

# ABSTRACT

RENSTROM, DANIELLE STOUT. Roosevelt's Olive Branch: The Diplomacy of Unconditional Surrender. (Under the direction of Dr. Alexander DeGrand.)

The purpose of the research has been to show the connection between President Franklin D. Roosevelt's announcement of the policy of Unconditional Surrender and domestic and inner-Allied tension and disunity. The research involves an analysis of the political environment leading up to the Casablanca Conference in January 1943. Examination of domestic tension, derived from American media, from political challenges and from various sacrifices and demands of the war, evinces Roosevelt's need for a point of unity and focus for the home-front. Examination of inner-Allied disunity, including varying approaches to military decisions between Great Britain and the United States, the Darlan situation in North Africa, political discrepancies regarding the legitimacy of the Free French and the command of French North Africa, and the growing tension between Stalin and the Western leaders regarding the opening of a European second-front, contributed to the environment which prompted the President to announce the policy of Unconditional Surrender. The research also takes into account the "external" influences of the announcement, including militarism of the enemy nations, the "stab in the back" theory in Germany and the lack of legitimate or reliable peace feelers from within enemy nations.

**Roosevelt's Olive Branch:  
The Diplomacy of Unconditional Surrender**

by  
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Dedicated to my wonderful husband, Daniel, whose support and encouragement has made this work possible, and to our baby girl, Bennett Grace, whose anticipated arrival this fall made me stay on task in completing it.

In recognition of the grace of God through Christ as sufficient for all things.

## **Biography**

Danielle Renstrom, a native of Charlotte, North Carolina, graduated Summa Cum Laude with honors in independent studies in History from King College, in Bristol, Tennessee, in May, 2001. She began graduate studies in History at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina, in the fall of 2001. She married Daniel in June 2002, and had a baby girl, Bennett Grace, in September of this year. Danielle enjoys her involvement at Providence Baptist Church in Raleigh, where she formerly was employed and where Daniel serves as a musician in the college ministry. Danielle is now a full-time mom to little Bennett.

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**Roosevelt's Olive Branch:  
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**Part I: Background and Meaning  
of Unconditional Surrender**

*Another point. I think we have all had it in our hearts and our heads before, but I don't think that it has ever been put down on paper by the Prime Minister and myself, and that is the determination that peace can come to the world only by the total elimination of German and Japanese war power. Some of you Britishers know the old story—we had a General called U.S. Grant. His name was Ulysses Simpson Grant, but in my, and the Prime Minister's, early days he was called 'Unconditional Surrender' Grant. The elimination of German, Japanese and Italian war power means the unconditional surrender by German, Italy and Japan. That means a reasonable assurance of future world peace. It does not mean the destruction of the population of Germany, Italy, or Japan, but it does mean the destruction of the philosophies in those countries which are based on conquest and the subjugation of other people. While we have not had a meeting of all of the United Nations, I think that there is no question—in fact we both have great confidence that the same purposes and objectives are in the minds of all the other nations.<sup>1</sup>*

- President Roosevelt, Joint Press Conference  
Casablanca Conference, January 24, 1943

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<sup>1</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, ed. Samuel Rosenman, vol. 12 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 39; John Woolley and Gerhard Peters, "Joint Press Conference with Prime Minister Churchill at Casablanca, January 24, 1943" The American Presidency Project, University of California Santa Barbara, accessed 8/5/04; available <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/site/docs/pppus.php?admin=032&year=1944&id=59>

## **CHAPTER I:**

### **BACKGROUND OF UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER**

At the conclusion of the Casablanca Conference, which met from January 14-24, 1943, United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, with Prime Minister Winston Churchill, spent approximately 15 minutes speaking with media correspondents and photographers. At this Joint Press Conference, President Roosevelt read the official communiqué, which summarized the decisions made during the conference. After giving the statement, Roosevelt added rather informally that Prime Minister Churchill and he were determined to accept nothing less than unconditional surrender from Germany, Japan, and Italy. Prime Minister Churchill, according to some reports, responded with a, “Hear! Hear!” The official communiqué spoke nothing of unconditional surrender, but later Roosevelt suggested naming the Casablanca Conference the “Unconditional Surrender meeting.”<sup>2</sup>

This casual announcement gave the Allies a concise focus for their war efforts and set in place an unwavering policy in regard to the Axis powers. The Allies would accept only complete victory, demanding from their opponents total disarmament, extensive occupation, the punishment of war criminals, extirpation of organizations and institutions, and re-education of the people. Most significantly, the policy forbade premature discussions of war and peace aims. There would be no negotiations and no considerations of peace apart from total surrender. If the course of war were still in doubt, there would be no discussion of ending the conflict. Roosevelt determined that the Allies would not allow an Axis nation, even an anti-fascist opposition group within that country, to retain any military power, or “potential military power.” He also rejected any possibility for an enemy nation to maintain “a shred of control—open or secret”—in the government.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Lord Hankey, *Politics, Trials and Errors* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1950), 29-30; Anne Armstrong, *Unconditional Surrender: The Impact of the Casablanca Policy upon World War II* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1961), xi, 11, x.

<sup>3</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, *War Messages of Franklin D. Roosevelt: December 8, 1941 to April 13, 1945* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1945), 145; Armstrong, 19, 11, x; Winston Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), 688-690.



Churchill later explained that unconditional surrender did not mean that the Allies should, or would, treat the enemy nations brutally. The policy simply allowed the Allies to be restrained by nothing but their consciences:

Unconditional surrender means the victors have a free hand. It does not mean that they are entitled to behave in a barbarous manner, nor that they wish to blot out Germany from among the nations of Europe. If we are bound, we are bound by our own consciences to civilisation. We are not bound as a bargain struck. That is the meaning of “Unconditional Surrender.”<sup>4</sup>

### ***HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND MEANING***

According to Roosevelt, he borrowed the phrase “unconditional surrender” from Civil War General Ulysses S. Grant. FDR claimed that the expression came from a discussion between Grant and Confederate General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox. The President loved this analogy, retelling the story of unconditional surrender publicly several times. Civil War historians, however, differ with his version.

Grant won the “unconditional surrender” label not from Lee’s surrender at Appomattox, but from an earlier Confederate surrender. In 1862, Grant led a surprise attack against the Confederate garrison Fort Donelson in Tennessee. In response to the appeal for terms from the commander at Donelson, Grant demanded unconditional surrender. This decisive victory for the Union evoked great enthusiasm in the North. The Union’s new hero, U.S. (Ulysses Simpson) Grant, quickly became known as “Unconditional Surrender Grant.”<sup>5</sup>

According to some scholars, Roosevelt’s requirement of unconditional surrender did not actually follow an example, but rather set one. Historian Anne Armstrong argued that Grant’s demand for unconditional surrender during the Civil War did not serve as a historical precedent because it did not apply unconditionally to the entire Confederate state. She stated that this lack of historical precedent caused confusion and ambiguity in 1943: “Established international law governing armistices and occupation rights had grown up around the concept of negotiated peace. The legal implications, in fact the precise legal meaning of Unconditional Surrender, were not clear in 1943.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Churchill, *TheHinge of Fate*, 690; Hankey, 34.

<sup>5</sup> Armstrong, 13-14.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

Lord Maurice Hankey, Secretary of the British Cabinet during the Second World War, also noted that the demand for unconditional surrender historically had not been applied to an entire enemy state, but to single garrisons. In fact, victorious commanders frequently required unconditional surrender from individual forts. Such surrenders meant that the defeated soldiers would remain imprisoned under the rules of war until the end of the conflict. Hankey maintained that while the meaning of unconditional surrender of a single garrison was clear historically, the meaning of unconditional surrender of an entire enemy state had little precedent.<sup>7</sup>

A few exceptions existed, but they reflected poorly on unconditional surrender. Lord Hankey noted such an exception with the Third Punic War. In the second century B.C., Rome ordered Carthage to surrender unconditionally. Carthage refused to hand over her cities, territories and citizens without terms. The Romans, therefore, obliterated Carthage in 146 B.C. after a harsh and costly three year war.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, Hankey pointed out that Great Britain did not end any of her fifteen wars from the end of the sixteenth century until 1943 in unconditional surrender. In fact, no record existed of Great Britain demanding unconditional surrender in her history. Hankey illustrated the overwhelming effects even the mention of a nationwide unconditional surrender conveyed during the Boer War. According to Hankey, British Lord Milner suggested that the Boers be subjected to unconditional surrender, but Joseph Chamberlain responded that, “there seems to be a flavor of medieval cruelty about unconditional surrender from which we shrink.” Hankey recalled that even the rumor of a British demand for unconditional surrender evoked great bitterness among the Boers. In fact, South African General Botha could not even mention the words “unconditional surrender” at the Paris Peace Conference without “exasperation.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Hankey, 36.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER II: THE DOCTRINE'S ORIGIN AND MEANING

Besides the debate surrounding the historical background and historical meaning of unconditional surrender, another controversy existed regarding the spontaneity of the slogan's announcement. Diplomats and historians argued over whether or not this policy was a thought-out, planned announcement, or if it was spontaneous. Several accounts indicated that the proclamation at the conclusion of Casablanca's Joint Press Conference just "slipped out" of the President's mouth. Roosevelt maintained that his announcement of unconditional surrender was a spontaneous comment, and that the phrase just flashed through his mind while he was reading the communiqué.<sup>10</sup> A correspondent of *The Times* commented that FDR announced it as if, "it were a happy thought that had just entered his mind, that we might call this the 'Unconditional Surrender' Meeting."<sup>11</sup>

Robert Sherwood, Roosevelt's speechwriter and advisor, and director of the overseas branch of the Office of War Information during the war, did not believe this account to be true. He confirmed, however, that the President held to the idea that the announcement of unconditional surrender was spontaneous. In Sherwood's 1948 Pulitzer prize winning book, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, the author remembered the President saying that a controversy between two French Generals at the Casablanca Conference sparked his memory of unconditional surrender:

We had so much trouble getting those two French generals together that I thought to myself that this was as difficult as arranging the meeting of Grant and Lee—and then suddenly the press conference was on, and Winston and I had had no time to prepare for it, and the thought popped into my mind that they had called Grant 'Old Unconditional Surrender' and the next thing I knew, I had said it.<sup>12</sup>

United States military historian Hanson Baldwin also believed that Roosevelt's announcement entailed little or no planning: "Unconditional Surrender was laid down as a *diktat*—a one-man decision—without any study of its political or military implications and was announced publicly and unilaterally at a press conference to the surprise of the nation's

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<sup>10</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 687; Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 696; Armstrong, 12.

<sup>11</sup> Chester Wilmot, *The Struggle for Europe* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1952), 121.

<sup>12</sup> Sherwood, 696; Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 687, Wilmot, 122.

chief ally, Great Britain.”<sup>13</sup> Secretary of State Cordell Hull as well thought that unconditional surrender was not part of the State Department’s thinking, and that Roosevelt’s announcement had come as a shock to them, as well as to the Prime Minister.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, some leaders and scholars believed that, even if Roosevelt did not think of unconditional surrender first as it “flashed across his mind” at the Press Conference, the thinking and planning behind the announcement were quite minimal. According to Elliott Roosevelt, who accompanied his father on the trip to Casablanca, the President had thrown out the idea of unconditional surrender earlier at the conference. The younger Roosevelt recalled that his father and Churchill had discussed the slogan at lunch the day before the Joint Press Conference, and that the President had even made a toast to “unconditional surrender” at that time.<sup>15</sup>

Lord Hankey accepted Elliott Roosevelt’s account of the slogan’s origin. Hankey supported this view in noting that General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who attended the Casablanca Conference, did not even hear about the announcement until he returned to Algiers. Furthermore, Lord Hankey believed that the announcement was Roosevelt’s attempt to make an otherwise boring communiqué interesting. While much of the Conference had been of “major military importance,” many of its decisions, obviously, could not be announced to the public. “Unconditional Surrender, therefore, provided a useful make-weight to the colourless communiqué.”<sup>16</sup>

And still other historians, rightfully so, contended that much greater discussion on the subject took place leading up to the Conference. Documents from the State Department’s Subcommittee on Security Problems of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy, in May 1942, showed that this Subcommittee discussed unconditional surrender and then made the President aware of their discussions. They concluded, “Unconditional surrender will be exacted of the principal defeated states.” While believing that negotiating an armistice with Italy might be desirable, they maintained that, “nothing

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<sup>13</sup> John L. Chase, “Unconditional Surrender Reconsidered,” *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 70, no. 2 (June, 1955), 259.

<sup>14</sup> Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, vol. II (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1948), 1570 ; Armstrong, 13.

<sup>15</sup> Elliott Roosevelt, *As He Saw It* (New York: Duell, Sloan, Pearce, 1946), 117-119; Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 685; Hankey, 28.

<sup>16</sup> Hankey, 28-29.

short of unconditional surrender could be accepted” from Germany and Japan. The Subcommittee made no formal recommendation to the President of this decision, but the Chairman of the Subcommittee made Roosevelt aware of their thinking. The Subcommittee reaffirmed this support of unconditional surrender later that month, concluding that such a policy was preferable, but that “study should be given” to determine if an armistice or negotiated peace might be desirable under certain conditions. In December 1942, however, the Joint Chiefs of Staff suggested that, apart from “unconditional surrender,” no negotiations would be offered to any enemy nation.<sup>17</sup>

According to John Glennon of the U.S. State Department, the Joint Chiefs of Staffs again specifically discussed unconditional surrender at their meeting on January 7, 1943. Glennon maintained in his article, “This Time Germany Is a Defeated Nation: The Doctrine of Unconditional Surrender and Some Unsuccessful Attempts to Alter It, 1943-1944,” that Roosevelt announced to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on that day that he supported unconditional surrender.<sup>18</sup> Historian Michael Balfour asserted that the only reason the announcement came as a surprise to Secretary of State Hull was due to the fact that the President choose not to include him at the Casablanca conference, “presumably out of his well-known dislike for conventional methods of diplomacy.”<sup>19</sup>

Robert Sherwood as well believed that unconditional surrender was, “very deeply deliberated... a true statement of Roosevelt’s considered policy.” Sherwood recalled that Hopkins claimed Roosevelt had carried notes regarding unconditional surrender with him to the press conference. Indeed, photographs of the conference show the President holding several pages of notes. According to Hopkins, the pages read:

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<sup>17</sup> FRUS, *The Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca, 1943* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), 506; Harley Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-1941* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), 127; Elena Aggarossi, *A Nation Collapses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 20-23; Herbert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 109. Congress did not wish to take credit for the announcement. They debated it some and offered no criticism at the time, but that did not mean it was necessarily agreeable to them. They associated unconditional surrender rather with the President and with his party, and some even later attacked the legitimacy of the decree. See Ronald Young, *Congressional Politics in the Second World War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), 148.

<sup>18</sup> John Glennon, “This Time Germany Is a Defeated Nation: The Doctrine of Unconditional Surrender and Some Unsuccessful Attempts to Alter It, 1943-1944,” in Gerald N. Grob, ed., *Statesmen and Statecraft of the Modern West: Essays in Honor of Dwight E. Lee and H. Donaldson Jordan* (Barre, Massachusetts: Barre Publishers, 1967), 115; Aggarossi, 23; Feis, 108.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Balfour, “The Origin of the Formula: ‘Unconditional Surrender’ in World War II,” In *Armed Forces and Society*, vol. 5, Winter 1979, 283.

The President and the Prime Minister, after a complete survey of the world war situation, are more than ever determined that peace can come to the world only by a total elimination of German and Japanese war power. This involves the simple formula of placing the objective of this war in terms of an unconditional surrender by Germany, Italy and Japan. Unconditional surrender by them means a reasonable assurance of world peace, for generations. Unconditional surrender means not the destruction of the German populace, nor the Italian or Japanese populace, but does mean the destruction of a philosophy in Germany, Italy and Japan which is based on the conquest and subjugation of other peoples.<sup>20</sup>

If, in fact, prior to the Conference, Roosevelt had planned and discussed unconditional surrender, why, one might wonder, would the President give a different account of the announcement? Would not a spontaneous, impulsive declaration produce far more criticism than a well-thought out, discussed policy? From his years of interaction with the President, Sherwood gave readers an insight into Roosevelt's personality. According to the author, FDR actually enjoyed seeming at times rather "frivolous." Sherwood offered no explanation for this oddity, but maintained that historians should just ignore Roosevelt's statements regarding the "spontaneity" of the Doctrine's announcement:

Roosevelt for some reason, often liked to picture himself as a rather frivolous fellow who did not give sufficient attention to the consequences of chance remarks. In [Roosevelt's] explanation, indicating a spur-of-the-moment slip of the tongue, he certainly did considerably less than justice to himself. For this announcement of unconditional surrender was very deeply deliberated.<sup>21</sup>

Sherwood argued that, regardless of what one might think of unconditional surrender, "whether it was wise or foolish, whether it prolonged the war or shortened it—or even if it had no effect whatsoever on the duration," one should not believe that unconditional surrender was unplanned or ill-thought out. Sherwood furthermore noted that Roosevelt refused to "retract" or "soften" the Doctrine, and that the President reiterated the statement many times until his death. Despite FDR's "frivolous" appearance, unconditional surrender had been a topic of much discussion prior to the Joint Press Conference and a deeply deliberated policy in Roosevelt's mind.<sup>22</sup>

### ***CHURCHILL'S INVOLVEMENT***

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<sup>20</sup> Sherwood, 696-697.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

Statesmen and historians also debated how deeply Churchill was involved in the formulation of unconditional surrender. The Prime Minister maintained at one time that he knew nothing of the policy until Roosevelt publicized it at the Joint Press Conference. On July 21, 1949, Churchill made a poignant statement to the House of Commons, responding to concern Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin had voiced regarding the declaration of unconditional surrender several years earlier. According to Lord Hankey, Bevin lamented that, “neither the British Cabinet nor any other Cabinet had a chance to say a word before the adoption of the [unconditional surrender] formula.” Churchill responded that he knew nothing of the announcement before Roosevelt gave it:

The statement was made by President Roosevelt without consultation with me. I was there on the spot, and I had very rapidly to consider whether the state of our position in the world was such as would justify me in not giving support to it. I did give support to it, but that was not the idea which I had formed in my own mind. In the same way, when it came to the Cabinet at home, I have not the slightest doubt that if the British Cabinet had considered that phrase, it is likely that they would have advised against it, but working with a great alliance and with great, loyal and powerful friends from across the ocean, we had to accommodate ourselves.<sup>23</sup>

Sherwood also stated that Churchill wrote him with confirmation of hearing the slogan for the first time at the Conference,

I heard the words ‘Unconditional Surrender’ for the first time from the President’s lips at the Conference. It must be remembered that at that moment no one had a right to proclaim that Victory was assured. Therefore, Defiance was the note. I would not myself have used these words, but I immediately stood by the President and have frequently defended the decision.<sup>24</sup>

Churchill later recanted this position, confessing that his memory had not served him well on the subject.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 686-688; Hankey, 31.

<sup>24</sup> Sherwood, 696.

<sup>25</sup> Churchill wrote on the matter: “Memories of the war may be vivid and true, but should never be trusted without verification, especially where the sequence of events is concerned. I certainly made several erroneous statements about the ‘unconditional surrender’ incident, because I said what I thought and believed at the moment without looking up the records. Mine was not the only memory at fault, for Mr. Bevin in the House of Commons on July 21, 1949, gave a lurid account of the difficulties he had to encounter in rebuilding Germany after the war through the policy of ‘unconditional surrender,’ on which he said neither he nor the War Cabinet had ever been consulted at the time. I replied on the spur of the moment, with equal inaccuracy and good faith, that the first time I heard the words was from the lips of the President at the Casablanca press conference. It

Others believed that the Prime Minister, while not knowing of Roosevelt's inclination toward unconditional surrender prior to the Casablanca Conference, discussed the policy with the President before the Joint Press Conference. Elliott Roosevelt, as mentioned previously, indicated that his father and the Prime Minister spoke of it at lunch a day prior to the press conference:

It was at that lunch table that the phrase "unconditional surrender" was born. For what it was worth, it can be recorded that it was Father's phrase, that Harry [Hopkins] took an immediate and strong liking to it, and that Churchill, while he slowly munched a mouthful of food, thought, frowned, thought, finally grinned, and at length announced, "Perfect! And I can just see how Goebbels and the rest of 'em'll squeal!"<sup>26</sup>

Churchill wrote in his memoirs that he had no recollection of these "private and informal interchanges where conversation was free and unguarded," which the younger Roosevelt recalled. The Prime Minister did not deny, however, that the issue of unconditional surrender might have "cropped up" in talks with the President.<sup>27</sup>

Other statesmen and historians maintained that Churchill not only knew of the Doctrine at the Conference, but that he also brought it before the British War Cabinet days before the announcement. Churchill, in fact, included in his memoirs a memo regarding the slogan, sent from the Casablanca Conference to his War Cabinet on January 20:

I would like to know what the War Cabinet would think of our including in this statement to the press a declaration of the firm intention of the United States and the British Empire to continue the war relentlessly until we have brought about the 'unconditional surrender' of Germany and Japan.<sup>28</sup>

The Prime Minister claimed in his memoirs that he did not remember or have written record of any further conversation regarding unconditional surrender after receiving a response from the War Cabinet. Churchill pointed to the "pressure of business, especially the discussion about the relations of Giraud and de Gaulle and interviews with them," as probable reason that the issue was not discussed again. He also noted that, since he did not

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was only when I got home and searched my archives that I found the facts as they have been set out here. I am reminded of the professor who, in his declining hours, was asked by his devoted pupils for his final counsel. He replied, 'Verify your quotations.'" Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 686 – 688.

