

*All Overlord  
Admiral Brown  
file*

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WB  
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WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON

16 February 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

You asked the other day the number of divisions that would be in continental U.S. on the date of the launching of OVERLORD. I find the following to be the present schedule:

June 1st

Divisions in U.S.	41
Divisions in U.K.	21
Divisions in Mediterranean	8
Divisions in Pacific	19

September 30th\*

Divisions in U.S.	29
Divisions in OVERLORD (U.K. and N.W. France)	31
Divisions in Mediterranean	8
Divisions in Pacific	21

\* During June and July, only one division a month can be sent to U.K. as the ports will be too burdened with cross-channel business.

It is expected that on June 1st there will be a total of 1,514,700 U.S. soldiers in the United Kingdom, 2,804 four-engine bombers, 711 medium bombers and 4,346 fighter bombers or fighters.

*[Signature]*  
Chief of Staff.

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON

*Admiral Brown  
to file  
File  
WB*

December 20, 1943.

Dear Mr. President:

Admiral Leahy brought me this morning a message to you from the Prime Minister in relation to the respective commanders in France and in the Mediterranean. The Admiral and I, together with General McNarney, drafted a reply for you which you have doubtless seen and which I trust was satisfactory. It covered only a portion of Mr. Churchill's suggestions. We unanimously felt that his other suggestions should wait until we have an opportunity to point out to you certain possible serious objections.

To make clear these objections involves explaining to you in some detail the very important and rather complex plans now in existence for OVERLORD. The command organization for this operation, as you doubtless know, was prepared in London by General Morgan, the present Chief of Staff for the Supreme Allied Commander. It was then approved by General Marshall when General Morgan was recently in Washington. This plan provides that all the initial assaulting troops for OVERLORD shall carry out their landing under the command of the American First Army. These assaulting troops, under present plans, will comprise British, Canadian and American divisions. After making their landing and during the "build up" period of approximately three months, this First American Army, together with the American and British Units landing subsequently during that period, shall operate on the

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Continent under the 21st Army Group (British) which is now planning its part of OVERLORD. After the "build up" period, and throughout the subsequent "follow up" of the invasion, all American units in France will be formed into an American Army Group or groups under American command. At all times from the very beginning of operations the Supreme Allied Commander (American) will exercise direct control over the Forces engaged, whether it be the initial First American Army, the 21st Army Group (British) or the subsequent Army Groups as the forces expand. There has never been any thought or suggestion of interposing between that Supreme Commander and any of the various Army groups, an intermediate operational Command.

Now Mr. Churchill says to you in his cable: "The War Cabinet desires that Montgomery should command the First Expeditionary Group of Armies." There is no group of Armies constituted in the plan under that name. If Mr. Churchill simply means that General Montgomery is to command the 21st Army Group (British) under the present plan, we of course raise no objection but if Mr. Churchill means to suggest that General Montgomery shall be interposed as a permanent intermediary operational commander between the American Supreme Commander and any or all of the various American Army Groups as they are formed, we have very deep and decided objections, and I do not wish to fail to make them clear to you.

Such a proposition is in direct opposition to our understanding that the ground operation would be under the direct command of an American Supreme Allied Commander and all planning by COSSAC

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has been directed to that end. At this late date to interpose another headquarters between COSSAC and the ground forces must result either in the assignment of the COSSAC staff to Montgomery and the creation of an entirely new staff for the Supreme Commander or the creation of a new staff for Montgomery. We are opposed to the interposition of an additional headquarters, either British or American, between the Supreme Commander and the assaulting Armies or Groups of Armies. We feel that in view of the fact that the United States will furnish a great preponderance of the ground forces to be committed to OVERLORD, the American ground forces must permanently be under direct American command. In my opinion, no other solution can be satisfactorily explained to the American people.

Mr. Churchill may contend that his proposal is merely an essential reproduction of the setup which we have had in the Mediterranean where Eisenhower had top command and Alexander had operational command over all of the ground forces. The analogy fails because the situation in France will be entirely different from that in the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean was primarily a British theater, i.e., the British were far more directly interested in it than we. The number of troops which they furnished in each of the three operations of North Africa, Sicily and Italy was larger than those furnished by the Americans. In such a theater, Eisenhower's command might without harm be relegated to the functions of planning and general supervision, leaving the direct tactical handling of the troops to a British Operational Commander. The paramount interest of the British would see that the

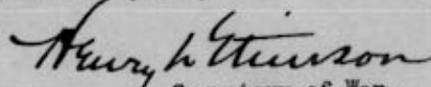
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operation did not flag.

But in France it would be totally different. In the first place, it will be an incomparably more difficult and fiercely contested operation, involving for the first time the collision of large masses of troops of the opposing nations. It will make far greater call upon the steadfastness and determination of our own troops. Secondly, after the initial build up, the follow up will be entirely American and will result before the end of the year in our having over three times as many troops in France as they. Furthermore, as you know only too well, the main impulse behind this great operation ever since we entered the war has been American and the doubts and hesitations have been British. No case could show more compelling reason for insisting that American troops shall be directly led and handled by American Commanders. For these reasons, our Staff have always felt that it was imperative that the setup in OVERLORD should be entirely different from the setup in the Mediterranean and that we should take every step possible to infuse the vigor of American faith and leadership in the operation into the American troops.

