

4 GRAND STRATEGISTS AND THE AIR AND SEA WAR

When Franklin Roosevelt died in April 1945, his closest war-time collaborator during the previous three years was devastated. He wrote in his private diary, beginning with a sentiment of general grief that could have been written in a mainstream newspaper. “This world tragedy deprives the Nation of its leader at a time when the war to preserve civilization is approaching its end with accelerated speed, and when a vital need for competent leadership in the making and preservation of world peace is at least seriously prejudiced by the passing of President Roosevelt who was a world figure of heroic proportions.”¹

Then Admiral William Leahy, Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, went in an entirely different direction, one that makes him stand out within the functioning of the American government, and the creation of American grand strategy, during the war. “His death is also a personal bereavement to me in the loss of a devoted friend whom I have known and admired for thirty-six years, since we first worked together in World War I.” Three days later, after Leahy had accompanied Roosevelt’s body to its interment in Hyde Park, New York, the President’s family estate, the admiral was once again overcome with grief. At the end of the burial he wrote about “a long day that was for me full of sad memories, and that also for me probably was my last visit to the home of my friend who will live in history as one of our greatest Presidents. He was a great gentleman and a true friend.”²

Neither George Marshall, Henry Arnold, Ernest King, Henry Stimson, Cordell Hull nor any other figure that influenced American

grand strategy, with the possible exception of Harry Hopkins, could have honestly called Franklin Roosevelt a “true friend.” Even Hopkins, who lived in the White House to be close to Roosevelt for two years, was more of a paladin than companion. This position gave Leahy enormous power, power he exercised but was careful never to call his own. However, his role in the American war effort has, mistakenly, been downplayed when compared with the others, especially Marshall.³ After his appointment as Roosevelt’s military Chief of Staff in July 1942, Leahy met with the President practically every day that he was in Washington, DC, dined regularly with the Roosevelt family, and spent holidays with the President either in Hyde Park or fishing. During much of 1944, when Roosevelt was either too tired to work (he spent much of the spring in Bernard Baruch’s estate in South Carolina) or busy with the presidential campaign, Leahy ran a great deal of the American war effort. Much of what is known as the Churchill–Roosevelt correspondence in 1944 was actually the Churchill–Leahy correspondence.

What makes Leahy so important is that, thanks to his close knowledge of Roosevelt’s intentions, it is through him that we can best see how the President’s own views on the air and sea war evolved during the war. Unlike the other military chiefs of staff, Marshall, King and Arnold, who operated more as advocates for a certain policy, Leahy acted as Roosevelt’s interpreter of policy. It was he who discussed the options privately with the President in the White House and, more often than not, he who transmitted the President’s decisions to the rest of government. They were also two of only a handful of men who made the real decisions about the grand strategic questions for British and American air and sea weaponry. From 1941 onwards, these decisions were really in the hands of eleven men. British strategic planning was dominated by only one civilian, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and the different service chiefs, Field Marshal Alan Francis Brooke (later Lord Alanbrooke), Air Marshal Charles Portal (affectionately called Peter and later ennobled as the 1st Viscount Portal of Hungerford), Admiral Sir A. Dudley Pound and his successor as First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham (known by his nickname ABC and later ennobled as 1st Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope).⁴ They all attempted to steer the Prime Minister in different directions and worked out the details with their American counterparts and British subordinates, which determined where the different air, sea and land

efforts would be made. It is interesting to see how little influence other members of the Cabinet had over grand strategy. The Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, was at the heart of World War II diplomacy but was not a major player in determining strategic war campaigns. Labour members of the Cabinet, in particular the Deputy Prime Minister Clement Attlee and the Minister of Labour Ernest Bevin, had huge impact on British domestic policy, in many ways far greater than Churchill's, but were not part of the strategic discussion in any meaningful way.

Unlike among the British, there was one civilian in the United States who did play a major role in strategic policy, at least in 1941 and 1942, and that was Harry Hopkins. As long as he was fully trusted by Franklin Roosevelt, and healthy enough to discharge his duties, Hopkins acted as the eyes, ears and voice of the President. As in Britain, members of the Cabinet who one would think would matter in strategic decisions about war fighting were often kept at arm's length by Roosevelt and his service chiefs. Neither the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, nor the Secretaries of War and the Navy, Henry Stimson and Frank Knox, were particularly influential in making the major strategic choices. Only James Forrestal, who succeeded Knox in May 1944, had real influence over Roosevelt and the service chiefs, but by the time he took his position most of the major decisions had already been made.

The eleven men who did make the real choices operated under enormous strain during the war. Two of them died (Roosevelt and Pound), two of them almost died (Hopkins and Arnold), one of them had a clear depressive breakdown (Churchill), while Ernest King and Alanbrooke seemed on edge for much of the time. Only Leahy, Marshall, Portal and Cunningham served from 1942 to 1945 in moderately good health, though even they had their moments. In a later chapter the particular debates that they had will be discussed in more detail. However, understanding their general outlook on the air and sea war will help provide a foundation for understanding how the war was fought to eventual victory.

Roosevelt and Churchill

Winston S. Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt are two of the most discussed personalities in history.⁵ Their roles as war leaders have been

the subject of numerous books and articles, to say nothing of plays, television shows and films. Their relationship has been analyzed from almost every perspective and almost all of their correspondence has been published, making it almost impossible to say anything new about them. Their personal relationship was the most important one of the war. Both during and for a while after the conflict, it was common to stress their common purpose and close personal connection. More recently, a group of historians has put stress on the tensions in their relationship – in particular over the future of the British Empire.⁶

There are strong elements of truth in both portrayals. Within the history of wartime alliances, the Roosevelt–Churchill relationship was remarkably close, and they communicated on an intimate level that has rarely happened between the leaders of such large global powers. This always should be remembered, particularly now when the stress is often on the more tempestuous side of their relationship. On the other hand, they viewed the world very differently, and this did lead to real, and in some ways growing, problems. Churchill was in many ways fighting for the past. He definitely wanted to forestall change, to maintain for as long as possible the British Empire as one of the world's few "superpowers." His policies in the war, though they might seem erratic or at least unpredictable, had this as their guiding principle. He famously said in 1942 that he had not become the king's First Minister in order "to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."⁷ Roosevelt, on the other hand, was fighting for change, even if he wasn't entirely sure what that future change would be. He certainly kept his more specific intentions very much to himself. As Leahy said of American war aims (and he would have known better than anyone other than Roosevelt), no other American really had a clue. "There were times when I felt that if I could find anybody except Roosevelt who knew what America wanted, it would be an astonishing discovery."⁸ He wanted passionately to destroy Fascist Europe and militarist Japan and replace them with what he considered more progressive systems, certainly something closer to New Deal America. He put a great emphasis on crushing "imperialism," by which he meant systems that were not only non-democratic but also not evolving in a democratic way (thus in his mind excepting the USSR, which he believed was dictatorial but heading in the right direction). When it came to the non-European world, Roosevelt believed that the United States and the United Kingdom should play a guiding but not controlling role,

therefore putting him at odds with the British Empire as constructed. The President did not go to war to save the British Empire – in many ways he went to war to ease the process of its dissolution.

