

Key Allied Decisions in World War II

An Online Professional Development Seminar



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from the National Humanities Center

- How prepared was the Roosevelt administration to shift from progressive domestic reforms to fighting a world war?
- Did FDR have prior knowledge of the Pearl Harbor attack?
- Regarding WWII, contemporary students seem to know only the Holocaust and the dropping of the Atomic bombs. How can we broaden their understanding of the conflict?
- How large a role did the Soviet Union play in the defeat of Nazi Germany?
- How much cooperation was there between the Soviet Union and the other allies?
- What role did US industrial capacity play in winning the War?
- How did nations like Germany and Japan respond to our efforts to change their societies?
- How are the key decisions of WWII still felt today?



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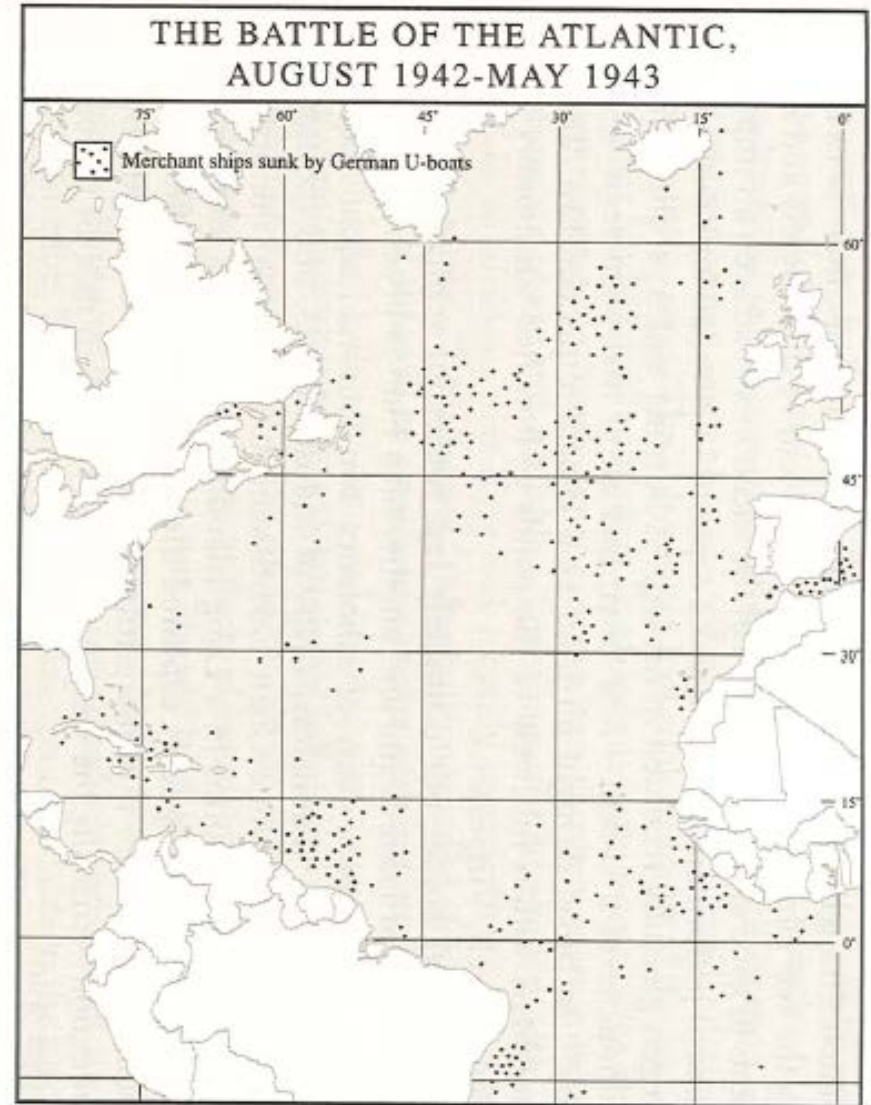
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Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government
(2011)

- The US entered the war largely unprepared in December 1941, and would need at least a year to fully mobilize. Key issues: timing and location of US entry into Pacific vs. European theater; industrial production above all.
- Divergent interests: Britain wanted to delay a cross-Channel invasion, avoid reprising the Continental blood-bath of WWI, protect England and preserve Empire, and perhaps leave the Nazi and the Soviets to annihilate (or at least badly weaken) each other. The Soviets were fighting for their lives and desperate for some relief on the Germans' Eastern Front, and so demanded immediate invasion on the Western Front. The United States had to balance its earlier but lower-priority involvement in a Pacific War while placating isolationists and Asia-firsters at home, and pursuing its own geopolitical ambitions abroad through alternating concessions to both the British and the Soviets.
- The US was constrained internally by the political fallout of the interwar debate over intervention, and externally by the drastically divergent positions and interests of the British and Soviets. The Alliance thus was above all a “political” instrument, not just a strategic one.
- WWII was in some ways three separate wars largely fought (1) between the Nazis and the Soviets on the Eastern Front, (2) fought between the Nazis and the US-UK forces on the Western Front, and (3) between Japan and the US in the Pacific Theater. Had the Alliance failed politically, the Axis might have had a better chance at victory by dividing and conquering in separate efforts.
- The US had very different relationships with the British, with whom they formed a combined command, and the Soviets, with whom they had little contact. Yet the US needed the Soviets as a counterweight to the British, from whose turf its European operations were based.
- The US sought to square the circle of great power politics by assuming an exceptional role in world history. The global pattern of fascist aggression opened this opportunity, but facts on the ground in Europe, where the UK and USSR had already staked entrenched positions, constrained those designs.

Battle of the Atlantic



Axis Expansion in Europe



1 Axis expansion in Europe 1938-42

Japanese Advance



Table 1.1. *Population, gross domestic product, territory, and empires of the Allied and Axis powers within contemporary frontiers, 1938*

	Popul- ation, million 1	Territory, sq. km		GDP, international dollars and 1990 prices	
		total, thou. 2	per thou. people 3	total, \$ bn 4	per head, \$ 5
<i>Allied powers</i>					
UK	47.5	245	5	284.2	5,983
France	42.0	551	13	185.6	4,424
UK dominions	30.0	19,185	639	114.6	3,817
Czecho-Slovakia	10.5	140	13	30.3	2,882
Poland	35.1	389	11	76.6	2,182
French colonies	70.9	12,099	171	48.5	684
UK colonies	453.8	14,994	33	284.5	627
Allied total	689.7	47,603	69	1,024.3	1,485
of which, great powers only (UK and France)	89.5	796	9	469.8	5,252
<i>Axis powers</i>					
Germany	68.6	470	7	351.4	5,126
Austria	6.8	84	12	24.2	3,583
Italy	43.4	310	7	140.8	3,244
Japan	71.9	382	5	169.4	2,356
Japanese colonies	59.8	1,602	27	62.9	1,052
Italian colonies	8.5	3,488	412	2.6	304
Axis total	258.9	6,336	24	751.3	2,902
of which, great powers only (Germany Austria, Italy, and Japan)	190.6	1,246	7	685.8	3,598
<i>China</i>					
(exc. Manchuria)	411.7	9,800	24	320.5	778
Allies/Axis	2.7	7.5	2.8	1.4	0.5
Great powers only	0.5	0.6	1.4	0.7	1.5
China/Japanese empire	3.1	4.9	1.6	1.4	0.4