If you have any doubts about the correctness of the position which I have thus set out, I trust that you will await the arrival of General Marshall and have a talk with him.

Faithfully yours,

  
Secretary of War.

The President,  
The White House.

*Overland*

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11 December 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The attached report of three communications received by the Special Branch, Military Intelligence Division is being brought to your attention at the request of the Prime Minister.

Acting Chief of Staff

*Referred to  
Adm Leahy*

*original letter and  
enclosures filed  
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Germany.*

SECRET SECURITY

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**SECRET - SECURITY**

FROM: Moscow  
TO: AGWAR

Number 51, 9 November 1943

From General Deane for Joint Chiefs of Staff.

As background for the coming conference I send following impressions.

Above all Soviets want to end war quickly and feel that they can do it. They may attach less importance to OVERLORD than heretofore--this is indicated by Stalin's calm acceptance of Alexander's Italian estimate and by Conference's acceptance that OVERLORD is to be next year without pressing for it being moved forward. They seem much more concerned about immediate measures--this is indicated by their anxiety to get Turkey and Sweden into the war and their concern over our pressure in Italy. You may be confronted with insistence that further operations be undertaken in the Mediterranean now such as increased pressure in Italy and some venture in the Balkans for the purpose of quickly drawing German strength from the eastern front--they may even urge some delay to OVERLORD if it would make more immediate results possible. Their impressions may not be correct but I feel that the possibilities should be considered before meeting with Red military authorities. Harriman feels that Soviets are as keen as ever on second front but he feels also a choice between a spring OVERLORD and more immediate help elsewhere would be a difficult one for Soviets to make.

CM-IN-5951 (10 Nov 43)

**SECRET - SECURITY**

*Admiral Brown  
to file*

BRITISH EMBASSY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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*File WB*

September 21st, 1943.

Dear Admiral Leahy,

During the meeting at Quebec the President handed to the Prime Minister a memorandum from General Marshall on the appointment of political advisers to the staff of the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Allied Command of Cross-Channel Operations.

On behalf of the Prime Minister I am returning to you the memorandum. You will doubtless have seen from subsequent correspondence between General Marshall and Field Marshal Sir John Dill that agreement has been reached on the question.

*I am,  
my dear Admiral,  
very sincerely yours  
R. J. Campbell.*

Admiral William D. Leahy, U.S.N.,

Offices of the Combined Chiefs of Staff,

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

August 11, 1943.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Subject: Divisions for OVERLORD on May 1, 1944.

With reference to the discussion yesterday afternoon and your instructions to have a preponderance of U.S. divisions available in the United Kingdom on the target date for OVERLORD, the following is submitted:

At the TRIDENT Conference it was agreed that the British would provide a minimum of 14 divisions with a possibility of an increase to 18, if it did not prove necessary to cannibalize these 4 divisions in order to provide replacements and supporting units for the minimum number of 14. (This British contribution of between 14 to 18 divisions would include 4 or 5 Canadian divisions.)

The U.S. agreed to provide a total of 18 1/2 divisions on the target date. 6 1/2 of these would not be completely equipped and ready for combat until a later period of from two to eight weeks but they would be in England. (I will see that the 18 1/2 figure is lifted to 19 without any further discussion.)

Note: In discussions regarding U.S. troop strengths in the United Kingdom on the target date, the British have presented the problem of limiting our divisional strength in England on that date to the 18 1/2 referred to because of transportation, depot, and cantonment complications. As troops cross the Channel additional divisions can be moved into Great Britain, though it is desired that the bulk of the flow of reinforcements should be transported direct from the U.S. into France.

Computations indicate that when the OVERLORD build-up in France had reached 60 divisions the composition of the forces would be about as follows:

United States	42 divisions
British	13 divisions
Canadian	5 divisions

This represents the total possible contribution of British troops unless transfers are made from the Mediterranean or elsewhere.

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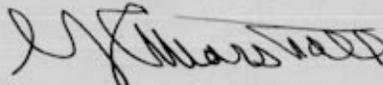
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The TRIDENT decisions provided that on May 1, 1944, there would be 7,302 U.S. combat planes and 4,075 British.

Present tonnage figures indicate the possibility of increasing shipments to England between now and May 1st up to 100,000 men, of course providing we do not divert this shipping to send additional men to the Mediterranean. General Devers is pressing us to increase the number of technical units to support the Air Forces and the special anti-tank, artillery, and other separate units to support the Ground Forces, by a total of 100,000, which would absorb this tonnage if it materializes.

It appears to me that rather than base the American preponderance on the number of divisions alone it would be more effective to base it on the strength of the forces involved. We will have 3200 more combat planes, from 1 to 4 more combat divisions, and apparently a considerably greater number of Corps and Army supporting troops. We have not the detailed British figures on the last factor mentioned but their shortages in supporting troops along with those in manpower would indicate that our Corps and Army organization will be much stronger than theirs.



Chief of Staff.

