

**Sumner Welles, Postwar Planning and
the Quest for a New World Order
1937-1943**

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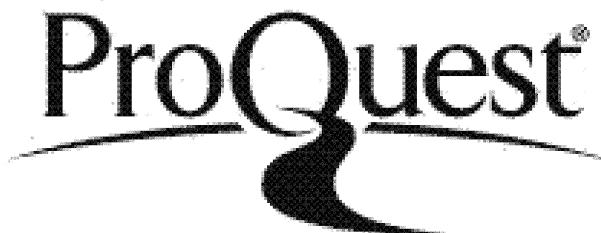


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Throughout the early years of the Second World War no official better expressed the U.S. desire to reconfigure international politics than Sumner Welles. He had known Franklin Roosevelt since childhood, and entered the diplomatic corps, with Roosevelt's assistance, just prior to American entry into World War One. During the early years of Roosevelt's presidency, Welles served as ambassador to Cuba and assistant secretary of state for Latin America, helping to design the Good Neighbor policy, which he believed essential to his aim of politically and economically integrating Latin America under U.S. hegemony. As under secretary after 1937 Welles became Roosevelt's closest foreign affairs adviser. His 1937 peace program, also known as the Welles plan, represented one of America's most significant international endeavors of the decade, while his 1940 mission to Europe, where he met with Hitler and Mussolini, was Roosevelt's most serious attempt to achieve a negotiated solution to the war. In August of 1941, at the peak of his influence, Welles helped draft the Atlantic Charter, which he sought to define as a declaration extending the Four Freedoms to the entire world.

Welles's most significant contribution to American diplomacy came after U.S. entry in the war, when he led the administration's postwar planning program. He dominated efforts to design a new world order, evaluating America's burgeoning interests around the world. He helped shape relations with the exile governments and sought to design detailed plans for the postwar reconstruction of Italy, Japan and Germany. He led the effort to create a new world organization, which he hoped would feature regional bodies and a military component to promote collective security. He sought to provide a response to the increasing nationalism in colonial areas, and promoted an elaborate system of international trusteeship to aid in the transition toward independence. He also shaped U.S. relations with the Soviet Union and sought to create an East European federation to protect the nations of the region from the future ambitions of U.S.S.R.

Paying particular attention to Welles's leadership of postwar planning, this account utilizes the recently opened Sumner Welles papers, along with the state department's extensive postwar planning records, to present an analysis of Welles's unique contribution to U.S. postwar planning during the Second World War.

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INTRODUCTION

In the middle of August 1941, less than four months before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Sumner Welles stood at the pinnacle of a remarkable diplomatic career. He had just helped draft the Atlantic Charter, which he hoped would define America's entry into the war as a crusade for a new world order replacing the militarism, colonialism, spheres of influence and balance of power he believed had characterized the past. He had recently delivered a stirring address before hundreds of Washington dignitaries at the site of the future Norwegian Legation, offering a thorough exposition of America's war aims, and pledging the United States to restore liberty to those nations subjugated in the war. A Time cover story on Welles's address called him the "chief administrative officer of U.S. foreign policy," hinting that his elevation to secretary of state was a mere formality, while a feature profile in the New York Times predicted that his views would dominate America's efforts to win the peace.¹

Welles was a formidable force in wartime Washington, due to his intimate ties to President Roosevelt and the First Lady, his alliances with some of the most powerful members of Congress, his support in the press corps and the public at large and his role as the administration's chief public spokesman on foreign affairs. In short, he was one of the most important officials in Washington, a man whose vision of what the U.S. would become after the war made him a key figure in America's wartime transformation from a major power to a superpower, an architect of the coming "American Century." But, as events would reveal, he was also a figure of immense contradictions, a deeply troubled man who wore different faces for different occasions and different people. His relationships with others, as well as his career, would suffer for it.

"Your name will be written large in the record of these times when history is able to assess the great constructive work you have performed," former U.S. Ambassador to Japan

¹ Time, August 8, 1941; New York Times Magazine, August 2, 1941.