If there was one issue that early in the war best showed the difference between the two men it was their assumptions about India.⁹ For Roosevelt, India was on an unstoppable course to becoming an independent nation, and so he believed that Indian nationalism should be encouraged as part of the war effort. In early 1942 he seemed willing to act as a negotiator between the British government and Indian nationalists, as part of a plan that would end British rule in the country.¹⁰ In March, he even sent Churchill a telegram in which he suggested, either helpfully or maliciously, that India should be seen as in a historical equivalent to the American colonies between 1776 and 1783.¹¹ Churchill, on the other hand, worked feverishly to postpone any change in the relationship between India and the British Empire. Although he almost certainly realized that the future would lead to greater Indian autonomy, at the least, he wanted to keep that day at bay for as long as possible.

When it came to the air and sea war, they did share many basic similarities. Both were determined to have a strong numerical superiority in machines and both believed that winning the air and sea war was the crucial predeterminate to victory on land. That said, there were important differences between them on how to achieve this victory, differences that came from their ultimate purpose in fighting World War II. Churchill, in trying to maintain British greatness, was determined to keep the number of British casualties as low as possible and therefore had an aversion to large land battles.¹² He was far more willing to let air and sea power act before committing a large British Empire force to fight in northwest Europe. Roosevelt, on the other hand, wanted to show the United States' commitment to the future by having American soldiers fighting on the ground as soon as possible.

Roosevelt may have been the greatest politician elected President of the United States, and he brought his immense, if at times waning, skills in this area to the conduct of grand strategy. Though there has been a great deal of nonsense written about how Roosevelt supposedly knew about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor ahead of time, and was willing to leave American military personnel unprotected to solidify the case for war, it certainly is true that he was determined to get the United States involved in World War II before the Japanese

attack. From the moment of his re-election in November 1940, he pursued a policy that can best be described as acting as a non-combatant ally of the United Kingdom. Three days after being re-elected, he called for a plan whereby half of all US war production would be sent to the United Kingdom.¹³ In this he worked extremely hard, and sometimes in direct opposition to the desires of his service chiefs, to send as much aid as possible to Great Britain.

When it came to his grand strategic assumptions, pinning Roosevelt down to one policy, or even set of policies, is not the easiest thing to do. In 1942 he was a forceful and impetuous war leader, and this meant that he determined US policy in many areas. He definitely favored the construction of air and sea weapons over ground equipment when it came to military construction. Two weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor, he instructed Marshall to draft a strategy memo on the course of the war which gave first mention to the creation of an air war against Germany and Japan.¹⁴ Later in 1942 he overruled his service chiefs in imposing targets for aircraft construction that made the building of planes easily the highest priority in American construction – and led to steep declines in AFV building. He certainly was a strong supporter of a strategic air war against Germany, though he was never particularly specific about how that war should be fought.¹⁵ When it came to shipbuilding, he was quite farsighted in seeing the need for a host of smaller vessels, including both landing craft and anti-submarine vessels, the construction of which he started pushing for early in 1942.¹⁶

On the other hand, he was determined from the moment the USA entered the war to get American ground forces into combat quickly, even if it subverted any proper planning for an air and sea war. Thus Roosevelt became the driving force, again over the skepticism of his service chiefs, pushing for an American invasion of North Africa in 1942. This was a crucial decision as it not only closed down other arcs of strategic advance, it meant that the Mediterranean as a theater now became one that rivalled northwest Europe in Anglo-American minds for the next two years. In the Pacific, he also sometimes acted impulsively. At one time he seemed to order so many men and machines to go to protect Australia that it would have made any significant 1942 build-up in Europe impossible.¹⁷

Internationally, he was also determined to obtain as much aid as possible for the United Kingdom, the USSR and China, even if it

hampered the speed of America's own air and sea build-up. Roosevelt seemed determined that the wartime alliance, of which he sat at the apex, would endure afterwards to control global security. Again, being Franklin Roosevelt, he was not particularly concrete in his plans as to how this would be achieved, but his intentions were clear. Thus, to him, it was extremely important to maintain close relations with the three other warlords, Churchill, Josef Stalin and Chiang Kai-Shek. This seems to have shaped many of his assumptions about how the air and sea war should be fought. In the Pacific, he was definitely part of the group that believed America should aim to open up a road to China as soon as possible and to use China as the major base from which the war against Japan would be prosecuted to its victorious conclusion.

When it came to supporting the USSR, Roosevelt not only made the delivery of aid one of his highest priorities, he was willing to risk ruptures with the British government when he believed the latter was letting Stalin down.¹⁸ In 1942, when it was clear that the British would resist any quick invasion of France, Roosevelt ordered Marshall and King to study whether the USA could invade without British support.¹⁹ He even proposed a suicidal invasion of France if it looked like the USSR might collapse.²⁰ Ever the practical politician, Roosevelt did seem to believe that the USA and the USSR were not as far apart ideologically as many of the extremists in both countries suggested, and that after the war the two countries could cooperate. As he told Secretary of the Navy Knox, Soviet communists were considerably more reasonable than American communists.

The Soviet people in Moscow are said to have little liking for the American Communists and their methods – especially because it seems increasingly true that the Communism of twenty years ago has ceased to exist in Russia. At the present time their system is much more like a form of the older Socialism conducted, however, through a complete dictatorship combined with an overwhelming loyalty to the cause of throwing every German out of Russia.²¹

On the surface, Roosevelt seemed a strong supporter of the Germany-First policy. He clearly believed that the Nazi state was the more formidable enemy of the United States and reassured the British from early on that the United States would direct a large majority of its efforts towards Europe. On the other hand, he did not envisage a

mere holding operation in the Pacific (even when he used that exact phrase). On May 6, 1942 he specifically spelled out his intentions for the Pacific to the Joint Chiefs, Hopkins and Stimson, in a farsighted memorandum.