Table 1
Power Generation in the Occupied Eastern Territories (1,000 kW)

	Total	RK Ukraine (incl. Military Area South)	RK Ostland	Military Area North and Center
Before the war	2570 (100%)	2200 (100%)	270 (100%)	100 (100%)
After Soviet retreat	300 (12%)	145 (7%)	135 (50%)	20 (20%)
March 1943	630 (24%)	350 (16%)	240 (90%)	40 (40%)

Source: *Wirtschaftsgrößenordnungen für die besetzten Ostgebiete*, 9 March 1943, Berlin: Chefgruppe W im Wirtschaftsstab Ost (Military Archives Freiburg; Bestand RW 31/260).

Table 2
Industrial Production in the Occupied Eastern Territories from the Time of Occupation until the End of 1943

Category	Unit	Production before Occupation	Production percent of until end of 1942	1941-1943 prewar production In 1943	Induction average until year end 1943	Plan fulfillment in the year 1943
Electricity	bill. kWh	10.0	7.5%	10.0%	8.8%	71%
Coal	mill. tons	85.0(1940)	2.1%	2.7%	2.4%	26%
Iron ore	mill. tons	16.5(1938)		2.3%	1.2%	10%
Crude Steel	mill. tons	12.0(1940)	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	2%
Cement	mill. tons	2.0(1938)	15.0%	8.2%	11.6%	31%
Lignite	mill. tons	0.5(1938)	56.0%	90.0%	73.0%	23%
Peat	mill. tons	8.0(1938)	56.0%	35.1%	45.6%	51%
Manganese ore	mill. tons	1.4(1938)	45.0%	81.4%	63.6%	80%
Shale	mill. tons	1.7(1938)	50.6%	76.2%	63.5%	68%
Shale oil	1000 tons	160.0(1938)	33.8%	67.3%	50.5%	82%
Petroleum*	1000 tons	370.0(1938)	67.8%	21.0%	44.7%	31%
Phosphate rock	1000 tons	175.0(1938)	7.6%	47.9%	27.8%	98%
Mercury	tons	300.0(1938)	7.6%	4.0%	5.5%	12%

* Including mineral oil production of Drohobycz(Galicia/General Government of Poland)

Source: *Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Chefgruppe Wirtschaft in Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete*, 20 November 1943, Berlin: Wirtschaftsstab Ost (Military Archives Freiburg; Bestand RW 31/260). *Wirtschaftsgrößenordnungen für die besetzten Ostgebiete*, 9 March 1943, Berlin: Chefgruppe W im Wirtschaftsstab Ost (Military Archives Freiburg; Bestand RW 31/260).

Part I
Ideological and Political Constraints on Allied Strategy

Part II
Key Wartime Decisions

Part III
The War Beyond the War

Ideological and Political Constraints on Allied Strategy

Joint Statement by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, August 14, 1941

Joint declaration of the President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.

First, their countries seek **no aggrandizement, territorial or other**;

Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them;

Fourth, they will endeavor, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity;

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What do the principles enunciated here say about nature of the Alliance?
- Does it matter that the Atlantic Charter was an unsigned press release?

Joint Statement by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, August 14, 1941

Fifth, they desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the objector securing, for all, improved labor standards, economic advancement and social security;

Sixth, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want;

Seventh, such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance;

Eighth, they believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments

Discussion Questions

- What do the principles enunciated here say about nature of the Alliance?
- Does it matter that the Atlantic Charter was an unsigned press release?

The Ambassador to the Polish Government in Exile (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

There were several points in the Declaration however, which had engaged his Government's concern.

While his Government was deeply sensible of the great importance of the Declaration, his Government felt however, that the abstract character of the policy of justice, as set forth therein, would render its practice inadequate to meet actual conditions on the continent. For example, mass deportation which had taken place in certain sections of Poland, rendered the principle of self-determination set forth in point 2 of the Declaration, difficult, to say the least. Moreover, in Yugoslavia, mass slaughter had almost wiped out certain sections of the country. These were just some of the complications involved.

(cont'd.)

....

Discussion Questions

- What were the consequences of the language of the Atlantic Charter for other Alliance members, particularly those fighting for their lives?

The Ambassador to the Polish Government in Exile (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

He earnestly hoped, the Minister continued, that the spirit of his observations might be understood. The abstract character of some of the points as set forth in the Declaration opened the way for an interpretation which exposed some of Poland's historic interests, and thus did not present a very engaging vista for the future. As a matter of fact, the German propagandists were already vigorously engaged in radio broadcasting an interpretation of the Declaration in a light unfavorable not only to the people in Poland, but also throughout Eastern and Central Europe. At the same time, the Germans were broadcasting an appeal to Poles to join forces against the “Infidel”.

Finally, the Minister said that all shades of opinion in Polish circles here believed freedom-loving peoples of the European continent would welcome an endorsement of the Declaration by the Soviet Union. Such a step would thwart German attempts to exploit any doubts which might exist in Europe about Soviet peace aims.

Discussion Questions

- What were the consequences of the language of the Atlantic Charter for other Alliance members, particularly those fighting for their lives?

Memorandum by the President's Special Assistant, Harry Hopkins, December 27, 1941

I would lift the countries like China and the U.S.S.R. out of their alphabetical listing and place them with our own and the U.K., the distinction being those actively engaged in war in their own countries and those that have been overrun by the Axis.

I think this listing is extremely important and should be gone over with great care by the State Department.

I think it is up to the British to decide whether or not India should be Included, although for the life of me I don't understand why they don't include it.

My own feeling is that at the moment the Free French should not be Included.

At the end of the second paragraph of the Joint Declaration, another sentence should be added including a restatement of our aims for human freedom, justice, security, not only for the people in our own lands but for all people in the world. I think a good deal of care should be given to the exact words of this and I do not think the reference to the Atlantic Charter is adequate.

Discussion Questions

- What can we learn about the nature of the Alliance from the inclusion, listing, and ranking/order of countries to be included in the declaration?

The Secretary of State to the President, December 29, 1941

CONFIDENTIAL AND IN HASTE

I enclose herewith the proposed amendment[s] to our Joint Declaration offered by the Soviet Ambassador for his Government. The Soviet Ambassador tells me that the word “Hitlerism” with his country includes Nazism, Fascism and Japanism, and hence his Government may stick rather strongly for this word. I mention this so’ you will have the full background. I see no particular objection to the other proposals.

