and other journalists who were accompanying him. Travelling among them was Walter Duranty, the recognized dean of American journalism. The following is a sample of the kind of questions that were put to the Soviet foreign minister: What do you think of Roosevelt? Is it true that Soviet Russia has agreed to sell paintings from the Hermitage to pay for the machine tools that America is to deliver? What is the condition of Stalin's health? Is it true that he's seriously ill? How do you view trade with America? What is Soviet Russia able to supply to America? If America recognizes Russia, who will be appointed the ambassador to Washington?

Litvinov answered all the questions, demonstrating the good nature, sarcasm, irony and frankness for which he was known. After a short luncheon, Duranty presented Litvinov with a card signed by all of the journalists present at the press conference. Walter Duranty's signature was at the top of the card. Duranty then asked the

Soviet Foreign Minister to endorse the card as proof that the press conference aboard the *Berengaria* had actually taken place.

Litvinov arrived in the United States to a chorus of newspaper and radio reports and interviews of political and public figures that dwelt on his personality and background. More attention was paid to his escapes from tsarist prisons and to descriptions of his hat, scarf and coat than to the purpose of his visit. Litvinov looked upon all this with humor and asked Boris Skvirsky, the head of the Soviet Information Center, to clip the newspaper articles about him.

Aboard the *Berengaria* in New York Harbor, Litvinov made an arrival statement. In it he said, "I am entering today the territory of the great American Republic, fully aware of the honor bestowed upon me to be the first to convey greetings to the American people on behalf of the Soviet Union in the capacity of its official representative. I am also aware that in a certain sense I am making the first breach in that artificial barrier which over the course of sixteen years has stood in the way of normal intercourse between the peoples of our two states... We all recognize that this situation has not been beneficial to either side, and the sooner we get it behind us the better for everyone."

One of the participants in this historic event, Ivan A. Divilkovsky, who was the general secretary of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., wrote to his wife in Moscow on November 13, 1933: "The attack by journalists and photographers on Papasha while still aboard the ocean liner in New York was in keeping with local tradition and was fully expected. Umansky [head of the foreign ministry press department - Z.S.] and I were pushed aside, and utter disorder reigned for an entire hour. While still aboard the liner Papasha was surrounded by eight plainclothes security men who were broad-shouldered and as tall as bell towers, all wearing thick sport coats and chewing gum, or at least it seemed that way in keeping with literary canons..."

"Upon arrival in Washington we encountered more chaos: large crowds and scores of photographers had gathered to catch sight of our motorcade, which was escorted through the city by policemen on motorcycles instead of horseback. The work has been non-stop since we arrived. We are staying at Skvirsky's - he has given us three rooms, in which we eat and work. Papasha is spending his whole day at meetings at the State Department and with the President at the White House; I usually accompany him to the State Department, but we were at the White House only

once, for the official breakfast - though a letter is not the appropriate place to tell about this.

"Skvirsky's house was from the very first day guarded by an unbelievable number of policemen, partly out of respect and partly out of concern for security, for there were all kinds of rumors about an assassination plot and a White emigre was even arrested in New York. The number of policemen has now been greatly reduced at our request. Nevertheless one security man stays with us at all times, and another one is constantly on duty in the front hallway downstairs. It is all very nice, for he helps us send telegrams and with other things."

Prior to Litvinov's departure for America, Moscow had carefully worked out the Soviet position at the talks. It had been clear from the start that no quick agreement could be obtained from the Roosevelt Administration. The opponents of recognizing the Soviet Union did not waste time and made an all-out effort to bring the negotiations to a standstill. On May 27, a few months before the talks were to begin, Robert F. Kelley, chief of the Division of Eastern European Affairs of the State Department, sent a memorandum to the State Department addressed to the President in which he proposed three conditions the Soviet Union would have to meet before being recognized by Washington. The conditions included Soviet repayment of debts owed the United States by the tsarist government, huge compensation for American property nationalized after the revolution, and the cessation of revolutionary propaganda.