<sup>26</sup> Elliott Roosevelt, 117.

<sup>27</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 685.



like the idea of applying unconditional surrender to Italy, he likely did not bring up the issue again with the President.<sup>29</sup>

Churchill also noted that the official joint statement of the conference, created by the Chiefs of Staff and approved by both the President and Prime Minister, made no mention of unconditional surrender. Because of this reason, Churchill claimed that Roosevelt's announcement of the policy came as a surprise to him: "It was natural to suppose that the agreed communiqué had superseded anything said in conversation." Churchill believed the phrase simply did "pop" into Roosevelt's head, as the President asserted. The Prime Minister even argued that the fact that the President held notes with "unconditional surrender" written in them during the press conference did not "weaken" the argument of the announcement's spontaneity. He offered no explanation for this reasoning.<sup>30</sup>

Most historians agreed that Churchill was not nearly as enthusiastic about the formula as was his American partner, and that the Prime Minister certainly did not originate it. Lord Hankey believed that Churchill was almost apologetic when speaking of unconditional surrender in the House of Commons on February 1, 1943. Hankey pointed out Churchill's phraseology: "The President...decided..." and also, "The statement which the President wished to be made on the subject of unconditional surrender."<sup>31</sup> Churchill admitted, however, that he supported the President's decision, knowing that "any divergence" between them would have been quite damaging to the war at that time.<sup>32</sup>

### **WAR AIM**

Despite all the confusion and controversy surrounding the origin of unconditional surrender, the policy reflected a war aim that had already taken shape earlier in the conflict. Armstrong argued that although it may have been Roosevelt's idea and a phrase borrowed from General Grant, it still reflected the whole of the American war aim.

Whatever its origin the philosophy of war and of policy in wartime which the phrase reflects did not originate at Casablanca and did not belong exclusively to Roosevelt. Unconditional Surrender seems to stem from a

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 684. Chase, 260; Wilmot, 122; John Snell, *Dilemma over Germany: Wartime Origins of the East-West* (New Orleans: Phauser Press, 1959), 16.

<sup>29</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 686-688.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Hankey, 30; Armstrong, 43.

<sup>32</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 686 – 688.

basic American attitude toward war...which apparently was widespread in both American and British official circles during the Second World War.<sup>33</sup>

In “The Origin of the Formula”, Michael Balfour asserted that later in the war there would have been no purpose in altering the unconditional surrender formula, because it was based on the character of the Allied war effort and on the personalities of those involved in decision-making, namely Roosevelt.<sup>34</sup>

According to John P. Glennon, the United States could trace its roots of unconditional surrender to just after the attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>35</sup> For instance, two days after the Japanese strike, Roosevelt gave a radio address to the nation, proclaiming that the only accepted outcome of war was total victory:

Powerful and resourceful gangsters have banded together to make war upon the whole human race...I repeat that the United States can accept no result save victory, final and complete.... The sources of international brutality, wherever they exist, must be absolutely and finally broken... We are now in the midst of war, not for conquest, not for vengeance, but for a world in which this nation, and all this nation represents, will be safe for our children.<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, in the Declaration by the United Nations in Washington on January 1, 1942, the member nations, “being convinced that complete victory over their enemies” was “essential,” committed not to make a separate peace or armistice with an enemy nation. Each government pledged “to employ its full resources... against those members of the Tripartite Pact,” and “to co-operate with the Governments signatory hereto and not to make a separate armistice of peace with the enemies.”<sup>37</sup> Historian Peter Hoffman believed that Roosevelt’s announcement of unconditional surrender at Casablanca merely confirmed the ideas that this Washington pact had demanded.<sup>38</sup>

Again in Roosevelt’s annual Message to Congress on January 6, 1942, he communicated this idea of unconditional surrender:

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<sup>33</sup> Armstrong, 15.

<sup>34</sup> Balfour, “The Origin of the Formula,” 285, 299-300.

<sup>35</sup> Glennon, 112.

<sup>36</sup> *War Messages of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 11-15.

<sup>37</sup> *United Nations Documents, 1941-1945* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1947), 11.

<sup>38</sup> Peter Hoffmann, “The Question of Western Allied Co-Operation With the German Anti-Nazi Conspiracy, 1938-1944,” *The Historical Journal*, vol. 34, no. 2 (1991): 452; Secretary of State Hull argued that this Declaration by the United Nations was simply a pledge by United Nations members not to make a separate

Our own objectives are clear: the objective of smashing the militarism imposed by war lords upon their enslaved people—the objective of liberating the subjugated nations—the objective of establishing and securing freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear everywhere in the world. We shall not stop short of these objectives—nor shall we be satisfied merely to gain them and then call it a day....We are determined not only to win the war, but also to maintain the security of the peace which will follow....This is the conflict that day and night now pervades our lives. No compromise can end that conflict. There never has been—there never can be—successful compromise between good and evil. Only total victory can reward the champions of tolerance, and decency, and faith.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, the President's tone when he spoke of the need to eliminate the German threat was strong during a conversation with General Vladyslav Sikorski, prime minister of the Polish government in exile in Washington, in December 1942. The President remarked, "We have no intention of concluding this war with any kind of armistice or treaty. Germany must surrender unconditionally. We must then dismember her and subject her to harshest possible quarantine, if need be for thirty years."<sup>40</sup> Judging from such statements, unconditional surrender, while announced at the Casablanca conference, stemmed from a war aim which Roosevelt promoted from the beginning of American's entrance into the war.

### ***BACKGROUND OF CONFERENCE***

Examining the military situation leading up to the Casablanca Conference and the military decisions made there does not directly shed light on the controversies surrounding unconditional surrender. It is, however, helpful in establishing proper context within this historic period. The Casablanca Conference took place during a significant time. By then, the tide of war had begun to shift in favor of the Allies. Victory at the Battle of Coral Sea in May 1942, had held the Japanese back from advancing southward in the Pacific. In June 1942, the threat to Australia had been removed. London was secure, while many German cities began not to be. In November 1942, the Allied forces, who had been on the defensive early in the year and even placed the Near East in near jeopardy, began to take the offensive

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peace or armistice with an enemy nation, and did not necessarily imply unconditional surrender. Hull, 1570-1571.

<sup>39</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 41-42; *War Messages of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 28, 30.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Hoffmann, 453.

in North Africa. German military forces still bore down heavily against the Soviets in the East, but the raging battle in Stalingrad was coming to a close in the Soviet's favor, Russia securing victory the end of January/beginning of February 1943.<sup>41</sup>

Military and diplomatic leaders who attended the Casablanca Conference endured countless hours of meetings, debates and compromise over the course of those few days. In the end, they came to conclusions on the course of action that the American and British forces would undertake in the first nine months of 1943. The President and Prime Minister wrote to Stalin, who was unable to attend the conference, about these resolutions. These two Western leaders, first of all, were "in no doubt" that they needed to concentrate on achieving an "early and decisive" victory in Europe, while, at the same time, putting "sufficient pressure" on Japan in the Pacific and Far East to avoid a Japanese spread into other theaters, such as the Soviet Maritime Provinces. Roosevelt and Churchill also affirmed to Stalin that they desired to divert German forces away from Russia and aid their Soviet ally with "the maximum flow of supplies."<sup>42</sup>

Their "immediate intention," however, was to clear the Axis powers out of North Africa in order to open a passage through the Mediterranean for military traffic and in order to have an intense bombardment of "important Axis targets" in the south of Europe. The President and Prime Minister announced that they hoped to launch the operations in the Mediterranean as soon as possible, and declared that preparations for such had already begun. They promised that the bombings against Germany would increase, and that their efforts against Japan, although increasing in the next few months, would not jeopardize their attempts to bring Germany to defeat in 1943. This was the conference setting in which Roosevelt announced unconditional surrender to the world.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Notter, 160. Crocker, *Roosevelt's Road to Russia* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1959), 167-168. For additional information on the meetings and decisions at Casablanca, see Arthur Bryant, *The Turn of the Tide, 1939-1943: A Study based on the Diaries and Autobiographical Notes of Field Marshal The Viscount Alanbrooke* (London: Collins, 1957), 539-581; Steven Weiss, *Allies in Conflict* (London: King's College, 1996), 69-82; Feis, 105-126. For complete transcript of the Joint Press conference on January 24, see *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 12, 37-45; Crocker, 167-168.

<sup>42</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1957), 51-52.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*; Wilmot, 121.

**Roosevelt's Olive Branch:  
The Diplomacy of Unconditional Surrender**

**Part II: External Reasoning**

### **CHAPTER III:**

## **VIEWS OF UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER IN RELATION TO THE ENEMY NATIONS**

In this particular setting, occupied with meetings of great military and political importance, why, one might wonder, did Roosevelt choose to announce unconditional surrender? Why, at that time, under those circumstances, did the President declare this monumental policy? Roosevelt gladly shared some of those seemingly obvious reasons; others, he hid from the public eye, cloaked behind a veil of diplomacy. The most obvious and public reasons for Roosevelt's announcement of unconditional surrender dealt with the enemy nations. The President spoke freely and often of these "external" reasons, as Italian historian Elena Agarossi termed them.<sup>44</sup> Destroying fascism and preventing any compromise or negotiation with an enemy nation became the forefront of the President's explanation of unconditional surrender.

### ***CRITICS OF UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER***

A controversy existed during that time regarding the attitude toward and treatment of the enemy nations. These views tended to fall into three main camps. The beliefs of the first group were, in a sense, diametrically opposed to the ideals of those who supported unconditional surrender, including Roosevelt. These critics believed that the fascist governments, not the people within the enemy nations, were responsible for war. They thought, for instance, that the Nazis, not "the Germans," were guilty of aggressive tyranny. Maintaining that legitimate anti-Nazi factions existed within Germany which ideologically opposed the aggressive policies of their government, this group argued that the Allies should not completely eliminate the possibility of working with opposition movements. While this view understood the practical difficulties of working with such resistance groups, they supported an open policy of dealing with fascism's opponents within enemy nations.

Critics of unconditional surrender argued that the formula would immediately increase the totality of war by pushing all Germans toward Hitler.<sup>45</sup> In essences, the announcement of the policy indicated to the German people that to be German was to align

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<sup>44</sup> Agarossi, 25.

<sup>45</sup> Hans Rothfels, "The German Resistance in Its International Aspects," *International Affairs*, vol. 34, no. 4, 488.

with Hitler. The concern among critics of the doctrine was that Germans who did not like Hitler would be forced to fight for him because, if they were going to die anyway, they might as well die with Germans than with foreigners.<sup>46</sup>

German political refugees were particularly distressed about unconditional surrender. Many of these refugees claimed, according to one German resistor, that the policy put “into the hand of National Socialism the sharpest possible weapon against the oppressed German people.”<sup>47</sup> The Germans, critics complained, would see no option of getting out of war, so would fight to the death with their countrymen. Lord Hankey noted a German proverb, “Despair gives courage to a coward,” and Montaigne’s saying: “It is one of the greatest discretions in the rule of war not to drive an enemy to despair... ’Tis dangerous to attack a man you have deprived of all means to escape but by his arms, for necessity teaches violent resolutions.”<sup>48</sup> According to Lord Gladwyn, head of the British Economic and Reconstruction Departments in the Foreign Office from 1941-1945, even the bravest and most loyal conspirators would not convince German generals to assist with a coup if that would mean only that they would be at the mercy of hostile Allies.<sup>49</sup>

Critics also believed that the policy would create a power vacuum in Europe.<sup>50</sup> Very few Allied leaders wanted to work with the anti-Nazi resistance, but the few who did, including Americans General J.E. Hull and Colonel Vorys Connor, and British George Kennedy Allen Bell, Bishop of Chichester, Sir Stafford Cripps, David Astor, and Lord Lothian believed it necessary for European stability. They believed that an intact, although weakened, Germany was necessary as a counter balance to Russia.<sup>51</sup> This group asserted that the formula not only forced harsh penalties on innocent Germans, but also presented a danger for a post-war Europe.

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<sup>46</sup> See F.O. Miksche, *Unconditional Surrender*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), 11-15.

<sup>47</sup> Prince Herbert Löwenstein, *What Was the German Resistance?* (Germany: Grafes, 1965), 49-50.

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in Hankey, 38.

<sup>49</sup> Hoffmann, 452.

<sup>50</sup> Rothfels, 488.

<sup>51</sup> Hoffmann, 462. For further discussion on the controversy of the slogan during the war, see Hull, 1571-1579.

## ***DEFINE UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER***

The second group, while believing that disarmament and occupation were necessary, thought that the term “unconditional surrender” was too harsh. This phrase was harmful because it unnecessarily sent a message that every German would be held responsible for the Nazi aggression. This camp did not believe that the Allies should offer a negotiated peace, but argued that unconditional surrender should, at least, be defined.

Sherwood noted that the controversy surrounding unconditional surrender began soon after Roosevelt returned to Washington from the Casablanca Conference on January 31. In both Britain and the United States propaganda experts believed that unconditional surrender, without clarification, would “put the iron of desperate resistance” into the Germans. Although they did not necessarily contest total defeat, they thought Roosevelt’s public announcement of it was a “disastrous mistake.”<sup>52</sup>

For this view, one can look to the writings of Allen Welsh Dulles, chief agent of American Intelligence on the European Continent during the war. Dulles actually supported unconditional surrender when Roosevelt first issued it. He believed that the policy was “sound psychological warfare,” by determining that the Nazis would be completely defeated. He soon objected to its phraseology, however, lamenting that it alienated anti-fascist groups and those people within enemy nations who desired an end to war. Dulles was concerned “unconditional surrender” sent a message of destruction, humiliation, and despair to the Axis nations.<sup>53</sup>

His problem with the term “unconditional surrender” was that it did not communicate sufficiently what unconditional surrender meant. On January 31, 1943, Dulles wrote to the OSS Headquarters in Washington that he thought it important to make clear to Germans that “unconditional surrender” did not “carry the implication that innocent German people will be subjected in the future to humiliating treatment or that it necessarily connotes intention to break up their country.” He remarked later in the war that to stop short of complete military victory or “to allow Germany any doubts of its total defeat” would be

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<sup>52</sup> Sherwood, 695.

<sup>53</sup> From his base in Switzerland, Dulles sent back word of his interaction with contacts in the anti-Nazi European underground. He became increasingly disheartened with unconditional surrender because he believed it had negative effects on the anti-Nazi movement within Germany. He lamented the fact that unconditional surrender gave no hope to those who considered risking their lives to overthrow Hitler. Allen



“unthinkable.” However, he was concerned that German propaganda had distorted “unconditional surrender,” and lamented the fact that the Allies were “tongue-tied by the fear that any explanation of what unconditional surrender meant might be construed by the Germans as a promise some future Hitler could say had been broken.”<sup>54</sup>

President Roosevelt acknowledged these criticisms. He was quick to give a defense against the “nice, high-minded people” who complained about the term “unconditional surrender,” saying that it was too “tough and rough.” Excerpts from a press conference in Honolulu showed that FDR did not believe the policy needed further clarification:

Back in 1865, Lee was driven into a corner back of Richmond, at Appomattox Court House. His army was practically starving, had had no sleep for two or three days, his arms were practically expended. So he went, under a flag of truce, to Grant. Lee had come to Grant thinking about his men. He asked Grant for his terms of surrender. Grant said, “Unconditional Surrender.” Lee said he couldn’t do that, he had to get some things. Just for example, he had not food for more than one meal for his army. Grant said, “That is pretty tough.” Lee then said, “My cavalry horses don’t belong to us, they belong to our officers and they need them back home.” Grant said, “Unconditional Surrender.” Lee then said, “All right. I surrender,” and tendered his sword to Grant. Grant said, “Bob, put it back. Now do you unconditionally surrender?” Lee said, “Yes.” Then Grant said, “You are my prisoners now. Do you need food for your men?” Lee said, “Yes.” Then Grant said, “Now, about those horses that belong to the Confederate officers. Why do you want them?” Lee said, “We need them for the spring plowing.” Grant said, “Tell your officers to take the animals home and do the spring plowing.” There, you have unconditional surrender. I have given you no new term. We are human beings—normal, thinking, human beings. That is what we mean by unconditional surrender.<sup>55</sup>

Roosevelt repeated the fact many times that the Allies did not intend to destroy the enemy nations and stated that the “peoples of the Axis-controlled areas” did not need to fear unconditional surrender. He assured them that “when they agree to unconditional surrender they will not be trading Axis despotism for ruin under the United Nations.” He continued

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Welsh Dulles, *From Hitler’s Doorstep: The Wartime Intelligence Reports of Allen Dulles: 1942-1945*, ed. Neal H. Petersen (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 9-10.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* Allen Welsh Dulles, *Germany’s Underground* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 133.

<sup>55</sup> Woolley and Peters.

that “the goal” of the Allies was “to permit liberated peoples to create a free political life of their choosing and to attain economic security.”<sup>56</sup>

Michael Balfour, in “The Origin of the Formula”, offered an analysis of this debate. Despite Roosevelt’s offer of humane treatment, Balfour noted that the character of unconditional surrender was unacceptable to the Germans, regardless of whether or not it was defined. He argued that defining unconditional surrender would have served no purpose unless the *character* of unconditional surrender was changed as well, which, he argued, it would not have been. He proposed that the real issue was not whether or not the formula was defined, a view he believed was based on “superficial implications,” but whether or not the Allied policy toward the enemy was too hard. Defining unconditional surrender would have offered terms which only reflected the character of unconditional surrender. These terms would have been just as repulsive to the enemy nations as was the undefined policy.<sup>57</sup>

#### ***UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER AS HISTORICALLY NECESSARY***

The final group, including Roosevelt and many Allied leaders, believed that the Axis powers had to be defeated, regardless of the cost to the enemy nations. While they did not seek these countries’ destruction, they believed the Allies needed to use extreme measures to defeat the fascist threat and to secure peace for the future. This camp often pinpointed Germany as the focus of their discussion and argued that world peace could not fall short of total disarmament, occupation and re-education. Working with any anti-fascist conspiracy group was completely out of the question. This view maintained that unconditional surrender was historical necessary, because it secured complete victory and peace for future generations.

#### ***UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER, GERMANY, JAPAN AND ITALY***

Even among those who supported unconditional surrender, a controversy existed over *which nation(s)* the Allies should direct it toward. Everyone in this group agreed on the need to apply it to Germany. Statesmen and scholars largely pointed to the history and personality of the Germans to defend unconditional surrender. Most supporters of the

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<sup>56</sup> Chase, 264. Historians debated whether or not Roosevelt’s message was clearly communicated to the enemy nations. See Dulles, *From Hitler’s Doorstep*, 260; Hankey, 55; Wallace Carroll, *Persuade or Perish* (Boston: The Riverside Press, 1948), 325.

<sup>57</sup> Balfour, “The Origin of the Formula,” 284-285.

policy also believed that it should be applied to Japan. Noting the way the Japanese had entered and fought the war, unconditional surrender was the only option. Furthermore, Great Britain wanted to commit to unconditional surrender in regards to Japan to evince to the United States that they would not abandon the war once Europe was secure.<sup>58</sup>

Not all were convinced of the need to apply it to Italy, however. For instance, the Sub-Committee on Security Problems of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy, which supported the idea of unconditional surrender in their May 1942 meeting, believed that “it might prove desirable to negotiate an armistice with Italy in order to pull her out of the war.”<sup>59</sup> Churchill, also hoping that the Italians would break from Hitler, did not want that nation to come under this policy. Just four days before the Casablanca Joint Press conference, Churchill recommended to the British War Cabinet that Italy be excluded from unconditional surrender. The Prime Minister suggested the omission of Italy to “encourage a break-up there,” and claimed that Roosevelt “liked this idea.” The President was clear, however, in the January 24 press conference that unconditional surrender applied to Italy. The British War Cabinet, as well, in response to Churchill, “was unanimously of opinion” that the policy needed to apply to Italy: “Knowledge of all rough stuff coming to them is surely more likely to have desired effect on Italian morale.”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Weinburg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 438.