The whole of the Pacific area calls, at the present time, fundamentally for a holding operation. . .

Defense of all essential points in the Pacific Theater is the primary objective. This defense calls for offense in two areas – attacks upon the Japanese lines of communication and the bombing of Japan proper from the east and west.

The objective of this defense strengthened by offensive actions is to destroy or damage as many Japanese naval vessels, merchant ships and airplanes as possible. In this regard, it is essential to maintain destruction or damage of a much larger number of Japanese ships and planes each month than they can replace. In other words, combat against Japanese ships and planes must be sought out in order to hasten the attrition of Japanese arms.²²

The “holding” operation that FDR was calling for was not only well thought out and expressed, it would also require a very large commitment of American force. The United States would be expected to send enough ships and aircraft to the Pacific to sink Japanese forces at a high rate, and at the same time begin approaching the Japanese mainland through both China and the Pacific islands, so that it could be strategically bombed. It was basically everything but the invasion of the Japanese homeland itself.

If the Roosevelt of 1942 was energetic and decisive, the Roosevelt of later in the war seems ever more circumspect and tired. Also, he played only a minor role in operational strategy, and as the war became more one of fighting than of planning, his interjections became less crucial.²³ The arrival of Leahy meant that the President corresponded less frequently with his chiefs and wrote fewer strategic memos of this type. Instead his wishes were communicated through his new Chief of Staff and, crucially, the other chiefs were often instructed to go through Leahy before approaching the President. This was something that the British understood as well, as Churchill would approach Leahy with tricky issues that he didn’t want brought directly to Roosevelt.²⁴ Moreover, Roosevelt seemed to become physically less powerful as the war developed. His illnesses lingered and his holidays

lengthened. Beginning in the second half of 1943, in particular after the conferences in Cairo and Teheran, he seemed to tire far more easily.²⁵ He could still raise himself to intervene strongly if concerned, such as in his desires to keep relations amicable with Stalin and Chiang-Kai Shek, but when it came to the specifics of the war, as long as success was being achieved he did not intervene nearly as often or as forcefully. In 1944 this tendency not to intervene only grew as the impending presidential election took up more of his decreasing strength.

Churchill's influence over British strategic policy remained far more hands-on during the entire course of the conflict. Of course he had a far more difficult job than Roosevelt. In the first place, he was definitely not one of the greatest domestic politicians of his era. Had World War II not come about, he would be known as one of the great "almost" figures of British political history, with a long career involving many different major Cabinet positions, but also a record of distrust that kept him from ever reaching the top. When the war broke out, however, both his experience and energy were desperately needed, so much so that his shortcomings were overlooked.

As a war leader, Churchill had a number of evident talents. In a political culture that often prized the ironic or understated, he had an ability to capture a moment or a mood with directness. His speech about the Battle of Britain, given before the battle really started and based on faulty intelligence, helped define British resistance both at the time and in the decades after the war. The line that "never has so much been owed by so many to so few" is one of the few unforgettable phrases of the entire conflict.

Churchill also knew his limitations as a war leader, particularly domestically, and worked amicably within a coalition government in this area – even if it ended up being disastrous for himself politically. He gave different Labour ministers, particularly Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin, huge scope to influence British life to aid the war effort. The latter, in production terms, wielded enormous power through his control of the workforce. Through this, Britain was able to produce a large amount of war materials and fight the air and sea war in an advanced manner.

What Churchill has been most criticized for as a war leader, however, most bitterly by those who had to work with him during the war, was his supposed erratic and impulsive nature which led him to latch on to fanciful and dangerous plans. In Alanbrooke's diary this is a

constant complaint. When Admiral Cunningham took over as the First Sea Lord in October 1943, he was advised by Alanbrooke's predecessor, Field Marshal Sir John Dill, not to give in to Churchill's notions. "In council with – shall I call him the Minister of Defence? – you will have great difficulty in controlling your hackles! Perhaps it will be best if you don't attempt to control them entirely."²⁶ After taking office, Cunningham soon started complaining about what he believed was Churchill's childishness and stupidity.²⁷

It is impossible, even in private, to imagine the American Chiefs of Staff speaking about Roosevelt in this fashion, and that partly points out one of the great difficulties for Churchill as a war leader. He lacked a Hopkins or a Leahy, someone whom he trusted to act as his protector and buffer. He did have Hastings "Pug" Ismay, who had been secretary of the Committee for Imperial Defence just before the war, and became Churchill's chief secretarial officer during it.²⁸ But Ismay was an unassertive and plodding man who had few opinions or, if he did, was rarely able to articulate them. Churchill's political colleagues, on the other hand, were also rivals, most of them aiming to succeed to the top job themselves. He did have people he trusted, such as Brendan Bracken or Lord Cherwell, but they were not at the heart of the strategy-making apparatus.²⁹ As such, Churchill often felt besieged by those both within the British government and outside who tried to alter his plans.

And plan he did, though perhaps not as erratically as it seemed to some of his contemporaries. Churchill's strategic notions almost all involved campaigns that deliberately avoided large commitments of land forces. For this reason, under his leadership aircraft and naval construction always seemed to win the lion's share of British effort. When it came to large-scale operations, until almost the moment the troops went ashore on D-Day, Churchill tried to delay an invasion of France. It has been argued that his faith in the British army being able to beat the Germans on land had been severely undermined by 1942, and that he never fully recovered from this.³⁰ He also saw no geopolitical need for an invasion of France. Believing from the moment the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor that the UK would now be on the winning side, Churchill wanted the United Kingdom to emerge from the contest with as small losses as possible. As such he saw no reason to attack the Germans where they were strongest, but wanted to whittle them away at the edges, letting strategic air power damage their morale

and economic might while the USSR faced the majority of the German army.³¹ It is debatable whether this policy was deliberately aimed at weakening the USSR for the post-war world, though that has been the view of many.³²

In 1942 and 1943, Churchill led the charge to concentrate the ground fighting in North Africa and the Mediterranean. In this he showed admirable determination and, when he was supported by Alanbrooke and Portal, was able to triumph over the American plan, championed mostly by Marshall, to attack France much sooner.³³ In some ways, however, he was moving away from a more modern conception of warfare in doing so. In 1941 and early 1942, Churchill more commonly referred to the need to engage German air power as a major part of his strategy. When he first met with Stalin, in August 1942, he tried to justify his focus on the Mediterranean by telling the Soviet dictator that it would open up new areas from which to attack German air power, including the strategic bombing of German production.³⁴ By the second half of 1943, however, this argument had mostly disappeared and he talked almost entirely in a battle-centric manner about the need to divert German divisions from the Eastern Front and France.³⁵

When the Americans forced the British to plan the invasion of France for the spring of 1944 (codenamed Overlord), Churchill fought them so strenuously that he had what is best termed a depressive collapse in Cairo.³⁶ Even as late as April 1944, as the American and British armies were preparing for the Normandy assault, Churchill described his strategic concepts to the American General A. C. Wedemeyer, who was passing through London on his way to becoming Mountbatten's deputy in the South East Asian Command.