Roosevelt received Litvinov cordially, but with a certain amount of aloofness. He carefully studied his face, bearing and manners. Also present in the spacious, poorly lighted and uncomfortable study where the meeting was held were Roosevelt's wife, Eleanor, and Secretary of State Cordell Hull. As the brief meeting was coming to an end, Litvinov presented Roosevelt with the stamp album. The President turned the pages of the album, unable to hold back his joy. The following day the Communist Party newspaper *Pravda* said of the encounter: "The meeting in the White House was a brief ceremonial act of politeness, and, although the details have yet to be reported, the press indicates that the meeting was of a most cordial nature."

The only mystery that remained to be unravelled was who would be negotiating with Litvinov: Secretary of State Hull or the President himself?

Witnessed Divilkovsky: "A very nervous setting was sensed in the White House. It was obvious that everyone there submitted themselves to the will and intellect of Roosevelt. But the nervousness that pervaded everything bore witness that it wasn't easy for the President to keep reins on the huge, complex machinery of state power and cope with the resistance — both open and concealed — to his policies."

This resistance was most evident in the State Department, among advocates of isolationism and within Church organizations. Their hypocrisy was displayed at every step. Y. V. Rubinin, who visited the United States in 1934 on an inspection tour in his capacity as chief of the Third Department for western countries at the Soviet Foreign Ministry, recalls: "Roosevelt, with whom I had a chance to speak, was a charming person, of brilliant mind and extreme hospitality. The bigwigs hated him. Once I was invited to a reception at the home of a highranking government official. His wife asked me what I thought of Roosevelt.

"A charming personality and very intelligent," I replied.

"What do you mean," the woman protested, clasping her hands. "Roosevelt is the biggest enemy of the United States; he is in the way of all of us."

Alexander Troyanovsky, the first Soviet ambassador to the United States, reflecting on why he thought Roosevelt in effect shut the Secretary of State out of the talks and negotiated with Litvinov himself, observed: "Roosevelt immediately sized up Litvinov and realized that he was of much higher caliber than his American partner. This discovery had a direct bearing on the talks. Roosevelt did not want Litvinov to have too much of an advantage, but he least of all wanted the negotiations to be dragged out and then deadlocked. Meanwhile, the resistance to negotiating with the Soviets mounted. It was for these reasons that the President decided to negotiate with Litvinov himself. Hull basically was given a secondary role. Roosevelt was fully aware of the growing role of the Soviet Union in world affairs and thought it absurd that normal diplomatic and trade relations did not exist between two of the world's greatest powers."

Before Roosevelt and Litvinov exchanged the historic documents on U.S. recognition of the U.S.S.R., they met over the course of eight days between the eighth and sixteenth of November, discussing each other's claims and counterclaims. Finally, an agreement was worked out. Summing up the results of the talks, Roosevelt said

that the Soviet Union should refrain from interfering in any form in the internal affairs of the United States and asked Litvinov whether the employees of the American Embassy in Moscow would be guaranteed religious freedom and allowed to attend religious services. At this point Hull unexpectedly demanded that the United States be allowed to lease facilities in Moscow for holding religious services. Litvinov rejected this demand, saying that freedom to perform religious services was guaranteed under the Soviet Constitution.

The talks were drawing to a close with all differences seemingly overcome.

In Moscow in August 1967 I interviewed Jessica Smith, an American who had served with the Soviet Information Center in Washington. She had accompanied Litvinov during all of his stay in Washington in November 1933. Smith recalled: "During one of the meetings with the President in his study Eleanor Roosevelt unexpectedly walked in: 'Franklin, why don't you tell your mother about the talks with Mr. Litvinov,' she said. 'Just picture that one fine day your mother wakes up and learns that diplomatic relations have been established between the United States and the Godless Bolsheviks of Soviet Russia. This would be highly unexpected for her. How would she accept all this? Look, that may be a shock to her.'

"Roosevelt looked at Litvinov with a smile and calmly said, 'This shock is not frightening. Let her also find out about this'."

The next day Roosevelt handed Litvinov a brief note in which he disclosed his decision to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The note ended with the words: "I trust that the relations now established between our peoples may forever remain normal and friendly, and that our nations henceforth may cooperate for their mutual benefit and for the preservation of the peace of the world."