<sup>59</sup> FRUS, 506.

<sup>60</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 684-686; Weinburg, 438. Churchill did not offer explanation for the reason, if Roosevelt “liked this idea,” why the President applied unconditional surrender to Italy regardless in his announcement. Ironically, Italy was the first nation to which unconditional surrender applied. For information on their surrender, see Elena Agarossi, *A Nation Collapses*.

## CHAPTER IV: MILITARISM

### **GERMANY**

Supporters of unconditional surrender often pointed to the militaristic nature of the histories and personalities of the enemy nations. Many believed this militarism was part of the “inherent character” of the German people. Some argued that Germany would always attempt to rise as a threatening military power and dominate Europe. A Germany that was not weakened and restrained militarily would serve as a menace, or possibly worse, to the world. Removing the Nazi war machine and purging Germany of the National Socialist influence would be just the first step in securing the world’s peace. The German state needed to remain militarily paralyzed. For instance, a special committee of the Political Warfare Executive in the British Ministry of Information announced that Germany must be “permanently eliminated as a major military power or she will permanently dominate Europe. There is no half-way house.”<sup>61</sup>

Roosevelt echoed this sentiment during the State of the Union address on January 7, 1943. He believed that if the Allies did not learn to “pull the fangs of the predatory animals of the world,” then such aggressors would continue to grow in power and to expand their tyranny—“and they will be at our throats once more in a short generation.” He stated that if any of the enemy nations remained armed at the end of the war, or if any were allowed to rearm, they would, “again, and inevitably embark upon an ambitious career of world conquest.” The President maintained that the Allies need to disarm the Axis powers to the point that they could not again break “the Tenth Commandment, ‘Thou shalt not covet.’”<sup>62</sup>

Roosevelt ensured that the people within enemy nations would not be enslaved, “because the United Nations do not traffic in human slavery,” but he believed that they would need to earn their way back into the “fellowship of peace-loving and law-abiding nations.” He declared that the climb to do so would be “steep” and guaranteed that the Allies would “certainly see to it that they are not encumbered by having to carry guns. They will be relieved of that burden, we hope, forever.”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Hoffmann, 453.

<sup>62</sup> *War Messages*, 66.

<sup>63</sup> *War Messages*, 145.

The belief among many Allies that the German people were inherently militaristic served as one of the main reasons for this determination for demilitarization. They believed that a dangerous Prussian military personality dominated the German tradition. In January 1942, in the President's annual Message to Congress, Roosevelt declared:

We are fighting today for security, for progress, for peace, not only for ourselves but for all men, not only for one generation, but for all generations. We are fighting to cleanse the world of ancient evils, ancient ills...Our enemies are guided by brutal cynicism, by unholy contempt for the human race.<sup>64</sup>

Roosevelt commented that this German militarism existed as an antithesis of civility: "There is not enough room on earth for both the German militarism and Christian decency." The President, indeed, made it his war aim to irradiate any militaristic sentiment in Germany, in order to insure peace in the world for generations to come. Believing that Germany, "that tragic nation," had "sown the wind," Roosevelt declared that they must then "reap the whirlwind."<sup>65</sup>

Churchill also believed that within Germany there existed a "Teutonic urge for domination," and lamented that twice in the previous quarter century Great Britain, America and Russia had suffered "measureless waste, peril and bloodshed" at the hands of a tyrannical Germany. The Prime Minister maintained that Prussian militarism tainted the German character: "They combine in the most deadly manner the qualities of the warrior and the slave. They do not value freedom themselves, and the spectacle of it in others is hateful to them. Whenever they become strong, they seek their prey, and will follow with an iron discipline anyone who will lead them to it." The Prime Minister carefully noted that the Allies were not warring against a race, but against tyranny. This tyranny, however, had largely manifested itself, according to Churchill, in the German people:

I am convinced that the British, American, and Russian peoples... will this time take steps to put it beyond the power of Prussia or of all Germany to come at them again with pent-up vengeance and long-nurtured plans. Nazi tyranny and Prussian militarism are the two main elements in German life which must be absolutely destroyed. They must be rooted out if Europe and the world are to be spared a third and still more frightful conflict.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 41.

<sup>65</sup> *War Messages*, 145; Armstrong, 21,19.

<sup>66</sup> Churchill, *Closing the Ring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951), 159.

### ***“STAB IN THE BACK”***

Along the same lines as German militarism, a major concern for the Allies was the “stab in the back” theory. As Hitler rose to power, he declared that the Allies had not defeated the German Army in the First World War, but that a treasonous revolt of the home front in 1918 led to the armistice which ended the war. The German Army, in fact, had been “stabbed in the back” by a weak home front. Hitler, using masterfully deceptive propaganda, asserted that Germany should take her rightful place among the victors and reclaim her lost territory. The Fuehrer played off of bitterness that existed among the Germans arising from discrepancies between Wilson’s Fourteen Points and reality of the Treaty of Versailles.<sup>67</sup>

Many Allied leaders believed that the Second World War was an offspring of lenient conditions given to Germany after World War I. They argued that the Second World War was practically inevitable since the Allies of the First World War left open a possibility for German rearmament. The main causes for the present conflict, they maintained, were that World War I never made its way onto German soil and that the Allies did not require Germany to disarm completely. These conditions after the First World War had allowed for the “stab in the back” theory to take hold in the minds of the German people, rallying them to war.<sup>68</sup>

Determined not to make this mistake again, Roosevelt, along with many of his contemporaries, supported policies of complete suppression for Germany. The President noted that it was, “useless to win battles if the cause for which we fight these battles is lost. It is useless to win a war unless it stays won.”<sup>69</sup> FDR feared Wilson’s example and determined that what happened with the Fourteen Points would not to happen to him. By giving no “escape clauses” he could not be blamed for a failed peace. Sherwood termed it, “the ghost of Woodrow Wilson,” and echoed that the President “wanted to make sure that when the war was won it would stay won.”<sup>70</sup> In the State of the Union Address in January

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<sup>67</sup> Feis, 108; Armstrong 40. For additional information on Hitler’s use of propaganda, see Z.A.B. Zeman, *Nazi Propaganda*, London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

<sup>68</sup> See Armstrong, x; Sherwood, 697.

<sup>69</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 425-426.

<sup>70</sup> Sherwood, 697. Historian Gerhard Weinburg noted that during the First World War, General John Pershing, Commander-in-Chief in Europe, along with the majority of the Republican party, had urgently supported a policy of surrender for Germany. The Wilson administration, including Roosevelt himself and many key leaders in Roosevelt’s World War II administration, had supported an armistice instead of surrender.

1942, Roosevelt proclaimed that the United Nations would not make the huge sacrifice of the war only “to return to the kind of world we had after the last world war.”<sup>71</sup>

Historian Hans Rothfels noted the important lesson learned from the failure of Versailles: “It became established Allied policy to avoid anything that might justify, later on, a revisionist claim on the part of the defeated nation or give to another rabble-rouser the opportunity to charge the victors with going back on their word.”<sup>72</sup> This fear certainly contributed to the declaration of unconditional surrender. One of Roosevelt’s advisors at Casablanca confirmed to Wallace Carroll, a United Press (UPI) correspondent before and during World War II and later with the Office of War Information, that the President had Wilson’s mistakes on his mind during the conference. The adviser communicated to Carroll, “The President said that he wanted to rule out any pledge or offer like the Fourteen Points....”<sup>73</sup> During a press conference later in the war, a reporter asked Roosevelt if unconditional surrender still stood. The President responded, “Yes. Practically all Germans deny the fact they surrendered in the last war, but this time they are going to know it....”<sup>74</sup>

The President believed that in order to secure a definite and permanent peace and in order to prevent another “stab in the back” mentality within Germany, the United Nations forces would need to “march in triumph” through the streets of the enemy nations. The peace obtained at the end of the war must guarantee that, “our grandchildren can grow and, under God, may live their lives, free from the constant threat of invasion, destruction, slavery, and violent death.”<sup>75</sup> Unconditional surrender, according to Roosevelt, offered the means to this end.

Churchill, as well, echoed concern regarding the “stab in the back” theory, pointing out that, “twice within our lifetime, and three times counting that of our fathers, [the German people] have plunged the world into their wars of expansion and aggression.”<sup>76</sup> The Prime Minister asserted that the Allies must this time completely restrain this ambition from taking

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This “weakness,” as some Americans considered it, contributed to the administration’s defeat in the 1918 elections. This experience made Roosevelt, in particular, sensitive to the dangers of negotiated surrender. Weinburg, 438-439.

<sup>71</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 41.

<sup>72</sup> Rothfels, 487.

<sup>73</sup> Carroll, 309.

<sup>74</sup> Woolley and Peters.

<sup>75</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 12, 72; vol. 11, 425-426.

<sup>76</sup> Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, 158.

root again. Churchill shared Roosevelt's sentiment that he did not want the danger of Wilson's Fourteen Points being mentioned by the Germans after Allied victory, "saying that they surrendered in consequence of [them]."<sup>77</sup>

Not everyone agreed with Roosevelt and Churchill's view of Germany militarism. Anne Armstrong, in fact, believed that the President and Prime Minister exaggerated and distorted German militarism to serve as propaganda.<sup>78</sup> Some believed that classifying all Germans in the same category as the Nazis was illogical and dangerous. Prince Hubertus Zu Löwenstein, a German who gave account of the anti-Nazi resistance movement, emphasized this point in stating, "There are Germans, Jews, Englishmen, Americans, some good, some bad, some indifferent. In every country and everywhere. The generalizations, 'the...' is already the beginning of totalitarian barbarism."<sup>79</sup> The author referred to Germany not as a nation of militants and imperialists, but as, "a nation of poets and philosophers," and claimed that German history testified not of barbaric efforts, but of "active affirmation of freedom and human dignity."<sup>80</sup>

Löwenstein argued that there was in fact a deep-rooted conflict between this "true," peaceful Germany and the Nazi government under whose authority it resided. He even argued that this conflict was not an "inner political" conflict among fellow Germans, but rather equated the situation in Germany to that of occupation and oppression in non-German countries. True Germany, he believed, struggled not against another German political system, but against an "alien power." His reasoning was that the Nazi government served as a complete antithesis to the German character and history. National Socialism, in fact, "was at variance with everything which constituted German history." He claimed that Hitler's barbaric totalitarianism defied the German "tradition of a constitutional state and of humanism, of progressive democracy and respect for international law." Löwenstein bemoaned the fact that, "Now there was utter disregard for all these ethical traditions and the entire spiritual and moral heritage of centuries."<sup>81</sup>

Despite Löwenstein's support of the German resistance movement and the ideology that the German people and culture were not inherently militaristic, he still did not dismiss

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<sup>77</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 690.

<sup>78</sup> Armstrong, 30.

<sup>79</sup> Prince Hubertus Zu Löwenstein, *What Was the German Resistance?* (Germany: Grafes, 1965), 40.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 7.



the possibility of the “stab in the back” theory. He warned that while refusing to assist the opposition was morally wrong, the Allies still needed to be cautious of elements of bitterness inspired by the First World War.<sup>82</sup> This caution, however, according to Löwenstein, should not have led to the extreme measures of unconditional surrender.

### ***JAPAN AND ITALY***

President Roosevelt did not believe that Germany was the only nation with militaristic tendencies. He held similar sentiments toward Japan and Italy, although the effects of their histories were not as acutely felt. The President believed that the antagonism of these two nations had begun long before the Second World War. In the State of the Union Address on January 6, 1942, Roosevelt spoke of the aggressive character of both of these nations. In regards to Japan, he believed that their “scheme of conquest” went back “half a century.” He declared that Japan did not just seek to obtain more “living room,” but that their policy included the “subjugation of all the peoples in the Far East and in the islands of the Pacific, and the domination of that ocean by Japanese military and naval control of the western coasts of North, Central, and South America.” The President pointed to the history of this “ambitious conspiracy,” noting the Japanese war against China in 1894, their occupation of Korea, their war against Russia in 1904, their “illegal fortification” of Pacific islands after 1920, their take-over of Manchuria in 1931, and the invasion of China in 1937.<sup>83</sup>

In this same speech, Roosevelt spoke of a “similar policy of criminal conquest” that the Italians “adopted.” Claiming that Italy had desired for years to dominate all of North Africa, Egypt, the Mediterranean, and parts of France, he spoke of their “imperial designs” in Libya and Tripoli, and their seizure of Abyssinia in 1935. In all of this, however, the President admitted that these aggressive policies of Japan and Italy were, “modest in comparison with the gargantuan aspirations of Hitler and his Nazis.” For this reason, Roosevelt mainly focused on the history of the German people when addressing the issue of militarism in the enemy nations.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>83</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 33.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

Roosevelt desired to see this militarism come to an end, and observed that the “mood” in America was “stronger than any mere desire for revenge. It expresses the will of the American people to make very certain that the world will never so suffer again.”<sup>85</sup> Unconditional surrender, according to the President, offered a solution for this pervasive militarism.<sup>86</sup> In fact, supporters of unconditional surrender saw, according to Armstrong, “no practicable alternative” for the policy.<sup>87</sup> The fears of militarism and of the popularity of the “stab in the back” theory within Germany were leading external causes in Roosevelt’s support of unconditional surrender. The President declared that the Allies would “fight through and work through until the end—the end of militarism in Germany and Italy and Japan. Most certainly we shall not settle for less.”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid, vol. 11, 34.

<sup>86</sup> According to some historians Hitler gave Roosevelt very little option about declaring total victory, as the Fuehrer declared that he would be satisfied only with Total Victory or Total Defeat: “We shall not capitulate—no never! We may be destroyed, but if we are, we shall drag a world with us—a world in flames.” Quoted in Wilmot, 96.

<sup>87</sup> Armstrong, x.

<sup>88</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 40.

## **CHAPTER V: DOUBLE AGENTS, PEACE FEELERS AND POST-WAR DISCUSSIONS**

### ***DOUBLE AGENTS***

Besides the fear of this militaristic personality of the enemy nations, another external reason that many Allied diplomats and leaders supported unconditional surrender was that they believed anti-fascists opposition groups were not reliable. First of all, distinguishing between true opposition and double-agents was problematic. The Allies simply could not be sure if anti-fascist agents were actually puppets of their enemy governments, attempting to get information or misleading the Allies. Geoffrey W. Harrison of the British Foreign Office suspected at one time that most of the “German opposition” news that the British got was from the German Secret Service, in order to cause dissension among the Allies.<sup>89</sup>

Furthermore, this concern heightened after the Venlo incident in 1939. In October of that year, British agents entertained discussions with representatives of the German opposition, and even gave the opposition assurances from Chamberlain that Britain would negotiate with a credible non-Nazi government if such a group would overthrow Hitler’s regime. Over the next few weeks, Chamberlain, Halifax and the British war cabinet authorized various meeting between the British SIS and the German opposition.

In November, at Venlo, Netherlands, British agents Captain Sigismund Payne Best and Major Richard H. Stevens met with German officers, disguised as refugees, who said they were plotting to overthrow Hitler. The Germans promised the British that the latter could meet with the leader of the opposition group, so British agents brought along Dirk Klop, Dutch intelligence officer, to their next meeting. What Best, Stevens, and Klop did not realize, however, was that Himmler had ordered the German agents to capture the British representatives. As the British car approached, the Germans shot into the car with a machine-gun, killing Klop. They then took Best and Stevens hostage, imprisoning them until the end of war. The Germans, furthermore, obtained a list of British agents in occupied countries, especially in Czechoslovakia, and were able to arrest them. Although, according

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<sup>89</sup> Hoffmann, 463.

the Hoffman, this did not at the time eliminate British contacts with genuine resisters, it set forth a warning to any Allied country who might attempt to meet with anti-fascists agents.<sup>90</sup>

Historian Hans Rothfels claimed that the Allied Foreign Offices and intelligence experts “had the feeling” that every time they were approached by the German resistance, it was from Wilhelm Canaris’s, the German chief of intelligence, counter-espionage group. Rothfels pointed out that even sincere anti-Nazis might be “unwilling agents of Nazis.”<sup>91</sup> An author for *Nation*, spoke of a “widespread tendency to swallow whatever soup is cooked in Dr. Goebbels’s kitchen.”<sup>92</sup> Although he specifically referred to the July 20, 1944 assassination attempt on Hitler’s life, the writer sarcastically illustrated the skepticism of believing information communicated from Germany.

### ***PEACE FEELERS***

Not all of the anti-fascist opposition groups who approached the Allies were spies of enemy nations. Many Allied leaders, however, doubted that meeting with these people would be beneficial. For instance, Geoffrey Harrison, eventually believing that a good number of “genuinely anti-Nazis” existed, did not think such resisters were worth the Allies’ time. He pointed out that they were not organized and had no popular support; they were “powerless to render us any service.”<sup>93</sup> Peter Hoffman noted that upon the issuance of unconditional surrender the “basis for negotiations” with any anti-Hitler movement in Germany had “vanished.”<sup>94</sup> Roosevelt rejoiced that, “the world can rest assured that this total war, this sacrifice of lives all over the globe, is not being carried on for the purpose, or

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 447.

<sup>91</sup> Rothfels, 479.

<sup>92</sup> Argus, “Behind the Enemy Line,” *Nation*. August 26, 1944, 240.

<sup>93</sup> Hoffmann, 463. Harrison also complained that their aim in negotiation was simply to gain control of Germany, rather than stemming from a desire to eradicate Germany of Nazism: “These individuals were in fact less concerned with active steps in eliminating the Nazis than in stepping into the Nazis’ shoes, when the Nazis have been eliminated.” Harrison believed that the only group capable of overthrowing Hitler was the German Army, but he maintained that their only motive was “saving something from the wreckage.” Hoffmann, 463. Many Allied leaders believed that the German Army simply desired conquest, and aligned themselves with Hitler because he seemed the best leader to accomplish that feat at that time. Once they figured out that Hitler was a military maniac, they sought to disconnect themselves with him. According to a *Time* article, “Theirs was the tradition of always stopping a losing war in time to keep fit for the next one.” The author of this article maintained that when Hitler gave the Generals victory, they were content with him. But once the tide of war changed, they sought a way out. “The War,” *Time*. August 7, 1944, pg. 23. Alfred Vagts, a *Nation* writer, along the same lines, commented, “Victories cement partners in a military coalition, and defeat draw them apart.” Alfred Vagts, “The Putsch that Failed,” *Nation*. August 5, 1944, 153.

<sup>94</sup> Hoffmann, 451.

even with the remotest idea of keeping Quislings or Laval in power anywhere on this earth.”<sup>95</sup>

Those in support of unconditional surrender noted that the refusal to work with peace-feelers from enemy nations also freed the Allies from having to distinguish between “good” and “bad” Germans after the war. Allied leaders feared that if they agreed to negotiate peace with an anti-fascist opposition group, then all peoples within that enemy nation would pretend that they were a part of the resistance. Supporters of unconditional surrender believed that the policy offered protection from this post-war administrative and diplomatic headache.<sup>96</sup>

### ***PREMATURE POST-WAR DISCUSSIONS***

Those in favor of unconditional surrender also believed that the policy would not allow the Germans to contest the post-war set up and would not obligate the Allies to consult with the Germans concerning it. Historian Raymond O’Connor maintained that this was one of the main purposes for unconditional surrender: “Especially applicable to Germany and Japan to prevent...subsequent recriminations or excuses by the defeated foe, it gave the victors a free hand in creating the kind of world they wanted without having to consult their erstwhile enemies.”<sup>97</sup>

While some statesmen feared that the announcement of unconditional surrender would strengthen and unify the German war effort, Churchill believed that this policy would do far less harm than would a statement on the actual conditions approved for a post-war Germany. The Prime Minister recalled that he greatly opposed creating an “alternative

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<sup>95</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 12, 78.