Joseph Grew predicted in a wartime letter to Welles. Indeed, when Welles died in 1961 his eulogists praised his long career, but one would hardly have surmised from such accounts that he had once influenced his generation like few public officials before or since. President Kennedy wrote upon Welles's death that "his career will have an enduring place in the history of American diplomacy and public life," and an editorial in the New York Times added that "few Americans were better known or more highly regarded in the chanceries of the world than he. There is no fear that he will be forgotten, for he made his mark on the history of the twentieth century."² But rarely have such prophecies been proven so false so soon, as this once dynamic public figure faded from memory within only a few years.

In the years since his death his role in wartime diplomacy had been diminished, in large part due to the lurid nature of the real reasons behind his abrupt resignation in August 1943. At the time, many assumed that Welles had resigned due to longtime differences with Secretary of State Cordell Hull. The real causes of Welles's demise were much more complex and controversial, however, and involved more than Welles's rivalry with Hull, or, as some charged, a conservative conspiracy to purge progressives and New Dealers.

During the early years of the war, numerous stories circulated about Welles's conduct on a train returning from the Alabama funeral of Speaker of the House William Bankhead in September 1940. According to most accounts, an intoxicated Welles propositioned several black male porters whom he had summoned to his private compartment. On a second train trip later that month Welles allegedly solicited porters on a train bound for Cleveland.³ The secret service warned President Roosevelt that the railroad company was considering legal action. Homosexuality was still grounds for criminal

² Joseph C. Grew to Sumner Welles, September 21, 1943, box 94, folder 5, Welles papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library [FDRL]; John F. Kennedy to Harriette Welles, September 25, 1961, box 22, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL; New York Times, September 25, 1961.

³ A detailed account of the scandal can be found in a recent biography of Sumner Welles by his son. See Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 1-3, 342-346. Another useful account is Irwin F. Gellman, Secret Affairs: Franklin Roosevelt, Cordell Hull and Sumner Welles (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 219-220, 237-238.

prosecution in the 1940s and many assumed it would make an official of Welles's standing susceptible to blackmail, particularly in wartime. Shortly after the first train incident, one porter filed a formal complaint with his employer, the Southern Railway Company, which had its headquarters in Philadelphia, home of William C. Bullitt, Roosevelt's ambassador to Moscow and Paris, and a longtime rival of Welles for the president's favor. When Bullitt learned of the indiscretion he realized at once that he possessed a weapon of sufficient strength to destroy Welles.⁴

President Roosevelt, with the aid of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, orchestrated a three-year cover-up to protect Welles. But Bullitt and Hull pushed to bring the allegations to the attention of the press and Congress and, by the summer of 1943, they succeeded when revelations about Welles's conduct became known to the senate foreign relations committee. Welles abruptly retired, declining Roosevelt's suggestion that he become a special envoy to Moscow. Although only fifty years old, it was clear to almost everyone that his career was over.

* * *

Welles was a more interesting figure, even with all his flaws, than the selfless public servant or hapless victim who has been portrayed elsewhere in the drama of World War II accounts. To many, Welles had been a model statesman: intelligent, articulate and knowledgeable about his department and the world. Tall, at six feet three inches, erect in bearing, and attired in London-made hand-tailored suits which he often changed several times a day, with his neatly clipped mustache and ivory-handled walking stick, he seemed the epitome of the "striped pants" stereotype of the diplomatic corps. James Reston, the chief Washington correspondent of the New York Times, thought Welles "has enough dignity to be Viceroy of India, and, what is more important, enough influence in this

⁴ Orville H. Bullitt, ed., For the President: Personal and Secret Correspondence Between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972) 511-518; Adolf A. Berle Diary, September 1, 1943, box 215, Adolf A. Berle Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library; Breckinridge Long Diary, August 29, 1943, box 5, the Papers of Breckinridge Long, Library of Congress Manuscript Division; Athan Theoharis, J. Edgar Hoover, Sex, and Crime: An Historical Antidote (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1995), 32.

