# CHURCHILL, ROOSEVELT, STALIN AND THE GRAND ALLIANCE, 1940-1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PDF pages</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>CHAR 20/67</td>
<td>M474/2: The Prime Minister to the Foreign secretary, 21st October, 1942.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>CHAR 20/108/20-22</td>
<td>Eden to PM, Tel. T315/3, 16th March, 1943.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>CHAR 20/152 (pg 2 and 3)</td>
<td>M338/4: PM to the Foreign secretary, 1st April 1944.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CHAR 20/152 (pg 7)</td>
<td>M(S) 31/4: PM to Foreign secretary, 16th January 1944.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>CHAR 20/153</td>
<td>M1025/4: PM to Foreign secretary and COS, 23rd October 1944.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>CHAR 20/179/58-59</td>
<td>PM to Foreign Secretary, tel. FROZEN 1163, 7th January 1944.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-31</td>
<td>CHAR 23/13/37</td>
<td>WP (44) 483, ‘Russia in 1944’- memo by Ronald Matthews, Daily Herald correspondent in Moscow, 1942-1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-34</td>
<td>CHAR 23/13/ pg1-3</td>
<td>WP (44) 8, Record of Churchill-Stalin conversation, 28th November 1943.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-38</td>
<td>CHAR 23/13</td>
<td>WP (44) 9, Record of Churchill-Stalin conversation, 30th November 1943.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39-42</td>
<td>CHAR 23/14/12</td>
<td>WP (45) 111, speeches at ‘Crimea Conference’ and Churchill-Stalin conversation, 8th February 1945.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43-44</td>
<td>CHAR 23/15/1-2</td>
<td>WM 22 (45) 1 confidential annex, 19th February 1945: Churchill’s account to cabinet of the Crimea conference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources for study are held at the archives centre. © Copyright holder. Permission is required to further reproduce these images.
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

You asked that the ban on the volunteering from the Field Army to the Commandos should stand until the new proposals for raising the standard of the Beach Divisions are "in force." What date have you in mind for this? If it is a matter of a week or so's delay, it might be accepted. Otherwise the ban on volunteering from the Field Army should be raised at once.

The numbers required by the Commandos are not large, and General Paget has nearly a million officers and men under his orders. He can certainly spare the few who are needed for the Commandos. Please do not let there be obstruction from Home Forces in this matter.

W. S. C. 21.10.42.

[Reference: Minute of 20.10.42 from Secretary of State for War replying to M.429/2 of 4.10.42 about recruiting for the Commandos.]

LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.
MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT.

1. I am distressed to see the queues for buses lengthening again in a very pronounced manner. The reduction in bus services is bound to affect the war effort. It seems so easy to make a boast of saving this or that amount of petrol by inflicting hardship and forcing austerity, and yet how heavy is the price when people arrive at their work or homes tired out, and so reduce their output and efficiency. I know of nothing in the petrol situation which could justify this blow at our output.

2. Economies in fuel are very desirable and certainly should be enforced by precept and example. Is it true, however, that there has been a great epidemic of colds this month in consequence? Of course, the loss of workers through needless illness is war waste of a most expensive kind. I gather that the coal situation is improving slightly. What arrangements are to be made for moderate central heating in November?

3. The climax of folly seems to be reached by the gentleman who writes in the papers proposing that the use of lifts should be restricted, pointing out that if you walk up eight flights of stairs you save the use of electricity for the lift which would keep an electric light burning for so many hours. But this takes no note of the condition of exhaustion of people made to climb several times a day up many flights of stairs, and the bad effect on their office work. If it comes to that, why not stop the trains and let people walk and carry their baggage with them, as they did in the good old days? We are a modern community at war, and not Hottentots or Esquimaux. I hope, therefore, it will not be imagined that simply cutting off facilities and imposing hardships produces increased war output, which is the sole aim. There is an optimum in these matters, and I do not think we are very far off it.

4. I should like to see what Lord Leathers proposes to say in his broadcast.*

W. S. C. 21.10.42.

* Proposed broadcast about winter transport.

FOREIGN SECRETARY.

(Most Secret.)

1. You are, of course, perfectly entitled to print and circulate to the War Cabinet this document.* In spite of the pressure of events, I will endeavour to write a reply. It sounds very simple to pick out these four Big Powers. We cannot, however, tell what sort of a Russia and what kind of Russian demands we shall have to face. A little later on it may be possible. As to China, I cannot regard the Chungking Government as representing a great world Power. Certainly there would be a faggot vote on the side of the United States in any attempt to liquidate the British Overseas Empire.

2. I must admit that my thoughts rest primarily in Europe—the revival of the glory of Europe, the parent continent of the modern nations and of civilisation. It would be a measureless disaster if Russian barbarism overlaid the culture and independence of the ancient States of Europe. Hard as it is to say now, I trust that the European family may act unitedly as one under a Council of Europe. I look forward to a United States of Europe in which the barriers between the nations will be greatly minimised and unrestricted travel will be possible. I hope to see the economy of Europe studied as a whole.
hope to see a Council consisting of perhaps ten units, including the former Great Powers, with several confederations—Scandinavian, Danubian, Balkan, &c.—which would possess an international police and be charged with keeping Prussia disarmed. Of course, we shall have to work with the Americans in many ways, and in the greatest ways, but Europe is our prime care and we certainly do not wish to be shut up with the Russians and the Chinese when Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, Dutch, Belgians, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Poles, Czechs and Turks will have their burning questions, their desire for our aid and their very great power of making their voices heard. It would be easy to dilate upon these themes. Unhappily the war has prior claims on your attention and on mine.

3. I am, by the way, increasingly inclined to think there has been a change in the Russian internal situation. It may be that Stalin has had to cede some of his powers to the military. I am sure we should be wise to wait longer before trying to formulate conclusions.

W. S. C.
21.10.42.

* The Four-Power Plan.
[Reference: Reply of 19.10.42 from the Foreign Secretary to M. 461/2 of 18.10.42.]

---

LORD CHERWELL.

S. 18/2.

I notice a new method of presenting returns which is creeping in. This takes the form of putting the grand total first and all details in inverted order beneath it. There may be some case in logic for such a system, but it is entirely contrary to all usage, and has an unnatural and baffling effect when presented to people who have been accustomed to add up and write the total at the bottom.

Let me know how far this infection has permeated and which are the branches that use it. It may still be possible to arrest it. Is it a fad of the Central Statistical Branch? Fads of this kind should not be allowed to cause inconvenience in time of war.

W. S. C.
21.10.42.

Sir E. Bridges, General Ismay: to see and help.

---

CHEF OF COMBINED OPERATIONS.

M. 475/2.

(Secret.)

How does your project of the snow ploughs work out? Let me have a report.

W. S. C.
22.10.42.

MINISTER OF WORKS AND PLANNING.

M. 476/2.

(Secret.)

Pray examine and make proposals upon a project for beginning the rebuilding of the House of Commons as soon as possible.

What demands would be made on labour and what time would be required—

(a) to make the Chamber habitable;
(b) to decorate it as it was before?

The existing site, foundations and size should all be preserved, but, as you will see by reference to Questions and Answers given in the House, the ventilation might be improved, and perhaps some further accommodation given to the distinguished visitors and the public.

It has occurred to me that a great deal could be done in restoring the foundations and outer structure and putting the roof on, even while the war is going forward, without any very heavy demands on labour. It is a great public need to have the Chamber restored, and if we wait till the end of the war it may be years before we can sit with reasonable comfort and efficiency. The whole character of Parliament is affected by the Chamber.

The matter should be kept quite secret at the present stage. Anyhow, it is very unlikely the enemy will hit the same place twice. A preliminary report is all that is required in the first instance.

W. S. C.
22.10.42.
PRIME MINISTER'S P
PERSONAL TELEGRAM
SERIAL No. T.345/3.

[CRYPT]

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Viscount Halifax.
No. 1273.
16th March, 1943.

D. 4.2 a.m. 17th March, 1943.
R. 11.30 a.m. 17th March, 1943.

& & &

IMMEDIATE
DEDIP
PERSONAL AND SECRET

Following for the Prime Minister from Eden.

I dined with the President last night when Harry Hopkins was the only other person present. During the course of a conversation which lasted about 4 hours the President gave me some account of his views on European problems. I have no doubt that you will have heard most of this before. For instance, he again expounded his view that armaments after the war in Europe should be concentrated in the hands of policing Powers - Britain, the United States and Russia. The smaller Powers might have rifles but nothing more dangerous than this. I explained the obvious difficulties. The President's chief pre-occupation seemed, however, to be about American-Soviet relations. I gave him some account of what Maisky said to me before I left London and he observed that unfortunately his Government's diplomatic contacts with Russia were not comparable with ours. Litvinov was in too weak a position at home to be of any real value and I gathered from Welles later that the President intends to replace Admiral Standley, not necessarily on account of his recent proclamation, but in order to have somebody with diplomatic experience in Moscow. The President also mentioned that whereas you and Stalin had met, he had never done so. He then reverted to plans mentioned in my telegram No. 1228.

2. We discussed in some detail Russian demands as given to me by Maisky. The President, somewhat to my surprise, did not seem to find any great difficulty in the Polish question. He thought that if Poland had East Prussia and perhaps some concessions in Silesia, she would gain rather than lose by agreeing to the Curzon line. In any event we, the United States, and Russia should decide at the appropriate time what was a just
and reasonable solution, and if we were agreed, Poland would have to accept. Though he mentioned that he liked Sikorski, he clearly did not think the Poles had played their cards wisely. The big question was whether it was possible to work with Russia now and after the war. Bullitt had expressed the view to him that Russia wished to see all States in Europe Communist and to overrun the Continent herself. What did I think? I said I thought it impossible to give a definite view. One could only proceed in foreign policy on the basis of certain assumptions. Even if Bullitt's fears were to prove correct, we should make the position no worse by trying to work with Russia and by assuming that Stalin meant what he said in the treaty which he had signed with us. The President agreed; nor did he take exception to the Russian claim to the Baltic States. I think that his view of this is that if Russia takes these States nobody is going to be able to turn her out, though he did mention that he hoped that some arrangements for a plebiscite, a method of resolving difficulties to which he seems over-optimistically attached, would be possible. The President suggested it might be desirable if at some stage we, Russia, and the United States were to try to come to an agreement about Poland. The President added that he did not feel any difficulty now in agreeing to Russian demands about Finland.

3. We then spoke of Germany. The President appeared to favour the dismemberment of Germany as the only wholly satisfactory solution. He agreed that if this was our view we should, when the time came, work to encourage all such movements from within. Germany should be policed for a long period of years and generally the three Great Powers should seek to obtain authority from other States to carry out this work in Europe. I pointed out that as regards occupied territories, these countries would wish to put their own house in order and, generally speaking, I thought this was a solution which we should encourage. We would have our hands quite full enough with Germany. The President asked how many of the exiled Governments I thought would have any measure of authority when they returned to their territories. I replied that Holland and Norway and, I hoped, Greece and possible Czechoslovakia. The President agreed but expressed anxiety about the position in Belgium. He said that he thought the King's conduct, not only by his act of surrender but by his marriage, had gravely undermined his position. Nor did he think the exiled Belgian Government had much authority in the country. I agreed. The President then said it might be that in view of Belgium's great food shortage some international authority would have to be instituted in that country for awhile. The President went on to describe his project of a Wallonia which he had mentioned to Oliver Lyttelton. I poured cold water, I hope politely, and the President did not revert to the subject.

4. We then travelled to the Balkans and the President reverted to his conception of a kingdom of Serbia apart from Croatia/
Croatia and Slovenia. I told him that in principle I disliked the idea of multiplying smaller States. I hoped the tendency now would be reversed and that we should aim at grouping. While I admitted the difficult relations between the Croats, Slovenes, and Serbs at the present time, I could not see any better solution for the future of either the Croats or Slovenes than forming some union with the Serbs. The President spoke again of plebiscites.

5. This brief account is an inadequate record of a conversation which ranged so widely, but I was encouraged by the President's obvious friendliness and determination that our two points of view should be formed in unison. I, of course, made it plain at all times that while answering the President's questions I was not expressing any considered views of His Majesty's Government and this is well understood on both sides. At the conclusion of our talk the President said that it might be useful if, before I went, we were each of us to jot down headings of matters about which we were agreed. This paper would neither be signed nor dated, and my copy would be for you alone.

6. The President spoke of the need to associate China with other world Powers in the solution of world problems. I was not enthusiastic but the President maintained that China was at least a potential world Power and anarchy in China would be so grave a misfortune that Chiang Kai-shek must be given the fullest support. Madame Chiang Kai-shek had had a resounding success here and the President was delighted with her reported description of Willkie as "adolescent" and himself as "sophisticated".

7. I have had conversations with Hull and Welles to-day but nothing notable emerged from them except that Welles was emphatic on the need for dismemberment of Germany at the peace, and Mr. Hull showed understanding of the Indian position.

[Copies sent to the Prime Minister].

[OTP]
FOREIGN SECRETARY.

This question is of the greatest importance. At present His Majesty's Government, and in particular you and I, are being abused for our weak departures from the Atlantic Charter. The Left Wing are taking a prominent part in this. The only reason why we and the Americans are falling below the Atlantic Charter level is in order to try to keep in step with Russian territorial demands—for the Baltic States, for part of East Prussia, for the Curzon Line, for Bessarabia and there may be more. The Russian case is that they acceded to the Atlantic Charter (not as a Treaty but as a Declaration of Intention) because of their own resolved reservation that "territorial aggrandisement" only began west of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line. Did they at any time suggest this to us? Is there anything on record between us on the subject? Have we at any time given any formal, official or public indication that we knew all the time that they were playing on the basis of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line? My impression is that we have not done so and that the whole world thinks that the Russians are committed to non-aggrandisement. I also feel that nothing would disturb the Russians more than the fact that it would have to be made public that they started from the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line, of which they are ashamed in principle, but which they are resolved to profit by in fact. Thus, in this matter, we have a very powerful leverage for discussion with them, and I am pretty sure that they would go a long way to have our support for their view on the starting point of the Atlantic Charter being for them endorsed by the Allies.

I beg you to consider this with the closest attention and talk it over with me after supplying me with the further information for which I ask.

W. S. C.

1.4.44.

Reference: Foreign Secretary's minute—P.M./44/184 of 26.3.44—about Soviet adherence to the Atlantic Charter.

FOREIGN SECRETARY.

It would be convenient if, in your minutes, you numbered your paragraphs as I can then refer to them.

W. S. C.

1.4.44.

FOREIGN SECRETARY.

1. See paragraph 2 of Ambassador Halifax’s No. 1557.* I am sure this is the right course for us to take now, and meanwhile to relapse into a moody silence so far as Stalin is concerned both by my personal telegrams and by all Foreign Office contacts through Ambassador Clark Kerr. Instead of asking for interviews he should stay at home, and when there is some necessary thing, like the British crews taking the ships to Russia, it should be delivered to Molotov in the most urbane and detached manner and no argument entered upon at all. The great thing at this stage is not to argue with them. Let us give them two or three months of perfectly simple answers to questions they may ask. Whenever possible let the answers be given by the two Ambassadors, or by Churchill and Roosevelt signed together. I am anxious to save as many Poles as possible from being murdered. It is perfectly clear that to argue with the Russians only infuriates them. On the other hand, events will soon make them come and ask us questions, to which we should be in no hurry to reply. You may take it they will take every conceivable advantage they can of their position, and of course once we get on to the Continent with a large commitment, they will have the means of blackmail, which they have not at present, by refusing to advance beyond a certain point, or even tipping the wink to the Germans that they can move more troops into the West. Although I have tried in every way to put myself in sympathy with these Communist leaders, I cannot feel the slightest trust or confidence in them. Force and facts are their only realities.

* About Mr. Hull’s views on the attitude which should be adopted by the President and the Prime Minister towards Marshal Stalin.
2. I do not know how long we shall be able to keep this up, but it is clear to me that at present their feeling is we must flatter and kowtow to them, and they may be disagreeably surprised if we simply do not come to the party. Meanwhile every effort must be made to reach complete understanding with the United States, and Poland is an extremely good hook.

3. I write the above without the slightest wish to go back on our desire to establish friendly relationships with Russia, but our and especially my very courteous and even effusive personal approaches have had a bad effect. This is why I take this line.

W. S. C.
1.4.44.

FOREIGN SECRETARY.

(Minister of Information to see.)

I only wish to get depositions from our witnesses and certainly not to press the matter on the Russians at this time. We must have our dossier clear.

In the meantime the Minister of Information has been expressing considerable anxiety about the evidence given by M.I.5. Apparently Macdonald is all right but the Minister of Information seems to think we had been misled by M.I.5 about the American correspondent. We really must have this skeleton properly articulated before he is put back into the cupboard.

W. S. C.
1.4.44.

[Reference: Foreign Secretary’s minute—P.M./44/192 of 31.3.44—about the press leakages concerning Soviet-Polish negotiations.]

SECRETARY FOR PETROLEUM.

I was most interested to hear of the successful use of the fog dispersal equipment at Fiskerton on the 18th March when it increased the visibility from 200 yards to 1,500 yards and enabled five bombers to land safely. I am delighted to know that this equipment is giving so good an account of itself. It is a fine reward to you and your department that your labours have already resulted in the saving of valuable lives and equipment. You have my full support in further developing this project.

W. S. C.
1.4.44.

LORD CHERWELL.

Pray let me have these figures* analysed, first of all in relation to the numbers of fighting troops engaged in the theatre, then in relation to the proportions of killed and wounded to missing. It must be remembered that “missing” includes prisoners who give themselves up. The lower the proportion of missing, the more creditable; but, like all percentages, this does not work out in the case of the Poles and Italians.

I think you have from other papers the general statistics on which to work. If not, I can easily get them for you. Diagrams would be useful.