<sup>96</sup> Raymond O’Connor, *Diplomacy for Victory: FDR and Unconditional Surrender* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc, 1971), 102. A Swedish dispatch in the closing year of the war confirmed that distinguishing between “good” and “bad” Germans was difficult enough even without negotiating surrender. On July 29, 1944, a dispatch from Berlin to the Stockholm *Aftontidningen* revealed that Nazi soldiers were already trying to disguise their involvement in the Party. Himmler had to order, with the penalty of death, Party members not to dye or alter their Party uniforms, and not to alter the look of their boots to make them look like regular shoes. Argus, author in *Nation*, commented, “So they are already starting that sort of thing, while Himmler is still there. When he disappears and the Allies come, the rank and file of the Party, with dizzy speed and miraculous thoroughness, will have dyed, altered, and removed all signs of the past. The insinuation that anyone had ever had anything to do with boots or brown uniforms, either on his person or in his heart, will be an undemonstrable slander and a deeply wounding insult.” Argus, “Behind Enemy Line,” *Nation*. August 19, 1944, 212-213. One can only imagine that if the German party members were altering their uniforms and boots even under unconditional surrender, how much more would the Germans desire to align themselves against the Nazis in a post-war Germany which negotiated a peace with concessions.

<sup>97</sup> O’Connor, 102.

statement on peace terms,” believing that such conditions would have been “repulsive to any German peace movement.” He wrote in his memoirs:

I remember several attempts being made to draft peace conditions which would satisfy the wrath of the conquerors against Germany. They looked so terrible when set forth on paper, and so far exceeded what was in fact done that their publication would only have stimulated German resistance. They had in fact only to be written out to be withdrawn.<sup>98</sup>

Some pacifists believed that unconditional surrender actually promoted peace by postponing the job of making decisions regarding postwar make-up until after the fervor of the war had calmed down a bit.<sup>99</sup>

Roosevelt’s “external” reasons for announcing unconditional surrender, militarism of the enemy nations, fear of the failures of World War I, lack of credibility of the anti-fascists opposition groups, avoidance of premature post-war discussions, all served as public explanations of the policy. Roosevelt freely and often shared these motives for unconditional surrender. They created a concise Allied focus in regard to the enemy nations. They were not, however, the only motivations for the President’s announcement at the Casablanca Conference.

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<sup>98</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate* 689.

<sup>99</sup> Snell, 17.

**Roosevelt's Olive Branch:  
The Diplomacy of Unconditional Surrender**

**Part III: Domestic Reasoning**

## **INTRODUCTION**

While the external reasons for unconditional surrender served as a public explanation for the policy, hidden diplomatic causes played an equal role in Roosevelt's announcement. Although the President specifically directed unconditional surrender toward the Axis powers, reasons of domestic and inter-Allied importance were just as significant in the declaration. FDR hoped that his announcement of unconditional surrender would serve as an instrument of peace and unity on his home-front and, more importantly, among the Allies during a rather tumultuous time in their alliance.

Leading up to the Casablanca conference, Roosevelt believed that a need existed to emphasize a point of unity and to encourage the Allies to rally around a common cause. The President affirmed in March 1942, at a speech to the Economic Club of New York, that unity of the Allies was of up-most importance: "To attain and maintain this charter of liberty the supreme strategy of victory must be for the United Nations to remain united—united in purpose, united in sympathy, and united in determination."<sup>100</sup> Some of Roosevelt's contemporaries also expressed a need for a unified vision of war. Republican Senator Vandenberg, who served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated, "...Now that we are in the war up to our eyes, I think the first job is to win the war....I am unwilling to do *anything* which might disunite the war effort by premature peace efforts.... If we must quarrel with our Allies, I'd rather do it *after victory*."<sup>101</sup> In the announcement of unconditional surrender, Roosevelt hoped to consolidate that desire for unity into an effectual policy.

Unconditional surrender encouraged the Allied leaders to emphasize those things they had in common, and deemphasize the things they did not. Armstrong, who claimed that unconditional surrender "represented a policy of lowest common denominator," argued that the President made his announcement intentionally ambiguous so that it would avoid any disagreement among the Allies.<sup>102</sup> John Glennon agreed that it was almost an "ideal

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<sup>100</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, ed., vol, 11, 161-162.

<sup>101</sup> Quoted in Armstrong, 36.

<sup>102</sup> Armstrong, 39.



formula” in that it provided a “simplistic ‘defeat the enemy’ psychology.”<sup>103</sup> This need for peace and unity stemmed from a variety of reasons, some more influential than others. The fear of domestic criticism, military disagreements with the British, disillusionment over the Darlan Deal, tension over French leadership, and mistrust between the Western Allies and the Soviets, specifically relating to the second front, all contributed to the political environment that prompted Roosevelt’s decision to announce unconditional surrender. An examination of each of these reasons shows clearly the President’s urgent need to proclaim a policy that could aid in bringing cohesiveness to a struggling alliance.

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<sup>103</sup> Glennon, 116. Glennon qualified that statement saying that it was an ideal formula provided it was not viewed as an excuse to postpone or avoid making difficult political decisions.

## CHAPTER VI:

### MEDIA

On the home-front, Roosevelt faced various political criticism and issues of domestic disunity. Although not severe, the President believed that any such discord harmed the over-all war effort. Sumner Welles, the Under Secretary of State from 1933-1943, noted that FDR was greatly concerned about his role as the leader of the American people.<sup>104</sup> Criticism of his government or his leadership disturbed the President, as evinced through various speeches leading up to the Casablanca conference.

The President, first of all, strongly disapproved of critical or dissentious media efforts made in the United States against the war effort or the Allied coalition. These types of reports disturbed FDR, who believed that they caused disunity and mistrust. In fact, he asserted that those who openly criticized their government's domestic or international policies served as instruments of the enemy:

Those who cry for divided efforts in an indivisible war, those who are blind to the fact that security at home may be menaced by disaster abroad, those who encourage divided counsels in this crisis, those who viciously or stupidly lend themselves to the repetition of distortion and untruth, are serving as obliging messengers of Axis propaganda.<sup>105</sup>

Aspects of the American media did, in fact, overtly criticize and speculate against the war effort. Some critics claimed that Washington D.C. was, “a madhouse—with the Congress and the Administration disrupted with confusion and indecision and general incompetence.” Roosevelt feared that such statements could hurt American confidence in their government and could cause dissension in regard to the war effort.<sup>106</sup>

The President protested the media in Washington D.C., in particular. At a press conference in February 1942, Roosevelt referred to a political cartoon in Washington *Star* that had caught his attention. In it, Uncle Sam held a millstone that read, “Whoever is guilty of bringing about the crime of disunity, of him let it be said that it were better that a millstone were hung about his neck and that he were cast into the sea.” Over in the corner of the cartoon stood a caricature, which represented, in Roosevelt's mind, the type of people in Washington. This fellow complained: “The British want to fight to the last American,”

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<sup>104</sup> Sumner Welles, *The Seven Decisions that Shaped History* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), 135.

<sup>105</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, ed., vol. 11, 162.

“Why help the Russians? They will turn on us later,” and “We ought to pull out of the Far East. We can’t win here-can’t win there.” Roosevelt blamed the people represented in this cartoon for circulating throughout the country many of the fabrications regarding the status of the war and of the Allied coalition. The President called Washington D.C. “the worst rumor factory, and therefore the source of more lies that are spoken and printed throughout the United States than any other community.”<sup>107</sup>

At a *Herald-Tribune* Forum later that year, Roosevelt acknowledged that during war, unlike times of peace, the media and public could not know and discuss every subject. Very few people in the United States were privy to accurate and exhaustive facts from around the world, and those individuals were quite restricted with that information. On the other hand, the President asserted, those who did not know correct, comprehensive news had to “speak from guesswork based on information of doubtful accuracy.” He warned against such reports, and praised the majority of Americans who, with “good old horse sense,” refused to listen to every speculation or dissent in the media or public forums.<sup>108</sup>

In a press conference in October 1942, the President spoke of the American war plan: “I can say one thing....They are not being decided by the typewriter strategists who expound their views on the radio or the press.” FDR told of Robert E. Lee, who once stated that the “tragic fact” of the Civil War was that all the greatest generals “were apparently working on newspapers instead of in the Army.” Roosevelt believed the same to be true for the war in his time, and complained that such reports led to false doubts and criticisms: “The trouble with the typewriter strategists is that, while they may be full of bright ideas, they are not in possession of much information about the facts or problems of military operations.”<sup>109</sup>

In issuing unconditional surrender, Roosevelt offered a concise, unified focus of war, which could refute the various rumors and criticisms of the media. To the accusation that the other Allied nations would pull out of war: unconditional surrender. To the speculation of negotiated peace: unconditional surrender. To the doubt that the Allied coalition could win the war in the Far East: unconditional surrender. To the idea that the conclusion of war would not be worth the American sacrifice: unconditional surrender. To the allegation that

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<sup>106</sup> Roosevelt, *Nothing to Fear*, 348.

<sup>107</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 102.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, 483-485.

<sup>109</sup> Roosevelt, *Ah, That Voice*, 196-197.

the American government was marked by confusion and lack of direction: unconditional surrender.

The policy heralded a commitment to endure the war to the end, and a faith that the coalition would not negotiate a separate peace with the enemy. It gave Roosevelt's government a theme of defense from speculations of incompetence. In the words of the President: "Washington may be a madhouse—but only in the sense that it is the Capital City of a nation which is fighting mad."<sup>110</sup> Unconditional surrender in no way prevented further criticisms or speculations, but it did, however, offer Roosevelt a powerful, concise policy by which to respond to these allegations and a slogan by which Americans could dismiss such criticisms: "The United Nations are dedicated to a common cause.... We have a unified command and cooperation and comradeship.... We Americans will...find ways and means of expressing their determination to their enemies."<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Roosevelt, *Nothing to Fear*, 348.

<sup>111</sup> Roosevelt, *Selected Speeches, Messages, Press Conferences, and Letters*, ed. Basil Rauch (New York: Rinehart and Co, 1957), 307-308.

## CHAPTER VII: DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES

The President combated not only criticism and speculation from the media, but also growing apathy toward the war, political challenges and disunity on the home-front over actual domestic and foreign policies. Philosopher Isaiah Berlin observed the apathy toward the war, and asserted at the end of 1942 that many Americans viewed the conflict as a necessary evil, but did not have the emotion toward it of a crusade like they did in 1917: “[The] average citizen is rarely swept on a wave of patriotic emotion.” Historian Thomas Fleming cited OWI research which reported in August 1942 that fewer than ten percent of army draftees had a “consistent, favorable, intellectual orientation toward the war.” Moreover, the Four Freedoms, which Roosevelt had hoped would rally the United States to the war’s cause, did not seem to have much of an impact. OWI reported that of the 3,000 army personnel surveyed, only 13 percent could name at least 3 of the Freedoms and over a third of those surveyed had never heard of them. Fleming described “grim stoicism” and “cynical indifference”, which caused some Republicans as well as Democrats, such as Archibald MacLeish and Henry Wallace, to think the war needed “the provision of a moral issue.”<sup>112</sup>

In addition to the challenges of growing apathy among Americans, Roosevelt’s party underwent a political crisis at the end of 1942. Fleming argued in *The New Dealers’ War: FDR and the War within World War II* that the humiliating Democratic defeat in the November 1942 elections made the President sensitive to criticism and defensive in Congress. Fleming claimed that the loss at the polls was one of the issues “in the forefront of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s consciousness” when he began his journey to Casablanca.<sup>113</sup>

To compound this situation, the President believed that debating domestic particularities or post-war issues harmed the over-all war effort in America. Historian John Chase of the University of North Carolina commented in a 1955 article “Unconditional Surrender Reconsidered,” that, in Roosevelt’s mind, maintaining “unity of opinion” on the home-front was “indispensable” to obtaining victory in the war and a stabilized peace

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<sup>112</sup> Thomas Fleming, *The New Dealers’ War: FDR and the War within World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 164.

<sup>113</sup> Fleming, 172.

afterward. Sumner Welles wrote that the President had to concentrate, in the public's eye, only on winning the war in order to maintain a national unified war effort.<sup>114</sup>

The President recognized, however, that, unlike Russia, China or Great Britain, the United States sensed very little impending danger, a situation which gave room for disunity over “superficial” matters.<sup>115</sup> Roosevelt told of visiting soldiers and sailors in the islands of the Western Hemisphere and on the coast of West Africa, who were greatly concerned about the conditions back home. They had heard of complaining and “too little recognition of the realities of war.” Reports told of labor leaders threatening to strike, farm groups attempting to profiteer prices, and hardships from rationings. The President's confidence was that most Americans were “in this war to see it through with heart and body and soul,” but admitted that some Americans “have placed their personal ambition or greed above the Nation's interest.”<sup>116</sup>

For instance, Roosevelt dealt with criticism regarding economic security. Some Americans believed in a rather isolationist approach to world politics, asserting that the United States should prioritize their own economic interests, rather than sacrificing for the sake of world stability. FDR asserted that without economic stability for the rest of the world, the economic safety of United States would be threatened. “We cannot make America an island in either a military or an economic sense. Hitlerism, like any other form of crime or disease, can grow from the evil seeds of economic as well as military feudalism.” This push for American economic security over world stability endangered, in the President's mind, the war-effort, and therefore, the security of both the United States and all the nations who fought against the Axis powers.<sup>117</sup>

Furthermore, during the State of the Union address issued on January 7, 1943, just before the Casablanca conference, Roosevelt spoke of disparagements within his country over “the management and conduct of our war production.” In defense, he listed the country's achievements in this area, and then proclaimed, “Who could have hoped to have done this without burdensome Government regulations which are a nuisance to everyone—including those who have the thankless task of administering them?” He admitted that the

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<sup>114</sup> Chase, 274; Welles, 135.

<sup>115</sup> Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 360-361.

<sup>116</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 74-75.

country's leaders had made some mistakes and that various hardships would continue along the way. The President continued that some of the disapproval over war production, "based on guesswork and even on malicious falsification of fact," had created fears and doubts and had "weakened our total effort."<sup>118</sup>

Also in regard to war production and the over-all war effort, the President asked the country to make significant sacrifices during 1942. For instance, in addressing the issue of the mobilization of manpower for the war effort, he challenged both employers and employees to lay down personal desires for the sake of the country. In order both to fight the war and to man the war industries and farms with enough workers to produce the needed arms, munitions and food, the President requested that workers stop "moving from one war job to another as a matter of personal preference." Employers should sacrifice as well, Roosevelt asserted, by using women, older men, handicapped persons, and even older children, "wherever possible and reasonable," in the place of men who were of military age and health. The President also challenged employers to train new personnel and to "stop the wastage of labor" in all unnecessary activities.<sup>119</sup>

Roosevelt encouraged sacrifice in broader arenas of life as well for the sake of the war effort. Schools, the President challenged, should be flexible in allowing high school students to take time off to help in farms and war factories, and Americans should work close to their homes to save in transportation efforts. During this year, the President also lowered the age limit for the Selective Services from twenty years down to eighteen. FDR sympathized with the parents: "I can very thoroughly understand the feelings of all parents whose sons have entered our armed forces," but declared that such a decision was inevitable to obtain victory without delay.<sup>120</sup>

Debate on the home-front regarding the post-war make-up of Europe served as another area of discussion which caused tension in the United States. Leading up to this time, many statesmen desired to plan a policy for post-war Europe. A great conflict had arisen over this issue. Sumner Welles noted that the President was concerned that by discussing the status of various nations, such as the Baltic states, Poland, and other Eastern

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<sup>117</sup> Roosevelt, *Nothing to Fear*, 351.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 345-348.

<sup>119</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 421-423.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

European settlements, the minority populations would become greatly agitated and argumentative, dividing into “antagonistic” groups.<sup>121</sup> Historian John Snell also asserted that in the post-war policy discussions, Roosevelt had to take into consideration the “uninformed emotions of the masses.”<sup>122</sup>

In light of all the sacrifices the war effort required and the emotion various discussions and decisions incurred, Roosevelt was cautious in the way he presented the world conflict to the American people. He disliked stating war aims in a positive light, preferring to refer to the conflict as “The Survival War.” Furthermore the President believed that he could not give the war a social purpose without the bitter criticism from those groups who already opposed his domestic plans.<sup>123</sup>

In response to these disagreements and difficulties on the home-front, Roosevelt trumpeted one response: Unity. Maintaining a focus on victory and national cohesiveness dominated Roosevelt’s thinking during this time. During a speech in November 1942, Roosevelt encouraged Americans to forsake individual political preferences for the sake of over-all unity: “While long-range social and economic problems are by no means forgotten, they are a little like books which for the moment we have laid aside in order that we might get out the old atlas to learn the geography of the battle areas.”<sup>124</sup> Also, in a letter to the Daughters of the American Revolution in May 1942, FDR reiterated a statement made by Thomas Jefferson: “The times do certainly render it incumbent on all good citizens, attached to the rights and honor of their country, to bury in oblivion all internal differences and rally around the standard of their country.”<sup>125</sup>

These issues Roosevelt faced on the home-front in 1942 contributed to the political environment which spurred on the President’s announcement of unconditional surrender. Historian Robert Dallek argued that the President’s entire domestic goal in 1942 was to “adjourn politics and submerge all differences,” and believed that Roosevelt desired a unifying point that enforced a long-range goal during the war.<sup>126</sup> Unconditional surrender offered this unifying, long-range goal. Issuing unconditional surrender put forth an

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<sup>121</sup> Welles, 135.

<sup>122</sup> Snell, 14-15.

<sup>123</sup> Chase, 275; Welles, 135; Roosevelt, *Nothing to Fear*, 350.

<sup>124</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 483.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, 239.



alternative to criticism and dissension by focusing on total unity in their defeat of the enemy and in their commitment to the United Nations. The policy offered a hope and confidence that the sacrifices of war and the “superficial” domestic disagreements would pale in comparison of total victory. To those who had lost loved ones in this conflict, it offered the assurance that those lives would not be given in vain. To the issues of economy, war production, scarcity, and manpower, unconditional surrender pointed to optimism and unity: “We are all in [this war]—all the way. Every single man, woman and child is a partner in the most tremendous undertaking of our American history....The United States can accept no result save victory, final and complete.”<sup>127</sup>

The announcement of unconditional surrender also allowed a legitimate postponement of discussions regarding postwar policy. Territorial issues in relation to occupied countries could not be decided until complete victory was imminent. Chase noted that the long-term advantages of unconditional surrender came “in the fact that it reinforced the ban on discussion of post-war territorial issues, thus preserving a measure of international harmony necessary to the effective prosecution of the war,” as well as unifying “American public opinion on the need for winning the war.”<sup>128</sup>

Over internal differences, Roosevelt laid an over-arching theme of unconditional surrender: “[One] thought is uppermost in our minds. That is our determination to fight this war through to the finish—to the day when United Nations forces march in triumph through the streets of Berlin and Rome, and Tokyo.”<sup>129</sup> This one determination, specifically set forth in policy at the Casablanca conference, offered for Roosevelt the diversion and unifying policy needed to combat domestic differences and fears.

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<sup>126</sup> Dallek, 360-361, 317.

<sup>127</sup> Roosevelt, *Nothing to Fear*, 305-310.

<sup>128</sup> Chase, 279.

<sup>129</sup> *The Public Papers and Address of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 12, 72.

**Roosevelt's Olive Branch:  
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**Part IV: Inner- Allied Reasoning**

## CHAPTER VIII: ALLIED DISUNITY

In addition to domestic criticisms and speculations, Roosevelt also dealt with various dissentious issues among the Allies leading up to the Casablanca conference. Throughout 1942, tensions or suspicion among the Big Three built over certain circumstances. Evidence of Allied conflict, oddly enough, can be traced through the personal diaries of Joseph Goebbels, head of German propaganda.

Goebbels desired to disrupt the unity of the Allies. In fact, one of the German propagandist's five main slogans boasted of "Allied Disunity." Tension among the Allies already existed, and any German successes would continue to strain their unity. German propaganda proclaimed that Allied Disunity would play a key role in the salvation of the German nation.<sup>130</sup>

According to Goebbels' personal diaries, however, Nazi propaganda in 1942 intentionally avoided the subject of Allied Disunity. Goebbels believed that the Allied coalition was so dissentious already during that time, that he dare not make an issue out of it: "The differences between [the Allies] are growing quite naturally and so quickly that we shall desist from trying to increase them by our commentary. The English might otherwise take up some of our comments and use them to prove to the Americans how undesirable such conflicts are." Goebbels called this tension "a precious plant," which had to be left "to grow with the aid of natural rain and natural sun under God's free sky." He had high hopes for these differences, but claimed that "the time has not yet come for making them grow by artificial means."<sup>131</sup>

Goebbels specifically noted in his diary in February 1942, that Americans were quite critical of Churchill at the time. He stated that Germany would "take no note" of the situation because he did not "want this tender plant of discouragement between the two allies to die prematurely." In April of that year, the German propagandist claimed that Americans were "at present anything but friendly to England." He pointed to a British source that claimed "one can hardly discover a single friend of England in the United

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<sup>130</sup> Carroll, 200.

<sup>131</sup> Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943*, ed. Louis Lochner (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1948), 90.