critical era to make his ideas, principles and dreams count." But, Reston added, "No man in public life in this century has been judged so often or so inaccurately . . . by external appearances."⁵

To others, Welles could be aloof, snobbish, uncompromising and elitist. Fluent in several languages, the Washington press corps joked that he could hold his tongue in Spanish, French, German or Italian. "Someone has said he is the nearest thing to a ruling-class Englishman the United States produces," a British magazine claimed in 1940, "he has more than his share of that uncompromising reticence so popular in official circles here." Harold Ickes characterized Welles as "a man of almost preternatural solemnity and great dignity. If he ever smiles, it has not been in my presence. He conducts himself with portentous gravity as if he were charged with all the responsibilities of Atlas. Just to look at him one can tell that the world would dissolve into its component parts if only a portion of the weighty state secrets that he carries about were divulged." But Welles had more than his share of human frailties which, coupled with his certitude, elitism and arrogance, contributed to his downfall. Shrouded in a self-protective armor of privilege and rigid manners, little of Welles's emotion ever escaped. Dean Acheson, who had known Welles since their boyhood days at Groton, recalled that Welles's "manner was formal to the point of stiffness. His voice, pitched much lower than would seem natural, though it had been so since he was a boy, lent a suggestion of pomposity." He often concealed himself behind an exaggerated fastidiousness and propriety. Once, when a remark of Alice Acheson made Welles laugh, he abruptly caught himself short: "Pardon me," Welles said, embarrassed, "You amused me." Washington newspapermen never quite knew what to make of Welles and thus referred to him as "Mr. Icicle."⁶

Welles began his diplomatic career during the First World War and had been enthused by President Wilson's pronouncements

⁵ New York Times Magazine, August 2, 1941.

⁶ Time, February 19, 1940; Picture Post, March 9, 1940; Harold Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes: The Inside Struggle (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 351; Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), 12.

about reordering world politics. Early in his career Welles became a proponent of the view that the United States should use its vast power to achieve a sense of order or equilibrium on a world scale to pursue outcomes consistent with U.S. interests. He had known Franklin Roosevelt since childhood and became a friend and adviser to the future president in the 1920s. During this time Welles came to understand the importance of free trade to what had become the world's most powerful economy, foreseeing America's growing influence in world affairs. He assumed that the removal of restraints on international trade would increase prosperity and make future wars unnecessary. Welles faced his earliest foreign relations challenges in Latin America. The Monroe Doctrine served as his secular religion and he became an early proponent of securing better relations with the other American republics as a way of promoting greater regional economic integration. In the 1920s he not only articulated a vision of what he called the "American system," which formed the basic outlines of what would later become the Good Neighbor Policy, but he also concluded that before the United States could become the foremost power in the world it would first have to secure its leadership of the western hemisphere. He sought to realize these vague aims after Roosevelt named him assistant secretary for Latin America in 1933. After a few false starts he took the lead in promoting economic integration and political unity in the hemisphere. His appointment as under secretary in 1937 placed him in a position to push for U.S. leadership in the world beyond the Americas, as he spearheaded the administration's efforts to play a more active role in global affairs.

More important than his diplomatic efforts prior to U.S. entry into the war was his work toward shaping the postwar order. Welles feared that the world powers might achieve a settlement contrary to U.S. interests. Thus, even before the United States entered the war, Welles emerged as the administration's strongest voice advocating a U.S.-led international order founded on a new world organization. Prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor he publicly called for the United

States to lead the way toward a future where the world's markets would be free, trade barriers nonexistent and colonialism and economic nationalism unnecessary. He played a leading role in drafting the Atlantic Charter and sought to include passages further reducing global trade barriers, expanding the meaning of self-determination to cover the colonial empires and pledging U.S. participation in an international organization.