C. H.

[Enclosure]

AMENDMENTS:

Preamble: . . . “in their own lands as well as in other lands . . . instead of
“not only in their own lands, but everywhere.”

(2) “Each government pledges itself to cooperate with the governments signatory hereto and not to make a separate armistice or peace with the enemies . . .,” instead of the original text.

Final Para: “and contributions in the struggle for victory over Hitlerism,” instead of “and contribution towards the defeat of members, etc.

[’]

Discussion Questions

- Why use the term “Hitlerism” instead of fascism? Mere semantics?
- How is the rewording suggested by the Soviets significant for strategy?

Declaration by the United Nations, January 1, 1942

A Joint Declaration by the United States, the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Poland, South Africa, Yugoslavia

The Governments signatory hereto,

Having subscribed to a common program of purposes and principles embodied in the Joint Declaration of the President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland dated August 14, 1941, known as the Atlantic Charter.

Being convinced that complete victory over their enemies is essential to defend life, liberty, independence and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice in their own lands as well as in other lands, and that they are now engaged in a common struggle against savage and brutal forces seeking to subjugate the world,

(cont'd.)

....

Discussion Questions

- Are references to “complete victory” and “savagery” mere rhetorical flourishes? Why the echoes of the language of the Atlantic Charter? Any differences?

DECLARE:

(1) Each Government pledges itself to employ its full resources, military or economic, against those members of the Tripartite Pact: and its adherents with which such government is at war.

(2) Each Government pledges itself to cooperate with the Governments signatory hereto and not to make a separate armistice or peace with the enemies.

The foregoing declaration may be adhered to by other nations which are, or which may be, rendering material assistance and contributions in the struggle for victory over Hitlerism.

Done at Washington

Discussion Questions

- Are references to “complete victory” and “savagery” mere rhetorical flourishes? Why the echoes of the language of the Atlantic Charter? Any differences?

I. GRAND STRATEGY

1. At the A-B* [American-British] Staff conversations in February 1941, it was agreed, that Germany was the predominant member of the Axis power, and consequently, the Atlantic and European area was considered to be the decisive theatre.
2. Much has happened since February last, but notwithstanding the entry of Japan into the War, our view remains that Germany is still the prime enemy and her defeat is the key to victory. Once Germany is defeated, the collapse of Italy and the defeat of Japan must follow.
3. In our considered opinion, therefore, it should be a cardinal principle of A-B strategy that only the minimum of force necessary for the safeguarding of vital interests in other theatres should be diverted from operations against Germany

(cont'd.)

....

Discussion Questions

- significance of Germany-first strategy (implications for Pacific Theater)
- likely US/UK vs USSR view of “tightening ring” strategy?

CLOSING AND TIGHTENING THE RING AROUND GERMANY

13. This ring may be defined as a line running roughly as follows:

ARCHANGEL - BLACK SEA - ANATOLIA – THE NORHTERN SEABOARD OF THE MEDITERREAN – THE WESTERN SEABOARD OF EUROPE.

The main object will be to strengthen this ring, and close the gaps in it, by sustaining the Russian front, by arming and supporting Turkey, by increasing our strength in the Middle East, and by gaining possession of the whole North African coast.

14. If this ring can be closed, the blockade of Germany and Italy will be complete, and German eruptions, e.g. toward the Persian Gulf, or to the Atlantic seaboard of Africa, will be prevented. Furthermore, the seizing of the North African coast may open the Mediterranean to convoys, thus enormously shortening the route to the Middle East and saving considerable tonnage now employed in the long haul around the Cape.

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Discussion Questions

- significance of Germany-first strategy (implications for Pacific Theater)
- likely US/UK vs USSR view of “tightening ring” strategy?

17. In 1943 the way be clear for a return to the Continent, across the Mediterranean, from Turkey into the Balkans, or by landings in Western Europe. Such operations will be the prelude to the final assault on Germany itself, and the scope of the victory program should be such as to provide means by which they can be carried out.

....

Discussion Questions

- significance of Germany-first strategy (implications for Pacific Theater)
- likely US/UK vs USSR view of “tightening ring” strategy?

Key Wartime Decisions

In an attempt to ward off the inevitable disaster, the Axis propagandist are trying all of their old tricks in order to divide the United Nations. They seek to create the idea that if we win this war, Russia, England, China, and the United States are going to get into a cat-and-dog fight.

This is their final effort to turn one nation against another, in the vain hope that they may settle with one or two at a time-that any of us may be so gullible and so forgetful as to be duped into making “deals” at the expense of our Allies.

To these panicky attempts to escape the consequences of their crimes we say-all the United Nations say-that the only terms on which we shall deal with an Axis government or any Axis factions are the terms proclaimed at Casablanca: “Unconditional Surrender.” In our uncompromising policy we mean no harm to the common people of the Axis nations. But we do mean to impose punishment and retribution in full upon their guilty, barbaric leaders....

Discussion Questions

- What strategic needs of February 1943 does this decision accomplish vis-a-vis the Axis? the Allies?
- What are the long-term strategic implications?

The President and the Prime Minister realized up to the full the enormous weight of the war which Russia is successfully bearing along her whole land front, and their prime object has been to draw as much weight as possible off the Russian armies by engaging the enemy as heavily as possible at the best selected Points.