The P.M. [Churchill] did state that if he had been able to persuade the Chiefs of Staff, the Allies would have gone through Turkey and the Balkans from the south and into Norway on the north, thus surrounding the enemy and further dispersing his forces. He added, however, that the die is cast and that we must carry Overlord through vigorously to a successful conclusion. I told him that I liked very much to conjecture on what might have happened if we had taken the bulk of the half million men and the 8000 airplanes that we employed in Mediterranean operations and moved them to the British Isles for an invasion in April 1943. It told him that we would have been undertaking our operations when Germany was

so terribly committed and overextended against the Russians, and I sometimes felt that we would have by this time created a vast airdrome in France from which we could bomb, with fighter protection, Germany's most vital installations. He replied in a dramatic manner that he would personally assume the responsibility before God for the decision to do Torch and the operations which immediately followed. It was amusing, I can assure you, and at two-thirty in the morning I went back to the hotel, chaste and enlightened.³⁷

Churchill's desire to avoid a large direct land battle extended to the Pacific, particularly after the fall of Singapore to the Japanese. Before that time British strategists were intent on a major commitment to the war in the Pacific, particularly in terms of ships and aircraft. The surrender of Singapore, on the other hand, almost completely eliminated this desire and the British opted for a very defensive attitude based around protecting India. They, quite adeptly as it turned out, rebuffed American pressure to commit large forces to invade Burma and reopen an efficient land route to China. Becoming involved in a large land war that would have stretched into China was in no way something the British could have undertaken at the time without a huge diversion of effort. On the other hand, Churchill did continue to push some aggressive action, though by a more circuitous route. In August 1943 he latched upon the notion of a landing in northern Sumatra (DEI) which was relatively lightly defended. Conceptually, there was actually a great deal to be said for such a move: if successful, it would have stopped the flow of oil from the DEI. On the other hand, it was an operation that was probably beyond British capabilities in the Pacific at the time, specifically in regard to landing craft and naval air support. So Churchill's different planning was not nearly as erratic as it seemed to those around him. He was looking for campaigns that Britain could fight with air and sea weaponry primarily. If the ideas seemed disconnected, it was in their location and number, not their intention.

The Americans: Leahy, King, Marshall, Arnold and Hopkins

While discussing the different service chiefs from a national perspective provides a partially prejudicial narrative (in many cases American and

British service chiefs actually agreed along service lines against fellow countrymen in different branches of the armed forces), nationality also provides an important element of strategic and structural separation. Also, personal relationships played a material role in shaping decision-making. The Leahy-Roosevelt relationship went back to 1915, when Roosevelt, who was serving as Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration, was a mostly unknown Democratic politician with a valuable last name. Leahy, a young officer with a finely developed political nose, took over command of the Secretary of the Navy's personal dispatch boat, and through that, the two men became friends to the degree that Leahy actually visited with Roosevelt at both his Hyde Park and Campobello homes.³⁸ Unfortunately, there is a perplexing neglect shown by historians towards Leahy's powerful role in the making of World War II strategic policy.³⁹ Mark Stoler, who has written by far the best works on the American Joint Chiefs of Staffs during the war, is one of the few who comment intelligently on his power and influence.⁴⁰

Through this contact Roosevelt obviously derived a high opinion of Leahy's organizational skills and personal loyalty. In 1937 he named Leahy as his Chief of Naval Operations, which meant that the admiral was in charge during the build-up of American naval vessels that began at that time. When Leahy retired in 1939, Roosevelt rewarded him with the Distinguished Service Medal and made him governor of Puerto Rico. At the time the President told him: "Bill, if we have a war, you're going to be right back here helping me to run it."⁴¹ Instead of allowing Leahy to enjoy the pleasures of Puerto Rico for too long, after the fall of France in 1940 Roosevelt once again showed his great confidence in the man by making him the ambassador to Vichy France, the most important American diplomat in occupied Europe.⁴²

All of this was the table-setting to what came later. After the Pearl Harbor attacks, Roosevelt recalled Leahy as soon as it was diplomatically convenient, and made him his military Chief of Staff in Washington, a position that made him the second most important American in deciding the grand strategy of the war. Unlike Marshall, King or Arnold, Leahy quickly entered into Roosevelt's inner circle. He took up residence across the street from the White House in the Hays-Adam Hotel and was one of only three men to have an office in the new East Wing (the other two were Harry Hopkins and James

Byrnes).⁴³ The British delegation in Washington was quick to understand his powerful position in the White House. Brigadier Vivian Dykes, who was the British secretary to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, discussed Leahy's appointment with his US counterpart Walter Bedell-Smith and was told "that Admiral Leahy will almost certainly become a super-Chief of Staff for the Americans – a Pug Ismay, but senior instead of junior."⁴⁴ A few weeks after he took up his new post, the British embassy, which was always sensitive to power in Roosevelt's court, paid Leahy the ultimate compliment by treating him as the most important guest during the funeral service for the Duke of Kent, which attracted the cream of Washington society.⁴⁵ However, what mattered more to Leahy was how Roosevelt viewed him, and the President made it clear from the beginning that he wanted Leahy beside him whenever possible. In early September 1942 he went away with the President for a two-night stay at "Shangri-La," Roosevelt's favorite retreat in the Catochin Hills.⁴⁶

Moreover, as the war went on and Roosevelt became less energetic, Leahy became more and more a gatekeeper controlling access to the President. He was the only man in constant contact with all the different strategic elements of the American government, from the State Department to the Joint Chiefs to the President himself. The only way for the Joint Chiefs of Staff to get major decisions from Roosevelt, such as whether the United States should push for the invasion of southern France under the Anvil plan, was through Leahy using his influence with the President.⁴⁷ He also clearly played a role in deciding what information the rest of the Joint Chiefs of Staff would be told on issues of diplomacy. It was Leahy who often decided what elements of Churchill's correspondence with Roosevelt would be sent to the other chiefs.⁴⁸ This power was one that Marshall, at least, feared. He complained at different times that Leahy was not letting him know important decisions, such as the decision to break off diplomatic relations with Finland in 1943.⁴⁹