Welles wished to bring about a new world order based upon free markets and republican institutions, buttressed by American power. While heading the state department's postwar planning committees entrusted with the task of designing the foundations of the new order, Welles would translate these vague goals and aims into a plan of action. He envisioned how trade and the distribution of aid would be essential to American prosperity in the postwar era. He became sharply attuned to the needs of a national economy he believed was destined to dominate the global marketplace, and he assumed that American prosperity in the postwar era would depend upon foreign markets and a world reformed along the lines of democratic capitalism. He oversaw plans to design the United Nations and advocated a "soft peace" toward the defeated Axis powers. He desired the withering away of the world's colonial empires and wished to put U.S. relations with Moscow on a more permanent footing that might endure after the war. He sought to avoid simply reviving the old League of Nations by instead building the new world organization upon a series of smaller regional leagues and by providing it with a strong military capability and an extensive system of trusteeship for colonial areas.⁷

Unlike many of the president's other foreign affairs advisers, Welles considered himself more than a mere executor of Roosevelt's will. An examination of Welles's career challenges the long-accepted view that Roosevelt served as his own secretary of state. That title, at least unofficially, would seem to belong more properly to Welles. Furthermore, a

⁷ "An Association of Nations," by Sumner Welles, July 22, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; "Wilson and the Atlantic Charter," by Sumner Welles, November 11, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

closer look at Welles's world view allows us a better understanding of Roosevelt's foreign policy, for it has been long acknowledged that Welles understood Roosevelt's true aims just about as well as any one could. Of all those whom Roosevelt consulted on international matters, only Welles consistently sought to provide a broader justification for America's war effort. Welles often introduced themes and ideas that the president and Hull were not yet prepared publicly to advance themselves. He championed the most advanced universal and liberal goals of the administration, thus making him a favorite of many progressives and intellectuals.

But can we accept Welles's utterances at face value? Or did he merely seek to camouflage his real aims behind an idealistic smokescreen? While Welles was a self-professed internationalist, his vision of a postwar world sought to promote largely national definitions of security through international means, and his promotion of idealistic principles such as liberal democracy and self-determination perhaps owed more to calculations of America's national interests than to high ideals or selfless altruism. While an idealist in his public pronouncements, he sought to promote the more specific needs of America's expanding economy and strategic interests.

He had calculated that the war effort would be better sustained by moral arguments than by appeals to self-interest. While he understood that his envisioned new world order would allow American commerce to flourish alongside universal ideals and values, he used idealistic rhetoric because he assumed the American people would more willingly sacrifice for ideals they believed consistent with their deepest moral, religious and political convictions.⁸ He thus offered broader ideals than free trade or a mere resurrection of the balance of power, and foresaw the United States taking the lead in building a new order based on universal principles, but at the same time compatible with its national interests. The quasi-religious overtones of Welles's wartime utterances made many of his public addresses sound like sermons, giving an aura of spiritual and moral zeal to what otherwise might have sounded

⁸ Welles to Archibald MacLeish, August 13, 1942, box 81, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

like nothing more than a call to American nationalism. Such pronouncements sought to give America's interests a larger moral justification. Thus to many it seemed that Roosevelt had given Welles the task of defining why Americans fought and preparing the country for its preeminent role in the peace.⁹

His world view did not look backward to a time-honored neutrality but forward to a world "reformed" through American guidance. He saw the Second World War as a revolutionary event that would transform the United States into a superpower, while U.S. participation in the war would begin the gradual process of remaking the world in America's image. Welles assumed that the promotion of American values and free enterprise would best advance the national security of the United States and that a stable and capitalist world order would ultimately best promote American interests abroad. He assumed that a world made safe for democracy and free trade would simultaneously advance the material interests and security needs of the United States.