W. S. C.
1.4.44.

* Casualties since the beginning of the campaign on the Italian mainland (taken from C.I.G.S.’s daily summary).

FOREIGN SECRETARY.

It might be well to ask the War Office whether this happened in fact, and if so, why it* was allowed.

W. S. C.
1.4.44.

[Reference: Telegram No. 862 from Moscow to Foreign Office about a Tass message from London reporting the case of 33 Polish soldiers of Russian nationality who were seeking transfer out of the Polish army in Britain.]

* The visit of the Tass correspondent to the soldiers’ headquarters.

[28798]
FOREIGN SECRETARY.

1. You will remember all the discussions we had at the beginning of 1942 about the future of the Baltic States and the very strong line I took against our committing ourselves to their absorption by Russia at that time. We solved these difficulties for the time being by the 20 Years' Treaty, and I see by my minute to you of the 6th October, 1943, that I summed up the situation as it was before the Moscow and Teheran Conferences.

2. I ask myself, how do all these matters stand now? Undoubtedly my own feelings have changed in the two years that have passed since the topic was first raised during your first visit to Moscow. The tremendous victories of the Russian armies, the deep-seated changes which have taken place in the character of the Russian State and Government, the new confidence which has grown in our hearts towards Stalin—these have all had their effect. Most of all is the fact that the Russians may very soon be in physical possession of these territories, and it is absolutely certain that we should never attempt to turn them out. Moreover, at Teheran when Stalin talked about keeping East Prussia up to Konigsberg, we did not say anything about the Baltic States, which clearly would be comprised in the Russian dominions in any such solution.

3. We are now about to attempt the settlement of the eastern frontiers of Poland, and we cannot be unconscious of the fact that the Baltic States, and the questions of Bukovina and Bessarabia, have very largely settled themselves through the victories of the Russian armies. At the same time any pronouncement on the topic might have disastrous effects in the United States in the election year, and there is no doubt that we should ourselves be subject to embarrassing attack in the House of Commons if we decided the fate of these countries.

4. In all these circumstances I should be very glad if you would let me have a note on the whole position of the Russian western frontier as you see it to-day. As far as I can make out, the Russian claim in no way exceeds the former Tsarist boundaries; in fact, in some parts it falls notably short of them. I should like to discuss the matter with you and Cadogan one evening, and thereafter I think the matter should be brought before the War Cabinet and Constant Attenders, not so much with a view to action, but to seeing where we all stand at the present time. It would be far better to shelve it all until we reach the discussions which we shall have to have after the defeat of Hitler. I do not know, however, whether this will be possible or whether the negotiations about Poland will not directly or indirectly involve these other matters.

5. I am afraid these are rather unhelpful jottings which only the extraordinary difficulty of the subject can excuse.

W. S. C.
16.1.44.

GENERAL ISMAY FOR C.O.S. COMMITTEE.

(Most Secret.)

1. This report* confirms the view I have held for some time that the danger of invasion to India by Japan has passed. During the next few months the Eastern Fleet will come into being, and will soon grow to a strength superior to any detachment which it would be worth while for the Japanese to make, having regard to the preoccupations in the Pacific. The air defence of India has also become very strong.

2. All the above brings me again to the conclusion that there ought to be a continuous reduction in the vast mass of low-grade troops now maintained under arms in India. Nearly two million men are on our pay-lists and ration strength, apart from the British troops in the country and on the frontier. The Viceroy and General Auchinleck should be instructed to reduce the numbers by at least half a million during the course of the present year. In this process which will no doubt largely take place by uncompensated wastage, the greatest care should be taken to improve the quality of the remaining units and to rely as much as possible upon the martial races. An effort should be made to get back to the high efficiency and standard of the pre-war Indian troops. The officers and skilled personnel from the disbanded battalions should be concentrated to these units, thus increasing the officer, and particularly the white officer, cadre. The standards of recruiting should everywhere be stiffened, and the intake reduced to the limits of the really trustworthy fighting recruits.

* Report by the Joint Intelligence Staff on Japanese intentions in the South-East Asia area.
plan. Could these men come back across France? I am aware that Marseilles is greatly congested, but are there not other routes which could be used? In this case also priority should be given to the troops who have been engaged in the fighting.

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

PRESEIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

Is there any truth in the suggestion that our people’s needs are being overridden by priorities for foreign relief?

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

[Reference: Extract from the Daily Mail of 19.10.44 on the supply of clothes for relief purposes abroad.]

MR. GEOFFREY LLOYD.

(Secret.)
Please let me have a short report up to date on “Pluto” and their deliveries.

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT.

How can these figures be right? How can 100 trips of cargo ships of 10,000 tons each bring in 8,000 tons of food only?

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

[Reference: Telegram No. 8 from Athens to Foreign Office about Allied imports of food and supplies into Greece.]

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

I have received representations from Members of Parliament concerning the inadequacy of the news regarding the British troops fighting in the various theatres, and it was suggested that war correspondents were not given sufficient facilities or adequate communications in order to get their material back to the newspapers here. The Minister of Information tells me that S.H.A.L.F. are well aware of the problem, but that the difficulties in the way of communications are formidable. You should consider what measures are practicable to provide improved facilities for war correspondents with the British Armies.

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

FOREIGN SECRETARY. (SIR A. CADOGAN—No others.)

GENERAL ISMAY, FOR C.O.S. COMMITTEE.

(Most Secret.)

1. Paragraph 1.—This is not a true record of what took place. Marshal Stalin opened the meeting by saying: “You asked when will the Soviet Government march against Japan? That will be on the day that the German Armies are destroyed.” I heard this with my own ears, and considered it the most important statement at the Conference.

2. It follows that paragraph 2 was also unevenly and inaccurately poised. At the time it was written the great advance into details of preparation agreed to at Moscow last week was not available to the writer.

3. Paragraph 3 is likewise somewhat affected. Here I must point to the astonishing ignorance of the Japanese about the true position, as evidenced even in the most recent Boniface that I have seen.

4. Paragraph 5 and 6.—The C.O.S. Committee should be asked to consider what harm there would be to British interests in Russia having a warm water base or bases in the Northern Pacific, and what danger to us would arise from a fleet vastly inferior to that of either the United States or Great Britain having
access to the sea. Would not the Russian ships and commerce be hostages to the stronger naval Powers?

5. It will be absolutely necessary to offer Russia substantial war objectives in the Far East, and I do not see what injury we should suffer if she had—in one form or another—all effective rights at Port Arthur. Any claim by Russia for indemnity at the expense of China, would be favourable to our resolve about Hong Kong.

6. Your Paragraph 12.—We should not show ourselves in any way hostile to the restoration of Russia's position in the Far East, nor commit ourselves in any way to any United States wish to oppose it at this stage.

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

[Reference: Foreign Office memorandum dated 5.10.44.—An Estimate of Russian Aims in the Far East.]

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

M. 1026/4.

I have considered the services rendered by the Army officers serving in the Office of the Minister of Defence, and I would be glad if the following names could be submitted to His Majesty for the award of the Honours indicated in the New Year List:

Brigadier A. T. Cornwall-Jones: C.B.E. (Mil.)
Lieut.-Colonel H. G. C. Mallaby: O.B.E. (Mil.)
Lieut.-Quartermaster A. C. Bear: M.B.E. (Mil.).

I am aware that Brigadier Cornwall-Jones is an Indian Army Officer, but as the service which has merited this recognition was rendered here, I consider that it would be appropriate that his award should come from the British Army quota.

I have instructed the Secretary of the War Cabinet to forward recommendations in favour of these officers.

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

M. 1027/4.

The Chiefs of Staff have drawn my attention to the service rendered by the London Controlling Section in the framing and executing of our deception plans. I consider that the service of these Officers should be recognized and that the following should be included in the forthcoming New Year Honours List:

Colonel J. H. Bevan: C.B.
Lieut.-Colonel H. L. Petavel: O.B.E.

I have instructed General Ismay to submit recommendations in favour of these officers.

W. S. C.
23.10.44.

GENERAL ISMAY, FOR C.O.S. COMMITTEE.

D. 250/4.

In spite of Mr. Mackenzie King's wish that I should not give this message* any circulation, it is necessary for me to have your opinion. It would be most serious and unfortunate if we had to lead Mr. Mackenzie King into a General Election in Canada on this issue. The normal course would be to communize a division. On the other hand, if the Canadian Opposition heard of this, they would naturally make a great outcry in order to drive the Canadian Government into difficult country. Whatever happens we cannot commit ourselves to any course of action which might hamper in any way the full use of the Canadian Army. I wonder whether Field-Marshal Montgomery said they would not be needed for the next large operation? What is the truth of this? Let me also know what numbers are involved. If we calculate on the German war being over by the 31st March it does not seem from Mr. Mackenzie King's dates that anything effective could be done before then, even if a Conscription Act were passed now.

Pray give me your views in strict secrecy.

W. S. C.
24.10.44.

* Telegram No. 2696 of 23.10.44 (T. 1901/4) from Mr. Mackenzie King about a report by General Stuart, Chief of Staff of the Canadian Army, stating that reinforcements to the Canadian forces overseas are inadequate, and recommending the introduction of conscription.
IMMEDIATE

From: Sextant
To: Air Ministry

FROZEN No. 1163

7th January, 1944.

Most Secret and Personal. Prime Minister to Foreign Secretary.

Your GRAND No. 1201.

1. For your eye alone. I am so much better that I may come home quite soon. Decision turns on whether I am sure about this hazardous battle in Italy, on which I am working, being well launched and all difficulties being cleared out of the way of the Commanders. This can only be done from here. I shall know very soon. Therefore I do not think the Poles need come, but I will let you know in 48 hours.

2. I rather contemplate telling the world that we declared war for Poland and that the Polish nation shall have a proper land to live in but we have never undertaken to defend existing Polish frontiers, and that Russia, after two wars which have cost her between 20 and 30 millions of Russian lives, has a right to the inextinguishable security of her Western frontiers.

Moreover, without the Russian armies Poland could have been destroyed or liquidated to a servile condition and the very existence of the Polish nation blotted out. But the valour and prowess of the Russian armies are liberating Poland and no other forces in the world could have done it. Poland is now assigned a position as a great independent nation in the heart of Europe with a fine seaboard and better territory than she had before. If she does not accept this, Britain has discharged to the full her obligations and the Poles can make their own arrangements with the Soviets.

4. I do not think we should give them the slightest hope of further help or recognition unless they cordially support the decisions which we and our Soviet ally have reached. They must be very silly if they imagine we are going to begin a new war with Russia for the sake of the Polish Eastern frontier.

Nations...
Nations who are found incapable of defending their country must accept a reasonable measure of guidance from those who have rescued them and who offer them the prospect of a sure freedom and independence.

T00 071745Z
FACTS AND TENDENCIES IN WARTIME, 1944.

Memorandum by Ronald Matthews,
Daily Herald Moscow Correspondent 1942-44.

ANGLO-AMERICAN correspondents in Moscow during the war years have been able to present a fairly accurate, if second-hand, picture of Russia's war effort; enough anyhow to convince the outside world that the Soviet army is really fighting and the Soviet people really working for victory. But the strictness
FACTS AND TENDENCIES IN WARTIME, 1944.

Memorandum by Ronald Matthews,
Daily Herald Moscow Correspondent 1942-44.

ANGLO-AMERICAN correspondents in Moscow during the war years have been able to present a fairly accurate, if second-hand, picture of Russia's war effort; enough anyhow to convince the outside world that the Soviet army is really fighting and the Soviet people really working for victory. But the strictness of the Moscow censorship in dealing with almost anything but military stories which have already appeared in the Soviet press makes the presentation of a genuinely all-round picture of wartime Russia almost impossible. This memorandum is an attempt to fill in these gaps in background information. Since transmission of some of these facts has been stopped by the censorship on the grounds that they might be unfavourable propaganda for the régime, the memorandum may appear as if it were designed to "pan" the U.S.S.R. That is by no means its design.

I have roughly divided the material into three sections: Facts of daily life (a) Moral and (b) Material, and general tendencies observed in the régime. I think it may serve as a unifying thread linking the various facts together if I indicate in advance the conclusions about the régime to which I have been drawn during my stay there. These are briefly, that there is in the Soviet Union an increasing trend towards social conservatism, with a revivified family life as one of its bases, and a parallel trend towards the hardening and perpetuation of the existing social hierarchy. This trend could already be noticed before the war, but it has been speeded up immensely since 1941. British Conservatives are still thinking of Russia as a revolutionary country. As usual, they are years out of date in their thinking. I cannot say what Russia's foreign policy will be after the war (though I may hazard a guess later), but internally, and on the base of her existing property-owning system she is probably to-day the most conservative country in Europe and will probably be after the war the only stable State on the Continent. The proviso about her existing property-owning system as a foundation for her conservatism is important, since there is no question at all of Russia going back on the principle of State ownership (she will be needing a great deal of foreign assistance after the war, but I should be surprised if any concessions were granted to foreigners) or of the de-collectivisation of the farms, though it seems likely that a high proportion of the peasants would like to go back to private ownership.

Facts of Everyday Life: (a) Moral.

1. It is convenient to start with moral facts, because almost the first thing that strikes a resident foreigner newly arrived in Russia is the atmosphere of suspicion and spying which surrounds him. The roots of this attitude, of course, go back very far: those who know pre-revolutionary Russia declare that even then the ordinary Russian tended to regard the foreigner as the South Sea islander regards objects which are tabu: to regard him, that is to say, as at once admirable and horrible; admirable because of his knowledge of western technique, horrible because, perhaps, of his lack of "soul." Foreign intervention in the Civil War, and the foreign policy towards Russia of the Western Powers in the between-the-wars period were naturally grounds for the confirmation of this attitude. It will be noted that I talk of a historical "tendency" on the part of ordinary Russians to regard the foreigner as a tabu object. I do so because the average Russian is naturally so open-hearted and friendly that whatever his prepossessions he would probably mix with foreigners freely if he were allowed. But, apart from a period during the New Economic Policy era in the twenties, and a shorter period, before the Purges, in the middle thirties mixing with foreigners has been strictly and effectively discouraged.

[27842]
One does, of course, meet Russians socially in Moscow from time to time; the big official receptions, for instance, give an opportunity for this. And one of the most disheartening experiences for a raw foreigner is to meet a Russian at some such gathering, to invite him out to a meal and to find that, without a word of explanation or apology, he simply fails to turn up. He has, of course, been warned off. This warning off sometimes goes to the most amazing extremes. Thus about a year ago the Australian and Soviet Governments decided to establish diplomatic relations and the British Ambassador, on learning the name of the Soviet Minister-designate to Canberra, asked him out to dinner; he was refused permission to come. The girl friends of officers and men of the British Military Mission and of members of the Diplomatic Corps are all sooner or later threatened with arrest and exile if they continue their association, even if, as is quite often the case, the association is entirely innocent. In some cases these threats have been carried out. There is no question of sexual morality being the ground of these warnings, for when girls marry their foreign boy friends and apply, through the Moscow Police Visas Department, for release from Soviet citizenship in order to be able to accompany their husbands abroad, they are invariably treated to a long lecture by the official in charge on the folly and unpatriotism of their marriage.

My marriage to a Russian girl enabled me to appreciate even more fully the effectiveness of this official discouragement of mixing with foreigners. Very few of my wife's friends felt it prudent to continue visiting her after our marriage. Only four of them attended our wedding reception, where there were present such dangerous persons as the British Ambassador and the heads of the British Military Mission. One of these four was dismissed from her post a week later, with no reason given. Her post was with V.O.K.S., the Society for Encouraging Cultural Relations with Foreigners. (It would appear that only the highest officials of this organisation, the stoutness of whose Communist principles is above suspicion, are permitted to mix with foreigners at official receptions.) My wife discovered for me a washerwoman who did my shirts better, more quickly and more cheaply than did the hotel laundry. After three washes she declined to do any more "because it drew unfavourable attention to her to have foreign linen hanging on her line."

It may seem surprising that since foreign correspondents (and other resident foreigners) live in a social void, as far as Russians are concerned, and have little opportunity of gaining first-hand information about anything remotely concerning State security, it should be worth the police's while to spy on them. Yet spied on they are constantly, their secretary-translators, messengers, chauffeurs and the servants at their hotel being most of them required to submit regular reports to the police on them. When, before our marriage, my wife first joined me as secretary, she was almost immediately requested by the police to submit regular reports on my activities.

Many people had hoped that when the Russians and ourselves became Allies this suspicious attitude towards us would cease. There has not been the slightest sign of such a change so far (to February 1944). This suspicion does not only affect social intercourse, it often goes far in minor ways to hamper co-operation in the war effort. When towards the end of the Moscow Conference last year B.O.A.C. officials in Moscow enquired of officials at the Moscow main airport the length of the runway, in order to discover whether it was safe for Mr. Eden's Liberator to take off with a full load of petrol, it was only after the Foreign Secretary's direct intervention that, after four days of vain efforts, they succeeded in discovering the figure. As is known, the establishment of a regular B.O.A.C. Britain-Moscow air line has now (April 1944) been held up for nearly a year, the only real reason, in the opinion of British officials in Moscow, being that the Russians object to foreign, even Allied, pilots flying over their territory. The British Military Mission compiled a list of what they called "vexatious restrictions" on Allied military activities in Russia. There were such things as the imposing of British merchantmen's anti-aircraft ammunition when in Murmansk harbour, so that their guns could not fire at hostile aircraft. There was last year's last-minute refusal by the Russians of permission for the establishment in North Russia of a Hampden and Catalina Wing of the R.A.F. to protect the (as we contended) inadequately-protected final stage of the northern convoys into port. This refusal, which came after stores for the Wing had already been landed, led to a month's-long suspension of the northern convoys. There was the extraordinary incident when, a northern convoy having been very heavily attacked and a large number of British seamen lying wounded in Archangel hospital, the Admiralty sent out a special fast hospital ship with doctors,
medicaments and nurses to relieve the pressure on the local Russian medical staff. In the circumstances there was no time to apply for visas the ordinary way and await their arrival in London, so the Russians were asked to treat this as a special case and have the visas ready at the port. They did not do so, doctors, nurses and stores were not allowed to land and, after a few days hanging about in Archangel, the hospital ship was forced to return.