States.” Goebbels again decided that he would “take no notice” in his propaganda efforts of these conflicts between the two nations: “They should develop of themselves.”<sup>132</sup>

Again in May 1942, Goebbels commented on an article in the *Chicago Tribune*, which “launched a very heavy attack” against the leadership in Great Britain and against the “meddling” of the English press with American internal matters. Goebbels asserted that the *Tribune* had always been rather “isolationist,” and was encouraged by their unexpected outburst. German propaganda, again, the Nazi affirmed, would remain quiet over the issue: “As we have no interest in causing the little plant of Anglo-American enmity to wither by turning our sun lamps of publicity on it too officiously, we shall take no notice of this editorial in our news and propaganda services.”<sup>133</sup>

Goebbels saw disunity brewing from the East as well. He claimed that Soviet Russia was becoming increasingly frustrated with the “British contribution in other theaters of war.” The German propagandist claimed that the Bolsheviks finally were realizing that their alliance with the United Nations was accompanied by “a ball and chain.” He later reported that the Allies were in an increasingly difficult position, as Soviet Russia demanded more of the coalition than they were able to give.<sup>134</sup> In all of the dissension Goebbels observed, he claimed that he chose to remain quiet, as not to bring attention to the destructiveness of these dynamics.

These entries clearly asserted that the Allies faced a very tumultuous time leading up to the Casablanca conference. Excerpts from Roosevelt’s speeches throughout 1942 revealed the President’s concern on this issue. FDR, however, asserted that danger existed for the Allies in enemy propaganda. He expressed a fear that this propaganda would disrupt cohesiveness among the nations of the coalition.

In contrast to the statements made in Goebbels’ diaries, the President asserted that Nazi propaganda attempted in every way to interfere with the Allied coalition. He declared in the State of the Union Address in January 1942, that Americans and other members of the United Nations needed to “guard against division,” which enemy propaganda attempted to create. The President explained that the Germans, in particular, would make continual efforts to “breed mistrust and suspicion between one individual and another, one group and

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid, 93, 175.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 225.

another.” Roosevelt gave Hitler credit for dividing France from Great Britain earlier in the war by a “technique of falsehood and rumor-mongering,” and lamented that the German leader was “trying to do this with us even now.”<sup>135</sup>

Again, in a Fireside Chat on the Progress of War in February of 1942, FDR reported that Axis propagandists had previously attempted by “various evil ways” to harm the Allies’ “determination and morale,” but had failed.<sup>136</sup> He lamented, however, that German propaganda had turned its attack to Allied unity. Roosevelt expressed his unease with the enemy’s attempt to harm the “confidence” the Allies had in each other: “They say that the British are finished—that the Russians and the Chinese are about to quit.” Enemy propaganda, according to the President, admitted that the United States was a rich nation and had significant industrial strength, but proclaimed that Americans were “soft and decadent,” and could not and would not “unite and work and fight.” FDR explained: “From Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo we have been described as a Nation of weaklings—‘playboys’—who would hire British soldiers, or Russian soldiers, or Chinese soldiers to do our fighting for us.” Roosevelt begged “patriotic and sensible Americans” not to listen to such rumors, and attempted to convince his audience that the Allies were, in fact, united and that all nations of the coalition were working and fighting hard to defeat the enemy.<sup>137</sup>

In another Fireside Chat in October of that year, the President described the “War of Nerves” as one of the chief weapons of the Axis powers. This “War of Nerves” included spreading “falsehood and terror,” starting fifth columns “everywhere,” deceiving the “innocent,” and aiding and abetting people from other nations, and within the United States, whose “words and deeds are advertised from Berlin and Tokyo as proof of our disunity.”

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<sup>134</sup> Goebbels, 70, 178.

<sup>135</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, ed., vol. 11, 39.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, 114-115. Goebbels disagreed with the President’s analysis. He asserted that morale in the United States was low and that “the masses” of Americans had become “greatly disillusioned.” In April, 1942, Goebbels wrote in his diary: “All reports from the United States agree that there isn’t a spark of enthusiasm for war discernible there.” He declared that Roosevelt had not “succeeded in interesting the broad masses at all.” The German propagandist reported that the American President’s attempt to create enthusiasm for the war through military parades would not help American morale: “He might just as well have elephants march through the streets.” In regards to England, Goebbels noted that *The Empire Review*, an English periodical, reported a “deepest pessimism on the part of the British Empire politicians.” The German propagandist reported that the manner in which the publication described the situation “left nothing to be desired.” He claimed that German propaganda could not have done a better job giving such a dismal report: “One almost has the impression that the writer of the article cleverly put together the ideas laid down in my *Reich* articles.” Goebbels, 166, 180, 159, 186.

<sup>137</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, ed., vol. 11, 114-115.

The President claimed that the Allies were beginning to win this war against German propaganda, and thought that attempts to turn one Allied nation against another were “panicky” and “frantic.”<sup>138</sup>

Although in public speeches, the President presented an optimistic view of Allied unity, his frequent mention of this subject, specifically relating to enemy propaganda, which according to Goebbels did not exist during this time, evinced his concern for this tender situation. He desired to trumpet Allied unity in hopes to spur on delicate relationships, for, although the President proclaimed unity and cohesiveness among the Allies, several major conflicts brewed beneath the surface. These situations also contributed to the political environment which prompted Roosevelt’s announcement of unconditional surrender at the Casablanca conference.

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 417; *War Messages*, 48; Chase 273.

## CHAPTER IX: AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN

The United States and Great Britain were linked very closely. There was little doubt that the two Western Allies would remain loyal to each other throughout the war. Churchill wrote: “However sharp the conflict of views at the Combined Chiefs of Staff meeting, however frank and even heated the argument, sincere loyalty to the common cause prevailed over national or personal interest.”<sup>139</sup> Frances Perkins, U.S. Secretary of Labor during this time, recalled that, while Roosevelt was skeptical of Churchill at first, the two of them grew to be very good friends. They became close enough, according to Perkins, that Roosevelt began to “tease Churchill unmercifully, but that was a sign of being ‘in the family.’”<sup>140</sup> Overall, Great Britain and the United States shared a common war aim and were supportive of each other in the face of world conflict.

Despite this comradeship, it is worth noting that the two Allied nations often disagreed on the prioritization of certain war objectives and the methods by which to accomplish these goals. Churchill recalled that the Combined Chiefs of Staff discussed at the Casablanca conference one such issue. American representatives expressed the fear that the British, who prioritized the European theater over Pacific theater, might pull out of the war once the Allies had defeated the Germans, leaving the United States to fight alone in the Pacific. Churchill reported back to his War Cabinet in London that this would not be the case: “I thought it right to say in categorical terms that our interest and our honour were alike engaged,” and that the “whole resources” of the British would be available for the defeat of Japan after Germany “had been brought to her knees.” The Prime Minister even offered to refute this American fear by entering a formal treaty or pact to this effect.<sup>141</sup>

Besides this concern that the British would pull out of the war once Europe was secured, the Allied leaders also faced military disagreements and tension at the Casablanca conference. Armstrong spoke of a “natural rivalry” between the British and American leaders.<sup>142</sup> Although the official communiqué of the Casablanca conference claimed that “complete agreement was reached between the leaders of the two countries and their

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<sup>139</sup> Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, 687.

<sup>140</sup> Frances Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew* (New York: The Viking Press, 1946), 80.

<sup>141</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 683-684.

<sup>142</sup> Armstrong, 8.

respective staffs upon war plans and enterprises to be undertaken during the campaigns of 1943,” the British and American delegates entered the Casablanca conference divided on almost every decision.<sup>143</sup>

Some of the issues on which these leaders disagreed were the prioritization on the war in the Pacific, the decision on when and where to launch a second front invasion, the extent and manner in which to proceed with the bombing offensive against the German nation, the method by which they would manage and then end the threat of German U-boats, and the issue of forth-coming action in the Mediterranean.<sup>144</sup> The British desired an attack in the Mediterranean and on Sardinia and Sicily, with their eyes on Italy. The United States did not want to be “entangled,” in Churchill’s words, in the Mediterranean in a way that would disrupt their later plans for Europe. Churchill observed, “We were thus reaching from both sides of the Atlantic a sort of combined deadlock.”<sup>145</sup>

In addition to these matters, another issue, producing the most tension between the two nations, loomed over the attendees at the Casablanca conference. This matter actually had consequences reaching far beyond the strain between Great Britain and the United States. The various dynamics involving the French during this time cast a political shadow not only on the British and American relationship, but also on Roosevelt’s credibility as a democratic leader. The situation also significantly contributed to the political environment which prompted the President to announce unconditional surrender.

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<sup>143</sup> Langsam, Walter. *Historic Documents of World War II* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1958), 87.

<sup>144</sup> Armstrong, 9.

<sup>145</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 651,



## CHAPTER X:

### FREE FRENCH

In 1940, when Germany over-took France, the majority of the French Parliament voted to dissolve the Third Republic and gave Marshal Henri Philippe Pétain power as Head of State, thus establishing the Vichy government. This government, although officially neutral, served essentially as a puppet state of the Nazi regime. Before the fall of the Third Republic, General Charles de Gaulle, a member of the French cabinet, went to London as an emissary representing the minority politicians who desired to resist the Germans, and was located in Great Britain when the Vichy government rose to power. From London, de Gaulle led a movement of the “Free” or “Fighting” French which opposed both the Nazi and Vichy regimes. De Gaulle viewed Pétain’s command as unconstitutional and acknowledged only his own exiled government as the legitimate authority of his homeland. The Vichy government, on the other hand, tried de Gaulle, *in absentia*, and sentenced him to death for treason.

From the beginning of the French conflict, Churchill supported de Gaulle and the movement of the Free French. British leadership refused to acknowledge the Vichy government, and offered de Gaulle asylum and aided his efforts. The United States, on the other hand, would not recognize General de Gaulle’s Free French, claiming that they had no intention of acknowledging “any one person or group as the Government of France until a liberated French population could freely chose their own government.”<sup>146</sup>

The tension between the United States and Great Britain, in relation to the two French movements, came to a head just two months before the Casablanca conference. In the beginning of November 1942, the Allies prepared for “Operation TORCH,” an invasion of North Africa. Churchill desired to inform de Gaulle of the impending plans for this attack, hoping to enlist the help of the Fighting French in the conflict. Roosevelt, however, refused. The President reasoned in a letter to the Prime Minister on November 5 that doing so would have an “adverse effect” on the already fragile political situation in North Africa. Since Vichy supporters were at bitter odds with the Fighting French in that area, de Gaulle’s endorsement of the attack would serve as a signal to his opponents to resist the Allied

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<sup>146</sup> Quoted in Dallek, 362-363.

invasion. Roosevelt hoped, rather, to entice the Vichy French into cooperating with the invasion.<sup>147</sup>

To Churchill's embarrassment, de Gaulle found out about the Allied North African landing through the news the morning after the attack.<sup>148</sup> The French leader met later that day with Eden and Churchill, who "lavished" on him "every sign of... friendship." The Prime Minister explained that, although the British fleet and air force were actively engaged in the fight, their role was "a purely accessory capacity," with the Americans calling the shots under Eisenhower's command. Churchill expressed the British devotion to de Gaulle, and lamented that they were "obliged to go along" with the American demand that the Free French be left out: "You have been with us during the war's worst moments. We shall not abandon you now that the horizon shows signs of brightening."<sup>149</sup>

Meanwhile, the American military leadership in North Africa discovered that the French in that area presented a much greater problem than initially expected. The Vichy sympathizers who Roosevelt had hoped would cooperate had no intention of doing so. Before the invasion, the United States leadership made the decision, through research by the State Department consular officials, the Office of Strategic Services and others sources in North Africa, to enlist the help of French General Henri Giraud.<sup>150</sup> Giraud was considered a hero, who had been able to escape from the Germans in both the First and Second World Wars. Upon his return to Vichy France after his escape in April 1942, Pierre Laval, Chief of the Vichy Government, tried to convince Giraud to return to the Germans. The General, however, chose to stay in Vichy and worked for Pétain creating a memorandum on the causes of the French defeat. The Western Allies viewed Giraud as the obvious choice to unite the French in North Africa, so smuggled him out of Vichy France in November.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 605; Cole and Weisberg, 34; Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 369-370.

<sup>148</sup> Charles De Gaulle, *The Complete War Memoirs of Charles de Gaulle* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 349-350; DeGaulle suspected the invasion from hearing "Robert arriving! Robert arriving!" all day long over the British and American military stations. "Robert," de Gaulle assumed, referred to Robert Murphy, Head of Civil Affairs Section for TORCH.

<sup>149</sup> De Gaulle, 349-350.

<sup>150</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 481-482; Sir Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Churchill & Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, ed. Warren F. Kimball, vol. II (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 3.

<sup>151</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 607; Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 277-278; In April 1942, Giraud made an impressive escape from the Königstein castle and managed to evade the German secret police for a week. He

From the beginning of negotiations with the Allies, Giraud made himself a thorn in the flesh. General Eisenhower lamented that Giraud was stubborn, difficult to deal with, and demanding. The American General wrote to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on November 8, that the Frenchman “flatly declined to participate in operations” unless he could immediately take the position of Allied supreme commander and “be completely independent to carry out his own strategic and tactical conceptions.”<sup>152</sup> An U.S. Admiral labeled Giraud’s demands “preposterous and unreasonable,” and Eisenhower expressed his disappointment over the French General’s “intense personal ambition and ego.” General Eisenhower conceded as many points as he could to Giraud, besides relinquishing his responsibility to the Combined Chiefs of Staff for operations of the Allied forces. The two finally came to a “gentleman’s agreement” with Giraud as the Commander in Chief of all French forces in the region of North Africa and Governor of that area, and plans were put in place for Giraud to unite the North African French toward the Allied cause.<sup>153</sup>

Roosevelt also attempted to obtain French cooperation for the invasion by issuing a flattering speech to them. He talked of his “deepest friendship” with the French people and of the “precious heritage” the United States had inherited from France, including its culture and principles of democracy: “No two Nations exist which are more united by historic and mutually friendly ties than the people of France and the United States.” He promised them that the Allies did not mean them any harm in the invasion, but sought to “repulse the cruel invaders who would remove forever your rights....” The President begged them not to obstruct the Allied advance in North Africa but to “help where you are able, my friends.” Roosevelt also sent a message to Marshal Pétain the next day with the same message.<sup>154</sup>

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finally managed to cross the German border into Switzerland and then on to France. He arrived in Vichy on April 27 and dined with Marshal Pétain; Bryant, 507.

<sup>152</sup> Eisenhower pointed out to Giraud that if he were given the supreme command of the Allied forces in North Africa, then Eisenhower would have to be responsible both to Giraud and to “the two governments, which are providing all the resources and dictating the major strategy.” Eisenhower commented that Giraud “seemed totally unable to grasp the point that I could not be responsible to two entirely separate agencies whose views, respecting immediate and primary objectives in the theater, do not repeat not remotely agree.” Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower: The War Years: II*, edited by Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1970), 670-676.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 451-460.

Neither Giraud's involvement nor Roosevelt's pleas served their purposes. During the invasion, the Americans discovered that the French officers, who were deeply devoted to Marshal Pétain, did not welcome General Giraud. Eisenhower later explained that the resistance that the Allies first met in North Africa came because the French believed that to be "Marshal's wish." Giraud lost credibility, as many Frenchmen viewed his urgings for non-resistance as somewhat treacherous. Eisenhower wrote that "no Frenchman immediately available, no matter how friendly toward us, seems able to stop the fighting."<sup>155</sup> The President's message to Pétain also had an adverse effect. The day after the invasion, the White House received word from Laval that his government had severed diplomatic relations with the United States.<sup>156</sup>

The Allies quickly realized that they were not equipped to over-take North Africa without subverting French resistance there. Eisenhower estimated that 60,000 troops would be needed to control the tribes in Morocco alone.<sup>157</sup> Seeing that Giraud was of little help to them, the Americans found themselves in need of another Frenchman to convince his fellow officers not to resist the Allied advances. For this position, the American military leaders chose the controversial Admiral Jean François Darlan.

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<sup>155</sup> Eisenhower, 707, 675.

<sup>156</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 451-460; The White House issued a statement lamenting this fact and emphasized that "no action of Hitler, or any of his puppets, can sever relations between the American people and the people of France. We have not broken relations with the French."

<sup>157</sup> *Eisenhower*, 708; Sherwood also pointed out that, since Eisenhower admitted how surprised he was at the situation in North Africa, and the fact that the Allies had been fairly certain that Giraud would be able to unite the French but he was not able to do so, the situation showed a lack of credibility on the part of Allied intelligence in North Africa. Sherwood noted that that fact was particularly surprising, given that North Africa was not enemy territory, so, therefore, served as a hub for Intelligence. "This led to a display of political crudity which made the U.S. Government look ridiculously amateurish." Sherwood, 653.

## CHAPTER XI:

### DARLAN DEAL

Before the German take-over of Paris, Darlan became the head of the entire French Navy. Upon the rise of the Vichy government, Darlan sided with Marshal Pétain, retaining his position as Minister of the Navy, and soon became the Vichy Commander in Chief of all French forces.<sup>158</sup> During the invasion of North Africa, the American military leadership discovered that Darlan was in Algiers, where the Admiral had gone to see his fatally ill son, Alain. The Americans placed Darlan, who the French officers in North Africa regarded alone as their legal commander and personal representative of Pétain, in protective custody and attempted to convince him to demand that the French forces cease their resistance.

Darlan was extremely hesitant give in to the threats of the Allies, as he had made a pledge of loyalty to Marshal Pétain. But within a few days of the Allied landing, Germany advanced on France, stripping the Vichy government of its actual authority. Under German persuasion, Laval and Pétain ordered the French to resist the Allied advance in North Africa, but, Pétain followed up with a second secret message to Darlan indicating that he approved of Darlan's agreement with the Allies. The German occupation gave Darlan and the other French officers the assurance they needed to cooperate with the Allies. Darlan argued that Pétain, then a German prisoner, would have otherwise approved of the deal in North Africa.<sup>159</sup> The French Admiral ordered the cease-fire, and immediately Eisenhower noted results: "Casablanca: In this area it appears that cessation of hostilities was at least partially brought about by Darlan's order"<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> George E. Melton, *Darlan: Admiral and Statesman of France, 1881-1942* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 166.

<sup>159</sup> Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 355-356; Melton, 166; Captain Harry C. Butcher, *My Three Years with Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946), 192. Sherwood noted that some believed that Robert Murphy had actually made secret arrangements with Darlan three weeks prior to TORCH and that Darlan's appearance in Algiers on the night of November 7 was not a coincidence, but was rather pre-arranged. Sherwood personally did not believe this account, claiming that it was "virtually impossible to imagine Generals Eisenhower and Mark Clark and many other soldiers and sailors suddenly developing the exceptional talents as actors that the performance of this fabulous masquerade would have required." Sherwood also pointed out that the paralysis of Darlan's son was "no masquerade." Sherwood, 648-649. William Langer was of similar opinion. Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 345.

<sup>160</sup> Eisenhower, 697.

The Allies attempted to bring Darlan and Giraud together to work toward a common cause in North Africa. This situation turned out to be difficult as well. Eisenhower commented that Giraud “hated” and “distrusted” Darlan, while Darlan refused to meet with any other Frenchman.<sup>161</sup> The American General concluded, “So here I am; I’ve promised Giraud to make him the big shot, while I’ve got to use every kind of cajolery, bribe, threat and all else to get Darlan’s *active* cooperation. All of these Frogs have a single thought – ‘ME’.”<sup>162</sup> Amid the controversy, Darlan and Giraud reached a tentative agreement whereby Giraud would be the military head and Darlan the political head of the French in North Africa. American General Mark Clark had been leading those negotiations, doing a “magnificent job” according to Eisenhower, but on November 13, Eisenhower left for Algiers to assist in “crystallizing the situation.” On that day, the French officials in North Africa agreed on a provisional government, the so-called “Darlan Deal,” or “Clark-Darlan Agreement.” It was official on November 22. This agreement gave the Allies military control of the North Africa region, while the French retained administrative control, with Darlan as High Commissioner, head of the civil government in French North Africa.<sup>163</sup>

Darlan still asserted, however, that he was an extension of the Vichy government. Captain Harry C. Butcher, Naval Aide to General Eisenhower, reported that Darlan’s radio announcement in Algiers regarding the deal carried “with it the assertion that Pétain had given the group a fatherly blessing.”<sup>164</sup> Darlan explained that he was “simply managing French interests in French Africa, in the name of the prisoner Chief of State.” He concluded: “I am acting as a trustee of authority, the trustee of a national treasure.”<sup>165</sup> Meanwhile, the arrangement with Darlan, in Butcher’s words, “placed something of an unpatriotic stigma against Giraud for having conferred with the enemy.” Because of this,

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<sup>161</sup> Eisenhower interpreted Darlan’s refusal to meet with any other Frenchman as “to hell with Giraud.”

