

• PSF

Safe: Lord Beaverbrook

Beaverbrook folder.

Washington,
D.C.,
27th December 1941

Dear Mr. President,

I am so anxious to step up the production of war weapons in the United States and Britain that I take the liberty of sending you this letter to support the arguments I put forward yesterday.

You will see in the accompanying document that the combined output of the United States and Britain planned for 1942 is utterly inadequate when you take into account the necessities of the nations.

It is my hope that you will permit Mr. Hopkins to take charge of a committee of production with full powers and entire authority.

Such a committee would not only dispose of the production requirements but would also be responsible for mobilising and distributing the necessary raw materials.

There is no question of a soldier's programme. The soldiers' demand in the United States and Britain can be fully satisfied.

But, thereafter, the need for an arsenal of tanks and anti-tank guns, aircraft and anti-aircraft guns is so very pressing that there should not be any limitation in



-2-

the production of these four weapons.

And I would ask you to lay down the simple rule that military programmes should be fulfilled and thereafter the weapons I have mentioned should be produced in an increasing degree for the arming and supplying of all the nations fighting on the side of democracy.

I am, Mr. President,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Beveridge".

The President of the United States,
The White House,
Washington,
D.C.

THE AMERICAN-BRITISH PRODUCTION PROGRAMME 1942

The production of weapons in the United States, Britain and Canada is entirely inadequate.

The deficits are so considerable that immediate steps must be taken to increase the production programme in all directions.

There can be no delay, as the production of our enemies may, before the year 1942 is over, leave us in a difficult and dangerous situation.

To take one instance. We are told that the Russian tank production is in excess of 25,000 a year. Only a few days ago, Stalin declared that it had now reached a peak since the outbreak of war.

Yet Stalin considers that his output is 16,000 below his requirement. We have every right to suppose, therefore, that enemy tank production must be in excess of the Russian output.

It is reported, with authority, that the Germans have more than 100,000 guns of 40 mm and over.

Already we know only too well the immense naval resources of the three chief powers confronting us.

In the tables below, I make a brief and rough examination of Britain's total requirements for the major weapons, and of Russia's requirements for these weapons from the United States and the British Empire.

These requirements represent the quantities demanded by the constituted authority in each country.

We have no means of knowing the requirements of the United States. It would be reasonable to suppose that these exceed the requirements of Britain or Russia. Indeed, the United States might be expected to require as many arms/
arms/

arms as Britain and Russia together.

But it has been assumed in the tables which follow that the United States requirements will be no higher than those of Britain. This assumption is manifestly absurd.

Even so, it will be seen that when the external requirements of Russia, the total requirements of Britain and this purely arbitrary figure for United States requirements are set against the total planned production of the United States, Canada and Britain, the deficits are considerable.

If it would be convenient to supply a list of the actual requirements of the United States, then it would be shown that the deficits are, in fact, overwhelming.

TANKS

1942 Requirements:	
British	19,000
Russian	16,500
United States - assumed figure	<u>19,000</u>
	54,500

1942 Production:	
U.S., U.K. & Canada	44,000
<u>Deficit</u>	<u>10,500</u>

AIRCRAFT (Bombers, Fighters, etc.)

1942 Requirements:	
British	34,700
Russian	6,000
United States - assumed figure	<u>34,700</u>
	75,400

1942 Production:	
U.S., U.K. & Canada	48,670
<u>Deficit</u>	<u>26,730</u>

ARTILLERY (Anti-aircraft, Field, Anti-tank)

1942 Requirements:	
British	31,300
Russian	9,000*
United States - assumed figure	<u>31,300</u>
	71,600

1942 Production:	
U.S., U.K. & Canada	49,000
<u>Deficit</u>	<u>22,600</u>

* The Russian requirements are confined entirely to anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, as they have 35,000 field guns and require no more.

RIFLES

1942 Requirements:	
British	1,700,000
United States - assumed figure	<u>1,700,000</u>
	3,400,000
1942 Production:	
U.S., U.K. & Canada	1,800,000
<u>Deficit</u>	<u>1,600,000</u>

A.

27th December, 1941

Dorothy:

FOR THE PRESIDENT'S FILES.
For the President's files.

Lois

ok
Lois

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

I am asked to say my opinion of the production requirements of the United States for war weapons in 1942.

I confine my recommendations to tanks and anti-tank guns, to aircraft and anti-aircraft guns.