During the final meeting between Roosevelt and Litvinov a President's aide announced that a special telephone line to Moscow had been installed in the Oval Room of the White House. This was Roosevelt's surprise for Litvinov, and he offered him to inaugurate the line.

Having finished speaking with Moscow, Litvinov returned to the President's study on the second floor, where he found Roosevelt sitting in a lounge chair. Roosevelt asked how the conversation had gone. Litvinov replied that he had spoken with his wife and son and that he could hear clearly.

Roosevelt then said: "Mr. Litvinov, such a conversation is the best propaganda for your system. When an American learns that a Bolshevik commissar has a wife and children, that he is a family man, that American will be full of respect for the commissar himself and for his country."

The conversation was interrupted by an official from the State Department, who in the presence of the President handed Litvinov keys to the building that had once been the home of the American millionaire Pullman before the tsarist government bought it for housing the Russian Embassy. Roosevelt smiled as Litvinov accepted the keys and congratulated him.

Litvinov, in the company of Skvirsky and Jessica Smith, immediately set out to inspect the mansion.

The mansion was in sad shape; the marble floors were cracked and puddles of water stood here and there. The curtains in the windows and doorways were in a decrepit state, and cobwebs hung from the ceiling.

Litvinov took all this in silence and then uttered, "It would be nice to hire one of the best American architects. Let him fix the mansion up and make it bright and cheery."

With this ended Litvinov's mission to Washington.

While Litvinov was sailing home across the ocean, radio stations and telegraph agencies all over the world transmitted reports and commentaries analyzing the just completed talks in Washington. Not only the American press but newspapers in major capitals in Europe and Asia noted the enormous significance of the talks. Even the press of Hitlerite Germany was obliged to acknowledge the success of Soviet diplomacy. The *Frankfurter Rundschau*, for example, stated that the Soviet Union, by securing U.S. recognition, had in effect broken through the last blockade surrounding it. And Walter Duranty, who wrote a series of articles on the Litvinov visit, concluded it by saying, "To sum up, I should say Litvinov is returning home with a pretty fat turkey for Christmas."

However it is highly doubtful that in November 1933, it had crossed anyone's mind that U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union not only put an end to an abnormal situation in which two world powers had no diplomatic relations over the course of sixteen years, but also laid the foundation for subsequent Soviet-American cooperation within the framework of the anti-Hitler coalition.

In 1941, soon after the Nazi attack of the U.S.S.R., Litvinov was appointed a deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and Soviet ambassador to the United States, where he arrived in December that year.

Before going on, I would like briefly to tell about the events that led to Litvinov's comeback and his appointment to this important diplomatic post.

On the morning of June 22, 1941 Litvinov was listening to the radio when the announcer, his voice trembling, said that an important announcement would follow. Litvinov and Boris Shtein, the former Soviet ambassador to Italy who was visiting Litvinov, ventured guesses as to what the announcement would be about.

Several seconds later Molotov's voice came on announcing war. "This is the end of Hitler!" Litvinov pronounced.

That day Litvinov sat down and wrote two letters: one to Molotov asking for some kind of an appointment, and the other to a blood donor center offering to give his blood for the wounded in combat.

He received a prompt reply from the donor center, thanking him for his offer, but was told that for now they did not need the blood of sixty-five-year-olds, and that if they did they would notify him.

In early November 1941 Litvinov's luck changed radically for the better. Late one evening Molotov telephoned from Moscow to Kuibyshev, where the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs had been evacuated and where Litvinov was staying. The duty officer took the call.

"Do you know where Litvinov is staying?" asked Molotov.

"Yes," the duty officer replied.

"Listen to me carefully, then," Molotov continued. "Go at once to Litvinov and tell him the following. I am relaying this at the instruction of Comrade Stalin. Tell Litvinov that he had been appointed deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and the Soviet ambassador to the United States of America."

The duty officer, a young man, was about to tell Molotov that he didn't think he could carry out his instructions properly, but Molotov had already hung up the receiver.