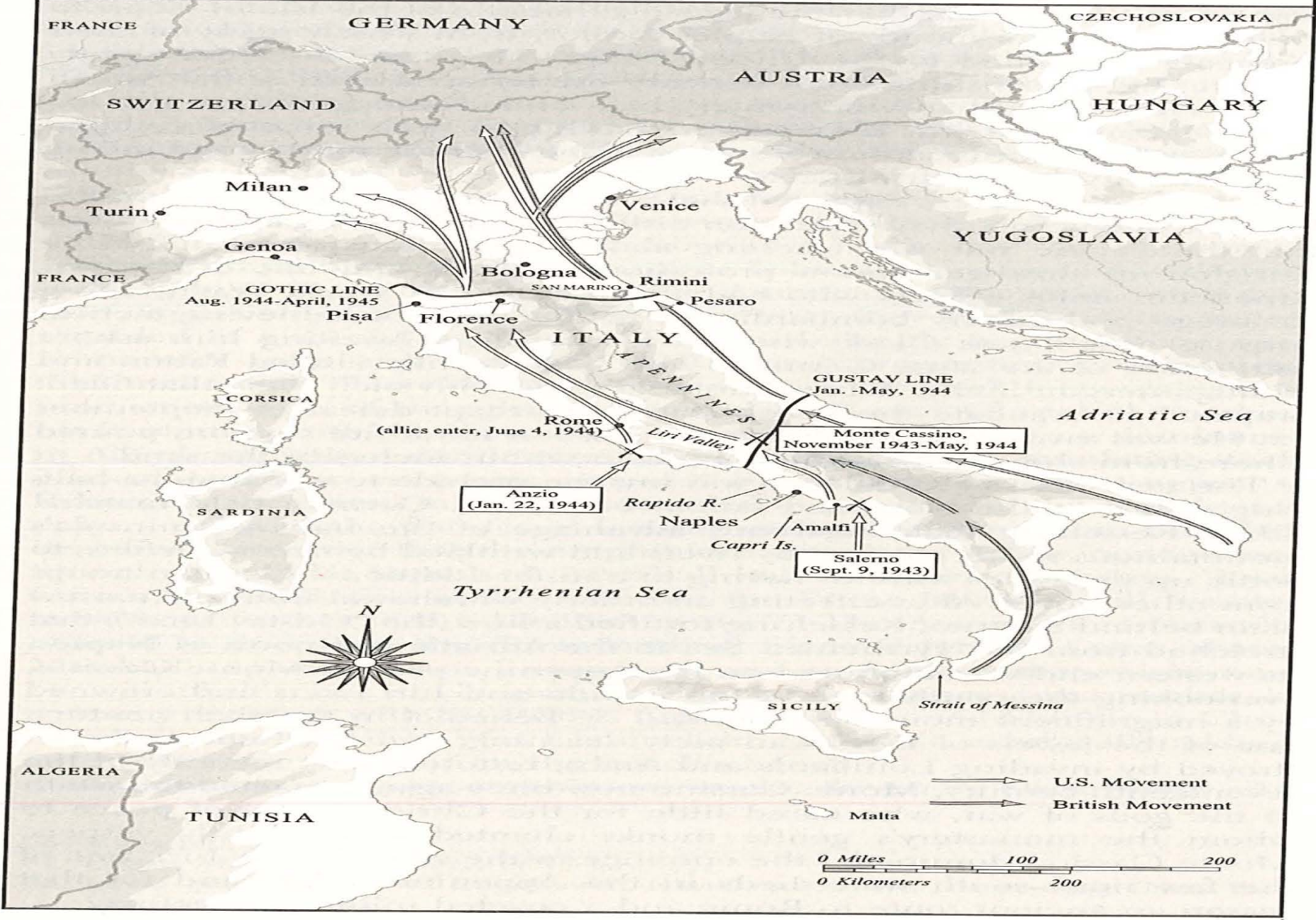
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Borrowing a phrase from a letter of Gen. U. S. Grant to the Confederate Commander of Forts Henry and Donelson during the American Civil War, the President called the sessions the “unconditional surrender” conference. The one hope for peace he asserted, lay in depriving Germany and Japan of all military power.

Discussion Questions

- How does this internal memo reveal the tension between short- and long-term strategic needs?

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN, 1943-1945



.... He thought that the keynote of our plans at the present time should be an intention to employ every resource of men and munitions against the enemy. Nothing that could be brought to bear should be allowed to stand idle.

.... TORCH was over, HUSKY was near, what should come next? He would put forward some views which had been formed by careful study. These would not be in the shape of fixed plans, but rather of ideas for the common stock.... We had the authority and prestige of victory. It was our duty to redouble our efforts, and to grasp the fruits of our success. The only questions outstanding between the two Staffs were questions of emphasis and priority. He felt sure that these could be solved by mutual agreement.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What alternative is Churchill trying to avoid by laying out his strategic vision for the Mediterranean Theater?

.... Another great effect of the elimination of Italy would be felt in the Balkans, where patriots of various nationalities were with difficulty held in check by large Axis forces, which included 25 or more Italian Divisions. If these withdrew, the effect would be either that Germany would have to give up the Balkans, or else that she would have to withdraw large forces from the Russian Front to fill the gap. In no other way could relief be given to the Russian Front on so large a scale this year. The third effect would be the elimination of the Italian fleet. This would immediately release a considerable British squadron of battleships and aircraft carriers to proceed either to the Bay of Bengal or the Pacific to fight Japan.

.... We had our finest and most experienced troops in the Mediterranean. The British alone had 13 Divisions in that theater. Supposing that *HUSKY* were completed by the of August, what should these troops do between that time and the date 7 or 8 months later, when the cross-Channel operation might first be mounted? They could not possibly stand idle, and he could not contemplate so long a period of apparent inaction. It would have a serious effect on relations with Russia, who was bearing such a disproportionate weight.

Discussion Questions

- What alternative is Churchill trying to avoid by laying out his strategic vision for the Mediterranean Theater?

a. It will be observed that General Morgan lays down three main conditions which must be created if the operation is to have a reasonable prospect of success. These are:—

(1) There must be an overall reduction in the strength of the German Fighter forces between now and the time of the assault.

....

Wherever we may attempt to land, and however many ports we capture, we cannot escape the fact that we shall be forced to maintain a high proportion of our forces over the beaches for two or three months while port facilities are being restored.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What is the main concern for the British Chiefs of Staff for Operation OVERLORD (the invasion of Nazi-occupied France)? How does it harmonize with Churchill's arguments made in Washington three months earlier?

The essential discrepancy in value between the enemy's troops, highly organized, armed and battle-trained, who await us in their much vaunted impregnable defences, and our troops, who must of necessity launch their assault at the end of a cross-Channel voyage with all its attendant risks, must be reduced to the narrowest possible margin. Though much can be done to this end by the means available and likely to become available to us in the United Kingdom to influence these factors, we are largely dependent upon events that will take place on other war fronts, principally on the Russian front, between now and the date of the assault.