This continual access to the President stands in stark contrast to the other American military chiefs. It also means that his power has been severely underestimated. His relative silence during major arguments has been remarked upon as if to imply he didn't influence events.⁵⁰ This is a fundamental miscalculation. Leahy's power was such that he did not need to argue with the other chiefs; all he needed was the support of the President, which he had in spades. Even traveling to



18 Franklin D. Roosevelt's inner circle. This picture is indicative of the special place that Harry Hopkins and William Leahy had in the President's eyes. Here they are celebrating FDR's birthday with him in the air on January 31, 1945. The fourth man is the plane's pilot. Marshall, King and Arnold traveled in another plane.

something like the Casablanca Conference in January 1943 showed the difference. Leahy was always berthed in Roosevelt's own railway car or personal plane (See Figure 18.). The other chiefs were given a completely separate railway car or plane.⁵¹ Marshall and Roosevelt had a professional relationship, and it seems that they met together alone only a few times during the entire war. King, whom Roosevelt valued, was also kept at arm's length personally, and later in the war the President showed real irritation at what he thought was King's heavy-handedness in the Navy Department.⁵² Arnold, meanwhile, had even less access to Roosevelt and suffered a number of heart attacks during the war which kept him away from the President for long periods of time. The President seemed to value a number of things which explain why he kept Leahy close. The admiral was not a prima donna; he was, while intelligent, not a showy intellect; and, perhaps most importantly, he was extremely discreet. For instance, like Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, who filled a somewhat analogous role with Winston Churchill, Leahy kept a diary. However, it was a rigidly controlled piece of recollection in which the American was the model of discretion. While Alanbrooke was petulant, gossipy and opinionated on almost every page, Leahy only rarely ventured a personal view. When he did, however, it clearly mattered to him – and through that we can see how he guided Roosevelt in a certain direction.

Although Leahy became Chief of Staff in July 1942, it was not until September 9 that he gave in the diary a clear indication of the

direction in which he would like to push American grand strategy. It came after his description of a meeting between himself and a Chinese military delegation. "I have an idea that Great Britain will not give any useful assistance to a Burma expedition at the present time, and it is my opinion that from the long distance American viewpoint of essentials in our own war effort, the opening of the Burma Road and the support of China should have a very high priority."⁵³ It was one of a number of mentions in his diary where Leahy clearly expressed a desire for the United States to prioritize operations in the war against Japan.⁵⁴ While he recognized that Germany was a stronger economic enemy, he was never a "Germany-First" in strategy. He was worried that Japan, if allowed to prepare its defenses while American effort was directed at Europe, would be extremely difficult to fight and would take years longer to conquer. Furthermore, he was acutely aware of the future importance of China, and showed constant frustration with what he believed was British reluctance to send appropriate forces into the war against Japan.

The other member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to agree with Leahy on this priority was, not surprisingly, Ernest King. King's desire to concentrate more effort in the Pacific at the expense of the war against Germany was widely acknowledged both during the war and after. Alanbrooke thought he was a fanatic on the subject. He certainly was willing to dissemble wildly to obtain more resources for the Pacific, as he did at the time of the Casablanca Conference in January 1943. King's desire, however, was more basic than that of Leahy. The latter seemed motivated by a number of considerations: the future of China and the real threat that Japan posed if it was allowed to establish a firm defensive perimeter, as well as the desire to have the United States carve out a policy in the region that was distinct from the British Empire. For King, on the other hand, the desire to send more force to the Pacific was about the need for a singular success for the United States Navy. Deeply suspicious of the British and of the American army, if more respectful of the former and less so of the latter than people realize, King wanted an area of independent action where the United States Navy could shine. He even tried to make it impossible for the British to take part in the final assault against Japan, to keep them from gaining any credit for victory in the Pacific.⁵⁵ In the Atlantic he believed the American fleet would always be duelling with the Royal Navy for prominence, and would probably lose the public relations battle owing to British

craftiness. Any war in Europe would also certainly end with a large American army in Europe, and once again the navy would be overshadowed. In the Pacific, however, the American navy would be the vital service.

As King wrote in a series of pungent, handwritten notes after the war:

One should recall that the British have been managing world affairs for well over three hundred years, that is, since the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Meanwhile they had seen many changes during this period but they seemed to carry on just as they had been doing and they entered into World War II with the same idea in mind. However after Dec. 7 1941, a great change took place since it was the United States who had the forces, the material and especially the money. The U.S. also had the basic idea that the situation in the Pacific required some attention and effort and should carry on at the same time as assistance was being given to the British and the other Allies against the Nazis and Fascists in Europe where the British thought they had their own ideas “sewed up.”⁵⁶

A few lines later he added:

The British were able to convince some people in the U.S. – especially the Army that the British course of action was the best to follow. Since most U.S. people did not want to leave Japan a free hand to “round-up” the entire Pacific – that is where I came into the picture – when I was ordered to command the United States Fleet – and I naturally did everything I could to go after the Japanese. That is where I ran afoul of the British with their contrary basic idea and the U.S. Army whose leaders did not understand *sea power*. But I seemed to be able to carry on against the “enemy” in spite of my troubles getting attention focused on the Pacific. (Emphasis in original)⁵⁷

When the United States Navy had complete control of the waters around Japan, something that they had been inexorably establishing since the capture of the Marianas, King wanted to ensure that the British fleet was kept as far away as possible from the final victory to make sure that the USN’s superiority was recognized.⁵⁸

Whether King's bitterest enemy was the Japanese, the British or the American army would be difficult to say. Of course, it was this aggressive spirit that made King attractive to Roosevelt in the first place. A trained naval aviator, he never entered Roosevelt's inner circle in the 1930s.⁵⁹ The President seemed wary of his heavy drinking (King once developed a cocktail known as the King's Peg which was a lethal combination of brandy and champagne), but he did respect his undoubted drive and aggression. In the wake of the Pearl Harbor attacks, King was thought by both the President and the Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, to be the dynamic force the American fleet needed to get it back on its feet. To the President's later chagrin, he actually created the most powerful position in the history of the USN for King, making him both the commander in chief of the United States Fleet (all ships in the navy) and Chief of Naval Operations, and therefore also in control of all the onshore naval bureaucracy.⁶⁰