It was late at night. Ten minutes after receiving the call from Moscow the young duty officer was standing in the cramped foyer of Litvinov's apartment.

Litvinov listened in silence, mumbled something through his nose and asked, "Couldn't you have chosen some other form to inform me of the Government's decision?"

The duty officer apologized and said that he was acting on the instructions of Comrade Molotov.

Total silence enveloped the foyer. Litvinov focused his thoughts on something and then mumbled softly.

"Tell them that I accept," he spoke at last.

"Comrade Molotov asked me to find out when you'll be able to fly to Moscow. Can I be of any assistance? Comrade Stalin is expecting you," the duty officer replied.

"No assistance will be required. I am ready to fly at once," said Litvinov.

Litvinov arrived at the Kremlin at the appointed hour and was immediately received by Stalin, who greeted him warmly. Also in the room was Molotov, who sat to the side and remained silent.

In a muffled voice Stalin outlined the objectives of Litvinov's diplomatic mission. He predicted that America would unavoidably become involved in the war and that Roosevelt, being a smart man, would not want to come out of the war with Hitler without holding aces in his hand. They also talked about war deliveries. Stalin said that these deliveries were important, especially while the Soviet defense industry was still getting on its feet. He underscored that much attention needed to be paid to this question.

Before being dismissed Litvinov asked whom he could take with him to the United States.

"Take whomever you want," Stalin replied, and wished him a good trip.

Litvinov flew to the United States via the Hawaii; he departed from Honolulu only several hours before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. America was stirred up by the news and the President's address to the nation.

Litvinov, having flown nearly half the world, landed in San Francisco on December 6, 1941. From there he flew directly to Washington. Describing his trip, the December 8, 1941 issue of *Pravda* commented: "Comrade Litvinov's arrival has caused great interest in the United States. He was met by representatives from the State Department, the American army and navy, journalists, cameramen, the former U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. Joseph Davies, writers, entertainers and businessmen."

In his arrival statement Litvinov said: "My first visit to this capital took place at a quite important moment. My present visit has come at an even more important time, when the fate of all peoples,

of all mankind is being decided. I am aware of the great interest and sympathy with which the American people are following events on the Eastern Front, and I can assure the American people that the Red Army and all the armed forces of the Soviet Union will continue their struggle against Hitlerite Germany with the same obstinacy and courage that have evoked the approval and admiration of the entire world."

Roosevelt considered Litvinov's appointment a wise decision by Stalin, but one that he had been forced to make.

After Litvinov had officially handed in his credentials Roosevelt had a long talk with the Soviet envoy, during which Litvinov informed Roosevelt about the situation on the front. Reporters who had besieged the White House were told that there would be no statement about the meeting.

As Litvinov was about to leave, Roosevelt turned to him and asked, "Max, come this evening with your wife and play bridge. Mrs. Roosevelt and I would be glad to see you at our place."

Soon after settling down in Washington Litvinov wrote to his son and daughter who had remained behind in Moscow. "I have much work. I am obliged to make many visits and receive a lot of people. But there is no time to rest and take it easy. I am so tired by evening, and never get enough sleep. An ambassador in Washington has twice as much work as an ambassador in any other country — especially at such an important time. Sometimes I think that I have taken on too much for my strength and age. I once tried to go to a concert with Egon Petrie, but after the first intermission I was summoned by the President. I have met with him four times already."

When Soviet troops on the Western Front under the command of General Georgy Zhukov launched a counteroffensive and began to rout German forces outside Moscow, Litvinov went to New York to give a speech at Madison Square Garden to members of the Russia War Relief organization, a group that collected money for the Soviet war effort. The auditorium was so full that people had to stand in the aisles. Near the podium stood an honor guard of young, well-built girls in splendid military uniform of the Women's Army Corps.

Litvinov was given floor immediately. He walked up to the microphone, adjusted his shirt and began to speak — in English, freely, in short, biting phrases: "My Motherland is waging a fight to the death with the fascist hordes," he began. He talked about the sufferings of people in the Smolensk region and the Ukraine, the burning

Byelorussian villages, tortured and burned children and dishonored girls, the soldiers who threw themselves under German tanks.