<sup>162</sup> Eisenhower, 677. Eisenhower continued: “It isn’t this operation that’s wearing me down—it’s the petty intrigue and the necessity of dealing with the little, selfish, conceited worms that call themselves men. Oh well—by the time this thing I over I’ll probably be as crooked as any of them.”

<sup>163</sup> Eisenhower, 705-707. Darlan and Giraud at this point had come to an agreement, but Nogues refused to accept it. This “Deal” became official on November 22. See also Robert D. Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1964), 139-140 and George F. Howe, *U.S. Army in World War II, Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1991), 269-271; *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 481-482; *Churchill & Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, 3.

<sup>164</sup> Butcher, 193.

<sup>165</sup> Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 379.

Giraud agreed that announcement of his involvement should not be issued until the situation in North Africa was secured.<sup>166</sup>

Eisenhower immediately defended the Darlan Deal to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, stating that he could “well understand some bewilderment in London and Washington” over these actions. He maintained that the situation in North Africa did not “even remotely resemble prior calculations,” and assured his superiors that Darlan was the only option in saving the North African operations. The American general pointed out that even Giraud, after observing the military situation, “clearly recognizes this overpowering consideration and has drastically modified his own ambitions and intentions accordingly.” Eisenhower reported that Giraud was “fully aware of his inability to do anything by himself, even with Allied moral and military support,” and that he had “cheerfully accepted the post of military chief in the Darlan group.”<sup>167</sup>

Eisenhower trusted Giraud to “watch Darlan,” and pointed out to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that repudiating Darlan would have devastating affects on the Allied cause in North Africa: “I am certain that anyone who is not...on the ground can have no clear appreciation of the complex currents of feeling and of prejudice that influence the situation. Eisenhower even sent a challenge to the Chiefs of Staff that if they were not satisfied with the arrangement still, they could send representatives to investigate the situation, “where, in ten minutes, they can be convinced of the soundness of the moves we have made.”<sup>168</sup>

Roosevelt supported entirely Eisenhower’s decision to work with Darlan, but warned the General to watch him closely. Roosevelt made his apprehensions clear to the General:

I think you should know and have in mind the following policies of this Government: 1. That we do not trust Darlan. 2. That it is impossible to keep a collaborator of Hitler and one whom we believe to be a fascist in civil power

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<sup>166</sup> Butcher, 192.

<sup>167</sup> Eisenhower, 707-708.

<sup>168</sup> Eisenhower, 708-709; Sherwood recalled hearing Roosevelt reading to Hopkins the above-mentioned cable Eisenhower sent to the President on November 14. “It was a remarkable statement of Eisenhower’s reasons for the Darlan deal. Roosevelt was deeply impressed by it and, as he read it with the same superb distribution of emphasis that he used in his public speeches, he sounded as if he were making an eloquent plea for Eisenhower before the bar of history.” Sherwood, 651.

any longer than is absolutely necessary. 3. His movements should be watched carefully and his communications supervised.<sup>169</sup>

Immediately criticism and speculation began over the decision to work with Darlan. Allegations surfaced that the arrangement was a compromise of the Allied political stance. Some voiced concern that Roosevelt and other political leaders were beginning to make decisions based upon military advantage, and not on political principle. Had the Allies begun down the slippery slope of political opportunism? Aligning with a Vichy statesman seemed rather suspicious, if not dangerous. Sherwood wrote that the protests could be summed up in the following statement: “If we will make a deal with a Darlan in French territory, then presumably we will make one with a Goering in Germany or with a Matsuoka in Japan.”<sup>170</sup>

So disturbed by the arrangement, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of Treasury at the time, told Secretary of War Stimson that he had lost all interest in the war. Morgenthau argued that some moral issues were more important than “temporary military victories.” Later, according to Fleming, Morgenthau “lectured FDR in the Oval Office for twenty minutes, claiming the Darlan Deal had fatally impugned the nation’s honor.”<sup>171</sup>

Many others joined Morgenthau’s complaints. Sherwood reported that just two days after Eisenhower informed Washington of the Deal, criticism had gotten so bad that he, along with Hopkins and Samuel Rosenman, FDR’s principal speech writer, “strongly urged” Roosevelt to issue a press statement.<sup>172</sup> The President heeded their advice and attempted to dispel controversy over the issue by emphasizing the temporary nature of the agreement with Darlan. In this press announcement, FDR stressed that he was opposed to pro-Hitler Frenchmen and affirmed that “the present temporary arrangement in North and West Africa is only a temporary expedient, justified solely by the stress of battle.” This “present temporary arrangement,” he repeated again, had two desired military objectives: 1) saving

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<sup>169</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 481-482; *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, 3; Eisenhower wrote in a secret cable on November 18, “Once the population looks to us as their benefactors, I can tell all the turncoats and crooks to go to hell I am convinced that the lower ranks of the Army are pro-Giraud and anti-Vichy....But to uncover and organize that sentiment would take time and, in some instances, an application of force and general policing of region at least for a considerable period.” *Eisenhower*, 735.

<sup>170</sup> Sherwood, 651; Coles and Weinberg, 30.

<sup>171</sup> Fleming, 168-169.

<sup>172</sup> Sherwood, 655.



American and British, as well French, lives, and, 2) saving valuable time, as each passing day allowed German and Italian resistance to build stronger. He believed that with the efforts of Darlan and Giraud, the united French forces would not be a hindrance to the Allied work, and would even assist in the Allied progress in North Africa.<sup>173</sup>

Roosevelt also tried to make light of the political controversy when delivering this press statement on November 17. He interrupted his own speech several time to crack jokes or insert light-hearted comments to the press. He ended the press conference and diverted some questions by a blathering explanation of a Balkan proverb:

I thought—I thought of putting in there, but I didn’t, an old Balkan proverb, which I cannot have even attributed to me, because at that present time I don’t like to call names any more than one has to. It’s rather a nice old proverb of the Balkans that has, as I understand it, has the full sanction of the Orthodox Church. And it runs—this is off the record—complete—(French for completely)---(Laughter)-look it up in an encyclopedia of Balkan proverbs if you want to—(more laughter)—it runs something like this. The--mind you, this is okayed by the Church. It says, “My children, you are permitted in time of great danger to walk with the Devil until you have crossed the bridge.” (Loud laughter). Rather nice!<sup>174</sup>

Roosevelt’s efforts to dispel the criticism over the Darlan Deal, however, had little effect. Sherwood noted that while the military performance in North Africa was “brilliant... the same could not be said for the concurrent and subsequent political conduct of affairs.”<sup>175</sup> Rosenman also commented that the landings in North Africa “were successful; but the politics of administration in North Africa were not.”<sup>176</sup> According to Sherwood, although Eisenhower had administered and approved the Deal, the General was not the “prime target” of the criticism which ensued. That disapproval largely fell on Roosevelt and the State Department. Sherwood asserted that, specifically, because Hull and the State Department were so eager “in claiming a substantial share of credit” for the accomplishments in North Africa, they were “given a huge and unfair share of the blame” for the Darlan Deal, “which

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<sup>173</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 480. Roosevelt used the word “temporary” three times within five consecutive sentences.

<sup>174</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Complete Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 19-20, edited by Jonathon Daniels (New York: De Capo Press, 1972), 246-247.

<sup>175</sup> Sherwood, 648.

<sup>176</sup> Samuel Rosenman, *Working with Roosevelt* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), 363.

seemed a sordid nullification of the principles for which the United Nations were supposed to be fighting.”<sup>177</sup>

Even after Roosevelt’s press statement, many on the American home-front were disgusted that Roosevelt and the State Department allowed an alignment with Darlan, who they considered a fascist, having collaborated with the Germans for two years prior.<sup>178</sup> Secretary of State Henry Stimson reported that, “the number and quality” of people in America who disagreed “was astonishing.”<sup>179</sup> Columnists and political commentators, such as Drew Pearson, Walter Winchell and Walter Lippmann, detested the decision, some calling it “a deal with the devil.” *Time* asked how the United States could work with one of Hitler’s stooges. Fleming reported that some of Roosevelt’s political opponents took advantage of the controversy and accused the President of doing business with the fascists.<sup>180</sup>

Rosenman claimed that even some of Roosevelt’s liberal adherents criticized this policy, being “unwilling to recognize that many thousands of American lives had been saved by our military and political deals with North Africa.”<sup>181</sup> “The moral authority of the President is being impaired,” declared the head of the OWI office in London. James Warburg, deputy director of OWI’s overseas branch, believed that the arrangement would devastate the good faith people around the world had in the United States. Even Eleanor Roosevelt spoke against the Darlan Deal in her daily newspaper column. Admiral William Leahy, the President’s military chief of staff and liaison to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reported that even at a White House dinner Mrs. Roosevelt expressed displeasure over this political arrangement.<sup>182</sup>

In Great Britain, the criticism over the American alliance with Darlan was even more severe. Butcher recalled that news of the deal “was being coolly received” in London, and reported that Darlan’s radio announcement in Algiers explaining the deal, “had created

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<sup>177</sup> Sherwood, 651; At the Casablanca conference, Eisenhower told the President, “I believe in a theatre commander doing these things without referring them back to his home Government and then waiting for approval. If a mere General makes a mistake, he can be repudiated and kicked out and disgraced. But a Government cannot repudiate and kick out and disgrace itself—not, at any rate, in wartime.”

<sup>178</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 11, 481-482; *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, 3.

<sup>179</sup> Mario Rossi, *Roosevelt and the French* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1996), 97.

<sup>180</sup> Fleming, 167-169.

<sup>181</sup> Rosenman, 363.

raised eyebrows in London, where Darlan was commonly regarded as a ‘stinking skunk.’”<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, the agreement appeared to the British to be a rejection of de Gaulle. Churchill noted a press reporting: “De Gaulle banned; Darlan uplifted.”<sup>184</sup>

The Prime Minister told of “passions running high” in England over the situation:

It affected poignantly some of my friends who had been most affronted by Munich, with whose impulses I had moved at crucial moments before the war. ‘Is this then what we are fighting for?’ they asked. Many of those with whom I was in closest mental and moral harmony were in extremely distress.<sup>185</sup>

Churchill lamented to Roosevelt: “Not only in France but throughout Europe,” the impression was given that “we are ready to make terms with local Quislings.”<sup>186</sup>

The British Foreign Office also complained to its Embassy in Washington: “We are fighting for international decency, and Darlan is the antithesis of this. We must not overlook the serious political injury which may be done to our cause.”<sup>187</sup> On November 26, the House of Commons introduced a motion to repudiate any British association with the Darlan Deal:

This House is of the opinion that our relations with Admiral Darlan and his kind are inconsistent with the ideals for which we entered and are fighting this war; furthermore, that these relations, if persisted in, will undermine the faith in us among our friends in the oppressed and invaded nations and impair the military, social, and political prospects of this final and complete triumph of the cause of the United Nations.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Fleming, 169.

<sup>183</sup> Butcher, 193. Fleming noted, however, that while “the British man on the street” might have been upset over the Darlan Deal, the British secret service had actually been negotiating with Darlan for several weeks leading up to the invasion. Fleming, 167.

<sup>184</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 637, 633; Sherwood believed that the British Foreign Office had a private satisfaction in the extreme embarrassment of the United States government over the Darlan situation. He noted that the British could maintain “a very virtuous position of loyally supporting an Ally but taking no direct responsibility for the Ally’s political blunders.” Sherwood did not believe that Churchill and his colleagues were “happy” that Roosevelt insisted that the entire North African operation should be an entirely American one, even putting British troops in American uniforms and R.A.F planes labeled with American insignia, so were rather pleased at the vast political blunder. Sherwood, 655.

<sup>185</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 637, 633.

<sup>186</sup> Quoted in Dallek, 364.

<sup>187</sup> Quoted in Dallek, 364.

<sup>188</sup> Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 372-373.

The complaints in the British parliament were so severe that John Winant, U.S. Ambassador to England, told Roosevelt that Eden might have to issue a statement such as this. Fortunately for Roosevelt, Eden decided not to do so.<sup>189</sup>

The agreement with Darlan brought up lively conversation between Churchill and de Gaulle. The Prime Minister admitted to the Frenchman that England gave her consent to the deal but only on the condition that it was only temporary and expedient. De Gaulle conveyed his disagreement with the decision, stating that “it is a strategic error” to appeal to “strategic reasons” if those reasons fall “contradictory to the moral character of this war.” The French leader challenged Churchill to “think of the consequences” if one day the French people realized that “her liberation” was owed to a man such as Darlan: “You can perhaps win the war from a military point of view but you will lose it morally, and ultimately there will be only one victor: Stalin.”<sup>190</sup>

De Gaulle reported that the Darlan situation “provoked general indignation” among the French: “Never before had I encountered among our people, on any subject whatever, such unanimity as there was on that score.” De Gaulle made sure publicly to distance himself with the Darlan situation, giving a radio announcement in London proclaiming that he and the National Committee took no part in the affiliation with the Admiral, nor did the Fighting French think the situation appropriate. In a speech to the French in Great Britain on November 11, De Gaulle proclaimed, “The cement of French unity is the blood of the Frenchmen who have never recognized the armistice.”<sup>191</sup>

The Soviets were among the few who were not bothered by the situation. In a letter to Stalin dated December 3, 1942, Georgi Dimitrov, the Secretary General of the Communist International during this time, expressed his view that working with men such as Darlan was militarily expedient: “It is essential to strengthen the national front and attract all the French who want to struggle against Hitler in earnest, regardless of former political and

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid, 377; The President hoped that this would not be required, but suggested a restricted statement, if need be, along the lines of: “The United States Government takes the position that the operations in North Africa are purely military in character. A desperate battle for the control of Africa is in progress. General Eisenhower is in command of our Allied armies. He will give our all information that is consistent with the security of the armed forces.”

<sup>190</sup> De Gaulle, 359-360.

<sup>191</sup> De Gaulle, 359-363, 355; Admiral Harold Stark communicated to De Gaulle that “had I been in Eisenhower’s shoes I would have done exactly as Eisenhower has, and that I believe he [de Gaulle], as a soldier, would have done the same thing.” Howe, 270.

other disagreements.”<sup>192</sup> In a letter to Roosevelt, Stalin considered “it an important achievement” that the Allies had “succeeded in winning Darlan and others to the Allied side against Hitler.” The Soviet leader also wrote to Churchill a few weeks after the Deal that, “the Americans used Darlan not badly in order to facilitate the occupation of North and West Africa.” Stalin concluded, borrowing an old Russian proverb, that “military diplomacy” should be used not only for Darlan, but “even the Devil himself and his grandma.”<sup>193</sup>

Sherwood noted, however, that the Darlan situation “inspired plenty of gleeful quips by Goebbels and his satellite broadcasters” throughout Europe, including Rome and Paris. German propaganda embraced the idea that, while Americans trumpeted the ideals of the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter, they, in reality, knew very little about Europe, and “could be hoodwinked by any treacherous gangster who offered them collaboration.”<sup>194</sup>

The President took criticism over the Darlan Deal very personally. Rosenman recalled that Roosevelt spent a significant amount of time refuting these attacks and defending the political situation in North Africa. He reported that FDR showed more “resentment and impatience” with the critics of the Darlan agreement, than any other time that Rosenman knew. The President, on occasion, refused to talk about the North African deal, or, on the other hand, would read aloud bitterly what a journalist had written about the situation, and then would express resentment.<sup>195</sup> De Gaulle as well reported Roosevelt’s sensitivity to the subject. When challenged on the issue by two of de Gaulle’s representatives, the President burned with anger and shouted: “Of course I’m dealing with Darlan, since Darlan’s giving me Algiers! Tomorrow I’d deal with Laval, if Laval were to offer me Paris!”<sup>196</sup>

The “temporary” arrangement of the American alignment with Darlan came to a sudden halt when, on Christmas Eve, 1942, Royalist Fernand Bonnier de la Chapelle

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<sup>192</sup> Alexander Dallin and F.I. Firsov, *Dimitrov and Stalin: 1934-1943* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 201-202.

<sup>193</sup> *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, II, 44, 80.

<sup>194</sup> Sherwood, 655.

<sup>195</sup> Rosenman, 363-364.

assassinated the French Admiral. De Gaulle observed that Chapelle served as “the instrument of the aggravated passions that had fired the souls around him to the boiling point.” These “souls” were determined to “liquidate a ‘temporary expedient,’” which they viewed as a disgrace to the French: “This young man... thought his action would be a service to his lacerated country, would remove from the road to French reconciliation an obstacle shameful in his eyes.”<sup>197</sup>

Despite Darlan’s death, the criticism from the deal loomed over Roosevelt and his administration. Many thought that this compromise was inconsistent with the United Nations agreement and feared that negotiating with Nazi-sympathizers would become a trend.<sup>198</sup> Were they Allies fighting for moral principles, or just for military expediency? Sherwood explained that the Darlan situation necessitated that Roosevelt emphasize the unwavering stance of the American war aim. All over the world, those who feared and hated fascism needed to be assured that the President was not willing to negotiate with the enemy.<sup>199</sup>

Entering the Casablanca conference, Roosevelt found himself in a precarious situation in which he needed to convince the eyes of the world that his decisions in war would not again endanger the ideology for which the Allies fought. The President desired to confirm that the Allies would remain on course with their war aim. He wanted that point to be unambiguous, and for other nations to trust his intentions. Unconditional surrender set forth this purpose by unequivocally affirming that the Allies would not compromise with the enemy.

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<sup>196</sup> Dallek, 365. For Pierre Laval’s memoirs of the North Africa/Darlan situation, see Pierre Laval, *The Diary of Pierre Laval* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1948), 130-148.

<sup>197</sup> De Gaulle, 379. De Gaulle did not support the assassination, stating that killing should be reserved for the battle field alone and pointing out that Darlan was accountable to “national justice” and not to any group or individual. De Gaulle, did, however, express his discontentment with the manner in which the situation was dealt: “How could we fail to recognize the nature of the intentions that inspired this juvenile fury? That is why the strange, brutal and summary way the investigation was conducted in Algiers, the hasty and abbreviated trial before a military tribunal convened at night and in private session, the immediate and secret execution of Fernand Bonnier de la Chapelle, the orders given to the censors that not even his name should be known—all these led to the suspicion that someone wanted to conceal at any price the origin of his decision and constituted a kind of defiance of those circumstances which, without justifying the drama, explained and, to a certain degree, excused it.”

<sup>198</sup> Weinburg, 433.

<sup>199</sup> Chase, 263.

By issuing unconditional surrender, the President offered, according to Carroll, a “pledge to the peoples and governments of the occupied countries that the policy of military expediency which had been followed in North Africa would not be extended to the Axis countries.”<sup>200</sup> Sherwood asserted, “Undoubtedly [Roosevelt’s] timing of the statement at Casablanca was attributable to the uproar over Darlan... and the liberal fears that this might indicated a willingness to make similar deals...”<sup>201</sup> Unconditional surrender affirmed to the Allies political opportunism would not mark the remainder of war.

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<sup>200</sup> Carroll, 312.

<sup>201</sup> Sherwood, 697.

## CHAPTER XII:

### DE GAULLE AND GIRAUD, SHOT-GUN WEDDING

Entering the Casablanca conference, Roosevelt found himself dealing with another difficulty. Langer commented regarding Darlan, “Unfortunately... the shots that killed the man did not kill the problem he had raised.” The *New Statesman* commented that Darlan “left in French North Africa a political cesspool whose stench not merely infected the cause of the Western Allies, but threatened, unless there be plain speaking and better understanding, to poison Anglo-American relations.” The issue of Darlan’s replacement and North African political administration became a point of discussion. Eisenhower insisted that Giraud replace Darlan, although Darlan had left a secret memo stating that General Charles Noguès should assume the role of High Commissioner. Eisenhower believed that he could make the break from the Vichy dependence at that point, and Giraud took command of both the military and civil affairs.<sup>202</sup>

Roosevelt and Churchill desired that de Gaulle and Giraud come to terms in order to secure a unified non-Vichy French movement. From the beginning of the North African ordeal, de Gaulle had been open to working with Giraud, although an agreement with Darlan was detestable to him. When hearing of the “temporary” nature of the Darlan arrangement, de Gaulle made efforts to enter discussions with Giraud on the issue of a unified French front.<sup>203</sup> In fact, de Gaulle commented to Churchill during a meeting on the day of the invasion: “General Giraud is a great soldier. My hopes accompany him in his endeavor. It is too bad that the Allies have prevented him from coming to an agreement with me....But sooner or later we shall see eye to eye, and all the more readily if the Allies keep out of our way.”<sup>204</sup>

De Gaulle had been willing, before Darlan’s assassination, to meet with Allied representatives regarding a unified non-Vichy French movement. The French general showed interest in going to Washington to discuss the possibility of French unity with the

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<sup>202</sup> Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 379-380.