From this position King exercised enormous power over the fleet for the rest of the war. Compared with the other service chiefs, he kept his main theater commander, Admiral Chester Nimitz, on a very short leash. Where Marshall usually gave Eisenhower a free hand in deciding strategy in Europe and Arnold allowed Generals Eaker and Spaatz latitude to design their own strategic air campaigns, King was constantly meeting with Nimitz and pushing the Texan down certain strategic routes, even rebuking him strongly when he thought the commander of the Pacific Fleet had erred. On the other hand, King's immense influence also contributed to at least one major disaster. Perhaps his greatest shortcoming was his reluctance until the summer of 1942 to support the convoying of merchantmen along the American seaboard. He was, rightly in my opinion, strongly criticized for this, which was partly responsible for the enormous loss in merchant shipping that the Allies suffered in the first six months of the year – the highest merchant shipping losses for the entire war. One of the reasons for this blunder was clearly that King wanted to keep as many ships as possible in the Pacific. And it was in that region that he developed the most sophisticated air and sea strategy of World War II: the Central Pacific drive against the Marianas. At the time of American entry, and for almost all of 1942, the intended direction of the American drive through the Pacific was a long slog up through the Dutch East Indies, to the Philippines and then on to the Asian mainland and China. It was a perimeter strategy that would have involved high losses in equipment and personnel.

King, starting in December 1942 and before anyone else at the top of American decision-making, understood the importance of a Central Pacific drive. Unlike the American air force, which imagined basing heavy bombers in China to assault Japan, he realized that the Marianas offered even closer and easier to supply bases from which the newly designed super-bomber (known as the B-29) could bombard Japan. Moreover, taking the Marianas isolated Japan from the oil and other resources of its southern empire as fully as (and considerably less expensively than) physically invading those territories. It is here that the relationship between King and Leahy shows how important the latter would be in the making of American grand strategy. King set out trying to win his way through sheer mendacity – he decided to cook the books.⁶¹

If King was relatively successful in achieving his greatest aim in the air and sea war, Marshall and Arnold were considerably less so. Of the two, George Marshall remains the most difficult to judge. Opinions on the man during World War II were so wildly divergent that it is hard to believe at times that the different observers were talking about the same individual. Alanbrooke clearly thought Marshall was an empty, if finely tailored, suit. He constantly remarked on what he believed to be his basic stupidity and inability to grasp simple strategic concepts.⁶² King, in contrast, often thought Marshall was a devious plotter, protecting the interests of the army in various underhanded ways.⁶³ On the other hand, the soon-to-be Air Marshal Sir John Slessor, who visited Washington, DC on a crucial mission in 1941, believed Marshall was a great man and by “head and shoulders” the most impressive officer within the US army.⁶⁴ Within the army there was enormous respect and affection for Marshall, and Eisenhower, for one, constantly treated him with considerable deference. Certainly, from the point of view of history, Marshall is, more than any other member of the Joint or even Combined Chiefs of Staff, seen as the greatest figure of them all. Roosevelt, meanwhile, came to see him as invaluable in running the US army and kept him in Washington, DC when it was originally expected that he would be sent to Europe to serve as supreme commander during the invasion of France in 1944. At the same time, Roosevelt and Marshall also maintained a rather distant relationship. The President seemed far more interested in sea power and aircraft construction than in large land armies, and so rarely expressed strong opinions about Marshall’s area of expertise – except to always overrule

him and call for cuts in ground equipment building. When Marshall was appointed Chief of Staff of the army in 1939, he at first found his access to the President to be quite restricted.⁶⁵ Roosevelt personally never seemed particularly comfortable with the stiffer, more formal Marshall.⁶⁶ When the President tried to add an air of intimacy to their relationship by referring to Marshall as “George,” the general blanched.

If there is one major correction that needs to be made about Marshall, it is to de-emphasize his importance within the overall strategy of World War II. In terms of both the production that was under his direct control, and his own plans for the defeat of Germany and Japan, it could be argued he was actually the least important and effective of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In Europe he was mostly concerned with setting as early a date as possible for a land invasion of northwest Europe. In that policy he was thwarted for at least a year and a half. He contemplated plans for an invasion as early as the second half of 1942, and seemed really determined to press ahead with an invasion in 1943 at the latest.⁶⁷ To realize these plans, he wanted the United States to concentrate on the build-up of American forces in the United Kingdom under Operation Bolero. To make sure that Bolero was given the highest priority, he was instinctively skeptical of any large-scale commitment of American ground forces in other areas such as North Africa or the Mediterranean. In 1942 he was reluctant at first to support the invasion of North Africa, codenamed “Gymnast”, and disagreed with the President when Roosevelt first started supporting it.⁶⁸ In 1943 he was one of the most vocal opponents of any commitment of forces to invade Italy. He saw some advantage to an invasion of Sicily as there were already a large number of American forces in the theater, but he showed no desire to widen operations to include an invasion of the Italian mainland itself.⁶⁹ Instead he wanted the British and Americans to throw everything possible into an invasion of France in 1943. He lost every one of these strategic arguments.

When it came to the specifics of the air and sea wars, Marshall was also relatively detached. The US Army Air Force was allowed to develop American strategic air power doctrine on its own, with little input from the army’s Chief of Staff. Instead Marshall viewed air power mostly from a tactical point of view. When Ira Eaker presented the first complete plan for the strategic bombing of Germany in 1943, Marshall wondered whether it was wise to devote so much force to the effort and instead favored the diversion of aircraft to more tactical

roles.⁷⁰ His focus on the support of ground forces usually led him to argue for greater production of land vehicles. In 1942, when it was becoming clear that the United States would not be able to build everything that it had planned, he argued for the prioritizing of different armored vehicles.⁷¹ A few months later, he was the leader of the Joint Chiefs in their arguments with the President over the latter's clear preference for maximum aircraft construction.⁷²

When it came to the wider question of theater priorities, Marshall was always the most assertive of the Germany-First lobby. In 1942 he warned regularly against the deployment of too much US force to the Pacific. In May 1942, he told the President that operations in Europe were so important that he (Marshall) doubted whether the United States should even try to hold the Japanese in the Pacific. He summarized his overall strategic priorities as follows:

While I agree that we must *bold* in the Pacific, I do not concur that this is our "basic strategic plan." My view, and I understood it to be your decision prior to your visit to England, was that our major effort would be to concentrate immediately for offensive action against Germany from the British Islands. . . Hence, the urgency of "Bolero." Only by a complete and whole-hearted acceptance by all concerned, British and American, and by the exertion of every practicable effort on the part of all, can "Bolero" have any chance of success.⁷³

Marshall thus wanted strict limits on the numbers of army air and ground units sent to the Pacific. He resented sending reinforcements to the Pacific when the fighting on Guadalcanal descended into expensive attritional warfare. As for the overall strategic direction of the Pacific campaign, he was the most committed member of the Joint Chiefs in favor of a strategic thrust towards China.⁷⁴ Even in late 1944 he was pushing for a large commitment of ground forces to China as part of the overall defeat of Japan. In these areas he was usually outmaneuvered by Ernest King, who understood far earlier than Marshall the way that victory would be achieved in the Pacific.