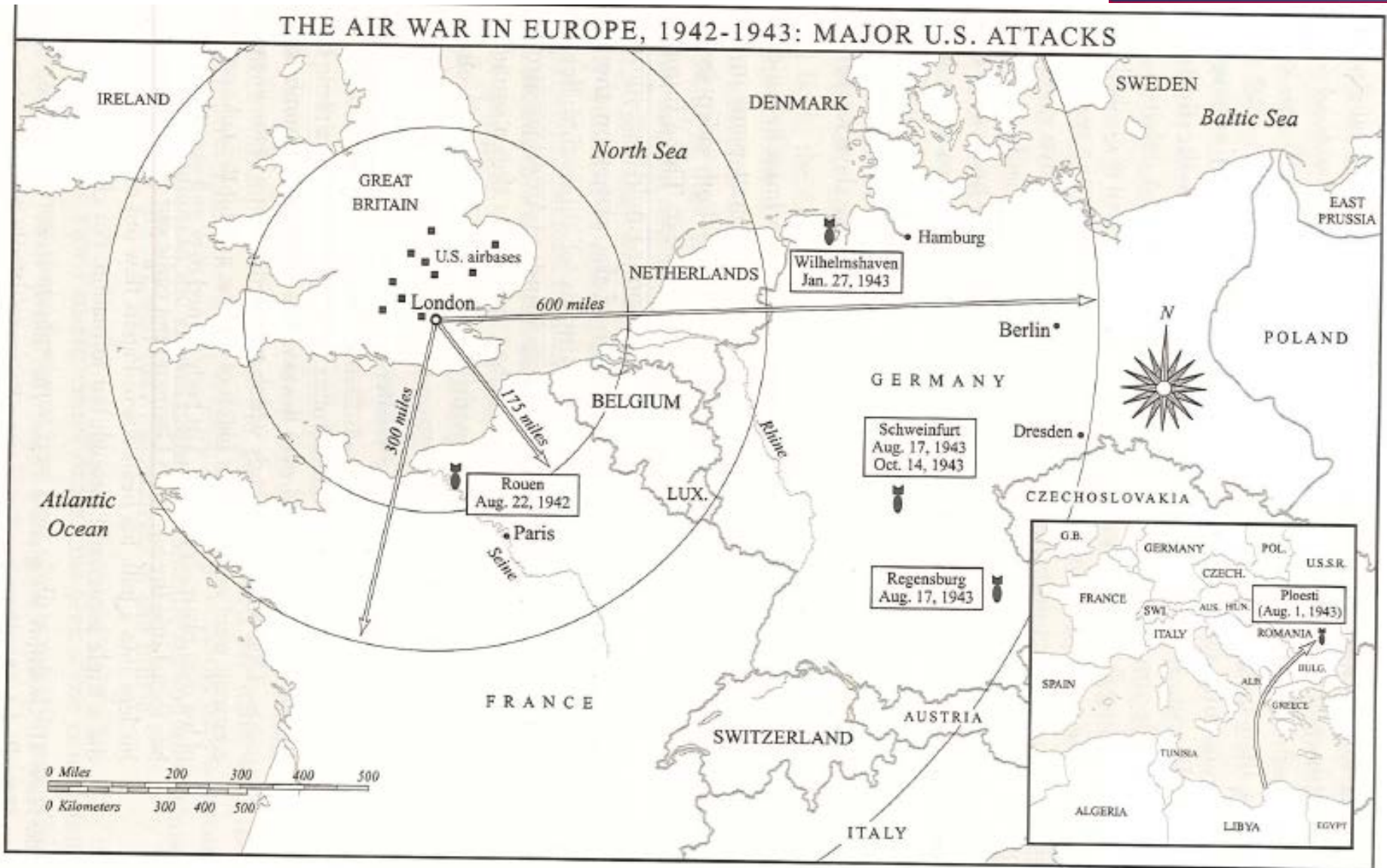
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Finally, I venture to draw attention to the danger of making direct comparisons between operation "Husky" and operation "Overlord." No doubt the experience now being gained in the Mediterranean will prove invaluable when the detailed planning stage for "Overlord" is reached, but viewed as a whole the two operations could hardly be more dissimilar.

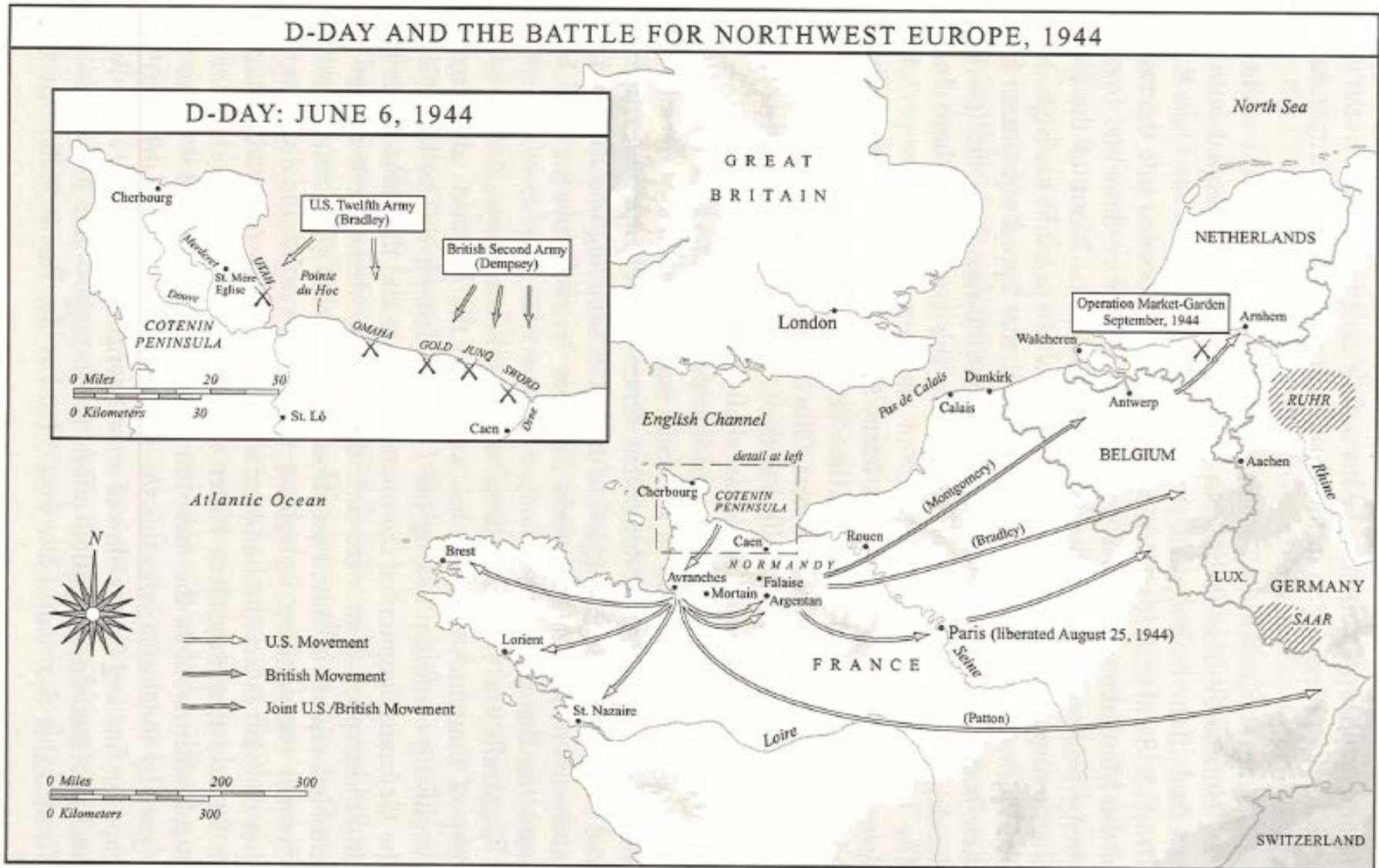
Discussion Questions

- What is the main concern for the British Chiefs of Staff for Operation OVERLORD (the invasion of Nazi-occupied France)? How does it harmonize with Churchill's arguments made in Washington three months earlier?