Quiet settled upon the enormous auditorium. Then, no longer able to hold back, someone burst into sobs. A woman from the front row ran up to the podium, tore a diamond necklace from her neck and threw it at Litvinov's feet. She was followed by a second and a third. A crowd formed around the podium, people tearing off rings and bracelets. The people started making out checks and handing them to the front. One man, waving a check made out for fifteen thousand dollars, shouted "Here's my contribution!" The checks mounted. The girls from the honor guard collected them and handed them forward. The giant Madison Square Garden rumbled and cried.

Litvinov looked calmly into the audience and said, "Gentlemen, a second front is needed!"

At this point let us recall that Secretary of War Henry Stimson, in his report to President Roosevelt following the German attack on the U.S.S.R., asserted that Germany would take at the minimum a month, and at the maximum, three months, to defeat the Soviet Union. Also, isolationists, foes of the Soviet Union, and open and secret admirers of Nazi Germany argued that arms deliveries to Moscow were impermissible, especially since Soviet forces were all the time retreating and the arms might end up in the hands of the Wehrmacht, which was piling up one victory after another. In this atmosphere it was exceedingly difficult even for Roosevelt to come to a decision on Lend-Lease; he had to reckon with formidable opposition within the government and the business world. This subject was constantly brought up in the many and lengthy meetings between Litvinov and Roosevelt. These tête-à-têtes were so frequent and long that the American press launched a campaign against the Soviet diplomat, accusing him of having opened a branch of the Soviet Embassy in the White House.

To be sure, the successes of the Red Army in routing the German forces outside Moscow not only laid Stimson's predictions to rest but also dispelled doubts about the ability of the Red Army to stand up to the formidable Nazi war machine. These successes began to erode the propaganda of the Soviet Union's enemies. But in order to sway the President in his decision on Lend-Lease, one had to be experienced, possess authority, use iron logic, and be likeable, which for a diplomat is not of minor importance. Litvinov combined all of these qualities.

On April 19, 1942 the publication *This Week* said of Litvinov's popularity: "Mr. Litvinoff and his English-born wife are today the reigning favorites of Washington's official and semiofficial society."

Litvinov's diplomatic and political strategy — as it was defined by the Soviet Government — was aimed at convincing America to open a second front at the earliest date. In one of his first meetings with Roosevelt and other high government and military officials Litvinov summarized the Soviet point of view on military and political matters. Soon after he explained the Soviet position to the American public in a speech to the American Academy of Political and Social Science in Philadelphia.

When the American press became transfixed with the idea that the U.S.S.R. should at once enter the war against Japan, which had attacked the United States, Litvinov made it plain that the opening of a Soviet Far Eastern front against Japan was out of the question, since the Allies should concentrate all their resources on defeating the Nazi Germans. The Wehrmacht had penetrated too far into Russia and this made the Nazis' defeat inevitable. Russia would fight to the end, until the German army was totally defeated and destroyed. It was Hitler who was the chief international gangster. His fall would mean the fall of other international gangsters, such as Japan, Italy and other German satellites. Hence the Allies should concentrate all their efforts on defeating Hitler.

Meanwhile America was moving too slowly. The decision to open a second front was continually postponed; the Soviet Army beat back the Nazis outside Moscow, routed German armies on the Volga and near Kursk, but no decision followed.

During the darkest days of the war, when the American press was filled with pessimistic articles on the situation at the Soviet-German front, Litvinov used every pretext possible, even the most inconsequential, to keep the American people from losing faith in the invincibility of the Red Army, in the Soviet people's inevitable victory over fascism.

Here are some facts relating to December 1941.

A group of diplomats, journalists and members of the public was invited to the Soviet Embassy in Washington. Everyone crowded around a large map on which was marked with little flags the position of Soviet and enemy troops. The Nazi army was in Mozhaisk outside the gates of Moscow. The mood of those invited was suppressed. Litvinov suddenly announced: "I received a letter today

from Moscow from my friend Yemelyan Yaroslavsky. He has a summer cottage outside Moscow. He is asking me to send him rhododendron flower seeds to plant in his garden next spring."