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St. Rytton

This was buried in a file of old Map Room  
dispatches. It belongs, more properly, to your files.  
As you see, it concerns the Invasion of Normandy.

W.G.S.

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON

August 10, 1943.

Dear Mr. President:

In my memorandum of last week, which was intended to be as factual as possible, I did not include certain conclusions to which I was driven by the experiences of my trip. For a year and a half they have been looming more and more clearly through the fog of our successive conferences with the British. The personal contacts, talks, and observations of my visit made them very distinct.

First: We cannot now rationally hope to be able to cross the Channel and come to grips with our German enemy under a British commander. His Prime Minister and his Chief of the Imperial Staff are frankly at variance with such a proposal. The shadows of Passchendaele and Dunkerque still hang too heavily over the imaginations of these leaders of his government. Though they have rendered lip service to the operation, their hearts are not in it and it will require more independence, more faith, and more vigor than it is reasonable to expect we can find in any British commander to overcome the natural difficulties of such an operation carried on in such an atmosphere of his government. There are too many natural obstacles to be overcome, too many possible side avenues of diversion which are capable of stalling and thus thwarting such an operation.

Second: The difference between us is a vital difference of faith. The American staff believes that only by massing the immense vigor and power of the American and British nations under the overwhelming mastery of the air, which they already exercise far into the north of France

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and which can be made to cover our subsequent advance in France just as it has in Tunis and Sicily, can Germany be really defeated and the war brought to a real victory.

On the other side, the British theory (which cropped out again and again in unguarded sentences of the British leaders with whom I have just been talking) is that Germany can be beaten by a series of attritions in northern Italy, in the eastern Mediterranean, in Greece, in the Balkans, in Rumania and other satellite countries, and that the only fighting which needs to be done will be done by Russia.

To me, in the light of the post-war problems which we shall face, that attitude towards Russia seems terribly dangerous. We are pledged quite as clearly as Great Britain to the opening of a real second front. None of these methods of pinprick warfare can be counted on by us to fool Stalin into the belief that we have kept that pledge.

Third: I believe therefore that the time has come for you to decide that your government must assume the responsibility of leadership in this great final movement of the European war which is now confronting us. We cannot afford to confer again and close with a lip tribute to Bolero which we have tried twice and failed to carry out. We cannot afford to begin the most dangerous operation of the war under half-hearted leadership which will invite failure or at least disappointing results. Nearly two years ago the British offered us this command. I think that now it should be accepted -- if necessary, insisted on.

We are facing a difficult year at home with timid and hostile hearts ready to seize and exploit any wavering on the part of our war leadership. A firm resolute leadership, on the other hand, will

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go far to silence such voices. The American people showed this in the terrible year of 1864 when the firm unfaltering tactics of the Virginia campaign were endorsed by the people of the United States in spite of the hideous losses of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor.

Finally, I believe that the time has come when we must put our most commanding soldier in charge of this critical operation at this critical time. You are far more fortunate than was Mr. Lincoln or Mr. Wilson in the ease with which that selection can be made. Mr. Lincoln had to fumble through a process of trial and error with dreadful losses until he was able to discover the right choice. Mr. Wilson had to choose a man who was virtually unknown to the American people and to the foreign armies with which he was to serve. General Marshall already has a towering eminence of reputation as a tried soldier and as a broad-minded and skillful administrator. This was shown by the suggestion of him on the part of the British for this very post a year and a half ago. I believe that he is the man who most surely can now by his character and skill furnish the <sup>military</sup> leadership which is necessary to bring our two nations together in confident joint action in this great operation. No one knows better than I the loss in the problems of organization and worldwide strategy centered in Washington which such a solution would cause, but I see no other alternative to which we can turn in the great effort which confronts us.

Faithfully yours,

*Henry L. Wilson*  
Secretary of War.

The President,  
The White House.

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Admiral Brown  
Please give to me  
on Tuesday when to  
see comes to lunch

WAR DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON

**SECRET**

August 4, 1943.

Dear Harry:

As a preliminary to my talk with him, it may help the President to read the enclosed memorandum which I have drawn up as a summary of my observations on Italy and Overlord. I shall be very grateful if you would read over this memorandum and, if you think it would help as a guide to our conversations, ask the President to read it.

The Prime Minister also asked me to speak to the President on two other subjects of lesser complexity but major importance, as to one of which he has given me a memorandum for the President which I can bring up. I really think the President should have all of this information before the coming Quebec conference.

Faithfully yours,

*Harry L. Hopkins*

*H* Harry L. Hopkins, Esq.,  
The White House.

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BRIEF REPORT ON CERTAIN FEATURES  
OF OVERSEAS TRIP

I.

England

1. My principal objective had been to visit troops. But when I reached London the P.M. virtually took possession of my movements for the first week and I found myself launched in the discussion of subjects and with people which I had not expected. These unexpected subjects were so important that I devoted the bulk of my time to their consideration and altered my trip accordingly.