Foreigners in Moscow often ask themselves when this attitude towards them will change. The speculation is complicated by the fact that one does not know to what extent the isolation of foreigners may not be due to the inertia of the administrative machine, which, having been told some years back, in entirely different circumstances, to enforce it, and having never received orders to cancel it, mechanically continues to execute a now out-of-date policy. I know that Sir Archibald Clark Kerr has at least once mentioned to Stalin his social difficulties. And though Stalin assured him: "you can meet who you like. Who would you like to meet?" I gather he hasn't found the situation change very much. Some people maintain that the launching of an effective Second Front will radically change the attitude towards Allied nationals: that should soon be seen. I am inclined myself to doubt the probability of such a speedy transformation. I rather think that until the Russians have raised their productive capacity a good deal further, they will do little to encourage their citizens mixing with foreigners, from whom they would be bound to learn of the (up to the moment) greater material comforts available in the capitalist countries.

All this does not make pleasant writing. But I feel it essential these things should be known to responsible people in the cause of realism. I very much sympathise with writers in the weekly reviews who look forward, e.g., to a sweeping exchange of university students between Britain and the U.S.S.R. But to look on such a step at the moment as anything more than a dream is grossly to delude oneself.

2. This attitude of suspicion towards foreigners makes the task of correspondents in Moscow difficult in the extreme. It is complicated by the complete lack of co-operation shown by the Press Bureau of the Soviet Foreign Office, to which they are accredited. Since the beginning of the war it has been laid down that correspondents' contacts with Soviet organisations may only be made through the Press Bureau, and the Press Bureau, even though a correspondent may harry it with visits and telephone calls, will take days to arrange the simplest interview. Towards the end of last year I became exasperated (as all correspondents do from time to time) at my complete inability to obtain first-hand material for feature articles, and had a long talk with M. Palgunov, head of the Press Bureau (who is also head of Tass). He received my complaints with every sign of apparent sympathy, assured me the position would be rectified and suggested that I should submit to the Bureau a programme of interviews and visits covering a period of some weeks, whose fulfilment in order he would then arrange. On the 24th December I therefore submitted to him a list of nineteen requests: I reproduce the first six to show their complete innocence:

(i) Interview with head of 251 school, Moscow, on subjects covered in his recent Izvestiya article about school discipline, &c.
(ii) Visit to one of new Suworov Cadet Schools.
(iii) Visit to Moscow People's Court.
(iv) Interview with Mayor Pronin on Moscow's plans for third war winter.
(v) Interview with representative of Planning Department to discuss question of how far wartime transfer of industry eastwards is likely to be maintained after war.

By the time I left Moscow on the 21st February, only one of my 19 requests had been fulfilled.

I should say that the Press Bureau makes no sort of ideological discrimination between correspondents. The representatives of the Daily Worker or a distinguished friend of Communism, such as Edgar Snow, are treated as badly as the representative of the most reactionary paper. The Anglo-American Correspondents' Association has made frequent protests about the Press Bureau's uncooperaiveness, and has asked for such elementary conveniences as the appointment of regular spokesmen of the Foreign Office and the War Office, from whom authoritative interpretation of diplomatic and military events may be obtained. All its representations have been ignored, and from the rapidity of Mr. Palgunov's progress in his official career (he is now a regular guest at the

[27842]
big Kremlin banquets to distinguished foreign visitors) it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that his unfriendly treatment of the foreign Press meets with the approval of his superiors.

Correspondents often speculate on the reasons for the Press Bureau’s attitude towards them. Three main reasons are usually suggested:—

(i) Distrust of foreigners as such referred to in (1).

(ii) Conviction that the story of Russia’s effort sells itself without any pandering to the correspondents (which is probably true as long as the war goes on).

(iii) The fact that, owing to the unwillingness to take responsibility which infects the Soviet civil service (not the army), it is safer for Press Bureau officials to say no to correspondents’ requests than to say yes.

3. The last sentence raises the question how far the atmosphere of constraint and fear referred to in (1) is felt by the mass of Russians, who do not have an opportunity of mixing with the dangerous foreigners. I should say it is less felt at the lower levels, but even there the humblest Soviet citizen cannot help realising that his life is regulated for him. There are, for instance, the regular waves of “voluntary contributions” to national defence: the worker knows well that there is no question of dissenting when the party representative comes round his shop and tells him that “it has been decided” that everyone shall contribute a month’s pay to the army, and will he contribute his share. The worker knows how spontaneous are the “spontaneous meetings” held in factories and farms all over the country at an hour’s notice, to hail the sentences on the German accused in the Kharkov atrocity trial, or the triumph of Allied unity at the Teheran Conference. On the higher levels, secret arrests and disappearances are still common. Rather more than a year ago Kapler, the distinguished cinema scenarist of “Lenin in October,” “A Day of War” and “Stalingrad,” and two of his associates were suddenly arrested and vanished. There has been no trial and no news of them since, though in cinema circles two explanations are being offered: (1) that Kapler’s ideological approach to the Stalingrad film was incorrect (whatever that means), and (2) that he, a married man, had been going about rather too much with Stalin’s young daughter. During the October 1941 panic in Moscow (to which I shall refer later) the Police archives were among the vast quantities of official documents burned. But it is suggested that this puts those unfortunate enough to be suspected by the authorities in a more and not less unhappy position since, with any exculpatory evidence there may be in their dossiers destroyed with the rest, the police are free to imagine their past in the most lurid colours.

4. The Communist party, whose negative defensive weapon the police is (I call propaganda its positive defensive weapon) has been allowed to grow very considerably since the war. I say “allowed to grow” not “grown,” because since the party’s seizure of power in Russia, there has been something like a regular process of expansion and contraction in its membership; at one time it is regarded as more important to sweep into its ranks a high proportion of those displaying enthusiasm for (say) the war, or the latest Five Year Plan; at another to safeguard its internal unity by eliminating those members who are not 100 per cent. trustworthy. A very great number of the latest recruits have come from the army. It is interesting that the political officers of the army (shorn now, of course, of their executive authority) do not seek to rouse their men’s ardour by any theoretical exposition of Communist principles, indeed, this is discouraged as being dry and pedantic; instead, they preach patriotism to them, and the war is known officially in Russia as “the Great Patriotic War.” It notable that on civilian party platforms also orators since the war have also shunned doctrinal issues and have concentrated on practical problems.

It may be true that a high percentage of Party members to-day are still disinterested enthusiasts. But no one who knows Russia would do anything but laugh at the assertion (still sometimes made) that Party members are all incorruptible. And now that the self-denying ordinance has been removed under which members of the Party could not receive more than a certain maximum salary, a large number of people are undoubtedly seeking membership for careerist motives, since it is impossible to attain high executive position in any enterprise without being a member of the Party.

5. Since returning to England, I have sometimes been asked: “What is public opinion about the régime?” I can only reply that real public opinion
about the larger issues of State policy is non-existent in Russia, since it is manufactured and distributed from above. And the process of manufacture and distribution is astonishingly easy. It will be remembered, to give an example, how Mr. Wendell Willkie jeopardised his political career during and after his visit to the U.S.S.R. in 1942 by his championship of the Soviet thesis that the Allies were holding up the launching of the Second Front from motives of political unfriendliness and military polo-nomics, and that their leaders must be "prod" into action. Two or three months ago, in a pronouncement in the United States, whose whole tenor was one of extreme unfriendliness to the U.S.S.R., he referred in passing to the fact that, in American eyes, there was a problem of the future status of the Baltic States and a problem of the future frontiers of Poland. For these harmless assertions the Soviet Press came down on him like a ton of bricks, declaring that they were no more a concern of the United States than the status of California was of Russia. And a day or two later, a friend of my wife's, a very intelligent person and candidate for membership of the Party, came into our hotel room and started a conversation about the next American Presidential elections. She displayed great anxiety as to whether Roosevelt would win, and explained it by saying: "It would be dreadful if Willkie were elected; he is an enemy of the Soviet Union."

It is, parenthetically, rather difficult for Moscow correspondents to know how to report these waves of manufactured opinion or enthusiasm. In the late autumn of 1942, for instance, a certain collective farmer was reported in the papers as sending a gift of hundreds of thousands of roubles to Stalin for the construction of tanks, and his letter to the Soviet Premier and Stalin's reply were printed in full. This lead was immediately followed by a spate of similar contributions from all over the country, and for some three months of one of the most exciting periods of the war; two pages of all the daily papers were filled every day with the text of the donors' letters to Stalin and Stalin's acknowledgments, all printed verbatim: the bitterness of the Soviet war correspondents, whose dispatches were cut or held out entirely on account of this interminable subscription list was considerable. All correspondents in Moscow know what the truth about this wave of gifts was. The scarcity of food had led to an enormous rise of prices on the (legal) open market, where the peasants are free to sell the non-State-requisitioned portion of their produce, and as a result a quite disproportionate amount of the country's money had found its way into their hands. It was essential for the authorities to redress the balance, and so a drive for "voluntary" gifts was launched.

This real story of the wave of contributions the censorship naturally would not allow to be sent. To have cabled the superficial story, of a spontaneous movement of sacrifice which the censorship did permit, would have presented a completely false picture of the situation. What was the duty of Moscow correspondents, then; to cable this distorted story, or to ignore the whole business?

In spite of this regimenting of opinion and action there are uncritical friends of the Soviet Union (the Moscow correspondent of the London Times can, I think, be classified among these) who maintain that the U.S.S.R. is, in some sort of sense, a democracy. They have the very slenderest ground for their argument. Till the late twenties the Communist Party was itself a democracy; not only were decisions reached by popular vote but they were quite often initiated from below; now they are almost invariably initiated from above. It is on these exceptions to the rule of initiative from above that the contenders for the U.S.S.R.'s claim to the title of "democracy" fasten. They argue that if (say) this or that condition of living in an area of the country becomes so intolerable as to rouse widespread popular protest, the local Communist Party will take it up and matters will be rectified. It is quite easy to find examples of this in minor matters of administrative detail, and I am inclined to think that a recent not so minor constitutional change may also be due to pressure from below. All those who listened to M. Molotov's speech on the proposal to give autonomy in the field of military and foreign affairs to the constituent republics of the U.S.S.R. were struck by one thing: that at no point in his speech did he give what seemed in the least like a real reason for the step. I know, though, that during the Germans' Autumn 1942 advance into the Caucasus their approach was hailed at first with delight by some of the minor nationality groups, who joyfully anticipated being freed from the dictatorship of Moscow. It is quite true that after a few days of German occupation they were clamouring for the Red Army to send them in partisan leaders, but it seems quite likely that the earlier reaction, and the state of mind behind it, may have led Moscow to decide on the constitutional change.
The strict control wielded by the Party and police renders it difficult for any popular discontent, which there may be with the régime as such to find voice except by anecdotes; fresh ones, usually reflecting on the rigid thinking of the bureaucracy, are constantly being invented. I have been told by Russians who might have had an opportunity of knowing (though there was no way of checking on it) that a high proportion of the peasants would gladly return to a system of individual small holdings. All I can say with any certainty about their state of mind is that there is undoubtedly considerable feeling among them against the town workers; during the 1941 exodus from Moscow there were many instances of peasants attacking and looting cars taking Muscovites away to their evacuation homes. The older town workers realise that, though their money wages have risen since the N.E.P. period in the twenties (the tolerated partial return to private enterprise alongside State production), their purchasing power is far less.

But the average age of the Russian population is now so low that the vast percentage of the town workers have never known any other régime than that they are now living under. On my way to the railway station of the Moscow suburb where I spent last summer I fell in one day with an elderly schoolmaster who started to talk to me about the Atlantic Charter, and emphasised that what Russia wanted most of all the Four Freedoms alluded to in it was freedom from fear. It was, of course, extremely dangerous for him to speak so critically of the régime as he went on to do, but I should think that people who allow themselves to think of it openly in such critical terms are probably a very small minority, and are to be found mainly among the older generation.

It is often asked whether we shall see in the measurable future a relaxation in the Russian dictatorship. There are those who believe that such a relaxation will prove possible when the U.S.S.R. has, as they put it, "solved the problem of production"—that is, raised its productive capacity to a height when it will be able not only to maintain defence and heavy industries equal to those of the greatest other Great Power, but also to supply its workers with consumer goods on a stream equal to that provided in the Western European countries. Though she has suffered immense war damage, Russia possesses enormous recuperating powers, and I have heard the period needed to "solve the problem of production" estimated at from twenty-five to as little as ten years. The argument of those who expect to see the dictatorship relaxed when the problem of production is solved is, of course, that its main function is to drag on the Russian worker into keeping output rising, and that when this function has been fulfilled to a point where the U.S.S.R. is able to afford its citizens a standard of living comparable with that of its industrial rivals it will have exhausted its utility.

There are, again, those optimists who contend that there may be a relaxation of the dictatorship immediately after the war. Though discipline is very strict in the Red Army to-day, it is generally agreed that there is a very much freer and less constrained atmosphere in it than there is in civil life. And those who take this optimistic view believe that when the demobilised soldiers return to their homes and farms and factories after the war they will revolt at the idea of being ordered about again by a nasty little Party boss or a horrid little policeman.

Both these views, of course, are mere guesses. And though the first seems rational enough, anyone will realise that if a régime which had exhausted its utility invariably climbed out of the saddle, most of the revolutions in history would never have happened. The Soviet police is to-day one of the strongest vested interests in the world; if the dictatorship were to be relaxed, the Party would still probably maintain a good deal of its function of leadership, but the police would inevitably decline vastly in power and prestige. It is difficult to see them consenting to this; if there were any real danger of it happening, I can quite easily see them unearthing a new "plot" against the régime and launching a new purge. On the other hand, the leadership of the Party has always been very realistic. When the advent of the war saw a great upsurge of religious feeling in Russia, they switched off the State-supported anti-religious propaganda like an electric light, just as much (I am convinced) for internal reasons as to impress their Allies. Should there be at any time an upsurge of feeling in favour of democracy, they would probably appear at least to bow to this, too. Though the lack of critical sense among the Russian public would make it easy for them to concede to the people the shadow of power while themselves retaining the substance.

6. What has been said in (5) above about the freer atmosphere in the Red Army raises the question to what extent there is to-day a contest of opinion
between the various organs of Soviet life, or between any one of them and Communist Party, or within the Party itself. It is widely believed that there are cross-currents of opinion within the Party on quite a number of issues, though it should be emphasised that there is not the faintest question of any split within it, but merely of such divergencies of view as with us, would be fought out openly at a Labour Party Conference. It is asserted that one of the issues on which there is conflict is that of co-operation with the Allies versus isolationism; Stalin is widely credited with tending towards the co-operationist view, while I have heard it said that Shcherbakov, Vice-Commissar for War, and one of the coming younger men on the Politburo, heads the isolationists. It is said that the publication of the Pravda "separate peace rumour" story was a result of the isolationists temporarily gaining the upper hand; all I can say for certain about this is that Litvinov, whom one would expect to be consulted about a matter of this kind, knew nothing about it beforehand and was as surprised and puzzled as anyone when he saw the report in the paper.

Any conflict between the Party and any of the organs of Soviet life—the army or the civil service—should theoretically prove impossible, since the Party is omnipresent; all the big generals, all the heads of the Foreign Office and the great factories—in fact, all the important executives of the country—belong to it. I have heard it contended that some of the generals may be merely formal members of the Party, and hence it is sometimes argued abroad that one or more of them may aspire to the position of a General Monk after the war. I should regard this as in the highest degree improbable. If there were no other reason, the Soviet public knows little or nothing from its Press about the personalities of its great generals. It sees an occasional photograph of them; it sees their names in the Orders of the Day, in which Stalin thanks them for their latest victory; it reads the announcement when they are awarded a new decoration. Beyond that it knows, from the newspapers, nothing, as I can testify, having vainly tried to construct a biography of the late General Vatutin out of my files.

There is little doubt, however, that there is some conflict between the various organs of Soviet life, and for the moment the police seem to be gaining the upper hand; most of the new appointees to the foreign diplomatic service are drawn from their ranks. I can give an example of the conflict between the police and the army. In the summer of 1941 a British naval officer, friend of mine, Captain E., arrived in Sebastopol as a liaison officer of the British Military Mission in Russia. His first night in mess he was approached by a political officer named Gusiev (brother of the present Ambassador in London, who also originated with the police) who asked him to describe conditions in the British navy. F. willingly complied, but, when he declared that married ratings in the navy got marriage allowances in addition to their pay, Gusiev told him he was a liar, on the grounds that there were no marriage allowances in the Soviet navy, and that he knew conditions in it were better than in ours. There were two other British officers present in the mess that night, one of whom spoke fluent Russian, and in that language he requested Gusiev to withdraw his accusation against F., who was considerably his superior in rank. Gusiev withdrew the word liar, and the British officers imagined the incident to be closed.

From what happened subsequently, however, it is evident that Gusiev became frightened at the language he had used, imagined that F. would put in a report on him, and therefore decided to get his report to the Political Department of the Navy in first. For when some months later Sir Stafford Cripps had occasion to write a letter to Stalin, complaining of the lack of co-operation between the Russian military authorities and the British Military Mission, Stalin's reply gave, as the last of a number of reasons for this lack of co-operation, that F. and two other British officers had been guilty, at Sebastopol, of "anti-Soviet propaganda." Since the other two officers had only been in Sebastopol with F. on one night, he was speedily able to pin down the incident, and he and his colleagues later left the country, since Sir Stafford was informed that they "no longer possessed the confidence of the Russian authorities."