In the end, Marshall was probably the least influential member of the Joint Chiefs when it came to the ultimate victory over Germany and Japan. He controlled the smallest equipment pool in terms of production cost and showed the least interest in the fundamentals of the production war. He lost most of the strategic arguments in

1942 and 1943, only seeing success in Europe in 1944, and never really contributing to the crucial campaigns that saw Japan defeated.

In contrast to this, the man who actually had control over a huge amount of American production was the member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who is often considered the least powerful, Henry “Hap” Arnold. A graduate of the West Point class of 1907, Arnold quickly gravitated towards military aviation. He was in the first class of trained army aviators, having been taught the craft by the Wright brothers themselves. During World War I, he first played a role supervising aircraft construction before shipping out to Europe just before the armistice.⁷⁵ In the interwar period his great energy and flair for showmanship (he undertook a number of long-distance flights that received public coverage) helped him rise to the top. When the Army Air Corps was created in July 1941, he was chosen to be its first commanding general. When the Joint Chiefs of Staff was assembled, he naturally sat in as the Chief of Staff of the air force. As such, he was in an extremely powerful position in which to shape American strategy in this area. After the war Leahy said that the Joint Chiefs “generally accepted his [Arnold’s] views on air strategy as correct.”⁷⁶

Arnold was known as an energetic and forceful officer who, when healthy, spent a great deal of time traveling – visiting both front-line units and production facilities.⁷⁷ He also took a very close interest in technical innovations in his aircraft.⁷⁸ He was instrumental in persuading the British to provide the United States with their early jet engine technology and personally pushed along the construction of the United States’ first generation of jet fighters.⁷⁹ He was also a relatively early and enthusiastic backer of fitting the airframe of the P-51 Mustang with the British-designed Merlin engine, which was responsible for creating the greatest fighter aircraft of the war. However, Arnold’s health during the war was not always good. He missed both the Trident Conference in 1943 and that at Yalta in 1945 because of heart conditions, the latter because of a serious heart attack that kept him out of service for months. Because of this, his colleagues and subordinates could play an important role in shaping Army Air Force doctrine. At different times Robert Lovett, the Assistant Secretary of War for Air, assumed a number of Arnold’s duties.⁸⁰ Interestingly for a civilian, Lovett built up personal relationships with RAF officers such as Air Marshal Harris. Maybe Arnold’s greatest talent was in choosing the right subordinates for major commands. The American air force fielded

one of the most successful slates of commanding officers during the war, including Carl Spaatz (one of Arnold's particular favorites), Robert Kenney, James Doolittle and Curtis LeMay. Even Ira Eaker, who has a more mixed reputation, was a man of real ability. In that sense, Arnold passed the most important test of any senior officer, which is appointing the right people to major commands.

Arnold also was willing to commission expert groups to study serious subjects and report back with recommendations. He was directly responsible for the creation of the Committee of Operational Analysts (COA), which developed the first sophisticated American strategic air force doctrine. While most officers in the USAAF, including Arnold, had an implicit belief that air power would be decisive in modern warfare, the specifics of this decisiveness were lacking.⁸¹ When the war started, it was quickly shown that achieving victory through the air was going to be far more difficult in reality than the rather grandiose air power theorists of the interwar period had assumed. Arnold personally seemed convinced that "precision" bombing as he conceived it would be more effective than "area" attacks. However, when it came to what specifically should be bombed, he was rather vague – except for the proviso that he believed that destruction of Germany's ability to manufacture aircraft should be a definite high priority.

Arnold was clearly a Germany-First advocate when it came to the deployment of American force.⁸² He tried to ensure that as many as possible of the bombers sent to Europe were deployed to the UK to attack Germany. He appointed the COA to give the USAAF some intellectual coherence in deciding what to target so as to maximize damage to the German economy.⁸³ The COA was the brains behind the American end of the Combined Bomber Offensive, and provided the United States with its first considered strategic air power theory. It was the COA, for instance, that first seriously discussed attacking Germany's ball-bearing production as a way of limiting its overall munitions production. Again, it is a sign of the flexibility of Arnold's leadership that he was willing to cede so much authority in this area.

When it came to the Pacific, Arnold believed that strategic air power could be decisive against Japan and he was an early advocate of using Chinese bases to bomb the Japanese mainland.⁸⁴ He was willing to divert a great deal of air force effort, including the first deployment of the wildly expensive B-29 bomber, to prove his point in Asia. One

problem with his analysis was his assumption about Japanese production – he did not understand how many aircraft they could construct when fully mobilized. As such, at first he seemed to believe that a smaller number of American aircraft could do the job. In the end he comes across as a sensible and rational member of the Joint Chiefs, who appointed good people to fulfil major tasks, stressed training and technological development, and made few bad choices. Within the context of World War II grand strategy making, that is a noted achievement.

Before leaving the Americans, there has to be discussion of the most unusual man who influenced the Anglo-American air and sea war, and that was Harry Hopkins. Hopkins' authority rested entirely on the close confidence that Roosevelt placed in him. The frail, often ill, chain-smoking Hopkins was the most important person in Roosevelt's political life. He had a feline understanding of the President's moods and, more often than not, he delivered the results that Roosevelt wanted. He was also entirely dependent upon Roosevelt's favor for his position in life. Only in 1943, when caught between the President and the demands of his new wife, did he not put Roosevelt first. His decision to move out of the White House ended up seriously denting his political power. Before that, however, he wielded enormous influence.