Although I have known the P.M. for many years and had talked freely with him, I have never had such a series of important and confidential discussions as this time. He was extremely kind and, although we discussed subjects on which we differed with extreme frankness, I think the result was to achieve a relation between us of greater mutual respect and friendship than ever before. I know that was the case on my side. Although I differed with him with the utmost freedom and outspokenness, he never took offense and seemed to respect my position. At the end I felt that I had achieved a better understanding with him than ever before.

2. On the day of my arrival I dined with him at a family dinner at which were present only Winant and Eden besides Mrs. Churchill

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and Mrs. Winant. He plunged at once into a discussion of the various theatres of the war which of course revived discussion of subjects on which we had had previous differences, including his penchant for various Mediterranean operations and my penchant for the Channel. He opened the door for me to bring up an argument which was new to him. He criticized our American system of fixed presidential terms and deplored the fact that we face an election in 1944 with all its distractions and disadvantages, including the possibility of the disaster of a change of administration in a critical period of the war. He commented that in this way we might be deprived of the immense asset of Mr. Roosevelt's leadership. I at once rejoined that I agreed with him as to the danger involved in such a contingency and pointed out to him in detail how that danger might be accentuated by getting the United States involved in a theatre like the eastern Mediterranean in which our people were less intelligently interested and would be undoubtedly subjected to campaign arguments to the effect that we were being made to fight for interests which were really those of the British Empire; in other words, that the war leadership in that respect was not good.

I told him that the American people did not hate the Italians but took them rather as a joke as fighters; that only by an intellectual effort had they been convinced that Germany was their most dangerous enemy and should be disposed of before Japan; that the enemy whom the American people really hated, if they hated anyone, was Japan which had

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dealt them a foul blow. After setting out all the details upon which my conclusion was predicated, I asserted that it was my considered opinion that, if we allow ourselves to become so entangled with matters of the Balkans, Greece, and the Middle East that we could not fulfill our purpose of Roundhammer in 1944, that situation would be a serious blow to the prestige of the President's war policy and therefore to the interests of the United States.

The P.M. apparently had not had that matter presented to him in that light before. He had no answer to it except that any such blow could be cured by victories. I answered that that would not be so if the victories were such that the people were not interested in and could not see any really strategic importance for them. Towards the end he confined his position to favoring a march on Rome with its prestige and the possibility of knocking Italy out of the war. Eden on the other hand continued to contend for carrying the war into the Balkans and Greece. At the end the P.M. reaffirmed his fidelity to the pledge of Roundhammer "unless his military advisers could present him with some better opportunity" not yet disclosed.

3. On Thursday, July 15th, I called at the office which has been set up to prepare plans for Roundhammer under Lt. Gen. Morgan of the British Army as Chief of Staff and Maj. Gen. Ray W. Barker of the U.S.A. as his deputy. They had just completed their long study of such plans which had been going on for some months and were sending their report to the British Chiefs of Staff. General Surles was with me

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and they carefully explained in detail to us the location and details of the proposed attack. I was much impressed with General Morgan's directness and sincerity. He gave us his mature opinion on the operation, with carefully stated provisos, to the effect that he believed that with the present allocated forces it could be successfully accomplished. He was very frank, however, in stating his fear of delays which might be caused by getting too deep into commitments in the Mediterranean. In particular he was fearful that divisions to be liberated from the Mediterranean on the first of November might not be actually free to move back on that date which he thought was an ultimate date, taking into account their subsequent training. He was fearful also of other commitments which would interfere with the accumulation of materiel, cantonments and other forces in the U. K. He said that he believed that the chief danger was of commitments made in perfectly good faith and in the belief that the delay proposed might be made up for by subsequent speed, when as a matter of fact the effect of the delay would be to lose the favorable summer and autumn season and throw the work of preparation into the winter season when such accentuated speed could not be attained. Barker who explained the details of the plan to us shared the same fear. In other words, they both felt that the plan was sound and safe but there might be a subsequent yielding to temptation to undertake new activities which would interfere with the long stage of preparation in the false hope that such interference could be atoned for by subsequent speeding up.

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During the fortnight that I spent in England I found the same fear pervaded our own officers who were engaged in Roundhammer preparations. General Lee of the SOS told me that our preparations were safe up to date, although the margin had been greatly narrowed by recent commitments, but he went on to say that he did not think we could stand any further interference with the timetable without blocking the whole plan. General Eaker and his air men were working steadily and hard on their portion of the Roundhammer proposition, namely the bombing of Germany. They were all confident that the plan was feasible. On one particular danger which the P.M. had frequently urged upon me, namely the fear of a successful German counterattack after the landing had been made, the air men were confident that they could by their overwhelming superiority in the air block the advances of the German reinforcements and thus defeat the counter-attack. The matter had been carefully studied by them. They told me that their confidence was shared by the officers of the RAF.

I later found in Tunis that Spaatz and Doolittle felt that the German counterattack could be blocked in France just as they had blocked it in Sicily. They even had studied the number of roads necessary to be covered in that operation.