<sup>203</sup> De Gaulle, 351, 376-377.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid, 350.



President. The meeting was set, and de Gaulle planned to leave on Christmas Day. Part of de Gaulle's hope for the gathering was that a new French National Committee could be established, which would include de Gaulle and Giraud and would replace Darlan's administration. Sherwood seemed to believe that Roosevelt very much liked this idea and saw it a solution to the "distasteful talk" about each Allied chief having his own "pet" Frenchman. Upon Darlan's death, however, rumors existed that the assassins were part of a Royalist plot and that de Gaulle supporters were involved, some of which were arrested and imprisoned. Churchill and Roosevelt sent word to de Gaulle, who was preparing to leave for Washington, that in light of Darlan's assassination, the meeting was canceled.<sup>205</sup>

From that point on, De Gaulle had no intentions of working with the Allies on this issue, or particularly of allowing the British or the Americans to dictate or control the effort to unify the non-Vichy French. After Darlan's death, de Gaulle sought out Giraud, sending him a telegraph on Christmas Day, 1942, proposing a meeting. De Gaulle was eager to establish a national movement in North Africa, and disliked the American efforts to keep authoritative rights to that area: "The Allied desire to keep the authority in North Africa under their control and to prevent France from reappearing as a sovereign power before the end of the war was to delay the triumph of national common sense."<sup>206</sup>

Giraud responded to this invitation rather evasively, claiming that the situation at-hand, Darlan's death, made such a meeting unfavorable. Giraud asked de Gaulle to send a representative to help coordinate a unified French coalition. De Gaulle suspected that the Americans were behind Giraud's evasiveness, claiming that Roosevelt "intended that French affairs should fall within his own sphere of influence."<sup>207</sup>

De Gaulle had a particular disgust for the American involvement in areas in which the French General believed they should have no part, especially when it involved French interest. In a discussion with Churchill regarding the political situation in North Africa, de Gaulle expressed his displeasure with the British taking orders from the American military leadership:

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<sup>205</sup> Sherwood, 663.

<sup>206</sup> De Gaulle, 383.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid, 384-385.

And I fail to understand your own position. You have been fighting this war since the first day. In a manner of speaking you personally *are* this war. Your army is advancing in Libya. There would be no Americans in Africa if, on your side, you were not in the process of defeating Rommel. Up to this very moment, not a single one of Roosevelt's soldiers has met a single one of Hitler's soldiers, while for three years your men have been fighting in every latitude of the globe. Besides, in this African campaign it is Europe that is at stake, and England belongs to Europe. Yet you let America take charge of the conflict, though it is up to you to control it, at least in the moral realm. Do so! All of European public opinion will follow you.<sup>208</sup>

De Gaulle's anger reached a boiling point when, three days after this conversation with Churchill, the British refused to allow him to broadcast on the BBC a declaration which stated that he was the "uncontested leader of the resistance movement," and which urged that French North Africa "be put into de Gaulle's hands as soon as possible." De Gaulle indicated that Washington had "vetoed" the declaration, so the British complied. When, several days later, the British postponed yet another radio announcement, lacking approval by the U.S., de Gaulle expressed to Churchill, "I did not know that on British territory the radio was not at my disposal." De Gaulle quickly summarized that "Churchill's behavior made me realize that it was not at his either."<sup>209</sup>

In his memoirs, de Gaulle expressed his displeasure with Roosevelt, claiming that "from the moment America entered the war," the President desired that the established peace "be an American peace." De Gaulle believed that FDR was "convinced that he must be the one to dictate its structure, that the states which had been overrun should be subject to his judgment, and that France in particular recognize him as its savior and its arbiter." Any intention the Free French had of expressing itself as a "sovereign and independent nation," only "thwarted his intentions."<sup>210</sup>

De Gaulle's resentments over the American meddling came to a head during the Casablanca conference. Elliott Roosevelt remembered that after dinner the first night, conversation turned to "the tangled French political scene." The younger Roosevelt recalled that the President referred to de Gaulle as Churchill's "problem child," and the Prime

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid, 362.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid, 363-364.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid, 392-393.

Minister referred to Giraud as Roosevelt's own problem. Throughout the entire conference, according to Elliott Roosevelt, those nicknames stuck, for good reason.<sup>211</sup>

Churchill and Roosevelt desired that de Gaulle attend the conference to offer consultation regarding the arrangements in North Africa, and also to discuss the possibility of a unified non-Vichy French movement. De Gaulle refused to accept the invitation to attend the conference, an action which prompted Churchill to describe the Frenchman as "very haughty." The Prime Minister was embarrassed and believed that de Gaulle's refusal would permanently discredit him in public opinion and would ruin the possibility of any further invitations on the behalf of President Roosevelt.<sup>212</sup>

In a telegram to Eden, the Prime Minister stated, "Here I have been all these days fighting de Gaulle's battle and making every arrangement for a good reconciliation between the different sections of Frenchmen. If he rejects the chance now offered I shall feel that his removal from the headship of the Free French Movement is essential to the further support of this movement by [Her Majesty's Government]." Churchill instructed Eden to "put the utmost pressure" on de Gaulle to attend the conference, "even to the point of saying that if he would not come we should insist on his being replaced by someone else at the head of the French Liberation Committee in London."<sup>213</sup>

De Gaulle claimed he ignored the threats, not being affected by them, but agreed to go for the sake of a united France: "I decided that the circumstances of the war and France's immediate situation did not permit me to refuse to meet the President of the United States and His Britannic Majesty's Prime Minister." Before sending his reply to Churchill, he formally met with the National Committee, who extensively reviewed the situation, intentionally taking their time, before deciding that de Gaulle should go. Even after that, the

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<sup>211</sup> Elliott Roosevelt, 67-68.

<sup>212</sup> De Gaulle, 386-7. Meanwhile, during the interaction between Churchill and de Gaulle, the French General sent a message to Giraud: "Remember that I am still prepared to meet you on French territory, as one Frenchman to another, when and where you choose."

<sup>213</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 680. Churchill lamented the fact that Elliott Roosevelt suggested in his writings that FDR suspected Churchill of trying to stop de Gaulle from coming. Churchill claimed he was putting the "utmost pressure possible" on the French leader.

French general claimed he was in no rush to begin his trip to Casablanca and that bad weather postponed his departure even further.<sup>214</sup>

When de Gaulle finally arrived at the conference, he added to Churchill and Roosevelt's strain. Entering the group of villas where the meetings were held, de Gaulle showed disgust at the scene: no troops to honor his arrival, barbed-wire fence encircling the conference area, American soldiers at every point and assigned to every "household task," no one permitted to enter or leave: "In short, it was captivity." The French general claimed that he had no problem with the Allies enforcing such standards on themselves, but to subject the French leader to it was another issue: "And furthermore on territory under French sovereignty, seemed to me a flagrant insult." De Gaulle claimed that his first words to Giraud were, "What's this? I ask you for an interview four times over and we have to meet in a barb-wired encampment among foreign powers? Don't you realize how odious this is from purely a national point of view?" De Gaulle also informed Churchill "in no uncertain terms" that he would never had agreed to come to the conference had he known he would be "surrounded, on French territory, by American bayonets."<sup>215</sup>

De Gaulle was quite cordial with Giraud during their discussions, but had no patience for Allied meddling. He recalled that the day after he arrived in Casablanca, he received a visit from Harold MacMillan, the British Secretary of State. MacMillan reported to de Gaulle that, with the cooperation of the Americans, he was "doing his best to find a formula for unity acceptable to both Giraud and myself which could be proposed to us by Roosevelt and Churchill." De Gaulle commented, "Here indeed was the expected intervention," and told MacMillan that "a Giraud-de Gaulle entente could be realized only between Frenchmen."<sup>216</sup>

De Gaulle, however, agreed to meet with Churchill on the matter. The Prime Minister informed the French General that he and the President had come to an agreement for a solution for the French situation. Giraud and de Gaulle would be established as Joint Presidents of a governing committee, treated with equal respect in every regard. Giraud,

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<sup>214</sup> De Gaulle, 388.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, 389-391.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, 390.

however, would have authority over military command. Churchill explained that this point was especially important considering that the United States, who provided the French Army with supplies, would not work with anyone else. De Gaulle, again disgruntled with the situation, noted in his memoirs,

I replied to Mr. Churchill that this solution might appear adequate at the quite respectable level of an American sergeant, but that I did not dream he himself could take it seriously. As for me, I was obliged to take into account what remained of France's sovereignty. I had, as he must know, the highest consideration for him and for Roosevelt, without, however, recognizing in any respect their authority to deal with questions of sovereignty within the French Empire.<sup>217</sup>

The Free French leader was also disgusted that Giraud planned to go along with Roosevelt's plan. De Gaulle asserted that the proposal meant that the real power would be appointed to Giraud safeguarded by the Americans, and declared that Giraud's authority came from an illegitimate source of foreign and Vichy power which would not be recognized in a sovereign free France. De Gaulle questioned whether Giraud could act in France's best interest since his authority was artificial. Giraud replied that those issues did not concern him, as his primary concern was military and that the United States had promised great military aid.<sup>218</sup>

Churchill, in a letter to his wife, actually described the tension between the two French leaders as comical: "Comic relief has been afforded by the attempt to bring de Gualle to the altar where Giraud has been waiting impatiently for several days!"<sup>219</sup> Roosevelt, in a personal letter to a relative on February 1943, described the Casablanca conference as a "great success" and "only General de Gaulle was a thoroughly bad boy." He described getting the two generals together as a "shot-gun wedding," and commented that he "produced the bridegroom from Algiers but Winston had to make three tries before he could get the bride."<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid, 390.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid, 390-393.

<sup>219</sup> Mary Soames, *Winston and Clementine: The Personal Letters of the Churchills* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 475.

<sup>220</sup> Roosevelt, *F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945*, 1400.

De Gaulle rejected the proposed communiqué that MacMillan and Murphy had drafted, even though it was vague, because it had been dictated by the Allies. The French leader protested that the proposed communiqué made things appear as if an agreement had been made when, in fact, one had not. De Gaulle declared that he was not opposed to a communiqué, but was opposed to one that a sovereign France did not originate. When Roosevelt complained of the need for a joint declaration, even if were only a theoretical agreement, for it would “produce the dramatic effect we need,” de Gaulle responded, “Let me handle it. There will be a communiqué, even though it cannot be yours.”<sup>221</sup>

De Gaulle agreed to taking a photo, however, with Giraud at the press conference. The Free French leader claimed he approved of doing so, since he “had the highest regard” for the other Frenchman.<sup>222</sup> Churchill recalled, on the other hand that the two “were made to sit” together and “forced” to shake hands for the reporters and photographers: “They did so, and the pictures of this event cannot be viewed even in the setting of these tragic times without a laugh.”<sup>223</sup>

This difficult political situation was forefront in Roosevelt’s mind when entering the press conference that day. The strain, not only with the French, but with the British, over the de Gaulle-Giraud situation significantly contributed to the atmosphere in which the President announced unconditional surrender. Roosevelt himself did not shy away from linking unconditional surrender with those circumstances. He claimed that the difficulty of getting the two French generals to meet made him think of Grant and Lee; ergo, unconditional surrender.<sup>224</sup>

In issuing unconditional surrender, the President pointed to a unified focus, away from the political squabbles of the French, away from the tension building from the British and American political opinions, away from accusations that the principles of war were no longer important. Unconditional surrender re-emphasized that the United Nations were united in purpose in the war effort and were devoted to each other, despite petty quarrels.

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<sup>221</sup> De Gaulle, 398; see also Sherwood, 691-693. De Gaulle actually did draw up another communiqué, without the Allied knowledge, stating that de Gaulle and Giraud had met and firmly agreed on a “permanent liaison” between them. Giraud signed. See de Gaulle, 398.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 693.

<sup>224</sup> Sherwood, 696.

When issues of loyalty and purpose arose, this policy offered an official focus for the Allied relationship.

## CHAPTER XIII: SECOND FRONT

In addition to the tension Roosevelt sensed from domestic criticism and from the various discrepancies with the British and French, the President also felt pressure from the Allied relationship with the Soviet Russia. The United States and Great Britain were aware that the Soviet Union's involvement in the war against Germany served as a key element in obtaining a timely Axis defeat. United States Army planners asserted that, because of Russia's manpower and proximity to Germany, the preservation of the conflict in the East was important for a successful land offensive against the Nazis later in the war. Armstrong, in fact, believed that Roosevelt's entire policy in relation to his Eastern Ally was "based on the attempt to win Soviet gratitude and friendship." FDR attempted to avoid policies which would provoke suspicion or would displease them.<sup>225</sup>

Leading up to the Casablanca conference, however, a great deal of suspicion existed between the Western and Eastern Allies. The Big Three had previously pledged loyalty to each other, declaring never to entertain the opinion of negotiating peace with the enemy, but speculations existed that these assurances were not taken seriously. Past histories of secret treaties or negotiations concerned the Allied nations, knowing that Europe's survival would be endangered if, for instance, Stalin once again partnered with Hitler. On the other hand, the Soviets kept their eyes on their Western Allies, with memories of the Munich Pact on their minds. While, in 1942, rumors existed in the U.S. and Great Britain that Soviet-German contacts had been made, Soviet leaders tended to be just as suspicious of the Western Allies' intentions.<sup>226</sup>

The most pressing issue of strain between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies leading up to the Casablanca conference was that of the opening of a second front in Europe. Roosevelt referred to this matter as "a thorny problem to crack." The Soviets desired that the Western Allies prioritize a cross-Channel attack, which would take some pressure off of the East by challenging the Germans with battle grounds on two sides of Europe. Churchill

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<sup>225</sup> Lash, 432; Armstrong, 37.

<sup>226</sup> Armstrong, 8; Carroll, 309; Hoffmann, 457; Glennon, 116-118, 121; William Langer, "Turning Points of the War: Political Problems of a Coalition," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1947, 84. For Stalin's official statement



and Roosevelt were cautious regarding the timing and available resources for such an invasion. Both had vivid memories of the destruction and lost lives in the European stalemate of World War I, which made them fearful of a premature invasion of the European continent. U.S. Ambassador Averell W. Harriman wrote that the President had “a horror of American troops landing again on the continent and becoming involved in the kind of warfare he had seen before—trench warfare with all its appalling losses.” The Western leaders also wanted to be cautious not to take away manpower and resources in an untimely manner from other theaters of conflict.<sup>227</sup>

This issue served as a topic of discussion and debate for over a year. As early as July 1941, Stalin requested the opening of a second front. The British produced a long document explaining the reasons they could not do so at the time, and the Russian leader seemed content for a while. By August of that year, however, the Soviets began to berate the British on the subject. M. Maisky, the Russian Ambassador to Great Britain, met with Anthony Eden and “bitterly upbraided,” in the words of historian Joseph Lash, the British for not being of more assistance to Russia. Eden, who was rather offended and embarrassed by the situation, promised additional supplies for the Soviet military struggle. To this, Stalin replied that supplies were not good enough, and requested, again, the opening of a European second front.<sup>228</sup>

As the German military pressure on the Soviet front increased, the British Communist party issued a statement, in October 1941, stating that the British honor depended “on whether she starts an invasion in the west.” Anthony Eden responded on October 25, that “war is a long-term business,” which would not be “settled by any sudden, brilliant improvisation.” Stalin, in a speech several weeks later, brought the subject up publicly for the first time. He stated that the absence of a second front “relieves” the German forces, and that “undoubtedly” the Western Allies would open the second front “in the near future,” which would “relieve” the Russian forces.<sup>229</sup>

By the winter of 1941-1942, the Soviets began to increase their diplomatic pressure over the issue. In November 1941, they accused the British of “sitting back and watching

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on the Soviet Union and International Affairs leading into the war, see Bruce Franklin, ed., *The Essential Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings, 1905-1952* (Garden City, New York, 1972), 344-346.

<sup>227</sup> Roosevelt, *F.D.R. His Personal Letters, 1928-1945*, 1329; Lash, 432-433.

<sup>228</sup> Dallin, 408; Lash, 434-436.

them.” On February 23, 1942, with the Americans then in the war, Stalin stated in an Order of the Day to the Russian forces that, while Germany had allies to help in her fight, “The Red Army has no such support.” He did not mention in his speech any military operations of the other Allied armies.<sup>230</sup>

Vyacheslav Molotov, the Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, visited both Roosevelt in Washington and Churchill in London in May 1942, with the primary purpose of moving forward the plans of a cross-Channel invasion. Both Western leaders agreed with the Soviets that an urgent need existed for a second front attack. An official statement from the Washington meeting indicated that the President asked Molotov to inform Stalin that he felt “these conversations have been most useful in establishing a basis for fruitful and closer relationship between the two Governments in the pursuit of the common objectives of the United Nations.” Molotov left Washington with a Soviet-American draft declaring the necessity of an invasion into France. The announcement read: “Full understanding was reached with regard to the urgent tasks of creating a second front in Europe in 1942.” In London, Churchill also gave the Soviet statesman an *aide memoire* stating that plans for a second front invasion were taking shape for August or September 1942, although the Prime Minister made it clear that he could not guarantee that the Continental landing would actually take place.<sup>231</sup>

By July, it became apparent to the Soviets that the plans laid out for Molotov would not come to fruition in a timely manner. This realization sparked tense exchanges between Stalin and the Western leaders. Premier Stalin stated in a cable to Churchill that he was “afraid” that the second front invasion was “not being treated with the seriousness it deserves.” The Soviet leader continued: “I must state in the most emphatic manner that the Soviet Government cannot acquiesce in the postponement of a second front in Europe until 1943.” Roosevelt wrote to Churchill a few days later that the Prime Minister’s reply to Stalin “must be handled with great care.” The President encouraged Churchill to “bear in mind” the “difficult and dangerous” circumstances which the Soviets faced: “No one can be expected to approach the war from a world point of view whose country has been invaded. I

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<sup>229</sup> Dallin, 408-409.

<sup>230</sup> Lash, 449; Dallin, 409.

think we should try to put ourselves in his place.” Roosevelt admonished the Prime Minister not to “raise any false hopes,” but to reassure Stalin of their course of action for the upcoming months. Churchill chose, however, just to “let Stalin’s bitter message pass without any specific rejoinder.”<sup>232</sup>

The Prime Minister, in fact, made his way to Moscow in August of that year to explain to Stalin that the second front landing had to be postponed again until early 1943. The Western Allied leaders had, in fact, committed in July to proceed with operation “TORCH,” the North African invasion, which was the cause of this delay. Although the Allies pledged as many resources as possible to their Eastern partners, Stalin did not take news of the postponement well, and insisted that virtually all the German troops were occupied on Soviet territory and none on the Western front.<sup>233</sup>

With tension building, Stalin stated in October of that year that a second front attack was of “first-rate importance.” He complained that, in comparison with the Soviet’s role in engaging the German troops, the supplies that the Allies had been sending to the Soviet Union had been “little effective.” Stalin concluded that in order “to amplify and improve this aid, only one thing is required: that the Allies fulfill their obligations fully and on time.”<sup>234</sup> As the Western Allies prepared to launch the attack on North Africa in November, Roosevelt hoped that the Allied landings in that area would provide “an effective second-front assistance to our heroic allies in Russia.” Stalin did not, however, believe that this attack served as an acceptable alternate for a European second front, and still maintained the necessity of a cross-Channel invasion no later than the spring of 1943.<sup>235</sup>

At this point in military planning, British and American leaders held differing opinions on the best course of action. Churchill agreed with Stalin, that a European second-front was needful as soon as possible. According to the Prime Minister’s memoirs, he was not as concerned with where they launched this invasion, as long as it was commenced as

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<sup>231</sup> *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol., 11, 268-269; Notter, 161; Zeman, Z.A.B. *The Making and Breaking of Communist Europe* (Cambridge, Mass: Basil Blackwell Inc, 1991), 169-170.

<sup>232</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 271-272.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid, 658, 651; Zeman. *The Making and Breaking of Communist Europe*, 169-170.

<sup>234</sup> The Western Allies had to cut off some of the supplies they had been sending to Russia because of the planned invasion of Africa. Stalin became “very uncommunicative” over the situation, according to John Chase. Chase, 269. Three days after Stalin made this statement, the United States and Great Britain pledged to increase the supplies to the Soviet Union.