Welles lent intellectual firepower to America's war aims, but his idealistic rhetoric was often in conflict with his passion for order, which also found personal expression in his impeccable attire, precise manners and cold demeanor. His stern moral standards, rooted in the Victorian values of his youth, never wavered in public. But within his cold exterior was a deeply troubled man who could drink himself into blackouts; a man with a rigid and tightly-controlled personality who struggled to contain his sexual feelings toward both men and women, often hiding his behavior behind a monumental snobbery.

Welles's world view was as complex as his personality. His idealistic pronouncements about freedom, self-determination and radical change belied his fear of revolution, upheaval and chaos. He distinguished himself during the war by embracing such radical concepts as a "people's war," "world revolution," "a new world order," while opposing the "status quo" and the "old unsteady balance of power." But, in actuality, he abhorred

⁹ "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL; Robert Sherwood to Welles, June 25, 1942, box 83, folder 11, Welles papers, FDRL. Not everyone was so convinced of Welles's idealism. "Welles is no radical," wrote the esteemed journalist and social critic I.F. Stone, "he is only occasionally liberal. His outlook is about that of a sensible business man who prefers a shrewd adjustment of realities to butting his head against a stone wall." See the Nation, September 4, 1943.

revolution and upheaval and much preferred order, structure and equilibrium, as demonstrated by his dogged advocacy of large-scale global planning, worldwide institutions and permanently fixed international laws and standards. He had a fondness and enthusiasm for structure and systematic planning, once telling an audience that stability, security and peace could be guaranteed only if constructed upon the foundations of corporatist consensus, detailed study, scientific truth and international law. In the midst of wartime chaos, Welles believed his ideals would not flourish without first restoring order, and while he attacked much of "status quo" during the war, he never reconciled himself to the dilemma that rigidly maintaining stability would ultimately make it more difficult to overthrow the old order.

Narrow self interest, combined with the utopian ideals, mixed freely to shape Welles's world view. Often, Welles sought to disguise a ruthless pursuit of his own ends under the cloak of idealism. Like Wilson, Welles's idealistic rhetoric often masked a crusading internationalism that sought to reshape the world in America's image. Wilson's self-professed idealism often concealed a blunt unilateral pursuit of narrowly defined interests. While Welles frequently spoke about self-determination, democracy and independence, he placed stability and order on a much higher plane. His public pronouncements about national self-determination in the colonial world, for example, stood in contrast to his desire that a US-designed and US-guided system of international trusteeship would carefully manage incremental steps toward independence. In some areas, Welles conceded, his system of trusteeship might endure for a thousand years. Furthermore, despite his oratory about freedom and individual rights, he supported and worked closely with authoritarian regimes, readily accepting them so long as they did not interfere with American interests. Additionally, he spoke of reordering the politics of regions such as the Middle East and Eastern Europe, but he desired a return to the stability and unity of the Ottoman Empire in the former, and flirted with notions of bringing back the Habsburgs for the latter.

There were other paradoxes. Welles claimed he opposed spheres of influence, but his regional approach to world organization seemed to be a tacit acceptance that spheres would inevitably develop. In fact, regionalism was essentially a spheres of influence scheme under a different name. In addition, while he never hesitated to use religious symbolism and analogies in his public comments, he seemed to have few religious convictions himself and rarely expressed his views on his faith and, while he often expressed his abstract belief in the progress of mankind, he essentially distrusted most men. Furthermore, he claimed a moral abhorrence of colonialism, but he sought to create an informal U.S. empire in the Americas, and his "enlightened paternalism" toward certain diplomatic officials could be patronizingly similar to the demeanor of some European imperial officials. He publicly championed a universalist vision of equal opportunity but sought to tell the whole world how to arrange its affairs and privately admitted that he thought "the Negroes are in the lowest rank of human beings"¹⁰ and that "the colored races" were generally "unfit for self-government ... "¹¹