4. I saw the P.M. again at a dinner given by Devers on Wednesday where I sat beside him, and again on Saturday I was with him nearly all day when he took me to Dover with a smaller family party in his special train. Mrs. Churchill and Mr. and Mrs. Winant were

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present; also the P.M.'s brother, General Devers, Minister Casey of Australia, and one or two others. I sat with him and Winant at breakfast and with him and Mrs. Churchill and Mrs. Winant at lunch. During the trip back he brought me with evident delight a telegram which he had just received from the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington, telling him that General Marshall had proposed that a study be made of the operation known as Avalanche. He took this as an endorsement by Marshall of his whole Italian policy and was greatly delighted. I pointed out to him that it probably meant that Marshall had proposed this as a shortcut intended to hasten the completion of the Italian adventure so that there would be no danger of clashing with the preparations for Roundhammer.

Later in the day he took me aside again and brought up the entirely different subject of S-1 in which matters had arisen which greatly troubled him. I was able to give him some reassurance on this subject as to my own feelings although of course I told him that I could only promise to report the matter to the President for the final decision.

5. On Monday, July 19th, I talked over the new telephone with Marshall and found that my assumption of Marshall's position was correct and that he had only suggested Avalanche so as to leave more time for Roundhammer and to obviate the danger of a long slow progress "up the leg" which might eliminate Roundhammer altogether. I told him also of my talks with the P.M. and with the other military men, including

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particularly Morgan, and at the close of my statement he suggested to me that I should go as promptly as possible to Africa to see Eisenhower, where I should be able to round out what I had gotten in London with the views of the people in Africa. He said, "Then you will have all sides and I think it is very important for you to go and to go quickly". Information which I subsequently received from the P.M. as to his proposed early visit to America caused me to understand why Marshall urged haste.

6. On Thursday, July 22nd, I had a conference at 10 Downing Street with the P.M. and others in respect to the subject he had brought up on the Dover trip in regard to S-1. After that conference was over and the others had departed, I told the P.M. of my talk with Marshall and his confirmation of my interpretation of his support of Avalanche, namely that he favored it only for the purpose of expediting the march up the peninsula and that he was still as firmly in favor of Roundhammer as ever. I pointed out to the P.M. that Marshall's view<sup>as to Roundhammer</sup> had always been supported by the whole Operation Division of the American General Staff. I also told him of my talk with Generals Morgan and Barker and of their full support of the Roundhammer proposition.

He at once broke out into a new attack upon Roundhammer. The check received by the British attack at Catania, Sicily, during the past few days had evidently alarmed him. He referred to it and praised the superlative fighting ability of the Germans. He said that if he had fifty thousand men ashore on the French channel coast, he would

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not have an easy moment because he would feel that the Germans could rush up sufficient forces to drive them back into the sea. He repeated assertions he had made to me in previous conversations as to the disastrous effect of having the Channel full of corpses of defeated allies. This stirred me up and for a few minutes we had it hammer and tongs. I directly charged him that he was not in favor of the Roundhammer operation and that such statements as he made were "like hitting us in the eye" in respect to a project which we had all deliberately adopted and in which we were comrades. I told him we could never win any battle by talking about corpses. On this he said that, while he admitted that if he was C-in-C he would not set up the Roundhammer operation, yet having made his pledge he would go through with it loyally. I then told him that, while I did not at all question the sincerity of his promise to go with us, I was afraid he did not make sufficient allowance for the necessary long distance planning and I feared that fatal curtailments might be made impulsively in the vain hope that those curtailments could be later repaid. I stressed the dangers of too great entanglement in an Italian expedition and the loss of time to Roundhammer which it would involve. He then told me that he was not insisting on going further than Rome unless we should by good luck obtain a complete Italian capitulation throwing open the whole of Italy as far as the north boundary. He asserted that he was not in favor of entering the Balkans with troops but merely

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wished to supply them with munitions and supplies. He told me that they were now doing magnificently when only being supplied ten tons a month. (Note: In these limitations he thus took a more conservative position than Eden had taken at the dinner on July 12th).

When I parted with him I felt that, if pressed by us, he would sincerely go ahead with the Roundhammer commitment but that he was looking so constantly and vigorously for an easy way of ending the war without a trans-Channel assault that, if we expected to be ready for a Roundhammer which would be early enough in 1944 to avoid the dangers of bad weather, we must be constantly on the lookout against Mediterranean diversions. I think it was at this meeting that he told me of his intention of coming to America and that he expected to come in the first half of August. I then understood what Marshall had meant in his telephone message as to promptness on my part and I thereafter aimed my movements so as to be able to return to America in time to report to the President before such meeting.

II.

North Africa.

I spent three nights with General Eisenhower at his quarters in Algiers. During that time he discussed with Surles and myself the proposed post-Husky operations in all their aspects and bearings. On the evening before I left I got him to sum up his views, jotting down

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a memorandum of them to be sure that there was no misunderstanding.

1. He pointed out that the first decision to be made was one of the highest policy for the chiefs of the two governments -- whether such a collapse of the entire Italian forces will occur as to offer an opportunity to occupy the whole peninsula with the subsequent purpose of moving troops from northern Italy into France or the Balkans with sufficient facility to make it worthwhile to give up Roundhammer.