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the affair, however, was the way in which the Russian naval chief, Admiral Kuznetsov, took it. He informed Admiral Miles, head of the naval section of the British mission, that "he regretted that he had been deprived of the services of the three most valuable naval officers in the whole mission through political interference over which he had absolutely no control." And when Miles told him what had really happened at Sebastopol, and insisted on his view that "Political Office Gusiev no longer possessed the confidence of the British authorities," Kuznetsov promised to look into it, and was able to inform him within a couple of days that Gusiev had been "liquidated."
Facts of Everyday Life: (b) Material.

7. Food shortage and food rationing came down on Russia very much more suddenly than they did on us in England. This was, of course, because of the early overrunning by the German armies of some of the richest food-producing areas in the U.S.S.R., and the impact was accelerated by the enormous reduction of civil, in favour of military, rail transport. The situation did not begin to become acute in Moscow, however, till after the panic of October 1941, when the Germans nearly got into Moscow, and when undoubtedly a great deal of large-scale looting of food and other stores took place. Then quite suddenly Muscovites felt their belts tightened. And the situation was made more difficult by the fact that either the ration scales were framed too generously or (possibly owing to the abnormally severe and early winter) transport for a while completely broke down. For there were three months during which, though the ration cards provided for purchases of butter, meat, milk, eggs, tea, sugar, &c., all that the ordinary citizen was able in fact to buy was black bread.

The food situation has fairly steadily improved since those winter months of 1941–42, though the bread ration has twice been cut in recent months, probably owing to the needs of the reconquered areas. The system by no means works out perfectly, and customers are frequently asked to take substitutes for the commodities to which they are entitled, such as sweet biscuits for sugar, lard for butter, tinned sausage for fresh meat. Even for children, fresh milk is almost unobtainable on the ration: I felt myself very lucky when of the 12 litres of fresh milk monthly to which I was entitled (when living out of the hotel) on the diplomatic ration I managed to get two.

As I explained in a feature in the Daily Herald (September 1942) there are several different scales of rations, those for war workers and manual workers, for white-collar workers and finally, the lowest, for non-employed dependants. The differences in the food obtained by the various sections of the population are, however, far wider than these scales by themselves would seem to imply. If a citizen wants to be certain of a good choice of food it is very important for him to be registered at a good "closed store." These shops are run for the benefit of the workers at the factories or other enterprises to which they are attached, and their families. A citizen who is registered at the Stalin Motor Works store or the Academy of Science store, in Moscow, will have when he draws his ration, a pretty wide choice of food-stuffs. If there is no shop attached to his place of employment and he is registered at a neighbourhood store, where he is inscribed simply because of his place of residence, he will not only have a narrower choice but is much more likely to find the rationed goods exhausted when he comes to buy them.

There are further forms of food privilege also. Those whom the State delights to honour such as (to my knowledge) distinguished artists are permitted to buy at their closed stores a certain value of goods each month over and above the ration quantity, at ration prices. The value of this will become apparent when I refer presently to the colossal expense of shopping at the only alternative to the State-owned stores, the (legal) open market. There are many jokes in Moscow about "Kremlin rations": all I can say about this is that during the black-bread only months of 1941–42 my wife was invited to a party at the house of a Commissar whose daughter she knew. At a time when most of Moscow was on the starvation line every kind of food and drink appeared on the table and most of the guests were unable to resist cramming their pockets with the dainties to take away.

In almost every town or village in Russia there is an open market, licensed by the municipality, where collective farm peasants are permitted to come in and sell, at competitive prices, that portion of their common produce which they are not required to sell at fixed prices to the State and also the produce of their individual allotments. Before the war, when food was plentiful, prices at these markets did not vary much from those in the shops. Once the war started and food shortage began, they were able to ask just what they wanted: in the winter of 1941–42 they would tour the streets of Moscow, exchanging a sack of potatoes for a fur coat or a piano (a cottage piano fetched more potatoes than a grand, since it was more portable and fitted more easily into a peasant hut). When I visited the Arbat market in Moscow in April 1943, potatoes and carrots were selling at 80 roubles a kilog. (against a ration price of less than a rouble), butter at 800 roubles a kilog. (against a ration price of 30 roubles), milk at 75 roubles a litre, appalling cuts of meat at 350–400 roubles a kilog. The official exchange value of the rouble, by the way, is around 22 roubles to the pound sterling; the
privileged diplomatic rate (which correspondents get) 48 roubles to the pound. The price of potatoes on the market has fallen since last autumn to between 20 and 30 roubles per kilog. owing to the large-scale cultivation of allotments round Moscow last summer by Moscow citizens: the other prices remain much the same.

At the Moscow market, most of the customers carry either openly in their shopping bags or half-concealed under their coats, loaves or chunks of bread. This is because the peasants of the Moscow region, who produce very little wheat but do not, for all that, get a bread ration, are eager to buy bread, and will accept it at from 120 roubles a kilog. up, according to its quality (against a ration price of 1.5 to 4 roubles a kilog.) in payment for their produce. Strictly speaking, this barter is not legal, but the police who patrol the market don’t interfere very much with it. My mother-in-law regularly sold bread in the market for me to get milk for my baby son.

On the blind side of the peasants’ market booths goes on pathetically the forbidden side of the market’s activities. Citizens can be seen selling every kind of goods to get money to buy food. One appallingly thin woman I saw standing helplessly beside a large tin hip bath; she was willing to accept what she was offered. An older woman was carrying round a toy lorry, another had a jam-jar with three chocolates and half a dozen lumps of sugar in it, a third a packet of cheap envelopes, two roubles each. A cripple, with one arm round his wooden crutch was with the other hand offering a stainless steel rubber-ferulled invalid stick for sale, another man was walking around with an electric stove (400 roubles), while 300 was being asked for an old pair of galoshes and 350 for a patched pair of boots. Many of those who in the hard winter months of 1941-42 were not willing in this way to sell their household treasures to buy food on the market simply died of starvation; two aunts of my wife, who live in a country villa outside Moscow, died thus.

It should be added that the Moscow citizen did not have, from October 1941 to last summer, the recourse which the Londoner has of eating out at a restaurant to save his rations. In the autumn of 1941 almost all of the restaurants of the city were turned into closed restaurants, open only to the workers of a particular enterprise. And only the higher officials of an enterprise had the privilege of eating without handing in their ration coupons. By the beginning of last summer there was only one open restaurant in the capital, and it was only open to diplomats, foreign correspondents and Russians of above a certain rank in the army or other services or holding certain decorations; prices here may be judged from the fact that a simple two-course meal for six guests, with a little vodka, some Russian wine and a little Russian brandy, which I gave here at the end of 1943 cost more than 2,000 roubles. Last summer there were opened, however, some 20 or more new open restaurants in various parts of Moscow. These sold food at what were described as “competitive prices,” which meant in practice some four or more times the pre-war price for a meal. They were, however, very well patronised, and there seemed usually to be queues in front of them.

Cigarettes and tobacco are rationed in Russia and the ration has been small and uncertain. Cigarettes have been more difficult to obtain than tobacco, on account of the shortage of paper, and many people roll their own cigarettes, using often torn scraps of newspaper for the purpose. The quality of the cigarettes now being sold is very low; they taste bitter and will only continue burning if one draws continuously at them. Drink is also rationed, and is in very short supply. There are only two bars now open in Moscow, one of which sells beer, the other cocktails. There are almost invariably queues in front of their doors.

8. The Russian citizen’s ration book contains coupons for clothes, but in practice, till very recently, he would have been unable to obtain them unless he had a good closed store attached to his enterprise; and even then in order to be able to buy he would need a recommendation from the head of his department. War-time rationing of clothes has been a much greater hardship to the Russians than to us, for they had smaller individual reserves; even before the war certain articles of clothing, such as shoes, were difficult and expensive to get, though this was less so in Moscow, Leningrad and other “Class A” cities, which got a priority in the distribution of consumer goods of which there was any shortage. A Russian who wanted to keep smart to-day and who cannot (as most people cannot) shop with some freedom at a good closed store, can only replenish his wardrobe in three ways. He can buy clothes at one of the Government second-hand shops, he can buy from his acquaintance, or he can get an article of clothing made for him by an employee of a Government clothing factory working in his
spare time. All these three ways of buying clothes are very expensive, the second two particularly so, so the privileged Russian who keeps up appearances must be prepared to sell up household possessions to buy clothes, as well as food. My late secretary, who has not been able to get a single article of clothing on the ration since the war, told me he had almost denuded his home of furniture to buy food and clothes. Since more men than women have been mobilised for the front, women's clothes are in greater demand and more expensive. A man's suit in fair repair will fetch 1,500 or so roubles, a new pair of men's shoes up to 1,500. But a new pair of women's shoes will command 6,000 to 8,000 roubles, the latter being the price charged by the best Government shoemaker in Moscow, working in his spare time.

9. These figures raise the question of what are the rates of pay in Russia to-day and what the value of the rouble. The range of rates is very large: an unskilled worker will get around 300 roubles a month, a skilled worker at a war factory will get 1,500 roubles; so did my wife as English teacher at the Academy of Science. One of her friends, who wrote musical accompaniments for film soundtracks, got 30,000 roubles a month; artists are very well treated by the Soviet State.

What the rouble in which wages are paid really means to-day it is almost impossible to say. The exchange rates, the official of 22 roubles to the pound sterling and the diplomatic of 48, are entirely meaningless; in Teheran it is possible to buy roubles back at 300 to the pound. I don't think it is so far from the truth to say that there are almost as many different values to the rouble as there are classes of wage-earner. For the man who belongs to a good closed store and is also allowed to purchase a liberal supply of goods off the ration at ration prices, each rouble he earns is plainly worth more than it is to the man who has no closed store and is forced to do much of his shopping in the open market. The man in the street is fully conscious of this meaninglessness of the rouble. If you want any small service done for you, such as the carriage of a load of wood to your house for heating, it is almost useless to offer money for it. You will get nothing done unless you offer payment in kind; you will usually be asked for a bottle or two bottles of vodka, though I paid for a carriage of a load of wood to our country home last summer with an old shirt. The barber I usually tipped with cigarettes (my ration was bigger than his); the hotel servants with bread.

Whatever the value of the rouble is, it is plain that a very high proportion of the country's currency has since the war found its way into the hands of the peasants, through their open market dealings. If it were allowed to continue there it might present very considerable problems after the war, when presumably the purchasing power of the rouble will rise again and peasants with large reserves of money tucked away might be difficult to manage and more reluctant to work than hitherto. On the other hand, the existence of considerable volumes of public savings in the various defence loans would make it difficult for the authorities to devalue. Something has been done to extract the money from the peasants' hands by the organisation of waves of "voluntary contributions" to the national defence, described in (5). But it must always be more difficult to trace the amount of money in a peasant's than in a town worker's hands, and so to be certain that the peasants have been cleaned out of their hoards.

10. Housing has ever since the revolution been one of the biggest problems facing the Soviet authorities. And, apart from the newly-established industrial centres in the Urals and further east, Moscow has been shorter of housing than almost anywhere else: since on account of its being a Class A city, with priority in the supply of consumer goods and workers who could flock to it. The 1914 evacuation did not seem to affect the situation much, and I should say that the moment nearer 90 per cent. than 80 per cent. of Moscow's population are living in one-room homes. Before her marriage to me my wife, who had a comparatively well-paid post, was living in a room measuring 80 by 15 feet, together with her mother, her daughter by her first marriage, a girl friend of the family and (up to the war) a maid. The room was one of three in a ground floor flat, the other two families in the flat occupying one room each and the three sharing the bathroom and lavatory accommodation. It is an extraordinary difficult and lengthy task to get new housing accommodation in Moscow, and cases of divorced couples continuing to share the same room are not a joke, but a fact of everyday life. The importance attached to housing may be judged from the fact that the Situations Vacant advertisements in the evening newspaper Vechernaya Moskva to-day none of them refer to the rate of wages offered, but all promise "good dormitory accommodation" as well as "good closed restaurant." In some of
The Urals industrial centres to which industry has been transferred east since the war, the standard of living accommodation has fallen from 10 square metres to 3.5 square metres per head. To illustrate the greater tightness of housing accommodation in Moscow, I may say that before my wife came to the capital, when she and her first husband were working in Rostov-on-Don they had no difficulty in getting a complete flat to themselves.

Plainly, altogether apart from the reconstruction of the devastated areas, Russia will have to do an immense amount of building after the war. And she will have not only to build a great deal of new houses, but to rebuild a very great number of the old. The apartment blocks and other houses built since the revolution have most of them been built in a hurry, their workmanship and material leaves much to be desired. The Russian climate, with its vast temperature range, varying annually between around 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and minus 30 degrees in the winter, is a great tester of shoddy building. And, as an additional reason why many of the new houses will have to come down, during the hard winter of 1941-42, when fuel was almost unobtainable in Moscow, indoor temperatures in homes fell to 20 degrees Fahrenheit of frost, pipes iced up and burst everywhere, and a great deal of damage was done to the structure of buildings, some of which was only becoming apparent in the autumn of last year: one of my colleagues had the walls of his flat collapse then.

11. It is a testimony, both to the stamina of the Russian people and to the work of their medical system that, despite lowered resistance due to food shortage and other conditions favourable to the spread of infection, there have been as yet no large epidemics since the war in unoccupied territory. It should not be believed, however, that the war-time medical service for civilians comes up to the standards to which we are accustomed in England: of course the demands of the army are far greater. Before the war a citizen who fell ill could count on getting a doctor from a clinic to his bedside within the day, and only if he were in a very great hurry he might ring up a doctor at his private address and ask him to come round for a fee. To-day the delay in attending to cases is much greater. A friend of my wife's who became partially paralysed one morning, she believed owing to contact with an industrial chemical, was told on ringing up her works' clinic that it would be two days before a doctor was available to come and see her. She had therefore to contact a doctor privately and ask him to come round for a fee. I should add that even the most distinguished specialists in Moscow to-day prefer to take their fees in kind instead of in cash: when my wife had occasion to consult a gynaecologist before our child was born she would invariably take him a bottle of wine as well as a sum of money. It may be interesting that this doctor, though one of the most famous in Russia, had not got a car. And it is no fun for a doctor to do his rounds on the terribly overcrowded trams and trolleybuses (buses have been mobilised as ambulances and taken off the streets for the duration of the war) of Moscow.

There is a very great shortage of even quite simple drugs and disinfectants in the Russian civilian hospitals to-day. When, before the birth of our child, my wife had to go to a clinic for a routine blood test, the blood was drawn off in a syringe with only part of the barrel, there was no disinfectant available to sterilise the needle, not even boiling water (for gas was then cut off during the day time) and my wife had to produce one of her own matches (the clinic had none) in order that the needle might be passed through the flame.

12. The Soviet State pays, in war time as well as in peace, very considerable attention to the arts. The principal Moscow theatrical companies were evacuated from the capital during the danger period, and it is easier for a competent artist to obtain exemption from military service than for any other class of citizen; there have indeed been cases of artists escaping from their employment to join the army and being brought back. Artists, in addition, get considerable privileges in rations, housing accommodation and so on.

The artists respond by doing their work well. "Artists brigades," sent out to entertain the forces, carry on their work up to within a mile or two of the front line. And in the packed Moscow theatres to-day (they have all now returned from the evacuation) some of the very best performances of opera, ballet and straight acting that it is possible to see in the world are given.

It would be a complete error, however, to think of the Russian theatre to-day as in any sense of the word leading the world. The Moscow Art Theatre, with its magnificent tradition, gives the best performances of Russian classics and some of the best of Western European classics than can be seen anywhere in the
globe. In its interpretation of classical ballet, such as Tchaikovsky's famous "Swan Lake," the Bolshoi Theatre is unrivalled. But the programmes to-day are, and have been for some years before the war, absolutely conservative. The principal fresh pieces in this spring's season of the Moscow Art Theatre, for instance, are a play by Ostrovski (Russian 19th century), a new translation of "Hamlet," and a translation of Oscar Wilde's "An Ideal Husband." The new plays I have seen have all been of the nature of political tracts, which are flat in their characterisation, stereotyped in their method of presentation and would be intolerably dull were it not for their superb acting. The same is true of opera and ballet; though Stravinski was already becoming famous in Western Europe before the last war, his ballets never appear in the Moscow repertory.

In the cinema, where during the late twenties and early thirties Russian feature films were leading the world, it is only the documentaries that have anything to teach us now. My wife, whose first husband was a distinguished cinema cameraman, assures me that for some years before the war she had not seen a single Soviet feature film of any real merit; the feature films produced since the war have, like the plays, all been in the nature of tracts. In the field of literature, the only figure of any eminence remaining now is the pre-revolutionary Alexei Tolstoy (who is still allowed to keep up his old régime state, with his household of servants headed by a butler); Sholokov, who is drinking himself stupid, is held now to have shot his bolt. Not a single big and permanent new literary figure has emerged since the revolution, and not only has there been no war fiction of any real merit, but the total output of fiction, since the war, apart from short stories and serials in periodicals, has been negligible.

A musician friend of my wife's expressed to me one day the opinion that Soviet Russia to-day had no intelligentsia which could compare with that of the Western European countries. It had, he said, killed off the old intellectual class, and the repression exercised by the régime (even if you believe that a new intellectual class can spring from the ground overnight) had made it impossible for a new one to emerge. For it must be emphasised that the Tsarist régime, for all its defects, afforded a latitude to its author critics which would be quite inconceivable under the Soviet system.

The facts of Soviet artistic life, apart from the superb technique seen in the theatre, make it difficult to resist the conclusion that this judgment of the sterility of Soviet art is largely true.

**Tendencies in Soviet Russia.**

13. At the beginning of this memorandum I spoke of the chief trends now visible in the Soviet Union being a trend towards social conservatism and towards the hardening and perpetuation of the existing social hierarchy. Evidence of both these trends is to be found in the field of education.