An Anglophile by background, style and temperament, Welles had a strong sense of personal, cultural and political kinship with Great Britain. Yet he distrusted the sincerity of the Churchill government, frequently became enraged with British officials, sought ways to undermine London's political aims and deliberately shaped and pursued policies that led to the diminishment of British power and influence throughout the world. In addition, Welles had a strong distrust of communism, stemming partly from his years working with right-wing Latin American regimes and his friendships with wealthy Latin Americans, but perhaps also due to his upbringing and class outlook. Yet during the war he pragmatically promoted closer relations with Moscow and helped cement the Grand Alliance,

¹⁰ Welles privately shared his generation's condescension toward "lesser races" and was unsure that all peoples were fit for self-government. For Welles's comments see Political Subcommittee minutes 27, October 3, 1942, box 54, Harley Notter files, Record Group 59, National Archives (hereafter referred to as "P minutes"). [All planning documents and planning minutes are from the Harley Notter files, National Archives, Record Group 59, unless otherwise noted].

¹¹ See P minutes 34, November 21, 1942, as well as the minutes of Welles's subcommittee on international organization, referred to as PIO minutes 10, October 9, 1942, box 85, Notter files.

which he hoped would outlast the war.

Welles's chief interest would always be postwar planning. More than anyone else in Washington, Welles seemed to be more concerned about long-term U.S. interests than the day-to-day realities of the war. Even before the U.S. entry into the war, Welles focused not so much on routine events but on the opportunities that a postwar peace afforded U.S. interests. He foresaw America's huge accumulation of power and anticipated that the dislocation and upheaval of the conflict would facilitate America's rise to global leadership, where the world would consent to a benevolent American hegemony. But he deluded himself that American predominance would be different from what had come before. Welles assumed that unlike previous attempts at world power the American empire would eschew crude military intervention and instead rely on economic power such as aid and trade, as well as political and moral guidance. His vision of a new world order rested upon the belief that the very fact of U.S. power would automatically bring about a sort of Americanization of the world based on order, international cooperation and free trade.

Welles significantly shaped America's postwar course and much of his legacy continued to guide American foreign policy long after his departure. He saw the war as an opportunity to achieve order abroad and embraced the illusion that the world at large would enthusiastically embrace American ideals. Welles, like Woodrow Wilson before him, never understood that American values, ideals and institutions were not necessarily exportable and, throughout the war, Welles would repeatedly confront the difficult truth that despite America's vast new power U.S. officials would be consistently thwarted in seeking to create their new world order. Ultimately, Welles would discover that Washington could do little to transform the world in its own image and would instead suffer great frustration in any attempt to do so.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Making of a Wilsonian Internationalist: Early Life and Career, 1892-1937

During Sumner Welles's long diplomatic career, he saw the state department grow from a small operation, with its cramped offices adjoining the White House, into a large bureaucracy with thousands of employees and a spacious headquarters in Foggy Bottom. The department's growth during his lifetime mirrored America's growing power in the world, as U.S. foreign policy evolved from the less extensive preoccupations of his early career, where the U.S. sought to project its power regionally, to visions of an American-guided world order in the 1940s, where America began to engage the entire world.

Welles saw these changes starkly reflected throughout his lifetime. Born in New York City on October 14, 1892 to a wealthy and well-established family, Benjamin Sumner Welles entered an America which was vastly different from the one he would come to know as an adult. In the year of his birth the major European countries elevated their legations in Washington to the status of embassies, a move confirming America's growing status and power in the world, while the most recent census had declared the American frontier closed, spurring the quest for new overseas markets and even colonies. Furthermore, the United States of Welles's birth was a country on the verge of becoming something it had not been before: a great industrialized world power. In the wake of massive unemployment, strikes, labor violence, rural dislocation and economic uncertainty, many of Welles's generation would come of age with a sense that the search for order and the absence of upheaval were necessary to restore some sense of equilibrium to American life. Welles, like Wilson, would go further by extending the search for stability to international politics by seeking to achieve order on a global scale.¹

¹ The New York Times, October 14, 1892. For an account of America's expanding economic and political power during this period see Walter LaFeber, The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963). For the relationship between the domestic search for order during this period and foreign relations see the chapter "The Emergence of Foreign Policy" in Robert Wiebe's The Search for Order, 1877-1920 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 224-255.