He indicated that even at that time the chance of a prompt entire collapse of resistance throughout the boundaries of Italy looked slim to him. Subsequent events would seem to have added confirmation to his view. The Badoglio government has not surrendered. The Germans are rapidly pouring troops into northern Italy with the evident intention of making a stand there which would be comparable to what they would offer in northern France. They have already seized Fiume, the northern gate to the Balkans.

2. Until otherwise ordered from above Eisenhower would adhere to the Roundhammer program.

3. He gave me his estimated timetable (a) for the final attack on Catania; (b) for the full occupation of Sicily; (c) for the launching of Avalanche (if decided upon); (d) the units which would be used in each of these projects.

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4. He said that if we were to be obliged to "merely crawl up the leg", it would be so slow that he thought we had better jump at once to Roundhammer.

5. He therefore very fully discussed the possibilities of Avalanche as a means of speeding up.

a. He would under no circumstances launch Avalanche until he was across the Messina Strait. He explained that such a crossing of troops and the seizure of the toe of Italy must be made to contain German forces from being free to rush back up the leg and meet us at Naples or Rome. He then and subsequently in cables has discussed such a transit as a most important first step and the various means of taking it.

b. He discussed with us the problem of air coverage for Avalanche. He was not so confident as to the solution of this problem as were Spaatz and Doolittle with whom we discussed it at Tunis. The air men believed that from bases in Sicily they could furnish the air coverage required provided they were given sufficient P-38's and Spitfires with belly tanks. Eisenhower was still carefully canvassing this problem.

c. Eisenhower had already earmarked the troops which he could use in Avalanche.

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6. When I asked him as to the possibility of any feasible alternative to Avalanche which would speed up the advance to Rome, he suggested, but did not endorse, a possible landing at the instep and going straight up the leg. He evidently had not fully studied such a move but believed it would be faster than moving up from the toe at Messina. On this last proposition he had decided views that it was too difficult, slow, and costly. He described it as just a series of inching up operations in a very difficult terrain which would take much time and very considerable losses.

7. He estimated that the Germans already had at least three divisions of troops in the leg at or below Naples.

8. Eisenhower said that he had plenty of landing boats for the Avalanche operation and was not concerned about getting any more.

9. Eisenhower impressed me favorably in having preserved his balance in the consideration of the various post-Husky plans. He was anxious to find a quick, bold stroke which would permit us to conquer the leg of Italy as far as Rome. He was still considering Avalanche as the most promising suggestion yet made to that end. He was evidently impressed by the character of the German resistance in the rough terrain of Sicily and did not like the prospect of facing such resistance in the similar terrain on the toe and leg if we attempted to go all the way by land.

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III.

My own resulting views from the foregoing talks in England  
and in Africa

1. Some sort of post-Husky operation seems strongly advisable if it can be made to assist and supplement and not destroy the mounting of the powerful threat of invasion across the Channel.

2. This is the view of our American military leaders in Washington, in London, and in Africa. Their purpose is to secure additional air bases for an attack on southern Germany and possibly other satellite or occupied territory.

3. The need of such bases is becoming constantly more apparent. The number of bombing sorties from the U.K. is limited (a) by the location, (b) by the adverse weather conditions, and (c) by the constantly increasing strength of German air defenses in the north.

Eaker's losses are approaching the margin of safety and his continuity of operations is greatly interfered with by the weather. On the other hand, our air forces in the south are able to operate almost every day and their percentage of losses has been a mere fraction of those incurred by Eaker's forces in the north.

4. If we could establish air bases in Italy as far north as Rome, our air men told me that they could institute regular attacks upon Germany from the south with the above favorable results.

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5. Such a project if feasible would not only not impair Roundhammer but it would greatly aid and facilitate it and would have the maximum advantage in effect upon Germany both psychologically and materially.

6. This conception of the American staff of an Italian operation is entirely different from the conception put forward at times to me by the P.M. and Eden and also made by certain others, notably General Smuts in a letter to the P.M. This last, which for brevity I will call the British conception, is not put forward as an aid to Roundhammer but as a substitute to supplant it. It contemplates an invasion from the south - in the direction of the Balkans and Greece or possibly towards southern France though this last suggestion has not been pressed. Such a southern invasion and the Roundhammer invasion cannot be both maintained. On the contrary, if they are both held in contemplation, they will be in constant interference and will tend to neutralize each other. For example, under the American conception it is absolutely essential to have a speedy daring operation which will not draw upon or interfere with the mounting of Roundhammer. A slow progressive infiltration of the Italian boot from the bottom, time consuming and costly, would be sure to make Roundhammer impossible.

7. The main thing therefore to keep constantly in mind is that the Italian effort must be strictly confined to the objective of securing bases for an air attack and there must be no further diversions of forces or materiel which will interfere with the coincident mounting of the Roundhammer project.

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT:

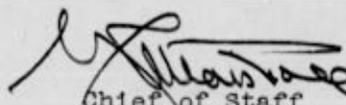
Subject: Appointment of Political Advisers to the Staff of the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander for Cross-Channel Operations.