A year or so before the war free education at the secondary schools and universities was abolished: only those pupils whose good work earns them free places go free to either. This obviously puts the children of well-paid parents, so far as higher education is concerned, at the same sort of advantage as they enjoy in England. The mediocre son of a well-paid official will, as in England, go to a secondary school and university at his father's expense, whereas the no less intelligent son of poorer parents will not. I am not denying the change; it is probable that in pre-war Russia there was, as is in all countries which have rapidly expanded their educational facilities, a tendency to the formation of an intellectual proletariat. I am simply stating the fact. But if secondary and university education is, as is widely believed, an economic and social advantage in later life, it can hardly be doubted that this fact makes for the perpetuation of the existing social hierarchy. At the same time that free secondary and university education was abolished, a system of factory training schools was set up, where elementary school pupils who did not go on further with their general education received technical training. The training given in these schools has undoubtedly been of the greatest value in facilitating the industrial effort behind Russia's war effort. But since the trainees tended to be the children of less well-paid parents, it will be obvious that this too tended to perpetuate the existing hierarchy.

The educational change in Russia which has undoubtedly caused most sensation abroad has been the separation of girls from boys in elementary education: there are now, not merely separate classes for boys and girls, but separate schools. This change has been discussed for some time before it was introduced last year, but the reasons given for it in the public press, though they would have delighted the heart of a conservative English educationalist (the headmaster of a
boys' or the headmistress of a girls' Public School, for instance) did not seem sufficiently convincing to be the real ones. It was argued that girls had a very different mentality from boys and that in teaching any subject to them it was necessary to approach it from a rather different angle if they were to get full benefit from the teaching. It was argued that girls should have gentler manners than boys, and it was easier to inculcate these if they were educated separately from boys. Finally, it was said that, since a girl's and a boy's physique were very different, they were plainly adapted to different kinds of work in the community, and so a different bias needed to be given to their education. And, in addition, while boys at school needed to receive the elements of preparatory military training, girls needed to be taught the elements of mothercraft and housecraft.

I am inclined to think that the last reason, which appeared to be the least stressed, was really the valid one, that the old Soviet view that all careers should be equally open to all sexes is going by the board, and that the régime is anxious to see a high proportion of the young women of the rising generation back in the home. I do not suggest for a moment that this means the end of careers for women (though I believe that under the new dispensation they have, for the moment, fewer secondary school places in Moscow). But the increased productivity of Soviet industry will progressively render it less necessary for all women to work outside the home. And the first twenty-six years of the Soviet régime, with both parents normally working outside the ordinary home, and with little stabilising home influence thus brought to bear on the children, has undoubtedly resulted in the production of a somewhat boorish and unruly younger generation.

There is no doubt that the heads of the régime want to change this. Soviet education has seen the most bewildering series of changes in the systems of organising and maintaining order in its schools. But the emphasis is all now on strict formal discipline and the enforcing of obedience by graded punishments so as to repress selfishness and hooliganism. "A pupil when entering school," writes one headmistress, "must feel that he or she is going into a holy place." Pupils are now issued with a code of rules for conduct which is almost identical with that handed out in pre-revolutionary schools. They must greet their teachers when they meet them in the street, a boy by taking off his cap, a girl by bowing. In the R.S.F.S.R., school-children may not go to cinemas or theatres on school days without permission from the head of the school, and then it is preferable that they should go in an organised body, accompanied by adults. Respect for parents and elders is being inculcated.

An interesting change on the literary (as distinct from the scientific) side of secondary education: Latin is now being introduced as a subject. It is also notable that the latest geography text-books on, for instance, parts of the British Empire are comparatively objective in their treatment and free from digs at "capitalist exploitation."

14. The U.S.S.R. has already gone a long way from the period when the family was regarded as a bourgeois institution, which should be broken up by the popularisation of communal feeding, easy divorce, removal of the stigma on illegitimacy and other means. The family is now accepted and growingly respected institution, and the next step which will probably be taken to increase its status and influence will be a further tightening up of the divorce laws. At the beginning of the Soviet régime, when abortion (now forbidden) was legalised, divorce could be obtained at a registry office on the application of one party to a marriage only, the registry office notifying the other party of the divorce by post, though provision had always to be made for the maintenance of dependent children. Then further legislation made mutual consent necessary, and later the cost of divorce was progressively stepped up, so that a citizen's second divorce required the payment of a higher fee than his first, and his third divorce a still bigger sum. It was currently reported in Moscow at the time I left that legislation was contemplated taking divorce away from the competence of the registry office and making it a court affair, as with us, necessitating the proof by the petitioning party of some grounds of incompatibility with the respondent. It was, indeed, widely expected that this legislation would be introduced during the last session of the Supreme Soviet.

15. The re-establishment of the Orthodox Church was another conservative move by the régime, though it should not be taken for a moment as implying that any of the heads of the régime have become converted to Christianity. It was a realistic move, taken, in my opinion (as I suggested earlier), less because of any impression it might make on Russia's Allies than because of the immense
wave of religious feeling which swept the whole country at the beginning of the war and has persisted ever since. I attended midnight Mass at Moscow Cathedral last Easter (the curfew was specially lifted for the occasion, as it has been for similar occasions since it was first imposed with the war), and I have never come so near suffocation in my life; the building, which might have held some 2,000 people with comfort was packed with seven or eight thousand. From what I could see there were far more genuine worshippers than curious spectators there, indeed, I saw no sign of irreverence. And the congregation gave the lie to the frequently made assertion that only old people go to church in Russia nowadays; there were just as many middle-aged and even young people. The service I attended was, of course, some time before the re-establishment of the Holy Synod and the Patriarchate as the governing body of the Church, and their official linking with the Soviet régime.

There had been quite a number of indications before the re-establishment of what was in the wind. Anti-religious propaganda, for instance, had been switched off almost as soon as the war began and the Church rallied behind the Government. Then the field censors, who early in the war used to excise religious expressions from letters between soldiers and their parents, ceased to do so. Next an article in the Communist party periodical, The Agitator’s Notebook, replying to a question whether it was proper for soldiers to mock at comrades who prayed in barracks, answered that while an individual expression of opinion on the uselessness of religious observances could be allowed, any kind of organised mockery was strongly to be discouraged. And ever since the war such representations of priests or religious persons as had occurred in plays and films had been invariably sympathetic.

It is not quite true to say that before the re-establishment the Orthodox Church was either persecuted or free. There had been an earlier period in the revolution when, for instance, priests had been disenfranchised and deprived of rations and when my wife had been expelled from school half a dozen times on the grounds that her grandfather was a priest. When the war started the position roughly was that:

(i) Any body of believers which could provide enough money annually to maintain the fabric of its church and support its priest could have its church open; the building and its furnishings were the property of the State, and if, say, any church vessels were stolen, the congregation had to indemnify the State for their loss.

(ii) State-supported and anti-religious propaganda was fairly active, and had its own newspaper, but children could not receive anti-religious teaching in classes (though the Marxist instruction they received in school was at least implicitly anti-religious and the Church could not maintain seminaries to train its priests).

(iii) Minor ways of making a church uncomfortable could be and were used, such as forcing it to pay a higher rate for the heating and lighting of its building.

(iv) Though priests were full citizens, a member of the Communist party (membership of which has been stated to be essential to obtain any of the better posts in the régime) could not be known to practise religion, and any one who had the ill-luck to be accused of a political offence would know that his religious beliefs would be counted as a black mark against him.

(v) Though in earlier days the Church had been able to print its own periodicals, it had of latter years received no paper allotment for the purpose.

The Church has now its own seminaries and its own periodicals again: this raises the interesting point that it is impossible for a totalitarian Socialist State such as the Russian merely to tolerate a movement, such as the Church. It is bound, as soon as the movements’ need for physical facilities arises, to some extent to co-operate with it. Thus the Soviet State has had to furnish State-owned buildings for seminaries, State-owned paper for Church periodicals; it may soon be furnishing the Church with metal for icons, and the Patriarch has already been furnished with a motor car for his use—by, oddly enough, the Commissariat for War.

This co-operation of the State with the Church has been rendered easier because, not only has the Church been extremely patriotic since the war began and priests served as foci of resistance in occupied territory, but back through Russian territory the Orthodox Church has always, since Peter the Great at least,
been a tool of the Russian State. There is no reason to believe that it will be less obedient to the Soviet régime than it was to the Tsar. A stiffer test of the reality of the new Soviet toleration of religion will come when the Red Army reconquers Lithuania, a country where the bulk of the people profess Roman Catholicism, a branch of Christianity which has always been far more refractory to State interference and which is far less likely to consent to be a tool of the régime. Father Braun, priest in charge of Moscow’s only Roman Catholic Church, that of St. Louis of the French, tells me that since the re-establishment of the Orthodox Church two or three members of his congregation have been arrested without trial, for no discoverable reason except that they do attend the church.

16. One more conservative move is becoming apparent in the various branches of the civil service. Under the Tsarist régime all public servants wore uniform, and there was a system of grades in each service which corresponded to those in each of the others as well as to those in the army and navy. Last year the railwaymen were given a new system of ranks and insignia which corresponded with those in the army; then the employees of the Foreign Office were put into uniform, with a similar system of ranks (the head of the Foreign Office Press Bureau is equivalent in rank to a major-general). It was forecast in Moscow when I left that teachers and students would be the next to be put into uniform again. Another step that is forecast for the near future is the changing of the title of the various Commissarists of the Government into Ministries.

17. The teaching of history in Russian schools and its presentation to the adult public has changed remarkably in recent years and is still developing. Not only the literary men and scientists of the Tsarist régime but its generals and statesmen are being refurbished up again as national heroes. Peter the Great is now venerated as the founder of modern Russia, his tyrannies forgotten, and Ivan the Terrible, the frantic Tsar who murdered his own son and died mad, is being turned into a hero and whitewashed as having laid the corner-stone of Russian national unity. I understand that Alexei Tolstoy, who has written a three-decker novel on Peter the Great, is now turning his attention to Ivan. No effort is being spared to turn the young Russian into a conscious nationalist.

18. Nowhere are the conservative trends in the Russian régime more apparent than in the army. For long years before the war the hated title of “officer” with its reactionary associations had been abolished, and the higher grades in the Red Army were known as “commanders.” Now not only has the word officer been reintroduced, but everything is being done to make the officer corps conscious of itself as a body and (to a great degree) self-perpetuating. The reintroduction of epaulettes to carry insignia of rank becomes more significant when it is remembered that during the revolutionary period officers captured by the revolutionary crowd sometimes had their epaulettes nailed to their shoulders for them, to such an extent were they regarded as a symbol of tyranny. The founding of officers clubs, open to commissioned ranks only, is another step which restores the pre-revolutionary army set-up; so is the establishment of orders and decorations open to officers only, such as those of Suvorov, Kutuzov, Alexander Nevsky and the Order of Victory (awardable only to generals, it will be a ruby and diamond star in a platinum setting). Red Army officers to-day have batons again, though it has apparently proved necessary to print elaborate justifications of this in the Press. At the booking offices of theatres there are now special officers-only queues, which get first service.

There were no doubt a number of sound practical reasons for these various steps whose general effect is to create an artificial gulf between officers and men, just as there was, some years ago, for the consecration in civil life of the “sacred principle” of inequality of pay. Most of them were taken after (the institution of the three first officers only orders immediately after) the lowest ebb in the Red Army’s morale, the second loss of Rostov, in summer 1942, which led to a good number of shootings among the officers concerned and a sweeping reorganisation in the army. But whatever may have been the immediate reasons for the creation of this artificial gulf, the institution of the Suvorov Cadet Colleges, for the training of future officers, leaves no doubt that it is intended to make it permanent. Boys who enter these colleges at the age of eight or nine will, on the conclusion of their seven years’ course, have a mentality and outlook entirely different from that of the rankers whom they will command. The regulations governing the conduct of these cadet colleges have been drawn up, under the supervision of experts such as General Ignatiev, former Tsarist military attaché in Paris, so as to closely conform to those obtaining in the similar bodies in the old régime. And though the colleges are stated to be open to the sons of officers
and men of the Red Army and partisans, I forecast that the local selection board who appoint boys to them will choose the majority of entrants from among officers' sons. Press comment at the time the colleges were established underlined the satisfaction it would give to an officer father to know that his son was being thoroughly trained to follow in his footsteps in his own glorious career. Since the colleges will have an annual output of 650 cadets, their graduates are going to act as a very influential leaven in the Red Army of the future.

Discipline is very strict in the Red Army to-day. There has recently been a drive to improve soldierly bearing in the rear areas, and there is far more saluting in the streets of Moscow than in those of London, while I myself in the crowded underground have seen a junior obeying the rule which lays down that he should rise and offer his seat to a standing senior officer. Discipline among troops on foreign service is so tight that when our military police in Tehran arrest a drunk and disorderly Russian soldier they do not dare to hand him over to the Russian police till he has recovered, for fear he might be shot.

General Conclusions.

19. The Soviet régime to-day, with its great material and military achievements and its virtually complete control of public opinion, is a very strong one. And since it owes its strength far less to the prestige of any personality than to the firmness, unity and discipline of the Communist Party, I think it would be a grave mistake to believe that Stalin's death would affect it as Mussolini's downfall affected the Fascist Party or Hitler's would affect the Nazi Party. Roughly, the contrast is that the Italian and German dictators created their own Parties, while Stalin was created by his (though he exercised ruthlessly every aut he had to stimulate it into the creative process). And I believe that the Communist Party, in Politturo (the body that lays down policy) is a body with incomparably more authority and prestige vis-à-vis the head of the Government than the Fascist Grand Council ever had vis-à-vis Mussolini. So I think it would be a very unsafe bet to anticipate that the death of Stalin would lead to a quarrel over his successorship which would seriously compromise the régime.

The only moment since the war began when any sign of a crack appeared in the strength of the régime was during the "October days" of 1941 in Moscow. The Germans were then rapidly approaching the capital, the Government departments and the Diplomatic Corps were evacuated. Work was stopped in the factories, and a number of installations were blown up; the underground was closed. A number of the Moscow police were drafted up to the front; most of those who were not, left their posts. For three days not a word came from the Kremlin, and while householders were vigorously scrubbing Communist inscriptions off their house fronts, looting of food stores began and scattered anti-Semitic demonstrations started in the suburbs. The opinion of those who were there at the time is that if the Germans had cared to drop 500 parachute troops over Moscow and take over the radio stations, they could have had it for the asking. Military caution caused them to delay resumption of their advance till their main forces had come up with their advance groups, and during this period the Russians had time to bring up their reserves of Siberian troops and counter-attack. After three days' silence the Kremlin spoke again, and since that time there has been no weakening in its authority. But it came very near indeed to losing it then, and though Allied journalists at the time naturally had to write as if the loss of Moscow would make no difference to Soviet resistance, since the Red Army would continue to fight right back to the Urals, there is little doubt that, in fact, the loss of the capital would have turned Russia into a largely passive partner in the war and would have dealt an irreparable blow at the régime.

Strong though the régime is, its heads quite plainly suffer from a marked sense of inferiority in face of the Western capitalist Powers. While, in their press comment, apparently quite insensitive to the feelings of these nations, they display a fantastic thinness of skin when confronted with the least criticism from abroad. This sense of inferiority probably accounts for the extravagant lavishness, considering the country's wartime shortness of supplies, of the entertainment they offer to visiting foreign statesmen and, on certain annual occasions, to the Diplomatic Corps: Kremlin banquets and Foreign Office receptions on the scale on which they are given in Moscow are such that, if our authorities were to hold similar festivities in London, they would arouse a storm of public indignation.

20. I feel that this sense of inferiority among her rulers, combined with the sense of suspicion to which I referred at the beginning of this memorandum are going to make Russia a very tricky country to deal with in the post-war years.
Any prediction of what her post-war internal and external policy are going to be is bound to be the merest speculation, but I will venture a guess. Her internal policy will be, I believe, nothing more than progressively to raise the standard of living of her population, while maintaining her arms and heavy industries at full strength: the achievement of Communism, the theoretical final aim of the Party, where the reward motive for labour will vanish and it will be ‘from each according to his capacities, to each according to his needs,’ will remain an aim far beyond the horizon. As far as foreign policy is concerned, I think the U.S.S.R.'s main preoccupation will be the achievement and maintenance of security.

This sounds modest enough, but the kind of security which will satisfy a deeply suspicious nation may well have very wide implications. And even if the Soviet Union does not wish to dominate Central Europe for the sake of domination, she may feel herself forced to do so for the sake of security. Suspicion breeds suspicion, and such an attempt at domination might well pave the way to a future conflict between Russia and her present Allies. So it is of absolutely paramount importance that the Western Powers should be able to give Russia at the end of the war such a sense of security. Though I think it is just as important from all points of view that they should be able to do so without making concessions to her which they feel to be unjustified. Such concessions would only make for further rankling ill-feeling; nor do I think the Russians will ever really trust us till we show firmness as well as conciliation in our dealings with them. I may be wrong, but I cannot help feeling that the effect of our giving in to them on points on which we feel we are in the right is doubly unfortunate. First, it loses us their respect (the Russians respect and respond to tough bargaining). And, secondly, it may well give them not confidence in us, but a sense that we are temporarily buying them off, just as the Germans and they bought each other off in August 1939. It cannot, unhappily, be said that the Foreign Office, under Mr. Eden's guidance, has up to the moment shown any sort of firmness in dealing with the Russians: it was the opinion of General Martell, when head of the British Military Mission in Moscow, that we were 'licking the Bolshties' boots till we were black in the face.' And, though Martell may have been a Blimp in politics, he was undoubtedly a man of considerable intelligence, whose judgments cannot be disregarded.