Or: "'La Traviata' is being performed today at the Bolshoi Theater, and 'Straussiana' is playing at the Stanislavsky."

In reply to the dumbfounded and incredulous glances he repeated, "Yes, I said 'La Traviata' is playing today at the Bolshoi Theater."

Roosevelt was quite encouraging of Litvinov's appearances before the American public. Litvinov and other embassy officers spoke in Washington, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Philadelphia. These speeches not only helped to keep Americans informed about the Soviet people's war efforts but were a source of considerable donations. Litvinov wrote his daughter Tatiana in Moscow: "These speeches are a part of our duties. The American organization Russia War Relief sets up meetings in different cities at which large sums are collected. At one of the meetings mama stood in for me and was very successful: twenty-five thousand dollars were collected there."

After the rout of the Nazi armies outside Moscow it became especially important to mobilize American public opinion and convince it that the German army was far from annihilated. Litvinov warned that a long and difficult struggle lay ahead. Litvinov set out to drive this point home in 1942, going on a tour of the United States during which he stopped mostly at industrial cities with large working-class populations.

On February 26, 1942 he went to New York where he spoke before an audience of leading journalists and businessmen at a press club. He told them that, according to reports from Moscow, Hitler was amassing new large armies in order to launch a new offensive and take revenge for his failure to capture Moscow. "We would like all the Allied forces to be committed by then and there should not be a single inactive army, navy or air force," Litvinov said. "This refers also to war materials, which should be sent there where they are needed most." Litvinov's speech was published in the newspaper *Pravda* and by all the leading American newspapers and magazines.

The summer of 1942 wore heavily on Litvinov. In a letter to his son dated July 17 he wrote: "News from the front has an oppressing effect, even though the events are merely foreseen and predicted."

On September 11 he wrote his wife in New York from Washington: "I haven't slept the past two nights — there wasn't time."

The battle for Stalingrad grew nearer. Litvinov's contacts with Roosevelt became increasingly frequent — they now saw each other almost daily. Roosevelt invited the Secretary of State to participate in the conversations only rarely, keeping leaks of information to a minimum. Only once did something unforeseen take place, and this came during the high point of the Stalingrad battle. Litvinov requested an urgent meeting with Roosevelt.

According to V. Pastoyev, who was then a press attache in the Soviet Embassy, "Litvinov told Roosevelt in much more categorical terms than he had used earlier that the fall of Stalingrad — if this happened — would prolong the war by many years. The Soviet Union would fight to the end. He insisted that if Stalingrad fell, the position of certain German allies would have to be taken into account, and the United States would indisputably be in a much worse position. It was necessary, he argued, to draw Hitler divisions away from the Eastern front and speed up deliveries of arms."

Unexpectedly, this confidential conversation between the President and Litvinov was reported by many American newspapers, including all of the arguments made by Litvinov.

Litvinov instructed press attache Pastoyev to find out who was to blame for making public his conversation with Roosevelt. It did not prove to be a very difficult assignment. It turned out that the United Press International news agency sent out its report on the situation at the Stalingrad Front, which was picked up by many newspapers. Having learned that Litvinov was meeting with Roosevelt that day, the agency guessed that the discussion would center on the battle for the Volga and its possible consequences, and ascribed to Litvinov its own deductions.

The battle for Stalingrad demanded extra efforts from the Soviet Embassy and Litvinov. They had to counter malicious propaganda that denied the heroism of the Soviet people and their faith in victory. The Soviet Embassy sent out to newspaper editorial offices summaries of combat operations and articles about the efforts to relocate Soviet industry in the Urals and Siberia. The score of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony was sent to Washington, and Litvinov, through the services of the composers Arturo Toscanini and Serge Koussevitzky, arranged for it to be played all across America.

Litvinov had no time to attend the concert. He wrote his son: "I just heard on the radio the first performance in America of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony conducted by Toscanini. Usually it is difficult to absorb and appreciate a symphony the first time you hear it, but in this case the unusual greatness of the opus was sensed immediately. The audience applauded non-stop."