THE AIR WAR IN EUROPE, 1942-1943: MAJOR U.S. ATTACKS



D-DAY AND THE BATTLE FOR NORTHWEST EUROPE, 1944



The 1944 Allied Advances on Germany



Declaration of the Three Powers, December, 1943

As to war-our military staffs have joined in our round table discussions, and we have concerted our plans for the destruction of the German forces. We have reached complete agreement as to the scope and timing of the operations to be undertaken from the east, west and south....

And as to peace-we are sure that our concord will win an enduring Peace. We recognize fully the supreme responsibility resting upon us and all the United Nations to make a peace which will command the goodwill of the overwhelming mass of the peoples of the world and banish the scourge and terror of war for many generations.

With our Diplomatic advisors we have surveyed the problems of the future. We shall seek the cooperation and active participation of all nations, large and small, whose peoples in heart and mind are dedicated, as are our own peoples, to the elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance. We will welcome them, as they may choose to come, into a world family of Democratic Nations.

Discussion Questions

- Compare the various welcomes given by Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. What are they trying to communicate, and what does that reveal about the differences with which each nation approached grand strategy at that moment?
- Why does FDR begin by discussing the Pacific Theater?
- What does the disagreement between Churchill and Stalin reveal about their competing objectives and their relative strength in shaping strategy at that moment? What role does FDR assume relative to each?

(3) Took note of Marshal Stalin's statement that if Turkey found herself at war with Germany, and as a result Bulgaria declared war on Turkey or attacked her, the Soviet would immediately be at war with Bulgaria. The Conference further took note that this fact could be explicitly stated in the forthcoming negotiations to bring Turkey into the war:

(4) Took note that Operation OVERLORD would be launched during May 1944, in conjunction with an operation against Southern France. The latter operation would be undertaken in as great a strength as availability of landing-craft permitted. The Conference further took note of Marshal Stalin's statement that the Soviet forces would launch an offensive at about the same time with the object of preventing the German forces from transferring from the Eastern to the Western Front:

Discussion Questions

- Compare the "complete agreement" claimed with the reality revealed in the JCS minutes.
- What purpose is served by referring to the "overwhelming mass of peoples," "all nations, large and small," etc.?
- What do the military conclusions reveal about the relative strength of Churchill and Stalin?

The War Beyond the War

The establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by processes which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of nazism and fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice. This is a principle of the Atlantic Charter - the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live - the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government to those peoples who have been forcibly deprived to them by the aggressor nations.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What consequences flow from making the destruction of Nazism and fascism the guiding principle of liberation and reconstruction? Is this commitment consistent with arrangements for reparations, or a French zone?
- What are the implications of bringing the USSR into the Pacific war?

To foster the conditions in which the liberated people may exercise these rights, the three governments will jointly assist the people in any European liberated state or former Axis state in Europe where, in their judgment conditions require,

- (a) to establish conditions of internal peace;
- (b) to carry out emergency relief measures for the relief of distressed peoples;
- (c) to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of Governments responsive to the will of the people; and
- (d) to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections.

...

When, in the opinion of the three Governments, conditions in any European liberated state or former Axis satellite in Europe make such action necessary, they will immediately consult together on the measure necessary to discharge the joint responsibilities set forth in this declaration.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What consequences flow from making the destruction of Nazism and fascism the guiding principle of liberation and reconstruction? Is this commitment consistent with arrangements for reparations, or a French zone?
- What are the implications of bringing the USSR into the Pacific war?

Yalta Agreement, February 1945

The leaders of the **three great powers** - the Soviet Union, the United States of America and Great Britain - have agreed that in two or three months after Germany has surrendered and the war in Europe is terminated, the Soviet Union shall enter into war against Japan on the side of the Allies on condition that:

1. The status quo in Outer Mongolia (the Mongolian People's Republic) shall be preserved.
2. The former rights of Russia violated by the treacherous attack of Japan in 1904 shall be restored, viz.:
 - (a) The southern part of Sakhalin as well as the islands adjacent to it shall be returned to the Soviet Union;
 - (b) The commercial port of Dairen shall be internationalized, the pre-eminent interests of the Soviet Union in this port being safeguarded, and the lease of Port Arthur as a naval base of the U.S.S.R. restored;
 - (c) The Chinese-Eastern Railroad and the South Manchurian Railroad, which provide an outlet to Dairen, shall be jointly operated by the establishment of a joint Soviet-Chinese company, it being understood that the pre-eminent interests of the Soviet Union shall be safeguarded and that China shall retain sovereignty in Manchuria;
3. The Kurile Islands shall be handed over to the Soviet Union.

It is understood that the agreement concerning Outer Mongolia and the ports and railroads referred to above will require concurrence of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The President will take measures in order to maintain this concurrence on advice from Marshal Stalin.

Discussion Questions

- What consequences flow from making the destruction of Nazism and fascism the guiding principle of liberation and reconstruction? Is this commitment consistent with arrangements for reparations, or a French zone?
- What are the implications of bringing the USSR into the Pacific war?

MARSHAL STALIN explained that in their attack on the central German position, the Russians employed 100 divisions, which was 20 more than the Germans had. He was interested in the preponderance that the British and Americans would have over the Germans.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that the British and American forces had overwhelming preponderance in airplanes and armored troops but not great preponderance in infantry. He stressed the necessity of exploiting to the full such superiority in strength as existed.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What is the subtext of Stalin's questions about the number of tanks and divisions being deployed on the Western Front?
- Why does Stalin go out of his way to say there was "no demand from the British and Americans for the Russian winter offensive"?
- Why does Stalin suggest the war in Europe might not be over by summer 1945?

MARSHAL STALIN said that the British and Americans had asked the Russians to express their wishes. He would like to know now what the wishes of the British and Americans were.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that his greatest wish was to express profound gratitude and admiration as he witnessed the marvelous advance of the Russian troops. He said the British and Americans recognized the hard and difficult task lying before them in their impending operations but had full confidence in their power to execute it. All they could ask from the Russians was that the Russians continue to do as they are doing now.

MARSHAL STALIN said there had been no demand from the British and Americans for the Russian winter offensive and no pressure was exerted by them to bring it about.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What is the subtext of Stalin's questions about the number of tanks and divisions being deployed on the Western Front?
- Why does Stalin go out of his way to say there was "no demand from the British and Americans for the Russian winter offensive"?
- Why does Stalin suggest the war in Europe might not be over by summer 1945?

Directive to Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany; April 1945

General and Political

- a. The rights, power and status of the military government in Germany are based upon the unconditional surrender or total defeat of Germany.

- b. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 3 below, you are, by virtue of your position, clothed with supreme legislative, executive, and judicial authority in the areas occupied by forces under your command. This authority will be broadly construed and includes authority to take all measures deemed by you necessary, appropriate or desirable in relation to military exigencies and the objectives of a firm military government.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What is the principle on which military government is to be based? How does it compare to that guiding principle announced in the Potsdam Agreement?