21. Those British Conservatives who believe that Russia still is a revolutionary, and an instructively revolutionary, country maintain that we should support discredited monarchist or Right-Wing Governments in the occupied countries of Europe lest, on their liberation, a popular movement should take control and fling them straight into the arms of the Soviets. I feel this to be a complete misreading of the situation. I think there is a very good case for believing that, the more popular and revolutionary the new Governments of Europe after the war, the less they will fall under Soviet influence. The authoritarian system now prevailing in Russia will have, it seems to me, little attraction for a people that has newly won its freedom from its class or other oppressors. To take an example: in Marshal Tito's army at the moment there prevails the system of discussion of tactics between officers and men before and after an operation, long discarded in the Red Army. It is the Bolshevik practice of the revolution's early years that is likely to appeal to the revolutionary Governments of the liberated countries. And that practice is absolute poison to the Kremlin to-day.

I cannot help feeling that when the influential review War and the Working Class argued in one of last summer's issues that one of the reasons why a delay might lead to an outbreak of revolutions all over the Continent such as that which followed the last war, it was not for a moment indulging in an argumentum ad hominem. Far from having its tongue in its cheek as it played on the Western Powers' nerves, I think it was expressing a fear that is probably very real in Moscow ruling circles. The fear, I mean, that the freedom which may be found under any new revolutionary régimes in Europe may put dangerous ideas into the regimented masses of Russia. A Germany, for instance, that went Communist in this way might shift the whole balance of power of world Communism.

22. The picture of conditions in Russia which emerges from this memorandum, a picture of hard-driven though (individually) extremely human insects, might well seem depressing to members of the British Labour Party. I think, on the contrary, it should be an inspiring challenge to their Socialist thinking. Too many of the younger, more ardent and hard-working members of the Labour Party have been content, in recent years, to abdicate any
initiative in political thinking because they have thought "Russia has shown the way." Russia has, indeed, shown us the way, but to a very large extent, it seems to me, she has shown us the way not to go. The attitude we should take to the Russian system, I feel, should not be a blind defence of aspects of it which our intelligence must know to be indefensible. It should not be an emotional despair that the world's first Socialist Society has degenerated into something very like a human ant-heap or a human beehive. It should be a firm resolution to go back to the first principles of our creed and so to rethink them that we are capable of building a new Socialist Society which shall be not only as nearly as possible efficient, but also, which is just as important, as nearly as possible free, and as nearly as possible human.

_April, 1944._
TEHRAN CONFERENCE.

1. Record of a conversation between the Prime Minister and Marshal Stalin on the 28th November.
2. Record of a conversation between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, M. Molotov and Mr. Hopkins on the 30th November.
3. Record of a conversation between the Prime Minister, President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin at luncheon on the 30th November.
4. Record of a conversation at luncheon in the Soviet Embassy, Tehran, on the 1st December.
5. Record of a conversation at the Soviet Embassy, Tehran, on the 1st December.
6. Record of a conversation at the Soviet Embassy, Tehran, on the 1st December.
7. Record of a conversation at the Soviet Embassy, Tehran, on the 1st December.
8. Record of a conversation at the Soviet Embassy, Tehran, on the 1st December.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that this was a historical meeting, and that so much depended upon the friendship of the three Heads of Government and the decisions reached at this Conference.

MARSHAL STALIN suggested that they should first consider the worst that might happen. He thought that Germany had every possibility of recovering from this war and might start on a new war within a comparatively short time. He was afraid of German nationalism. This was a possibility and allowances must be made for it. After Versailles peace seemed assured, but Germany recovered very quickly. We must therefore establish a strong body to prevent Germany starting a new war. He was convinced that she would recover.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked how soon.

MARSHAL STALIN thought it might be within fifteen to twenty years.

THE PRIME MINISTER thought that the world must be made safe for at least fifty years. If it was only for fifteen to twenty years, then we would have betrayed our soldiers.

MARSHAL STALIN thought that we should consider the economic side of the question. The Germans were an able people, very industrious and cultured, and they would recover quickly.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that certain measures would have to be enforced. He would forbid all aviation civil and military, and he would forbid the General Staff system.

MARSHAL STALIN asked whether he would also forbid the existence of watchmakers' and furniture factories which could easily be turned into factories for making parts of shells and into aircraft factories. The Germans had produced toy rifles which had been used for teaching hundreds of thousands of men how to shoot.
THE PRIME MINISTER said nothing was final. The world rolled on. We have now learnt something. Our duty was to make the world safe for at least fifty years (a) by disarmament, (b) by preventing rearmament, (c) by supervision of German factories, (d) by forbidding all aviation, and (e) by territorial changes of a far-reaching character.

MARSHAL STALIN thought that that was correct, but Germany would work through other countries.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that it all came back to a question of whether Great Britain, the United States and the U.S.S.R. kept a close friendship and supervised Germany in their mutual interest. He said they should not be afraid to give orders as soon as they saw any danger.

MARSHAL STALIN said there had been control after the last war, but it had failed.

THE PRIME MINISTER said people were inexperienced. The last war was not to the same extent a national war and Russia was not a party at the peace conference. It was different this time. He had a feeling that Prussia should be isolated and reduced, that Bavaria, Austria and Hungary might form a broad, peaceful cow-like confederation. He thought Prussia should be dealt with more severely than the other parts of the Reich, so that the latter would not want to go in with Prussia.

MARSHAL STALIN thought all this was very good but insufficient.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that Russia would have her army. Great Britain and the United States navies and air forces. In addition, all three Powers would have their other forces, all strongly armed, and they must not assume any obligation to disarm. They were the trustees for the peace of the world. If they failed, there would be, perhaps, 100 years of chaos. If they were strong they would carry out their trusteeship.

MARSHAL STALIN said he would think it over.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that there was more than merely keeping the peace. The three Powers should guide the future of the world. He was not a Communist and he did not want to enforce any principles on other nations. But he asked for freedom and for the right of all nations to develop as they liked. He said that they must keep friends in order to ensure happy homes in all countries.

MARSHAL STALIN asked what was to happen with Germany.

THE PRIME MINISTER replied that he was not against, toilers in Germany, but only against the leaders and against dangerous combinations.

MARSHAL STALIN said that there were many toilers in the German divisions, who fought under orders. When he asked German prisoners who came from the labour classes why they fought for Hitler, they replied that they were executing orders. He shot such prisoners.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that they should discuss the Polish question.

MARSHAL STALIN agreed and invited the Prime Minister to begin.

THE PRIME MINISTER said we had declared war on account of Poland. Poland was therefore important to us. Nothing was more important than the security of the Russian western frontier. But he had given no pledges about frontiers. He wanted heart-to-heart talks with the Russians about this. When the Marshal felt like telling us what he thought about it, the matter could be discussed and they could reach some agreement, and the Marshal should tell him what was necessary for the defence of the western frontiers of Russia.

MARSHAL STALIN said he did not feel the need to ask himself how to act. So far his heart did not feel stimulated.

[He meant that the Prime Minister should become more precise.]
THE PRIME MINISTER said that after this war in Europe, which might end in 1944, the Soviet Union would be overwhelmingly strong and Russia would have a great responsibility for hundreds of years in any decision she took with regard to Poland. Personally, he thought Poland might move westwards like soldiers taking two steps left close. If Poland trod on some German toes, that could not be helped, but there must be a strong Poland. This instrument was needed in the orchestra of Europe.

MARSHAL STALIN said the Polish people had their culture and their language, which must exist. They could not be extinguished.

THE PRIME MINISTER agreed and asked if we were to draw frontier lines.

MARSHAL STALIN said Yes.

THE PRIME MINISTER said he had no power from Parliament, nor he believed had the President, to define any frontier lines. He suggested that they might now, in Tehran, see if the three Heads of Government, working in agreement, could form some sort of policy which might be pressed upon the Poles and which we could recommend to the Poles, and advise them to accept.

MARSHAL STALIN said we could have a look.

THE PRIME MINISTER said we should be lucky if we could.

MARSHAL STALIN asked whether it would be without Polish participation.

THE PRIME MINISTER replied in the affirmative and said that this was all informally between themselves, and they could go to the Poles later.

MARSHAL STALIN agreed.

Mr. EDEN said he had been much struck by what the Marshal had said that afternoon to the effect that the Poles could go as far west as the Oder. He saw hope in that and was much encouraged.

MARSHAL STALIN asked whether we thought he was going to swallow Poland up.

Mr. EDEN said he did not know how much the Russians were going to eat. How much would they leave undigested?

MARSHAL STALIN said the Russians did not want anything belonging to other people, although they might have a bite at Germany.

Mr. EDEN said what Poland lost in the east she might gain in the west.

MARSHAL STALIN said possibly they might, but he did not know.

THE PRIME MINISTER demonstrated with the help of three matches his idea of Poland moving westwards, which pleased Marshal Stalin.

---

(2)

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. EDEN, M. MOLOTOV AND MR. HARRY HOPKINS AT HIS MAJESTY’S LEGATION, TEHRAN, ON 30TH NOVEMBER, 1943.

There was some general discussion on the subject of the control of strategic bases after the war.

M. MOLOTOV said that Marshal Stalin had referred to Bizerta and Dakar as examples of points which should be controlled by Great Britain and the United States to ensure control of the Mediterranean and the Atlantie. What was Mr. Eden’s view?

Mr. EDEN stated that His Majesty’s Government did not want any more territory, but he considered that strategic points in enemy territory should pass under the control of the United Nations. Strategic points on French territory were a more difficult question owing to our former close relations with the French and our desire to see France strong again. The French, however, should realise and be willing to make their contribution by making some strategic points...
RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND MARSHAL STALIN AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY AT TEHRAN ON 30TH NOVEMBER, 1943.

I circulate for the information of my colleagues the attached record of the above conversation.

W. S. C.

10 Downing Street, S.W. 1,
7th January, 1944.
MOST SECRET.


THE PRIME MINISTER said that he was half American and he had a great affection for the American people. What he was going to say was not to be understood as anything disparaging of the Americans and he would be perfectly loyal towards them, but there were things which it was better to say between two persons.

We had a preponderance of troops over the Americans in the Mediterranean. There were three to four times more British troops than American there. That is why he was anxious that the troops in the Mediterranean should not be hamstrung if it could be avoided, and he wanted to use them all the time. In Italy there were some 13 to 14 divisions of which 9 or 10 were British. There were two armies, the 5th Anglo-American Army, and the 8th Army, which was entirely British. The choice had been represented as keeping to the date of "Overlord" or pressing on with the operations in the Mediterranean. But that was not the whole story. The Americans wanted him to attack, to undertake an amphibious operation in the Bay of Bengal against the Japanese in March. He was not keen about it. If we had in the Mediterranean the landing craft needed for the Bay of Bengal, we would have enough to do all we wanted in the Mediterranean and still be able to keep to an early date for "Overlord." It was not a choice between the Mediterranean and the date of "Overlord," but between the Bay of Bengal and the date of "Overlord." He thought we would have all we wanted in the way of landing craft. However, the Americans had pinned us down to a date for "Overlord" and operations in the Mediterranean had suffered in the last two months. Our army was somewhat disheartened by the removal of the 7 divisions. We had sent home our 3 divisions and the Americans were sending theirs, all in preparation for "Overlord." That was the reason for not taking full advantage with the Italian collapse. But it also proved the earnestness of our preparations for "Overlord."

Now a word about the Commander-in-Chief. The Prime Minister agreed that it was vital to get the question settled. Up till August we British were to have had the supreme command in "Overlord," but at Quebec the President had asked him to consider the appointment of an American Commander-in-Chief for "Overlord" and we British were to have the supreme command in the Mediterranean. The Prime Minister has agreed because the Americans, although equal in numbers to the British at the commencement, would soon have a preponderance in "Overlord" and their stake would be greater after the first few months. On the other hand, as the British had the preponderance in the Mediterranean, the Prime Minister had his own ideas about the war there. He considered it right that we should have the supreme command in the Mediterranean. He had accepted the President’s proposal and it now rested with him to nominate the Commander-in-Chief. As soon as the President did so, the Prime Minister would nominate the Mediterranean Commander-in-Chief and also other commanders for important commands, such as the air, navy, &c. The President had delayed the appointment for domestic reasons connected with high personalities, but the Prime Minister had urged him to nominate the Commander-in-Chief for "Overlord" before they all separated in Tehran.

MARSHAL STALIN said that was good.

THE PRIME MINISTER then turned to the question of landing craft. He said it was the bottle-neck. We had plenty of troops in the Mediterranean even after the removal of the 7 divisions and there would be a big army in the United Kingdom, British and American. All turned on landing craft. When the Marshal had made his momentous announcement two days before about Russia...
coming into the war against Japan after Hitler's surrender, the Prime Minister had immediately suggested to the Americans that they (the Americans) might find more landing craft for the operations they had been asked to do in the Indian Ocean, or that they might send some landing craft from the Pacific to help the first lift of "Overlord." If so, there might be enough for all. But the Americans were very touchy about the Pacific. He had pointed out to them that a new situation had arisen and more help might be given for "Overlord" in consequence of the fact that after Hitler's defeat the prospects of the war against Japan would be facilitated by what the Marshal had said.

THE PRIME MINISTER said he wanted to explain the nature of the question between himself and the Americans. The Marshal would see that it was not lack-warmness about "Overlord" but only because he wanted to get all he needed for the Mediterranean and at the same time keep to the date for "Overlord." But it had to be hammered out between the Staffs and he hoped to do so in Cairo. Unfortunately the Generalissimo had been there and Chinese questions had taken up nearly all their time. He was sure that in the end enough landing craft would be found for all.

Now about "Overlord." The British would have ready by the date fixed in May or June 18 divisions with their corps, troops, landing craft, troops and ack-ack and other services, a total of slightly over half a million men. These would consist of some of our best troops including battle-worthy men from the Mediterranean. In addition the British would have all that was needed from the Royal Navy to handle transportation and to protect the Army, and there would be the Metropolitan air forces of about 4,000 first-line aircraft in continuous action. In addition the American import of troops was now beginning. Up till now they had sent mainly air troops and stores for the Army, but in the next four or five months the Prime Minister thought 150,000 men or more would come every month, making a total of 7 to 8 hundred thousand men by May. The defeat of the submarines in the Atlantic had made this movement possible. He was in favour of the operation in the South of France taking place about the same time as "Overlord" or at whatever moment was found correct. We would be holding enemy troops in Italy and of the 22 to 23 divisions, as many as possible would go to the South of France and the rest would remain in Italy.

A great battle was impending in Italy. General Alexander commands the 16 Group of armies, consisting of the 8th and 8th Armies, and has about half a million men under him. There are 13 to 14 Allied divisions against 9 to 10 German divisions, but the weather is bad and bridges have been swept away. But in December we intend to push on with General Montgomery leading the 8th Army. The landing would be made at the Tiber. At the same time the 8th Army would be fiercely engaged holding the enemy. It might turn into a miniature Stalingrad. We did not intend to push into the wide part of Italy but to hold the narrow leg. MARSHAL STALIN said he must warn the Prime Minister that the Red Army was depending on the success of our invasion of Northern France. If there were no operations in May, then the Red Army would think that there would be no operations at all this year. The weather would be bad and there would be transport difficulties. If the operation did not take place he did not want the Red Army to be disappointed. Disappointment could only create bad feeling and he did not want this to happen. If there was no big change in the European war in 1944 it would be very difficult for the Russians to carry on. They were war weary. He feared that a feeling of isolation might develop in the Red Army. That was why he had tried to find out whether "Overlord" would be undertaken on time as promised. If not, he would have to take steps to prevent a bad feeling in the Red Army. It was most important.

THE PRIME MINISTER said "Overlord" would certainly take place provided the enemy did not bring into France larger forces than the Americans and British could gather there. Supposing the Germans had 30 to 40 divisions in France, he did not think the force we were going to put across the Channel would be able to hold on. He was not afraid of going on shore but what would happen on the 30th, 40th or 50th day? But if the Red Army engaged the enemy and we held them in Italy and perhaps the Yugoslavs and possibly the Turks came into the war, then he was hopeful that we could win and that Germany would not have enough troops.

MARSHAL STALIN said that as regards the Red Army the first steps of "Overlord" would have a good effect and if he knew that the operation was going to take place in May or June, he could already prepare blows against
Germany. The spring was the best time. March and April were months of slackness during which he could concentrate troops and material, and in May and June he could organise decisive blows against Germany. Germany would have no troops for France. The transfer of German divisions to the east was continuing. The Germans were afraid of their eastern front because it had no Channel which had to be crossed and there was no France to be entered. The Germans were afraid of the Red Army advance. The Red Army will advance if it sees that help is coming from the Allies. He asked when would "Overlord" begin.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he could not answer without the President, but the answer would be given at lunch-time, and he thought that the Marshal would be satisfied.
CRIMEA CONFERENCE.

NOTE BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

THE following records of speeches and of a conversation between Marshal Stalin and the Prime Minister were made by the Official Interpreter at dinner parties which took place on the 8th February and 10th February during the Conference at Yalta in February, 1945.

10, Downing Street, S.W. 1,
18th February, 1945.

W. S. C.

SOME OF THE SPEECHES AT DINNER AT YUSUPOV, 8TH FEBRUARY, 1945.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

"May I add a few words in support of the President's toast. It is no exaggeration or compliment of a florid kind when I say that we regard Marshal Stalin's life as most precious to the hopes and hearts of all of us. There have been many conquerors in history, but few of them have been statesmen, and most of them threw away the fruits of victory in the troubles which followed their wars. I earnestly hope that the Marshal may be spared to give to the people of the Soviet Union and to help us all to move forward to a less unhappy time than that through which we have recently come. I walk through this world with greater courage and hope when I find myself in a relation of friendship and intimacy with this great man whose fame has gone out not only over all Russia, but the world. Thus supporting my friend the President, I desire to join ... ."
MARSHAL STALIN.