Leahy, who had very sensitive antennae when it came to Roosevelt's preferences, stated that in 1942 the President trusted Hopkins "implicitly."⁸⁵ This trust, which stretched back to the early days of the New Deal, had earned Hopkins the jealousy of many in American politics, as well as the reputation of a forbidding and powerful backroom operator. His most important biographer, Robert Sherwood, who worked closely with him during the war and became very fond of the Iowan, described him in his diary as "faintly ominous" when they first met.⁸⁶

Roosevelt obviously prized Hopkins. Unlike Hull and Stimson, who were given posts with ostensibly far greater authority, he was entirely Roosevelt's creature – and therefore was bestowed with more real power. It was Hopkins whom the President sent on truly important diplomatic missions to the United Kingdom and the USSR to negotiate with Churchill and Stalin. Hopkins also carved out an important position of influence within the military. His relations with Marshall were particularly close. It seems that Hopkins' influence with Roosevelt

played a key role in securing the army Chief of Staff position for Marshall.⁸⁷ The general repaid him by being extremely solicitous of the latter during the war. When Hopkins fell ill, Marshall made sure that he had the best healthcare the government could provide and made available to him the special facility set up in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.⁸⁸ Hopkins also had a close relationship with Arnold, with whom he collaborated on numerous occasions in the 1930s.

It was definitely in the early stages of the war, from December 1940 through the end of 1942, that Hopkins' influence was at its greatest. Almost immediately after Roosevelt's re-election in November 1940, the President decided to send him to the United Kingdom both to assure the British of American support and to ask the British what equipment they most needed to keep up their resistance to Nazi Germany. This trip was a great success. Though at first somewhat confused as to who Hopkins was, Churchill and other British policy makers such as Lord Beaverbrook quickly realized that they were dealing with a man who had great influence with Roosevelt and therefore treated him as a prized asset.⁸⁹ When Slessor arrived in Washington in 1941, he described Hopkins as a "fanatic" about aid to the UK.⁹⁰ When the British needed help getting equipment built or allocated, they often turned to Hopkins, who ended up as the *de facto* controller of lend-lease.⁹¹ When the situation in India threatened to expose Anglo-American differences on what the war was about, Churchill turned to him to try to persuade the President not to intervene on the subcontinent.⁹² Eventually the British became so grateful for Hopkins' support that they planned to name their next generation of light tanks after him.⁹³

He filled a similar role for the USSR. When Germany invaded in June 1941, Hopkins was quickly dispatched to the UK and then sent onwards to meet Stalin, arriving in Russia on July 27.⁹⁴ It was the beginning of a relationship in which Hopkins became one of the few Americans that the Soviet dictator apparently trusted. From that point onwards, if the Soviets felt an immediate need for important equipment they often went directly to Hopkins. In March 1942, for instance, Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet ambassador to the USA, made a special request to him for a large supply of cargo-carrying aircraft.⁹⁵ And Hopkins usually worked hard to get these needs met. In response to Litvinov's letter, he put pressure on Lovett to meet the Soviet request. By April this pressure had led the Army Air Force to allocate an

additional thirty cargo planes to the USSR, even though they were in short supply at this crucial time.⁹⁶

His perceived impartiality on the equipment issue, and his closeness to Roosevelt, were the reasons why Hopkins was made chairman of what could have been a powerful committee, the Munitions Assignment Board (MAB). The MAB was set up to make final determinations on where vital equipment would be sent, with the assumption that such decisions would be difficult but crucial. It was made up of both American and British officers, and began functioning regularly in 1942.⁹⁷ It dealt with some serious issues at first, such as the allocation of high-octane fuel, which was necessary to power aircraft.⁹⁸ It also dealt with a wide range of seemingly less important but actually vital supplies, such as radio receiver sets and copper wire.⁹⁹

In fact it was in the allocation of equipment that Hopkins made some interesting policy interjections. In the summer of 1941, he urged the British to use American-supplied B-24 Liberator bombers to bomb Germany instead of in a maritime role to protect trade.¹⁰⁰ While in no way trying to pass himself off as an expert in strategic bombing, he did generally push for the aerial bombardment of Germany over some other options.¹⁰¹ Like Roosevelt, Hopkins also was a believer in giving aircraft the number one construction priority for American production. When the issue erupted in the second half of 1942, he advised the President privately to ignore the JCS objections and simply order that aircraft construction should trump all other considerations.¹⁰² It was a sign of his status at the time that Roosevelt, on the same day that Hopkins wrote to him, did order his aircraft production targets to be met.¹⁰³

When examining the war, Hopkins was also important because of his understanding of domestic politics. His basic instinct was always Germany-First, though he was aware that many Americans felt an instinctive need to make a major effort against Japan.¹⁰⁴ Of all the Americans in the decision-making elite, he was clearly the most solicitous of Soviet needs and saw the war in Europe as pre-eminent because of the need to keep the USSR fighting. He certainly seemed less involved with the specifics of the war in the Pacific, though he was also sensitive to the political implications of that conflict. He wanted the British to at least seem to be doing more in the theater, to provide a counterbalance to those who were arguing that the USA was simply doing the UK's fighting in Europe, and receiving no support in return in Asia.¹⁰⁵

Gradually during the course of 1943, however, Hopkins' power seemed to wane owing to ill health and a decline of confidence from the President.¹⁰⁶ In his private papers, for instance, there are considerably fewer examples of the British and Russians making direct appeals to him (though certainly such appeals did still occur). The reason for the loss of Roosevelt's confidence is somewhat perplexing and doesn't show the President in the best light. One idea is that when Hopkins fell in love, got married and moved out of the White House, Roosevelt felt betrayed.¹⁰⁷ It was also true that Hopkins' illnesses kept him physically away from the President and out of regular contact for long periods, which also reduced his usefulness. Finally, the growth in professionalism of the JCS under Leahy's leadership meant that Hopkins' special position became less necessary to the functioning of the war effort. And that was the great weakness in Hopkins' status. Possessing no actual authority, the loss of his usefulness to the war effort and to Roosevelt, severely undermined his position. Yet, in the crucial years of 1941 and 1942, he played an extremely important role in shaping the air and sea war to come.

The British: Alanbrooke, Portal, Pound and Cunningham

In 1943 the American delegation to the Casablanca Conference marveled at what they saw as the great coordination amongst the British service chiefs. To them, Alanbrooke, Portal and Pound (see Figure 19) provided a mutually supporting field of fire for British policies, compared with Marshall and King who were interested in rather different objectives. This united front, however, hid the fact that the British Chiefs of Staff were in many ways more divided in their views of how World War II would be won.

In writing the history of the British chiefs of staffs during the war, Alanbrooke stands out, though not necessarily for good reasons. With Pound dying in 1943 and Portal refusing to cash in and write a biography after the war, only Alanbrooke's story was told in detail, in one of the most entertaining, if petulant, diaries of a major war leader that has ever come to light. Born to two hypochondriacal Anglo-Irish parents resident in France, there was something rather un-English about Alanbrooke's character.¹⁰⁸ During World War I he served in the artillery, where he excelled at organizational tasks. During the