<sup>235</sup> Notter, 162-163.

soon as possible. In early November, he articulated a desire that troops be sent to Great Britain, as soon as North Africa was secured, to begin preparations for “ROUND-UP,” the plan for the cross-Channel liberation of France in 1943.<sup>236</sup> He greatly opposed sending those troops to North Africa to bolster “TORCH.” According to his memoirs, the Prime Minister genuinely hoped to provide the desired relief for Russia much sooner than later. He complained, “I must repeat that ‘TORCH’ is no substitute for ‘ROUND-UP.’”<sup>237</sup>

Roosevelt, while confessing he had no intention of abandoning “ROUND-UP,” asserted that those plans might have to wait a longer amount of time than the Soviets and British desired, due to the efforts required for “TORCH” and the raging battles in the Pacific.<sup>238</sup> The American military staff, in fact, while supporting the idea of a second-front invasion for later in the war, believed that adopting “TORCH” made “ROUND-UP” impossible for 1943. They asserted that either Russia would be so weakened that Hitler could bring some of his troops back from the East, making these forces available to strengthen resistance on the Western front, or that the shipping demand for “TORCH” would significantly detract from “ROUND-UP,” making the Allied forces too weak to attempt a cross-Channel attack. The Americans preferred not begin a build-up of troops in Great Britain in 1943 for the second front invasion, believing those troops would be merely idle for a long period of time.<sup>239</sup>

Churchill held out hope that the American military leaders were incorrect, and saw the invasion into French North Africa as a stepping stone for a second front either across the Channel or in the Mediterranean: “It is a springboard and not a sofa.” He believed an Anglo-American invasion “either from the west or from the east” was “imperative” for 1943. In November 1942, Churchill commented to his Chiefs of Staff,

The interposition of ‘TORCH’ is no excuse for lying down during 1943....If French North Africa is going to be made an excuse for locking up great forces on the defensive and calling it a ‘commitment,’ it would be better not

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<sup>236</sup> Churchill later expressed his preference that this attack take place through the Mediterranean, launching an attack on Sardinia and Sicily, “with Italy as the goal,” opposed to a cross-Channel invasion.

<sup>237</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 648-651.

<sup>238</sup> Harley Notter noted that, while the United States and England were at war with Germany, Italy and Japan, the Soviet Union at the time was not at war with the latter. The war in the Pacific also presented the Western Allies with the responsibility of fighting on two fronts. Notter, labeling the Pacific theater a “second gigantically difficult front,” asserted that the Soviets largely discounted this fact and were quite displeased that increased efforts on behalf of the United States and Great Britain were not given to the European theater. Notter, 161.

<sup>239</sup> General Marshall agreed with the Prime Minister. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 653-658.

to have gone there at all. Is it really to be supposed that the Russians will be content with our lying down like this during the whole of 1943, while Hitler has a third crack at them? However alarming the prospect may seem, we must make an attempt to get on to the mainland of Europe and fight in the line against the enemy in 1943.<sup>240</sup>

In light of these discussions, the British leader claimed that he in no way meant to “deceive or mislead Stalin,” regarding the second-front, stating, “I tried my best.” He complained that he had led the Russians to believe that the Allies would open a second front in 1943: “I feel that Premier Stalin would have grave reason to complain if our land offensive against Germany and Italy in 1943 were reduced.”<sup>241</sup>

Despite Churchill’s assertion that he prioritized a second-front, the Soviets accused the Prime Minister of using “TORCH” intentionally to prevent a second-front in 1943. By this point in time, Clark Kerr, the British Ambassador in Moscow, reported that Soviet Russia threatened to pull out of the war unless the Western Allies committed to an immediate second-front invasion of France. The British were somewhat skeptical of this claim, but Roosevelt took the threat quite seriously.<sup>242</sup>

In a memo to Churchill, dated November 27, 1942, Stalin repeated his concern about the second-front. He had read a communication from the Prime Minister which indicated that the Allies were “ready to take advantage of any favorable opportunity.” Stalin responded that he hoped such a statement did not “imply renunciation of your Moscow promise to open a second front in Western Europe in the spring of 1943.” Churchill, then realizing that the anticipated second-front invasion could not take place in the spring of that year, summarized the situation at the end of 1942 by stating, “We have, in fact, pulled in our

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid, 649-651, 658. Churchill stated in his memoirs that “events would decide” whether they should go through the Channel or “follow our luck in the Mediterranean.”

<sup>241</sup> Churchill stated, “It will no doubt be said that the course of events proved that I took too sanguine a view about the prospects in Northwest Africa, and the United States Staffs were right in believing that the decision for “Torch”...closed the possibility of “Round-up” in 1943. Certainly that was what happened. No one could foresee at this time [the events of 1943].... Hardly anyone now disputes the wisdom of the decision to wait until 1944. My conscience is clear that I did not deceive or mislead Stalin. I tried my best.” Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 656, 659.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid, 651; Armstrong, 34.

horns to an almost extraordinary extent, and I cannot imagine what the Russians will say or do when they realize it.”<sup>243</sup>

Churchill and Roosevelt became increasingly nervous about the situation with Stalin’s refusal to attend the Casablanca conference. On December 2, The President wrote to the Soviet leader that the “military situation” made a meeting among the Big Three a necessity. Roosevelt claimed that a mere gathering of their military leaders would not suffice, as the commanders could not come to an ultimate decision without their approval. The most “compelling reason,” however, for the President’s invitation was that Roosevelt was “very anxious to have a talk with” Stalin. Roosevelt pleaded, “I hope that you will consider this proposal favorably because I can see no other way of reaching the vital strategic decisions which should be made soon by all of us together.” Stalin responded on December 6, that he “welcomed the idea,” but, unfortunately, would not be able to leave the Soviet Union during such a “crucial moment.”

The President expressed his “deep disappointment,” then suggested, based on the “many matters of vital importance to be discussed” between them, a tentative date for the meeting about the first of March. Stalin, again, sent his “deep regret” that he could not make a March meeting either, and then probed regarding the “urgent issues” to which Roosevelt referred. If, the Soviet leader inquired, the Western Allies followed through with their promise for a second front no later than the spring of 1943, what was there to discuss?

I do not know as yet what were the specific matters that you, Mr. President, and Mr. Churchill wanted discussed at our joint conference. Could we not discuss them by correspondence until we have an opportunity to meet? I think we shall not differ. I feel confident that no time is being wasted that the promise to open a second front in Europe, which you, Mr. President, and Mr. Churchill gave for 1942 or the spring of 1943 at the latest, will be kept and that a second front in Europe will really be opened jointly by Great Britain and the U.S.A. next spring.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, I, 80; Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 651.

<sup>244</sup> *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, II, 42-45. Susan Butler, ed. *My Dear Mr. Stalin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 101-105.

Roosevelt merely responded that he was “very sorry arrangements for conference could not be made but I well understand your position,” and did not acknowledge Stalin’s assertion about the second front.<sup>245</sup>

Both Churchill and Roosevelt, however, continued in their attempt to convince Stalin of the necessity of his attendance at the Casablanca conference, specifically in order to discuss the military direction of the upcoming year. Churchill wrote to Stalin, “This can only be settled between the heads of the Governments and States with their high expert authorities at their sides. It is only by such meeting that the full burden of the war can be shared accordingly to capacity and opportunity.” The Prime Minister, unlike Roosevelt, acknowledged Stalin’s inquiries regarding the second front. He reported that he “was not able” to speak to the issue except jointly with Roosevelt. “It was for this reason that I so earnestly desired a meeting between the three of us.”<sup>246</sup>

The President and Prime Minister’s efforts to convince Stalin to attend the conference were in vain.<sup>247</sup> In Casablanca, the American and British military leaders finally decided upon an assault in the Mediterranean, with an advance on Sicily, in order to protect their communication lines and air bases in that area. In a message from the Casablanca meeting to the Kremlin, Churchill and Roosevelt tried to convince their Eastern Ally that the agreed upon plans would take pressure off of the Soviet Union by diverting German supplies and troops. They also promised to send Russia “the maximum flow of supplies” to assist with the war in the East: “We shall spare no exertion to send you material assistance in any case by every available route.” The Western Allied leaders proclaimed that the military operations they decided upon “may well bring Germany to her knees in 1943.” This optimism did little to convince Stalin of the benefits of the Mediterranean attack. He

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<sup>245</sup> *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, II, 42-45. Susan Butler, ed. *My Dear Mr. Stalin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 101-105.

<sup>246</sup> *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, I, 81-82.

<sup>247</sup> Elliott Roosevelt even mentioned the conversation at Casablanca that took place the first night of the conference. The Western Allied leaders discussed the two reasons they believed Stalin had not come to Casablanca: “First, that he was directly concerned with military guidance of the Red Army (and every one of us was excited over the great news that was coming from the eastern front), and second, that we all of us knew what he would say if he did come to such a conference: Western front.” Elliott Roosevelt, 67.

lamented that the Western Allies would postpone the cross-Channel, yet again, until 1944.<sup>248</sup>

In addition to the displeasure Stalin expressed over the postponement of the second front, the Soviet leader also sent Roosevelt a rather tense message during the conference regarding other military affairs. Stalin's first complaint was against Roosevelt's proposal that an American general would inspect Russian military objectives in the Far East and in other places in Soviet Russia. Premier Stalin articulated that he was "rather surprised" at the proposal and declared, "It should be perfectly obvious that only Russia can inspect Russian military objectives, just as U.S. military objectives can be inspected by none but Americans. There should be no unclarity about this matter." Also, by this point in time, rain and German resistance caused a delay in the Allied advancement in North Africa. The Soviet leader expressed that his "colleagues" were upset that the operations in that area had come to a standstill, and, he assumed, "for a long time, too." "Would you care to comment on the matter?," asked the Premier.<sup>249</sup>

The Allied repeated postponement of the opening of a second front, accompanied by the other tense military situations, contributed to the Soviet's suspicion of the Western Allies during this time. William Langer wrote in "Turning Points of the War: Political Problems of a Coalition," in *Foreign Affairs*, October 1947, that the Soviets "took the line" that the failure to launch the second front attack was "an indication of unwillingness to crush the Nazi power or permit Communist Russia an unqualified victory." Langer also maintained that the principal reason for Churchill and Roosevelt wanting Stalin at the conference was to reassure him that they would not compromise and that total victory would be sought. The Allies, while encouraged by Russia's improvements in the conflict in the East by January 1943, became increasingly nervous that the Soviet's frustration and suspicious over the lack of a second front would compel them to turn against the coalition.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Chase, 269; *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, II, 51; Zeman, Z.A.B. *The Making and Breaking of Communist Europe*, 170.

<sup>249</sup> Chase, 269; *Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*, II, 49-50.

<sup>250</sup> William Langer, "Turning Points of the War: Political Problems of a Coalition," 84-85; Armstrong, 8.



This situation significantly contributed to the political environment that Roosevelt faced at the Casablanca press conference on January 23. The tension from the Soviet situation caused a desire on behalf of the President to extend an olive branch to his Eastern Ally. FDR believed that unconditional surrender would serve as this instrument of peace and unity, and would address the suspicion and disappointment the Soviets felt. Elliott Roosevelt reported that his father spoke of unconditional surrender as, “just the thing for the Russians... Uncle Joe might have made it up himself.”<sup>251</sup>

The announcement of the policy, according to Sherwood, was meant “to take the sting out of the Allied postponement of the promised second front,” and to show Stalin that the Allies were willing, in the words of Chase, “to get on with the war as fast as possible.”<sup>252</sup> By it, the President pledged to the Soviets to maintain their war effort until every nation of the coalition was safe from the aggression of the enemy. A policy which heralded a refusal to negotiate or compromise with the enemy would, the President hoped, appease the Soviet’s suspicions of the Allied commitment to completing the war. Wallace Carroll asserted that without unconditional surrender, Roosevelt and Churchill would have had “no respite from Soviet suspicions and accusations of treachery and double-feelings.” In issuing unconditional surrender, the President offered a diversion from the postponement of the second front and a commitment to maintain loyalty to Soviet Russia.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid. Elliott Roosevelt, 117.

<sup>252</sup> By no means were the Soviets completely pleased with unconditional surrender throughout the war. According to some scholars, unconditional surrender pacified the Soviet disappointment over the second front for a time. Once the war had turned significantly in their favor, this war aim was not as big of a deal to the Soviets. Sherwood noted that Soviet opposition to unconditional surrender later in the war indicated that the policy had probably served its usefulness only until the Allies actually committed to the second front. Chase, 276-277.

<sup>253</sup> Chase, 271, 269; Carroll, 312; With it, however, Carroll believed, “they exposed themselves to a few gentle complaints that they were being unnecessarily stern in their propaganda. Anything which so effectively kept Soviet suspicions in check for more than two years was nothing less than a stroke of genius!” Carroll, 334.

**Roosevelt's Olive Branch:  
The Diplomacy of Unconditional Surrender**

**Part V: Final Assessment**

Debate over unconditional surrender began immediately after the policy's issuance. The announcement prompted much discussion and controversy. Military leaders, journalists, diplomats, and historians, to name a few, voiced their opinions on the matter. Some argued that the Doctrine was "historically necessary" and "politically sound." Others argued that it was a "product of wartime emotion," or a "propaganda inspired misconception." During the war, these people looked forward, wondering what effects unconditional surrender would have on the remainder of the war and on a post-war world. After the war, they debated the policy's usefulness or destructiveness.<sup>254</sup>

Major William Crabbe, Jr., USAF, exemplified the controversy in a speech given at Colorado College some years after the war:

Have you read, for example, that, "probably the two most fateful words used in the life of the present generation were unconditional surrender?" Or that "history may say that 'Unconditional Surrender' was the most expensive of all phrases—and of all policies?" That it was "the principal source of the world's troubles of today?" Or, the "greatest tragedy of our time," which provided "the germs of a third world war?" Perhaps, instead, you have read that the policy was "nothing less than a stroke of genius." Or that "on all counts, and contemporary criticisms of it notwithstanding, it was one of the most effective achievements of American statesmanship of the entire war period."<sup>255</sup>

Some believed that unconditional surrender reinforced the purpose of war, by eradicating threatening and aggressive influences in the world, and by allowing the spread of freedom and democracy. Others believed that the policy stood as the very antithesis of these objectives by stereotyping all peoples in the enemy nations.

Some historians and statesmen believed that most of the criticism surrounding unconditional surrender immediately following the war centered around what the critic thought of the post-war situation. On the one hand, those who viewed a defeated Germany as the only solution for world stability often lauded unconditional surrender as sound diplomatic and military diplomacy.<sup>256</sup> On the other hand, those who were displeased with

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<sup>254</sup> See Armstrong, xi.

<sup>255</sup> Major William M. Crabbe, Jr., "The Unconditional Surrender Doctrine in Theory and Practice," Virginia Hanson W. Baldwin Collection, box 3, folder 5, George C. Marshall Library, Lexington, Virginia, 2.

<sup>256</sup> Chase, 258.

the post-war situation often disapproved of unconditional surrender. Sherwood commented in 1948 that many who “violently” opposed unconditional surrender attributed “the world’s postwar troubles” to the fact that the Allies maintained unconditional surrender. Those who believed that a weakened Germany disrupted the balance of power in Europe, allowing the Soviet Union too much power, pointed to unconditional surrender as the culprit of such problems.<sup>257</sup>

Michael Balfour noted in 1970, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Potsdam Conference, that unconditional surrender had “few friends,” as many blamed it for the partitioning of Germany.<sup>258</sup> Balfour further wrote in a 1979 article that critics on the left lamented that unconditional surrender still allowed some German nationalists to maintain influence in the Federal Republic through a capitalistic economy, while critics on the right believed that unconditional surrender prohibited Germany from aiding the West in withstanding Soviet Russia.<sup>259</sup>

Alex Campbell, in his 1985 article “Franklin D. Roosevelt and Unconditional Surrender”, claimed that unconditional surrender had “not found much favour” among diplomatic historians. He proposed that, with rare exception, they viewed it “unnecessary and unwise” for two reasons. First of all, it offended the dominant view among historians that there should always be room left for negotiation: “[They] are, after all, students of negotiation.” Secondly, Campbell pointed out that much of the “formative writing” on the subject was undertaken by men who also had had the responsibility of translating unconditional surrender “into practical terms” either during the war or in its immediate aftermath. These men had encountered so many difficulties along the way that they linked the policy with “civil-military and inter-Allied” hardships.

Campbell asserted, however, that historians should re-examine unconditional surrender. Forty years after the war’s end revealed that the policy had not prevented a balance of power, which he deemed crucial for a stabilized world. He claimed that unconditional surrender’s attempt to reduce Germany’s power resulted in a divided

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<sup>257</sup> Sherwood, 695; Chase, 258.

<sup>258</sup> Balfour, “Another Look at ‘Unconditional Surrender,’” in *International Affairs*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Oct. 1970), 719.

<sup>259</sup> Balfour, “The Origin of the Formula,” 296-297.

Germany. This divided Germany promoted the balance of power Campbell viewed as essential:

When the division of Germany came about, it was as a result of a different process, hardly intended or foreseen. Yet the effect has been both the reduction of German power and also the attachment of one part of Germany to each of the great power blocs, rather than a persistent competition between them for the support of a united Germany.<sup>260</sup>

Regardless of one's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the treatment of Germany and with the status of post-war Europe, most agree that unconditional surrender reflected a concise focus for the Allied war aim. Roosevelt repeated the phrase "unconditional surrender" in many of his speeches from Casablanca until his death, and refused any idea of compromise or clarification.<sup>261</sup> Although the announcement was casual, it offered an official policy that, Roosevelt hoped, not only would provide the total defeat of the enemy nations, but also would encourage the Allied coalition to remain intact.

Elena Agarossi, in *A Nation Collapses: The Italian Surrender of September 1943*, stated that unconditional surrender served as an "effective formula of Allied propaganda," in contrast to Germany's "total war" philosophy. In unconditional surrender, Roosevelt offered to his home-front, occupied Europe and Allied combatants a concise war aim. The President encouraged those fighting to believe that they fought for a "just cause." Agarossi elaborated that unconditional surrender presented the idea that the Allies were "protagonists" in a moral battle, "between good and evil, between Fascism and anti-Fascism, between liberations and usurpers," that would persist "until the forces of evil were destroyed." The policy provided an "ideal common" to those in the various countries united against the Axis powers. Armstrong echoed that in the "atmosphere of division" that faced the Allies, unconditional surrender provided "the one point of total accord [which] needed to be stated unequivocally."<sup>262</sup>

Pronouncing unconditional surrender served to renounce the criticism and speculation that Roosevelt faced at the time. The policy offered repudiation for domestic criticism and gave the home-front a slogan around which to unify. In the Casablanca

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<sup>260</sup> Alex Campbell, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and Unconditional Surrender," in Richard Langhorne, ed. *Diplomacy and Intelligence during the Second World War: Essays in Honour of F.H.Hinsley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 219, 240.

<sup>261</sup> Armstrong, 13, x.

announcement, the President hoped to present optimism and hope that the final result of war would be worth the sacrifice in the meantime. It encouraged the American nation to grasp the concept and spirit of total war. For those who were dissentious or critical of Roosevelt's leadership or of the war effort, the President pointed to the spirit of unconditional surrender, in which he proclaimed unity and victory.<sup>263</sup> Historian Raymond O'Connor noted that unconditional surrender allowed FDR to concentrate his time and efforts toward his "first priority," which was winning the war, and gave him the opportunity to "minimize" his labors in making public assurances of the war aim.<sup>264</sup>

To the British and Soviets, it offered a commitment that, despite the squabbles and disagreements along the way, the coalition would remain loyal until they defeated every enemy nation entirely. The President desired that unconditional surrender would calm speculations and would encourage trust among the members of the United Nations. The policy, in Roosevelt's mind, served to minimize the tension over military disagreements with the British, over the French political situation and over the Soviet push for a second-front.

Chase noted that the advantages of keeping both the home-front and the Allied coalition united were directly related. If Americans did not share a vision and energy in obtaining total victory, the Allies would tend not to trust or depend upon the United States. If, on the other hand, the Allies were disunified or suspicious of each other, the American home-front would wonder if they should trust the loyalty of the other members of the United Nations.<sup>265</sup> In issuing unconditional surrender, Roosevelt hoped to link his desire for a united domestic front and a united coalition. The political tensions leading up to the Casablanca conference made unconditional surrender a logical choice, in the President's mind, not only for accomplishing the final defeat of the enemy, but also for maintaining an united home-front and an united Allied coalition for the duration of war.

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<sup>262</sup> Agarossi, 24-25; Armstrong, 9.

<sup>263</sup> Chase, 274.

<sup>264</sup> O'Connor, 102.

<sup>265</sup> Chase, 274.

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