"I propose a toast for the leader of the British Empire, the most courageous of all Prime Ministers in the world, embodying political experience with military leadership, who when all Europe was ready to fall flat before Hitler said that Britain would stand and fight alone against Germany even without any Allies. Even if the existing and possible Allies deserted her, he said she would continue to fight. To the health of the man who is born once in a hundred years and who bravely held up the banner of Great Britain. I have said what I feel, what I have at heart and of what I am conscious."

THE PRIME MINISTER.

"I must say that never in this war have I felt the responsibility weigh so heavily on me, even the darkest hours, as now during this Conference. But now for the reasons which the Marshal has given, we see that we are on the crest of the hill and there is before us the prospect of open country. Do not let us underestimate the difficulties. Nations, comrades in arms, have in the past drifted apart within five or ten years of war. Thus toiling millions have followed a vicious circle, falling into the pit, and then by their sacrifices raising themselves up again. We now have a chance of avoiding the errors of previous generations and of making a sure peace. People cry out for peace and joy. Will the families be reunited? Will the warrior come home? Will the shattered dwellings be rebuilt? Will the toiler see his home? To defend one's country is glorious, but there are greater conquests before us. Before us lies the realization of the dream of the poor—that they shall live in peace, protected by our invincible power from aggression and evil. My hope is in the illustrious President of the United States and in Marshal Stalin, in whom we shall find the champions of peace, who after smiting the foe will lead us to carry on the task against poverty, confusion, chaos and oppression. That is my hope and, speaking for England, we shall not be behind-hand in our efforts. We shall not weaken in supporting your exertions. The Marshal spoke of the future. This is the most important of all. Otherwise the oceans of bloodshed will have been useless and outrageous. I propose the toast to the broad sunlight of victorious peace."

MARSHAL STALIN.

"I am talking as an old man; that is why I am talking so much. But I want to drink to our Alliance, that it should not lose its character of intimacy, of its free expression of views. In the history of diplomacy I know of no such close alliance of three great Powers as this, when Allies had the opportunity of so frankly expressing their views. I know that some circles will regard this remark as naive.

"In an alliance the Allies should not deceive each other. Perhaps that is naive? Experienced diplomats may say: 'Why should I not deceive my Ally?' But I as a naive man think it best not to deceive my Ally even if he is a fool. Possibly our alliance is so firm just because we do not deceive each other, or is it because it is not so easy to deceive each other? I propose a toast to the firmness of our Three-Power Alliance, may it be strong and stable, may we be as frank as possible."
MARSHAL STALIN.

"For the group of workers who are recognised only during a war and whose services after a war are quickly forgotten. While there is a war these men are favoured and meet with respect not only of people of their own kind, but also that of the ladies. After a war their prestige goes down and the ladies turn their backs on them.

"To the military leaders."

MARSHAL STALIN.

"A change has taken place in European history, a radical change, during these days. It is good to have an alliance of the principal powers during a war. It would not be possible to win the war without the alliance. But an alliance against the common enemy is something clear and understandable. Far more complicated is an alliance after the war for securing lasting peace and the fruits of victory. That we fought together was a good thing, but it was not so difficult; on the other hand, that these days the work of Dumbarton Oaks has been consummated and the legal foundations laid for organising security and strengthening peace is a great achievement. It is a turning point.

I propose a toast for the successful conclusion of "Dumbarton Oaks" and that our alliance, born under the stress of battle, be made solid and extended after the war, that our countries should not become engrossed only in their own affairs but should remember that apart from their own problems there is the common cause and that they should defend the cause of unity with as much enthusiasm in peace as during the war. For the consummation of "Dumbarton Oaks".

M. MOLOTOV.

"I propose a toast for the three representatives of the Army, Air Force and Navy of the country which went to war before we did. They had a hard task and suffered heavily and we must recognise that they have accomplished their task well. I wish them success and a rapid end of the war in Europe so that the victorious Armies of the Allies may enter Berlin and hoist their banner over that city. To the representatives of the British Army, Air Force and Navy, Field-Marshal Brooke, Admiral Cunningham and Air Marshal Portal and to Field-Marshal Alexander.

SOME NOTES ON THE PRIVATE TALK AT DINNER BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND MARSHAL STALIN, 8TH FEBRUARY, 1945.

The Marshal, speaking of M. Gusev, said he was honest, but at the same time heavy, "a bear," he might tread on someone's toes and forget to apologise! But he was learning.

With regard to the Finnish war in 1939, it began in the following way: the Finnish frontier was some 20 kilom. from Leningrad. (The Marshal often calls the city "Petersburg.") The Russians asked the Finns to move it back 30 kiloms., against which they offered territorial concessions in the north: the Finns refused. Then, some Russian Frontier Guards were shot at by the Finns and killed. The Frontier Guards detachment complained to Red Army troops, who opened fire on the Finns. Instructions were asked for from Moscow. These
contained the order to return the fire. One thing led to another and the war was on. The Russians did not want a war against Finland.

If the British and French in 1939 had sent a Mission to Moscow containing men who really wanted to reach agreement with Russia, the Soviet Government would not have signed the Pact with Ribbentrop.

Ribbentrop told the Russians in 1939 that the British and Americans were only merchants and would never fight.

Marshall Stalin, speaking of the alliance of the three Great Powers said:—

“If we, the three Great Powers, now hold together, no other Power can do anything to us.”

SPEECHES AT DINNER AT VORONTSOV VILLA ON 10TH FEBRUARY, 1945.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

I propose the health of His Majesty The King, the President of the United States and President Kalinin of the U.S.S.R., the three heads of the three States.

THE PRESIDENT.

The Prime Minister's toast recalls many memories. In 1933 my wife visited a school in our country. In one of the class-rooms she saw a map with a large blank space on it. She asked what was the blank space and was told they were not allowed to mention the place—it was the Soviet Union. That incident was one of the reasons why I wrote to Kalinin asking him to send a representative to Washington to discuss the opening of diplomatic relations. That is the history of our recognition of Russia.

The other gentleman mentioned in the Prime Minister's toast, His Majesty The King, is an old friend of mine. I knew him as a young officer in the Royal Navy. He is a great gentleman and the Queen a great lady.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

I should like to propose the health of Marshal Stalin, a toast which I have drunk on several occasions. This time I drink it with a warmer feeling than at previous meetings, not because he is more triumphant, but because the great victories and the glory of the Russian arms have made him kindlier than he was in the hard times through which we have passed. I feel that, whatever differences there may be on certain questions, he has a good friend in Britain. I hope to see the future of Russia bright, prosperous and happy. I will do anything to help and I am sure so will the President. There was a time when the Marshal was not so kindly towards us, and I remember that I said a few rude things about him, but our common dangers and common loyalties have wiped all that out. The fire of war has burnt up the misunderstandings of the past. We feel we have a friend whom we can trust and I hope he will continue to feel the same about us. I pray he may live to see his beloved Russia not only glorious in war but also happy in peace.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE proposed the health of M. Molotov and referred to his first visit to Russia ten years ago, since when he had always found M. Molotov to be a loyal friend even if they had differed on some questions.

Later he proposed the health of Mr. Stettinius.
The Deputy Prime Minister welcomed back the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and expressed the hearty congratulations of the War Cabinet on the results that they had achieved and their safe return.

The Prime Minister thanked the War Cabinet warmly on behalf of the Foreign Secretary and himself for their good wishes. They were both most grateful to the War Cabinet for the full support and the latitude in negotiation which the War Cabinet had given them during their discussions.

It was difficult, if not impossible, faithfully to reproduce the atmosphere of the discussions that had taken place between the three Heads of Governments. But his colleagues might welcome his impressions.

So far as Premier Stalin was concerned, he was quite sure that he meant well to the world and to Poland. He did not himself think that there would be any resentment on the part of Russia about the arrangements that had been made for free and fair elections in that country. On arrival in the Crimea he found that the situation had undergone an extraordinary change. In three weeks the Russian Army had fought its way from the Vistula to the Oder; almost the whole of Poland had been liberated; in many parts of the country so reconquered the Russians had been warmly welcomed, and great cities had changed hands very nearly intact. In his discussions at the Crimea Conference he had been at pains at all times to press the policy that had been approved by the War Cabinet viz. a free and independent Poland, sovereign in her own territories; with a Government more broadly composed than it had been, and with the principles of free and fair elections maintained. Whatever criticisms there might be of the arrangements that had been reached, he felt no doubt that they were on any broad and statesmanlike view the best practicable, and that they were truly in the interest of Poland. Premier Stalin, at the beginning of their conversations on the Polish question, had said that Russia had committed many sins (the word was so translated, but the actual word used might have been crimes) against Poland, and that she had in the past joined in the partitions of Poland and in cruel oppression of her. It was not the intention of the Soviet Government to repeat that policy in the future. He felt no doubt whatever that in saying that Premier Stalin had been sincere.
He had a very great feeling that the Russians were anxious to work harmoniously with the two English speaking democracies. Relations at the Conference had been very easy, and the fact that we and the United States spoke the same language while the Russians had had to use an interpreter had not, he thought, in any way impaired the closeness of contact or understanding. Premier Stalin was a person of great power, in whom he had every confidence. He did not think that he would embark on any adventures, but he could not deny that much rested on Premier Stalin's life.

He had been immensely impressed by the magnificent bearing and proud look of the Russian troops. There was no question that the Russian Army was a formidable machine.

Nothing could have been better than the cordiality and the completeness of the arrangements which their hosts had made to see that the discussions were conducted in the most comfortable surroundings possible.

Discussions of great importance had taken place on various other secret matters, in particular, in relation to Japan.

As regards Greece, the Russian attitude could not have been more satisfactory. There was no suggestion on Premier Stalin's part of criticism of our policy. He had been friendly and even jocular in discussion of it. He had expressed a wish for fuller information of what was going on, and arrangements had been made to let him have a full statement in writing. The Prime Minister added that Premier Stalin had most scrupulously respected his acceptance of our position in Greece. He understood that the emissary sent to the U.S.S.R. by the Greek Communists had first been put under house arrest, and then sent back. There had been no shadow of criticism in the Russian press at any time, and the conduct of the Russians in this matter had strengthened his view that when they made a bargain, they desired to keep it.

The experiences which he and the Foreign Secretary had had in Athens had been astonishing. The crowds which had welcomed them had been the biggest he had ever seen. He had driven two to three hundred yards with the Regent through streets where, a month ago, there had been firing and murder, and he had been enormously impressed by the enthusiasm shown. The joy of these people, who had been relieved from fear and from war, was incredible. Our policy had beyond any doubt been fully justified. He hoped in these circumstances that, in the interest of establishing the regime, we should do what we reasonably could to help the Greeks financially. The amounts involved were probably not so very great. In particular, it was important to avoid a cut in the pay of the Army before we were well round the corner. He had seen Sir David Waley, who had been handling the situation on very broad and sensible lines. The Foreign Secretary had remained behind in Athens after he (the Prime Minister) had left, and had done what he could further to urge the various parties to get together. He thought that the visit had been well worth while.
Tribute to Sir Winston Churchill
at the Churchill Memorial Concert in aid of
Music Therapy and local charities, Blenheim Palace 1 March 1997

duration ± 20 mins.
[ ] = optional time cuts

Your Graces, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Winston Churchill used to say there were only two things more difficult than making an after-dinner speech - one was climbing a wall which is leaning towards you and the other, kissing a girl who is leaning away from you. This is not, of course, an after-dinner speech, but I did feel, as I pondered the names of past distinguished speakers here - one or two of whom I have had the privilege of hearing at these wonderful musical occasions, for which we have to thank their Graces our hosts - thinking about those speakers I did feel, that I was climbing a very high wall, which was leaning very steeply, unhappily with no leaning girl in sight to fall back on. Perhaps mine could at least be a somewhat different perspective - a view from the bottom of the wall.

I consoled myself too with this observation made by one of Sir Winston’s young private secretaries, later head of my department in the Foreign Office: “The memory of Winston is nobody’s monopoly”. So I reflected on the marvellous opportunity granted me many years ago of standing literally at the side, at the shoulder, of our greatest wartime leader at four of the most momentous, dramatic junctures of his life and our country’s and Europe’s history. He was facing probably the biggest mass-murderer in history - the ally we could not do without - Josef Stalin. I have to confess that at the time I didn’t think anything of the kind - in wartime one was just chucked into another job, whose significance dawned only later.

My first sight of Winston Churchill in the flesh was from the Public Gallery in the House of Commons a year or so before the outbreak of War. I was still at school, just down the road here at Abingdon. Churchill, out-of-office, was speaking in one of the innumerable pre-war defence debates - castigating his government’s appalling record of failure to meet the Nazi re-armament threat. In my youthful ignorance I thought he was being somewhat
rude to his own side. [But his remarkably well-informed revelations in the press of the horrors of Nazi Germany, quoted in the King-Hall Newsletter we used to get in the school Reading Room, inspired me to write from school my first ever letter to the Times - a paragraph or two from Demosthenes' Philippics - one of our set books. Hitler, I suggested, was the present day's ruthless tyrant Philip of Macedon who had to be stopped. In the light of the Times Editor's anti-Churchill inclination to be polite to Hitler, we were all surprised the letter appeared. I was even more surprised when I received a response from a naval Korb. Kapitan in Vienna, defending the Nazis and blaming the Versailles Treaty on familiar lines. I mention it only because for me it had a sequel.]

After that Churchill rather faded from my mind, until he became Prime Minister. By that time I was up at Oxford, and we were all hanging on his stirring words on the wireless. But even when I joined the army I didn't imagine I would ever see him face to face, [though he often visited the troops].

It was not many months after being posted to our Military Mission in Moscow in 1943 that the General told me, as his ADC, I was to accompany him to Teheran at the end of November. There, without warning, I was ordered to attend the Chiefs of the Imperial General Staff and interpret for them and, as it happened, for others, at what turned out to be the first of the so-called Big Three Conferences: code-named EUREKA.

The Prime Minister arrived in Teheran from Cairo where he and President Roosevelt and the Chiefs of Staff had met to discuss forward strategy, particularly the date of Overlord - but Roosevelt had declined even to talk about a common approach to Stalin, much to Churchill's distress. I suppose it was that and the sore throat he was suffering from - he had lost his voice, a disaster for him - made him look worried and irritable as he arrived in the British Legation. It was the second time I had seen him in my life - now a sturdy figure in Air Force uniform with his pilot's wings - he wore one of his service uniforms, most of the time at all the Big Three Conferences. What annoyed him more next day, as I gathered from crumbs
of Chiefs of Staff conversations, was when his partner, our closest ally and benefactor, his friend, Roosevelt, refused to lunch or even to talk before they both met Stalin for the opening session that afternoon. The President said he didn’t want Stalin to think they were ganging up.

[What was worse, Stalin, through his Foreign Minister Molotov had tricked a not reluctant Roosevelt into moving from the US Legation into the Soviet Embassy, just a step across a narrow road from our Legation, with a cock-and-bull story about an assassination plot, which Molotov later admitted was a lie. And we now know Stalin had a transcript of all the conversations in Roosevelt’s Soviet quarters handed to him every morning. But it made life easier for the Three and Churchill went along with it. The opening session was a bit of a shambles - not just because two of the US Chiefs of Staff, General George Marshall and General Arnold were missing; they’d not been told about the meeting, so they had skipped off sightseeing up in the hills of Gulakec.] But the PM had regained his voice and was even puffing on a cigar. [I sat with our Chiefs of Staff who were not called on to speak so I had no interpreting to do.] Stalin spoke, as always briefly and to the point, at times barely audible with his strong Georgian accent: the PM’s contribution, I remember thinking, was the most impressive, fighting his corner on military strategy against both Roosevelt and Stalin.

Churchill’s principal interpreter was also from our Moscow Military Mission: Arthur Birse - wartime Major - more than twice my age, but a good friend and mentor. Born of Scots parents in St.Petersburg and educated there, he was by far the most brilliant of all the interpreters, British, Russian or American. He had interpreted at Churchill’s earlier talks with Stalin in the Kremlin and the Prime Minister now had complete confidence in him. [By the way, for obvious reasons, one interpreted the words of one’s own principal, except during informal chit-chat, when you were often interpreting both ways, oddly enough the easiest job.]

Churchill would begin his remarks with what I can only describe as a low, throaty purr, as if, Birse used to say, he were testing the quality, the richness of his words on their way from brain to tongue, and then he would
come out with those wonderful ringing phrases which made your spine tingle. He didn’t like to be interrupted by his interpreter until he had finished his thought which sometimes went on a bit and made it more difficult for us.

My easier test came the second day. A Sword of Honour was to be presented from the King to mark the heroic defence of Stalingrad. [At 3.30 p.m.] in the Hall of the Soviet Embassy, drawn up on opposite sides were a Red Army Guard of Honour, NKVD/KGB blue uniforms, red tabs, tommy guns slung, and a British Guard, with fixed bayonets, facing Churchill and Stalin standing side-by-side. With Stalin, the senior Russian officer, Marshal Voroshilov - the only senior soldier he had brought - “hoped he would do” as Stalin put it. Once Stalin’s companion in arms, a dashing cavalry officer during the Civil War in the ’twenties, Voroshilov was in command of several Armies when Hitler invaded Russia, but proved so hopeless he had to be sacked. Stalin treated him rather like an old dog.

As a Red Army Band struck up the Internationale followed by our National Anthem, the Prime Minister took the Sword from a lieutenant [of our Guard], said a few words, handed it over to Stalin, who was visibly moved and kissed the hilt then passed the Sword, to his Marshal... Voroshilov... who... promptly let it slide out of the scabbard, grasped it to his chest and dropped it onto his toes. I was standing just behind and to the side of the PM: he made no comment, pursed his lips, an almost imperceptible frown passed over his brow. As everyone dispersed, Churchill leading our way out, Voroshilov shuffled up behind me tugging my sleeve - I had been interpreting that morning at the Chiefs of Staff meeting with Voroshilov - he sheepishly asked me to help: we caught up with the PM. Voroshilov, blushing, stammered an apology for his gaffe with the sword, at the same time wished Churchill a happy birthday - which was in fact the following day, 30 November. As we walked away the PM growled at me “Isn’t he a bit premature? - must be angling for an invitation”.