Sumner Welles could trace his lineage to the founding of the American colonies. The Welles family were prominent in New York City society and throughout his later career Sumner would reap rich rewards from his close relationship with other established New York families, such as the Oyster Bay branch of the Roosevelts. The Welles association with the Roosevelts went back many years. Sumner's mother and Eleanor Roosevelt's mother were good friends and Sumner and Eleanor shared a godmother. In 1905 the twelve-year-old Sumner attended Franklin and Eleanor's wedding, where he carried the bride's train as she walked down the aisle on the arm of her uncle Theodore. The Roosevelt connection was also important symbolically, for Welles's contemporaries would be challenged by the example of Theodore Roosevelt's commitment to public service. Teddy Roosevelt entered politics at a time when many members of the American upper classes thought public life beneath them. He sought to make public service seem respectable, even noble.²

Welles was a sickly child, dominated by his mother throughout his early years. Contemporaries would later joke that the fastidious Sumner wore white gloves as a child at play. Nonetheless, his upbringing within the cloistered and pampered world of the New York wealthy contributed to shaping his political outlook and world view, instilling in him an almost Messianic belief in America's destiny, but also possibly contributing to his feelings of superiority over others and his inability to relate well with those from different backgrounds.³ Like the Roosevelts, the Welles family made regular trips to Europe, where young Sumner formed opinions and impressions about many of the countries he would be involved with during his diplomatic career. Following in the footsteps of Franklin Roosevelt, Welles attended Groton School in Massachusetts at a time when the student body included Averell Harriman, Dean Acheson and Eleanor Roosevelt's brother, Hall, who became Welles's roommate. Groton served the American

² "Welles Family Genealogy," box 7, folders 6-7, Welles papers, FDRL; "Sumner Welles: Diplomat de luxe," by Fred Rodell, American Mercury, November 1945; John Milton Cooper, Jr., The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1983), 11.

³ Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Welles to Bailey, March 8, 1948, box 129, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986).

establishment as Eton or Harrow did in England. The school was incredibly inbred, as eventually more than half the student body would be the sons of alumni, with both Welles and Franklin Roosevelt sending their sons there. Like Franklin Roosevelt before him, Welles fell under the tutelage of headmaster Endicott Peabody, a stern New Englander who was educated in England at Cheltenham and Trinity College, Cambridge. Peabody modeled Groton after Cheltenham, arranging the students in British-style "forms" rather than American "grades" and favoring British spellings over American. Student hierarchies were enforced by strict hazing rituals and various other tortures of which Peabody approved, believing they contributed to the development of "manly Christian character." Welles, inept at sports and unpopular with his classmates due to his sarcasm and cold personality, fell short of Peabody's ideal. But Groton nonetheless left a mark. Peabody told successive generations of Grotonians that public service was a high and noble calling, and many Grotonians would later acknowledge the school's profound influence on their careers. Franklin Roosevelt called Peabody the "biggest influence on my life," and Welles once told Peabody, "If I ever achieve anything in this world, even amount to anything, and I mean to, it will be due very greatly to you."⁴

Taking Peabody's advice, Welles went off to Harvard in 1910, again following the path of Franklin Roosevelt who had graduated in 1904. By his own admission, his years at Harvard were not happy. He spent much of his time drinking heavily, frequenting brothels, and developing a reputation for reckless behavior. He was unpopular. No clubs desired his company, he played no sports and was rejected by the Harvard Crimson. He left little impression, not even bothering to appear for his photograph for the Harvard Annual. His classmates remembered him, if at all, for his Brooks Brothers suits, stickpin, stiff collar and aloof demeanor.⁵ In 1913, contemplating dropping out of Harvard, he took a year off from his studies and traveled

⁴ Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist, 11; Frank Ashburn, Peabody of Groton: A Portrait, (New York: Coward, 1944), 112-114.