Directive to Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany; April 1945

4. Basic Objectives of Military Government in Germany:

- a. It should be brought home to the Germans that Germany's ruthless warfare and the fanatical Nazi resistance have destroyed the German economy and made chaos and suffering inevitable and that the Germans cannot escape responsibility for what they have brought upon themselves.

- b. Germany will not be occupied for the purpose of liberation but as a defeated enemy nation. Your aim is not oppression but to occupy Germany for the purpose of realizing certain important Allied objectives. In the conduct of your occupation and administration you should be just but firm and aloof. You will strongly discourage fraternization with the German officials and population.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What is the principle on which military government is to be based? How does it compare to that guiding principle announced in the Potsdam Agreement?

Directive to Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany; April 1945



c. The principal Allied objective is to prevent Germany from ever again becoming a threat to the peace of the world. Essential steps in the accomplishment of this objective are the elimination of Nazism and militarism in all their forms, the immediate apprehension of war criminals for punishment, the industrial disarmament and demilitarization of Germany, with continuing control over Germany's capacity to make war, and the preparation for an eventual reconstruction of German political life on a democratic basis.

d. Other Allied objectives are to enforce the program of reparations and restitution, to provide relief for the benefit of countries devastated by Nazi aggression, and to ensure that prisoners of war and displaced persons of the United Nations are cared for and repatriated.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- What is the principle on which military government is to be based? How does it compare to that guiding principle announced in the Potsdam Agreement?

Directive to Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany; April 1945

5. Economic Controls:

a. As a member of the Control Council and as zone commander, you will be guided by the principle that controls upon the German economy may be imposed to the extent that **such controls may be necessary to achieve the objectives enumerated in paragraph 4 above and also as they may be essential to protect the safety and meet the needs of the occupying forces and assure the production and maintenance of goods and services required to prevent starvation or such disease and unrest as would endanger these forces.** No action will be taken in execution of the reparations program or otherwise which would tend to support basic living conditions in Germany or in your zone on a higher level than that existing in any one of the neighboring United Nations.

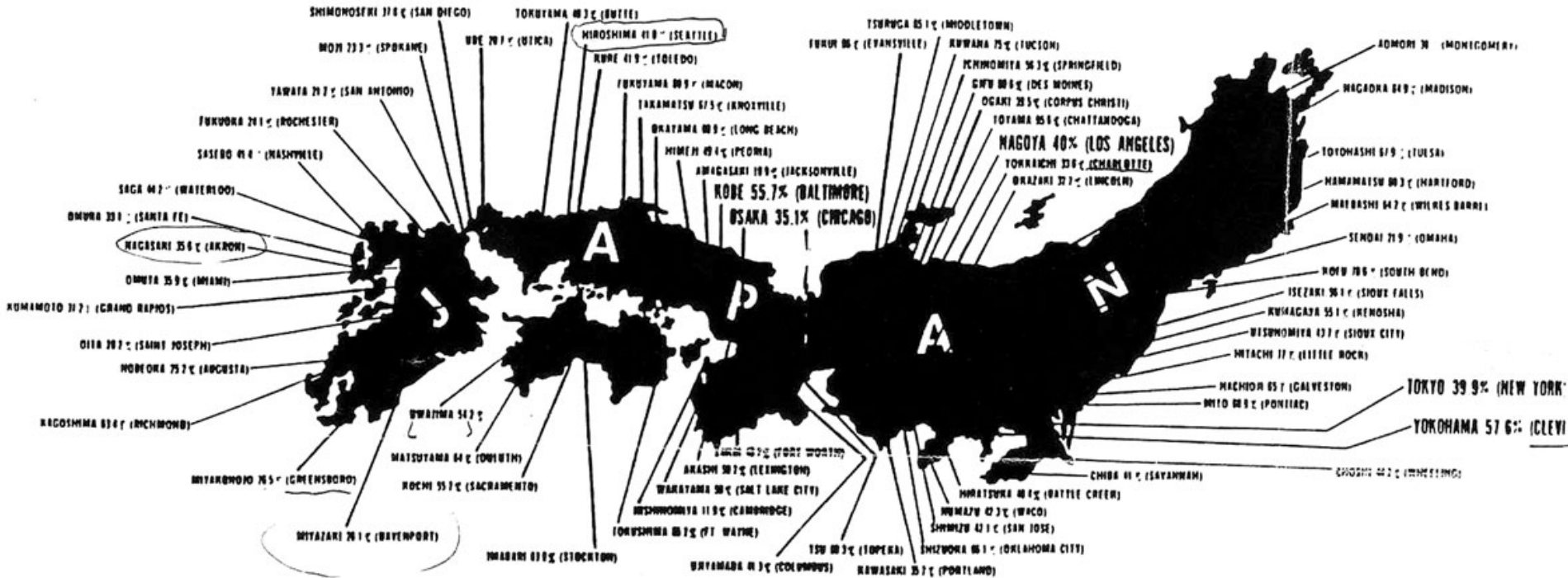
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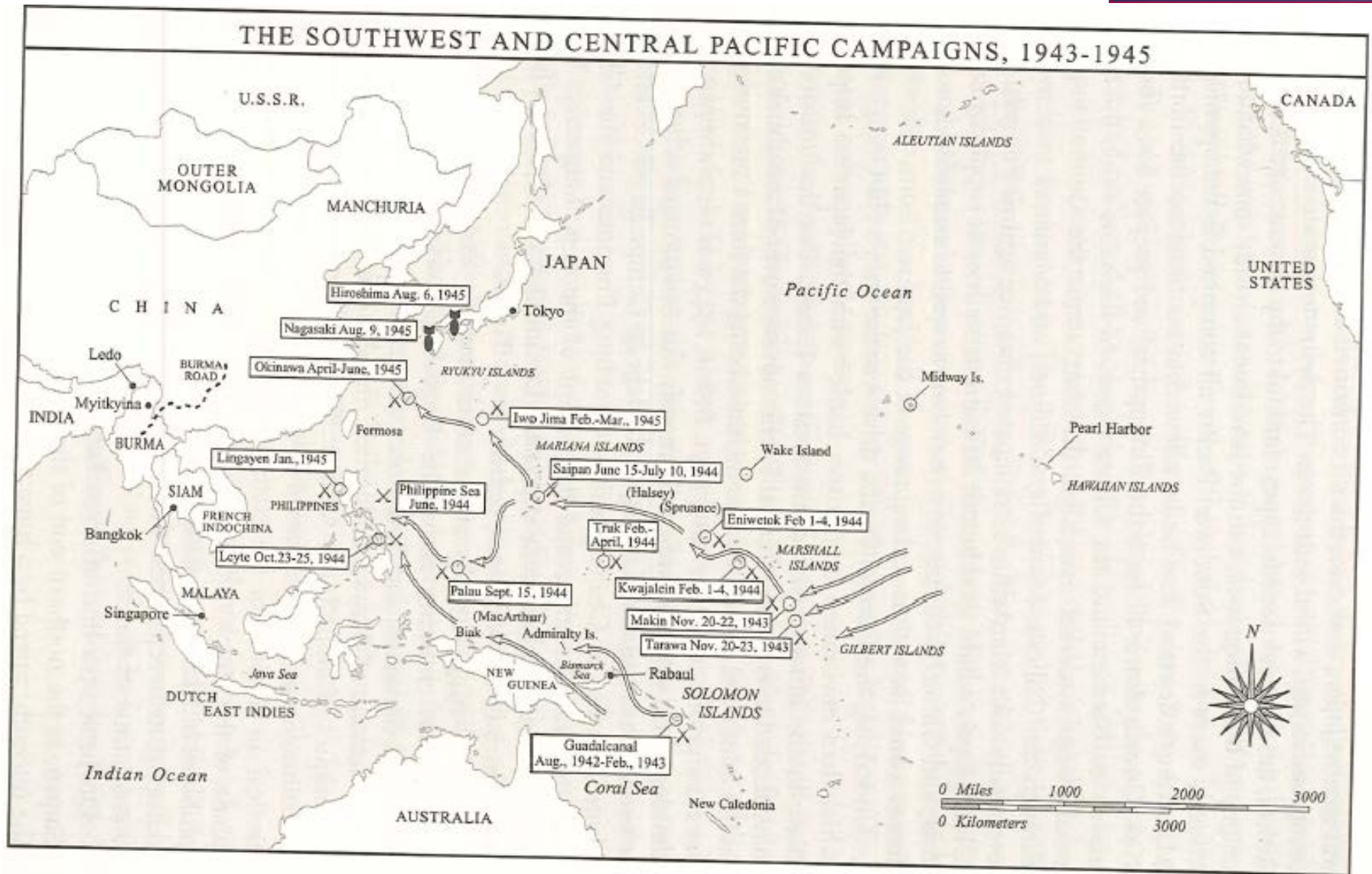
Discussion Questions