The United States Chiefs of Staff have been informed by General Devers that the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander for cross-Channel operations has proposed the appointment of political advisers as members of his staff. The British Chiefs of Staff and Foreign Office are strongly in favor of the proposal that British and American civilian political advisers should be appointed to work side by side on this staff and on the same level as the Chief Civil Affairs Officer, and in the closest concert with him. General Devers states that the British have nominated a Mr. Charles Peake to serve in this capacity and General Devers states that if the proposal is approved he suggests a Mr. Jacob D. Beam, now second Secretary to Ambassador Winant, as the American member.

The United States Chiefs of Staff propose to send the following reply to General Devers for transmission to the British and ask that you give it your approval:

"The appointment of political advisers to Cossac Staff is believed to be inadvisable. The United States prefers pattern being followed in Italian campaign, where Allied Commander receives coordinated and agreed political decisions of the two governments through the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Diplomatic representatives are present only as observers for respective governments."

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

  
Chief of Staff  
U. S. Army



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*President*

8 August 1943

MEMORANDUM

Subject: Conduct of the War in Europe.

1. The United Nations have failed during the past year and a half to concentrate their forces and to hold to decisions. The violation of these basic principles has resulted in the assembly of a much smaller military force against the European Axis than would otherwise have been possible. Since April, 1942, the United States and Great Britain have maintained verbal adherence to the decision that the main and decisive effort would be a cross-channel operation and that forces and supplies would be built up in the U.K. for that purpose. The giving bit by bit of resources to the Mediterranean, which has always been regarded as a secondary theater, has resulted in a net decrease in the U.S. forces and resources which could have been brought to bear against the enemy. After deciding firmly to attack across channel and to build up the necessary forces in accordance with the BOLERO plan, it was decided to do TORCH. There was to be no change in the U.S.-British main decisive effort. A net result of the disruptions of personnel and cargo shipping caused by this shift, originally considered as temporary, and by the day to day allotment of men and resources for the Mediterranean was that by 1 April 1943 the U.S. had only approximately 452,000 men facing the European

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Axis from the U.K. and from the Mediterranean, instead of the 1,074,000 scheduled for the U.K. by 1 April 1943 in the original BOLERO plan -- a net loss in U.S. troop movements overseas of over 600,000 men prior to April 1943. We have every reason to believe that the figure of approximately 1,000,000 men in the U.K. by 1 April 1943 could have been attained. It was based on a careful investigation of possibilities by British as well as by American authorities. The British who worked on BOLERO will doubtless agree that the project could have been carried out. The loss of 600,000 men can be attributed mainly to the movement of 150,000 U.S. and 250,000 British troops to North Africa from U.K.; the delays caused by readjustment of shipping schedules in preparation for the North Africa move; the meager port capacities in North Africa which limited the number of ships that could be handled in each convoy from the U.S. to a troop list of about 40,000 during the early period of the occupation; the lack of sufficient naval escorts for convoys to the U.K. at the same time they were being run to North Africa.

2. The above is by no means a complete measure of the waste which has resulted from reversal of decisions and from day-to-day variations from programs established and accepted as the basis for training men, producing equipment and deploying these resources

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throughout the world. Included in this waste are: the loss in cargo lift due to the transshipment of hundreds of thousands of tons of supplies through the U. K. to North Africa rather than directly; the waste of U. S. manpower resulting from pressing at high speed the training and equipment of units for an agreed major operation which is continually postponed, while a series of secondary operations are undertaken for which they are either not required or unsuitable; the waste in moving units great distances into staging areas and then failing to ship them overseas because of sudden changes in plans; the uneconomic use of U. S. and British labor and production facilities in straining every effort to produce equipment and provide a base in time for a major scheduled operation which is not carried out according to plan. These disruptions are relatively much greater in the U. S. than in the U. K. The bulk of the supplies come from here. The great distances in the United States between depots, military camps and ports and the distances between bases serving theaters and sub-theaters of war must be kept always in mind when any change in a course of action is suggested. A diversion of any part of the flow of men and supplies once started towards a particular sub-theater results

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in delays and wastes which the United Nations cannot afford. Un-  
sound practices such as those listed above, if continued, will  
certainly postpone victory, and may result in only a partial defeat  
of the Axis.

3. In showing the cost of the change from the Channel to Africa  
there is no intention to belittle the effects of TORCH. TORCH was  
successful and has brought great results. The Mediterranean has been  
opened, Italy is trembling in the balance, southern and eastern Germany  
have been placed under threat of air attack, the vitally important  
Floesti oil fields have been attacked. Much has been gained. BOLERO  
was not carried out and any appraisal of what might have resulted can  
be questioned. However, this direct action was the one chance to end  
the war in Europe this year. If this had happened, all that has been  
gained would be insignificant in comparison. It is particularly  
pertinent now to note that if we can put our air far enough north in  
Italy to bomb southern Germany, all the major military gains to be  
gotten from the African operation will have been attained. Decisive  
military action against Germany cannot come from that area. We recognize  
that plans must be flexible. We do not advocate sticking blindly to a  
plan regardless of what happens. All military undertakings are uncertain.

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We cannot control what the enemy does nor predict definitely his reaction. Changes should and must be made. Minor changes can be made. What we are trying to bring out is that major changes are terribly destructive and wasteful.