On November 8 Stalingrad Day was celebrated in America. The celebration served as a reply to those who were once again maintaining that the demise of the Soviet Union was inevitable and who had written off the Soviet Army, as they had done in the summer of 1941. In New York's Madison Square Garden an American-Soviet friendship rally was held, which was attended by fifteen thousand people among whom were labor organization officials, writers, leading industrialists, the military and members of women's organizations. Roosevelt could not attend because of his health but sent Vice President Henry Wallace in his place who conveyed warm greetings from the President. All those who spoke talked about the great exploit of the Soviet people and the Red Army. Then came Litvinov's turn to speak. His appearance on stage was met by roaring ovation. He spoke about the need to re-inforce the anti-fascist coalition and assured the audience that their words of encouragement and support would "reach the hearts of the Red Army soldiers who are fighting amid the ruins of Stalingrad and on other fronts. They will also evoke a profound response on the part of all Soviet people who are working as one amid indescribable difficulties in the name of the freedom of mankind."

The rout of German armies on the Eastern front and the inevitable failure of the Nazi offensive on the Volga thoroughly shook the myth about the invincibility of Nazi Germany and showed that the war would be a drawn-out affair, which meant the inevitable fall of Germany. But this fact took a long time to sink into the consciousness of the American people and did not impede the efforts of isolationists, the "German Party" and other openly anti-Soviet groups in the United States.

Nevertheless on January 1, 1942 in Washington Roosevelt, Churchill, Litvinov and twenty-three ambassadors of other countries signed a declaration which bound the signatory countries to cooperate militarily and economically and forbade them to sign a separate peace or armistice with the enemy. The declaration gave birth to the concept of "United Nations."

The long-awaited February day at last arrived when the entire world learned about the rout of the Nazi armies near Stalingrad. American newspapers and magazines published photographs of Field Marshal Paulus and his generals and endless columns of soldiers marching across the snow-covered Volga steppe — all of them taken prisoner. Roosevelt sent a telegram congratulating Stalin on the victory: "The brilliant victory at Stalingrad will remain one of the proudest chapters in this war of the peoples united against Nazism and its emulators."

The proponents of the American strategy of "hasten gently" now began to realize that they would have to hurry up lest the war end with them holding the wrong cards. This realization became increasingly evident in England and elsewhere.

Several days after the Soviet victory at Stalingrad Roosevelt once again invited Litvinov to visit him at his residence. The two experienced statesmen sat talking as Roosevelt's favorite dog, Fala, lay by the President's feet. They were quite different — Roosevelt, the aristocratic, farsighted President of the mightiest capitalist power, and Litvinov, the man whom the whole of America called "Papasha." The days of the Nazi tyranny now numbered, the two politicians began to turn their thoughts to the postwar world order. This world, they agreed, after undergoing so much suffering had to be built on the principle of reason and mutual understanding. They also agreed that the fate of all mankind would largely depend on relations between these two great powers.

In the spring Litvinov was summoned to Moscow. Upon learning of this, Roosevelt got worried and invited Litvinov to the White House. He was silent for a long time and then asked, "Will you be returning?"

"I don't know," Litvinov replied. "I believe I won't be." He understood that his mission was over now that the Nazi armies had been defeated at the Volga. At the same time he realized that a new, more important stage in his mission was beginning — the building of post-war relations with the United States of America. And he secretly cherished the illusory hope that he would play a part in carrying out this new mission.

Anastas Mikoyan once said of Litvinov: "Maxim Maximovich Litvinov was a Soviet diplomat whose career spanned two important periods in Soviet-American relations: in 1933 he helped establish diplomatic relations with the United States of America, and in 1941-

1943 he made a large contribution to strengthening cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and the United States, which became allies in the war against Hitlerite Germany."

The present-day flexible and constructive foreign policy of the Soviet leadership, a policy aimed at improving the international climate and understanding the cherished hopes and aspirations of all mankind — is a continuation of the policy whose foundations were laid, among others, by Soviet diplomat Maxim Litvinov, a graduate from the Leninist school of diplomacy.

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