- What is the principle on which military government is to be based? How does it compare to that guiding principle announced in the Potsdam Agreement?

Map - Firebombing of Japan



*U.S. map of Japan, indicating the 66 cities (Smithsonian). This map of Japan shows the principal industrial cities that were burned out by incendiary attacks. Figures indicate what percent of a city was destroyed. For comparison, each city is paired with a U.S. city of comparable population size. Yokohama (57.6%) and Kobe (55.7%) appear to have been the most devastated.



The Potsdam Conference, August 1945

3. The purposes of the occupation of Germany by which the Control Council shall be guided are:

(i) The complete disarmament and demilitarization of Germany and the elimination or control of all German industry that could be used for military production. To these ends:-

....

(ii) To convince the German people that they have suffered a total military defeat and that they cannot escape responsibility for what they have brought upon themselves, since their own ruthless warfare and the fanatical Nazi resistance have destroyed German economy and made chaos and suffering inevitable.

....

(iii) To destroy the National Socialist Party and its affiliated and supervised organizations, to dissolve all Nazi institutions, to ensure that they are not revived in any form, and to prevent all Nazi and militarist activity or propaganda.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- Cf. the treatment to be accorded the three enemies: Italy, Germany, Japan. What do the differences reveal?
- Evaluate the provisions for economic decentralization, political anti-fascism, reparations, and refugees/removals. Are they reasonable? practical? What strategic considerations do they seek to address?
- What strategic concerns drove the reassertion of unconditional surrender for Japan? the distinction between the people vs. the leaders of Japan?

The Potsdam Conference, August 1945

III. REPARATIONS FROM GERMANY.

....

8. The Soviet Government renounces all claims in respect of reparations to shares of German enterprises which are located in the Western Zones of Germany as well as to German foreign assets in all countries except those specified in paragraph 9 below.

9. The Governments of the U. K. and U. S. A. renounce all claims in respect of reparations to shares of German enterprises which are located in the Eastern Zone of occupation in Germany, as well as to German foreign assets in Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Rumania and Eastern Austria.

VII. AUSTRIA

It was agreed that reparations should not be exacted from Austria.

....

(cont'd.)

Discussion Questions

- Cf. the treatment to be accorded the three enemies: Italy, Germany, Japan. What do the differences reveal?
- Evaluate the provisions for economic decentralization, political anti-fascism, reparations, and refugees/removals. Are they reasonable? practical? What strategic considerations do they seek to address?
- What strategic concerns drove the reassertion of unconditional surrender for Japan? the distinction between the people vs. the leaders of Japan?

The Three Powers note that the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, in accordance with the decisions of the Crimea Conference, has agreed to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot in which all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates, and that representatives of the Allied press shall enjoy full freedom to report to the world upon developments in Poland before and during the elections.

....

IX. CONCLUSION on PEACE TREATIES AND ADMISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION.

... Italy was the first of the Axis Powers to break with Germany, to whose defeat she has made a material contribution, and has now joined with the Allies in the struggle against Japan. Italy has freed herself from the Fascist regime and is making good progress towards reestablishment of a democratic government and institutions. The conclusion of such a Peace Treaty with a recognized and democratic Italian Government will make it possible for the three Governments to fulfill their desire to support an application from Italy for membership of the United Nations.

Discussion Questions

- Cf. the treatment to be accorded the three enemies: Italy, Germany, Japan. What do the differences reveal?
- Evaluate the provisions for economic decentralization, political anti-fascism, reparations, and refugees/removals. Are they reasonable? practical? What strategic considerations do they seek to address?
- What strategic concerns drove the reassertion of unconditional surrender for Japan? the distinction between the people vs. the leaders of Japan?

....Secretary Byrnes was definitely of the opinion that it would be difficult to do anything on the international level at the present time and that in his opinion we should continue the Manhattan Project with full force, at least until Congress has acted on the proposed Bill. He also said that we should continue our efforts and negotiations in behalf of the Combined Development Trust. In his opinion the whole situation justifies and requires a continuation of all our efforts on all fronts to keep ahead of the race. ...

Secretary Byrnes felt so strongly about all of this that he requested me to tell Dr. Oppenheimer for the time being his proposal about an international agreement was not practical and that he and the rest of the gang should pursue their work full force. I told Secretary Byrnes that I understood from Dr. Oppenheimer the scientists prefer not to do that (superbomb) unless ordered or directed to do so by the Government on the grounds of national policy. I thought, however, work in the Manhattan District could proceed the way he wants in improving present techniques without raising the question of the “super” at least until after Congress has acted on our proposed Bill.

Discussion Questions

- What do Byrnes’ instructions regarding the Superbomb reveal about the condition of the Alliance at its moment of victory?

Final slide.

Thank You