It was at his 69th birthday dinner the next day that we witnessed another little domestic drama unfold. The tale has been told before, but perhaps bears retelling more completely: a Persian waiter making his first
entrance brings in the magnificent dessert, a splendid ice cream pyramid. Stalin is making a bit of a speech - the waiter wanting to serve Stalin, stands behind him. Mouth agape at sight of the gathering of the great, he nervously lets the dish tip slightly - it's hot in the room - yes, the inevitable happens - I look on, horrified, fascinated, as the beautiful creation starts to accelerate off the salver: it lands - not on Stalin - the waiter stagers sideways and it lands on the shoulder of Vladimir Pavlov, Stalin's interpreter, all down his new, latest style Russian diplomatic dress uniform. A voice just in front of me, Marshal of the Air Force Sir Charles Portal, Peter Portal, to his colleagues, murmurs "missed the target". I watched the PM, but either he had not noticed or had chosen not to.

Like the true professional, Pavlov continued calmly interpreting. Pavlov, by the way, was virtually always Stalin's interpreter in English - [not a certain impostor by the name of Berezhkov, making a living mainly in the States since he was let out of Russia, pretending to have been Stalin's interpreter in English.] Churchill's respect for Pavlov grew with every meeting. Birse gave him the details of the ice cream affair and fifteen months later at the Crimea/Yalta Conference he invested Pavlov with the CBE - not just because of his heroism under ice cream fire.

The day after the birthday dinner our troops held a birthday parade with presents for Churchill - we watched with a lump in the throat, as the tears streamed down his face.

In the long tally of history, [as Churchill used to say, and for reasons you wouldn't want me to go into.] Teheran was certainly the most significant of the big Three Conferences, more important than Yalta. Teheran was where, in my memory, Churchill was at his magnificent best.

My next encounter with the PM was almost a year later in October '44 when he came out to Moscow with Eden for talks with Stalin mainly about Poland and Eastern Europe - code-name TOLSTOY. [Codes appealed to Churchill's sense of drama and mystery - he was, we thought, himself the author of all the well-chosen Conference code-names - EUREKA - "we've cracked it" (the fortunes of war had turned by then) - for Teheran;
TOLSTOY for Moscow, War and Peace?: Yalta/Crimea - ARGONAUT the quest for the Golden Fleece at Colchis - plain enough; as is TERMINAL for Potsdam the last of the Big Three meetings. [At the Moscow Conference, Military Mission officers] were on 24-hour duty, taking messages and dealing with Russian officials, at the Soviet Hospitality Town House where the PM and Eden stayed when not in Molotov’s dacha outside Moscow. When they returned from the talks, usually in the early hours, exhausted, they would go into the bathroom, turn on the taps to drown the bugging, and continue their conversation. One night the PM, who was very relaxed about it all, turned to me, put his finger to his lips and said loudly with a twinkle in his eye, “do you think it does any good?”.

Churchill had struggled to get the Polish Government in exile in London to accept Stalin’s terms for the future of their country, the best he believed he could get for them. After a particularly tiring afternoon and night at our Embassy with “our London Poles”, as he called them, Churchill who was unwell and Eden returned to the town house. As they came in I heard the PM, doubtless mindful of his Foreign Secretary’s fondness for the cliche if not the pun, say wearily “Anthony, don’t tell me again that we are Poles apart”.

The following February (1945) after a 7-hour flight from Malta, Churchill landed at Saki airport in the Crimea shortly after Roosevelt’s aircraft had touched down. We watched as he greeted Roosevelt and with touching concern, it seemed, followed on foot, the jeep from which the long-disabled President, now looking desperately ill, reviewed the Guard of Honour. They still had a five-hour drive to their respective destinations. Ours was the slightly odd Moorish and Scottish baronial-style Vorontsov Palace/Villa overlooking the Black Sea. 12 miles away was the Livadia Palace, the American quarters and venue of the plenary sessions, itself well outside Yalta. [Stalin was in the Yusupov Palace about six miles from Livadia.]

Again, unsurprisingly, the PM was not best pleased when he arrived, demanding to know why his daughter Sarah, then a WAAF officer, did not
as he thought, have her room next to his quarters. The accommodation for other VIPs was appallingly cramped - Joan Bright, Churchill’s brilliantly resourceful Conference Administrator whom I had been helping for the past fortnight had done her best: only the most senior members of the party were in the palace itself, but they had to share bedrooms and one bathroom to a dozen or so. Later the PM, blissfully ignorant of the over-crowding said “I don’t know why they say it’s inconvenient, I find it very comfortable indeed”.

[He was also pleased when his Map Room, which followed him everywhere over the globe, had been set up by RNVR Captain, later Sir, Richard Pim. I had been helping Captain Pim’s team with drawing pins and so on and we heard the PM, who was gazing at the Black Sea/Crimea map, muse aloud “I wonder if Alexander the Great got here”. Steeling myself, I said “More probably, Sir, his father Philip of Macedon”. “Why do you say that?” Somewhat taken aback, I mumbled something about Philip, and my schoolboy letter drawing the Hitler parallel. The PM turned to look at me: “That was you was it? Well done”. Whether he had really seen and remembered the letter I couldn’t tell, but it gave me a boost.]

One of the most fateful episodes of the Yalta conference- code-name ARGONAUT - was at its opening session. It was there that Dresden’s destiny was sealed. In recent years revisionist historians and others have made it fashionable to denigrate Sir Winston’s reputation, [deliberately ignoring, for example, his peace-time record of far-sighted liberal reforms, his promotion of social security and pensions way back at the beginning of the century, his defence of trade unions against injustice at the hands of the law courts and so on.] Among the many myths they have put about is that Churchill, (and/or Bomber Harris or the RAF in general) was directly and personally responsible for the deliberate devastation of Dresden and its art treasures. The truth of the matter is this: at that first session Stalin with his Deputy Chief of Staff, General Antonov - I heard and watched them both - urgently asked us and the Americans to bomb roads and railways to stop Hitler transferring divisions from the west and reinforcing his troops which had halted the Russian advance on Berlin. The road and rail network, against
which we already had contingency plans, was the target, not the city, certainly not the civilians. Antonov stressed the importance of Dresden as a vital rail junction. Churchill and Roosevelt had to agree. The following day at the Chiefs of Staff meeting in the Yusupov Palace, Antonov again pressed the subject. I interpreted our assent. The bombing mission by the RAF and the US Strategic Airforce was a military success, but tragically and unintentionally inflicted enormous loss of civilian life which Churchill later deeply deplored. But, at the time, when [we were indebted to Stalin for relieving pressure on our front at the time of the German Ardennes winter counter-offensive by bringing forward the Red Army new year offensive and when] there was a chance to shorten the war which had already cost so many lives - the Red Army, like the country, had suffered the biggest losses - we and the Americans could not refuse their request - the initiative did not come from us, but we readily acceded to it.

Legend also has it that Eastern Europe was betrayed at Yalta. True, Stalin was pretty sanguine there - after all he held the trump cards: his armies were already in occupation of most of Eastern Europe. Sadly, the pass had already been sold by Roosevelt at Teheran, where he first advertised to Stalin his differences with his British ally Churchill and his relative indifference to Eastern Europe. It’s not just hindsight on my part that recalls an image of Churchill in the Crimea generally listless and dispirited. We heard him at the end of the conference say “That’s done with and out of the way” and refer to the final communiqué as “that bloody thing” - he had particularly objected to the overuse of the word “joint”, as in, say, “joint agreement” - it reminded him, he said, “of the Sunday family roast of mutton”.

Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt’s closest adviser, on the other hand, hailed Yalta as “the dawn of a new age”. Who was right? Of course, Churchill. With his political prescience and historical perspective he saw further ahead than anyone. But it’s not just his vision we have to respect and admire. His courage and energy in making those arduous, dangerous wartime pilgrimages to meet the other Big Two were almost superhuman. Just think, he had pneumonia
twice in one year, in February ’43 and again in December, a couple of weeks after Teheran, plus a heart attack and more illness to come. At the time we didn’t realise, because we didn’t know, the prodigious physical, let alone mental, strain he must have been under.

An interpreter, even though he or she has to concentrate like mad, does have the chance, during his opposite number’s translation, to observe from the side-lines the inter-play between the principals, their reactions to each other. What one remembers so well is the doggedness, the toughness, not without that old world courtesy and magnanimity, with which Churchill fought not just for Britain, but for Poland and France and for smaller nations too.

Stalin and Molotov, for instance, were pouring vitriol on France: the French are rotten to the core and should be punished after the war for their treachery, letting the Nazis take their country over. Roosevelt, who had started it all in his private talks with Stalin, goes along with him. Churchill sticks up for his much loved France, of course not just out of love - Britain would need her as a strong ally. But Churchill also stuck up for fair play for the German people, as distinct from the Nazis.

There were lots of extravagant toasts and pretty nauseous mutual flattery at the dinners and banquets they held for each other. But Stalin never trusted either Churchill or Roosevelt. Churchill, I think genuinely at first, held out the hand of friendship. Speaking of the Russian leaders he once famously said to Birse and me “I think Stalin is the most human of them all”. President Roosevelt misguided, and disastrously, tried to ingratiate himself with Stalin by running Churchill down, behind his back. It didn’t help. Talking to Milovan Djilas, right-hand man of Tito, the Yugoslav communist leader, Stalin’s verdict was: “Do you think we trust them? Churchill will pick your pocket of the smallest coin - Roosevelt goes only for the bigger ones”.

By the time they met again in July ’45 at the Potsdam conference, code-named TERMINAL, Truman had replaced Roosevelt who had died in April. We saw Churchill still battling on behalf of post-war Poland and France and the others at that last of the Big Three meetings - Big Two and a
Half as someone¹ put it at the time: Churchill was not on form and, of course, half way through the conference we had a general election. Churchill "the greatest modern British statesman" - I’m quoting the New American Desk Encyclopedia - Churchill was dismissed by his beloved country. Sir Winston, of course, served his country as Prime Minister a second time towards the end of his life. I regret I never saw him face to face again after Potsdam. My last tenuous connection, almost exactly 20 years after Yalta, was on the occasion of his state funeral, when it was my privilege to organize its coverage for the Czech and Slovak broadcasts of the BBC World Service.

For the very reason that their relationship during the war, as everyone knew, had not been the easiest, the most fitting epitaph, it seemed to me, came from General de Gaulle, the chief foreign mourner: in his letter to the Queen President de Gaulle paid this tribute, the more striking for its brevity: "In this great drama, he was the greatest" - "Dans ce grand drame, il fut le plus grand".

¹ Sir Alexander Cadogan
Note for Mark Burman, producer BBC Radio 4 programme At the Shoulder of History (autumn 1976)

It is only fair to you and to your programmes to point out that one of those interviewed by John Miller, namely Valentin Berezhkov, made claims which were manifestly and completely untrue.

Berezhkov was Molotov’s interpreter in German and possibly interpreted for Stalin when Ribbentrop visited Moscow. Berezhkov was also at the Teheran Conference in November/December 1943. He did not, however, interpret on any important occasion nor at any length for Stalin. It should be said that his English was very poor, not a patch on that of Stalin’s actual interpreter in English, Vladimir Pavlov. In a Russian TV programme, of which I have a copy, Berezhkov himself indicates that after the Teheran Conference he was not allowed anywhere near Stalin.

Stalin’s interpreter in English, both during and after the War, was always Vladimir Pavlov. At the Yalta Conference, where I was present, Ivan Maisky (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and one-time Soviet ambassador to the UK) also interpreted for Stalin. Litvinov (former Foreign Minister) had also interpreted for Stalin in English earlier. But in general from 1943 onwards Pavlov was the only English-language interpreter for Stalin. These facts are known to me at first hand because I was one of Churchill’s interpreters at the Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam Conferences and in Moscow. More importantly, Churchill’s chief interpreter throughout the wartime period was Arthur Birse, a close colleague, friend and mentor. Birse and I came to know Pavlov well on a business footing.

In his interview Berezhkov agreed when Miller put it to him that he was with Stalin when he met Churchill for the first time and when Stalin took Churchill to his private apartment. There is no truth whatsoever in that. At their first meeting the British interpreter was Dunlop, the Embassy interpreter: Stalin’s was Pavlov. Dunlop fell ill and soon died and was replaced by Birse. The only two interpreters when Stalin took Churchill to his private apartment were Arthur Birse and Vladimir Pavlov. Not only did Birse himself tell me that fact, but it is recorded in Birse’s memoirs, in the Public Records Office, in Churchill’s own account of the occasion (Churchill The Second World War vol.4 pp.446-7) and in Martin Gilbert’s authoritative biography. I can give you chapter and verse, if you wish.

Berezhkov also claimed he was Stalin’s interpreter when he first met Roosevelt in Teheran: again, that is completely untrue. Both Roosevelt himself and his interpreter, Chip Bohlen, later US ambassador in Moscow, have stated it was Pavlov (see Elliott Roosevelt As He Saw It p.175 & Washington, US Government Printing Office: Foreign Relations of the United States-Diplomatic Papers-Teheran p.482), besides which, only a couple of days after that encounter, Chip Bohlen himself told us in Teheran that only Pavlov and he were present with Stalin and Roosevelt.

Berezhkov further claimed in his interview that he had been present at the “percentages” meeting between Stalin and Churchill in October 1944: there is not a shred of
truth in that claim. Birse specifically told me that Stalin's only interpreter on that occasion was Pavlov, (while standing in for Birse during those sessions in October 1944 I was also looking after Churchill and Eden at the Soviet hospitality town house where Churchill stayed when not at Molotov's dacha outside Moscow). A couple of years ago when I was involved with the BBC World Service series The World That Came Out Of The Cold, we checked the documentation in the Public Records Office at Kew and these confirmed that Berezhkov was NOT present at that meeting: the official Records show that Pavlov was Stalin's interpreter (see Public Records Office - Operational Papers of the Prime Minister's Office - PREM 3/434/2 - also Martin Gilbert's Road to Victory p.989/Public Records papers F.O.800/302 folios 227-35).

That was why, in the Chatham House/World Service book of the series, we were careful to describe Berezhkov not as Stalin's interpreter, but Molotov's. The final proof, if it were needed, of the inaccuracy, to say the least, of Berezhkov's long-standing portrayal of himself as Stalin's interpreter in English was a long conversation I had with Vladimir Pavlov in 1990 when I was in Moscow to interview him for Finnish Radio. Pavlov had for years been seriously ill. That is the reason why for many years now Berezhkov has been able to peddle his story in default of Pavlov's account. When last challenged about the "inaccuracies" in his story by a producer of a BBC TV series on Churchill (presented by Martin Gilbert) for which Berezhkov was interviewed, Berezhkov's response was that on those occasions where he claimed to be present there had been several (more than one) interpreters, implying that he was hovering there somewhere. If that had been so I would have seen him and, where I was not present, Birse, and probably Chip Bohlen would have told me.

Incidentally, I cannot recall or believe there was any occasion when Churchill shook hands with Berezhkov, nor did I ever see Stalin shake hands with his own interpreters (as Berezhkov claims) though, in a show of old-fashioned courtesy, he did with all foreigners and their interpreters. All that Berezhkov said in his interview about Stalin's meetings with foreigners can be read and taken from the many books in English on the subject, which Berezhkov has obviously done.

Most of the above facts can be checked with the CARIS section of News Information Department of the World Service at Bush House. The attached note may also help to clarify the position. I feel strongly that for the sake of future programme accuracy and if only in fairness to Pavlov, and to Berezhkov himself, the historical record should be put straight and the truth must be told. I should be interested and grateful to have your thoughts, as I am pursuing the story further.

Churchill's interpreters with Stalin at wartime conferences and subsequently

During the second half of the War Arthur Birse and I, as army officers, were serving in our Military Mission in Moscow. Birse, more than twice my age, born and educated in Russia, was Churchill's interpreter at virtually all his meetings with Stalin throughout the war. As a matter of duty and necessity Birse always told me and, when necessary, others who Stalin's
interpreter was at the meetings, discussing any interpreting problems which may have arisen. On virtually every occasion it was Pavlov, shaky English at first, but rapidly improving: which was why Churchill personally, on the King's behalf, bestowed the CBE upon him.

Whilst serving as an artillery officer, I was posted as ADC to the Head of the Mission, General Martel. Among many other duties I acted as interpreter. During the wartime Big Three Conferences I was appointed sole interpreter to our Chiefs of Staff, General Alan Brooke (later Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke), Admiral Andrew Cunningham and Air Chief Marshal Charles Portal. Another Military Mission interpreter assisted the interpreting for the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden at Yalta and Potsdam. At Teheran Birse and I were the only British interpreters. There I was not only Chiefs of Staff interpreter but stood in for Birse with Churchill and Eden, as I did again at Yalta and Potsdam where I was sole interpreter for Admiral Louis Mountbatten at his private meeting with Stalin.

After demobilisation at the end of the war I entered the Foreign Office and served initially in our Moscow Embassy in Chancery and as Chief Interpreter. I interpreted at Stalin's Kremlin meetings for our ambassador and for Foreign Secretary Bevin's Personal Private Secretary Mr. (later Sir) Frank Roberts and others, including Field Marshal Montgomery. So I had the opportunity to observe Stalin at close quarters over a longer period (almost seven years 1943 to 1949) than most people outside Stalin's inner circle.

Just to complete the picture I was subsequently in the World Service, Bush House, in various posts including Head of the Czechoslovak Service, Assistant Editor Current Affairs, Deputy Head of the Central European Service (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia (then) and Finland).