These are the principal weapons in any programme, whether of defence, attack, or assistance to other countries.

The programmes allied to these projects should of course be stepped up accordingly. But the main purpose must always be the production of these four weapons.

Now the stock of the United States in medium and light tanks appears to have been 631 on October 1st last.

On the other hand, the stock of the United Kingdom on the same date was 5,163 tanks, on account of the generosity of the United States in helping Great Britain. About 500 obsolete light types are included in these figures.

But it is evident that the United States has a duty during the year 1942 not only to replace shortages of existing supplies, but also to secure an output consistent with needs.

I heard Mr. Knudsen's suggestion that the output should be no less than 45,000 medium and light tanks, including of course a few heavy tanks. This discussion took place in the Cabinet Room last Friday.

The proportion of tanks should be as suggested:

two-thirds medium and one-third light.

You will see that this programme involves a very considerable increase of 75 mm. guns, which will be a difficulty. But it is possible to require from Great Britain and the Dominion of Canada an increased production of 6-pdr. guns which could be substituted for 75 mm. guns.

Both Britain and Canada would require some assistance in materials and possibly in the permission to place sub-contracts in the United States.

The anti-tank gun is one of the most important productions for defence purposes and also for attack.

On October 1st last Britain possessed three times as many anti-tank guns as the United States. The British necessities for 1942 amount to 15,000 anti-tank guns.

To be on the same basis as Great Britain, it would be necessary to produce here 17,000 guns in the year 1942. But the basis is not at all comparable. United States' necessities far exceed Britain's. And the output capacity of the United States is in every respect greater than that of the United Kingdom. In fact, the British programme is not a complete unit at all. It is a programme which relies entirely on assistance from the United States.

The present United States programme of anti-tank guns is 7,000 guns, with possibly 4,700 added when the target is increased.

It appears to me imperative that a further increase of 6,000 guns should be provided for at once.

The aircraft programme does not surpass the British programme of operational types in any direction, with the exception of light bombers. These are very useful, but other classifications are of more value.

I have already urged that the fighter programme should be doubled. Many difficulties will arise and much argument will take place before such a large target is realised. But it seems to me that the immense possibilities of American industry justify such an expectation.

The need for 24,000 fighters is shown by experience of heavy losses through combat, through flights in war conditions and through operational training exercises.

An examination of British operational experience will convince you of the present necessity for this increased programme.

If the fighter programme is increased by as much as 12,000 in output in the year 1942, then of course other types must also show an increase in output, though not on the same scale as the fighter programme.

In anti-aircraft guns, the United States Government has a very unsatisfactory supply in hand.

The Government is therefore involved in a programme of anti-aircraft weapons not only sufficiently extensive to provide for necessities during the year 1942, but also to build up a reasonable stock

for the defence of centres of population possibly exposed to enemy attack.

Stalin told me that Moscow is defended by 800 anti-aircraft guns, and my experience in the Russian capital leads me to believe that he did not under-estimate his resources.

If this indication of anti-aircraft necessities is used for the purpose of providing a programme here, then it appears likely that the anti-aircraft project should be based on programmes more than double the present projects, including all increases now contemplates.

The concluding arguments, I regret to say, are based on calculations which can be torn to bits by all those who are experienced in production.

None the less these arguments in support of increased production here should be considered.

I have received from one of the Canadian authorities a statement of output for 1942, which I am assured will be realised.

This Canadian output should be increased fifteen times by the United States, taking into account the national incomes of the two countries. In fact, the resources of the manufacturing community in the United States far exceeds fifteen times the Canadian resources. At the same time Canada gets engines and other parts from the United States.

But on the basis of this multiple of fifteen, the United States output in tanks would

be 45,000, in anti-tank guns, 36,000, and in anti-aircraft guns 45,000..

B. Brewster

Washington, D.C.
29th December, 1941.

file

Beaverbrook

COPY

CABLEGRAM

~~SECRET~~

March 15, 1942

FROM: LONDON

Number 2184 March 15th

PERSONAL FOR HOPKINS FROM HARRIMAN:

BEAVERBROOK HAS FINALLY DECIDED AFTER CHANGING HIS MIND
SEVERAL TIMES AND AFTER MUCH PRESSURE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER
TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES. WILL LEAVE WITHIN A VERY FEW DAYS

MCCLURE

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 3 1972