4. Today the United States and Great Britain have two forces of limited size located in widely separated areas facing the European Axis. Neither of these forces nor their bases are at present adequate to launch an offensive which will bring victory, quick and complete. Furthermore, it is doubtful that they are now sufficient to take full advantage of an opportunity presented by a major weakening of Axis power. The price of variations and reversals in decisions is now and will continue to be the failure to economize in our use of resources and the failure to concentrate such resources in a way to assure complete victory. A firm decision with determination to stick to the agreed decision is now a "must." Any variations, no matter how attractive, may endanger the entire program. Small diversions create grossly disproportionate disruptions and delays in preparations for the decisive effort. These may culminate in unforeseen demands for major portions of U.S.-British resources. The United States and Great Britain have now reached the crossroads in the war where perseverance in the

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practice of dispersing the limited resources and reversing or amending decisions, involves a grave danger that the war will become stalemated or that decisive action leading to complete victory will be indefinitely postponed.

5. In order to clinch, at the earliest practicable moment, the victory now in sight the United States and Great Britain must decide on a main effort, must stick to that decision, must concentrate overwhelming air, sea, and land power for that main effort, must launch the main effort with skillful and explosive force, and must assign to all other efforts the task of preparation for and support of the decisive blow. A failure to adopt this overall policy will imperil the final victory.

6. The United States and Great Britain must, at QUADRANT, choose between attempting a decisive effort from the Mediterranean and re-affirming again the decision taken in London in April 1942 and affirmed at Anfa and Trident Conferences to launch a decisive main effort across the channel. The choice made must be supported by a strong resolution to carry out the decision with completely adequate resources and without variation or delay.

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7. The allocation of additional forces to the Mediterranean is uneconomical and assists Germany to create a strategic stalemate in Europe. The returns which can be foreseen from such commitments are based upon speculative political considerations. The terrain and communications systems prevent United States and Great Britain from effectively using large forces and enable the Germans to effect a stalemate in the rugged areas bordering the Mediterranean using comparatively small forces which may be little more than present garrisons. The quantity and effectiveness of aid or opposition to be expected from Turks, Bulgars, Rumanians, Hungarians, Croats, Slovenes, Serbs and Greeks cannot be assessed. The area of operations is distant from major United Nations bases, particularly those suitable for supporting the first and critical phases of an amphibious assault.

8. In short, the Mediterranean does not offer an opportunity for decisive military action against Germany, does not present an opportunity to draw continually increasing forces from Russia, and does not provide the opportunity to place effectively in combat the

ground forces of the United States and Britain. Furthermore, operations in the Mediterranean do not contribute to the defeat of the submarine and do not force Germany to expose her air force to the destructive losses inherent in a defense against a decisive U.S.-British air-ground offensive.

9. A cross-channel offensive contributes directly and with ever-increasing impact toward the essentials of military victory over the Axis. It can be launched from the U.K. which is the only U.S.-British base capable of unleashing a mass explosive air, sea and land attack directly against the German army. It will destroy or neutralize the most important German submarine bases. It will bring on an air battle which will result in the destruction of the German air force. It will bring our forces to grips with the German army in an area where all available British and U.S. air and ground forces can be used effectively and decisively. Germany must then choose between a retreat which will allow the assault forces to seize decisive land areas, and the transfer of divisions from the Russian front and other areas. Such transfers must quickly lead to the crumbling of her defenses and the attainment by the United Nations of complete victory.

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10. The choice between Mediterranean operations and a decisive cross-channel operation is a decision between:

a. Trusting that the Germans and Russians will continue to weaken and destroy each other while the U.S. and Great Britain succeed in crumbling the internal support of the German war machine by raids, limited operations, propaganda, sabotage, strategic bombardment and political disintegration and

b. Accepting that Germany cannot be defeated without bringing to bear against the German army the maximum military power of the U.S., Britain and Russia with the objective of defeating the German army by coordinated offensive air-ground action across the channel and from the Eastern front.

An expansion of operations in the Mediterranean is consistent with the first course of action. This area offers only an opportunity for gambling that victory can be achieved as a primary result of psychological and political pressure. The estimates governing the detailed course of action and the appraisal of the likelihood of success must be based primarily on political speculations and hopes concerning the weaknesses of our enemies and strengths of our allies. Military action is not and will not be the decisive factor.

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On the other hand a cross-channel operation is consistent with the second course of action set forth above. The opposition to be overcome and the cost in men and resources can be appraised in terms of military action. Men, guns and planes and not political and psychological imponderables, determine ultimate success or failure.

11. It is very doubtful that the Russian Army supplemented by the effects of strategic bombardment will, unaided by a major U.S.-British air-ground operation, be sufficient to destroy the fighting power of Axis ground forces. It is certain that dependence upon the Russian army alone for major ground operations will result in a protracted European war and may lead to unilateral action culminating in peace short of complete victory. Such a course of action is unacceptable.

12. It is clear that the soundest course of action is to mass air, sea, and land power in the U.K. for a cross-channel assault. But even more vital to the achievement of victory than the particular course of action chosen, is the pressing necessity of deciding what that course of action shall be and then sticking vigorously and wholeheartedly to that decision.