⁵ Harvard Annual, 1914; Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist, 19; American Mercury, November 1945.

the world. He considered studying art in Paris, but instead returned to the United States and graduated from Harvard with his class in 1914.⁶

After a year of drifting he sought to join the foreign service and in 1915 requested the help of fellow Harvard graduate William Phillips, who had married Welles's cousin and occupied a senior position in the state department. Welles also asked Franklin Roosevelt, now the assistant secretary of the navy, to personally recommend him to Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan. "I am delighted to learn that you are going to take the diplomatic examinations this Spring," Roosevelt wrote to Welles, "and am gladly sending you a line to go with your application." To Bryan, Roosevelt wrote: "I have known [Welles] since he was a small boy and have seen him go through school and college and I should be most glad to see him successful in entering the Diplomatic Corps."⁷

Welles received the highest score on the diplomatic examinations held that spring, and soon embarked upon his foreign service career. The timing of his entry into the diplomatic corps was significant, for with the Great War raging abroad, and a neutral America edging toward belligerency, a diplomatic career seemed to offer the twin rewards of social status and adventure. Like many young men of his station and generation, Welles came to admire the wartime leadership of Woodrow Wilson. "We had been thrilled to the depths of our emotional and intellectual being," Welles wrote years later, "by the vision that Woodrow Wilson had held out to us of a world order founded on justice and on democracy. As my generation looks back to the years between the wars I think our one outstanding thought must always be 'it might have been.'"⁸

That same year, 1915, Welles married Esther Slater, the sister of a Harvard classmate, whose family controlled a

⁶ Ibid; Harvard Class of 1914 Report, (Harvard: 1920); "Civic and National Personality," by Sumner Welles, c.1916, box 205, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist, 11.

⁷ Welles to Roosevelt, March 1, 1915, FDR Papers as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, 1913-21, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, March 15, 1915, ibid; Roosevelt to William Jennings Bryan, March 15, 1915, ibid; American Mercury, November 1945.

⁸ Lawrence E. Gelfand, "The Mystique of Wilsonian Statecraft." Diplomatic History, vol. 7, no.2, (Spring 1983), 87-101; Welles to Roosevelt, March 15, 1915, FDR Papers as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, FDRL; Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 3.

massive textile empire based in Webster, Massachusetts. They would have two sons, Benjamin born in 1916, and Arnold, born two years later. Welles soon distinguished himself professionally during diplomatic postings in Tokyo, where he oversaw Japanese treatment of German internees; and in Buenos Aires, where he spent much of his time seeking to outmaneuver British officials for trade advantages in the Argentine market. He rose rapidly through the ranks of the state department bureaucracy, returning to Washington in 1920 to become assistant chief of the Latin American Affairs Division.⁹ Within a few months he became "Acting Chief" of the division, helping to prepare and implement the "Wilson Plan" for the eventual withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Dominican Republic.¹⁰

By August 1921, just a few months shy of his twenty-ninth birthday, he became head of the Latin American Affairs Division, the youngest division chief in the history of the department. He sought to promote Washington's interests and a new sense of order in the region by improving the image of the United States through the reduction of the American military presence and by the avoidance of further interventions. He believed Latin America and the Caribbean deserved more attention from Washington (mostly through more intimate trade ties) and he began to develop many of the ideas that would, in little more than a decade, evolve into the Good Neighbor Policy.¹¹ Welles admired President Harding's secretary of state, Charles Evans Hughes, and shared Hughes's support for reducing

⁹ Boston Morning Journal, April 15, 1915; "Overall History of D.O.S." (Sumner Welles) 4E3, 6/29/D, Box 1, RG 59, War History Branch Studies, National Archives; Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist, 41-62.

¹⁰ Bruce J. Calder, The Impact of Intervention: The Dominican Republic During the U.S. Occupation of 1916-24 (Austin: University of Texas, 1984), 204-205; Welles to Josephus Daniels, May 7, 1927, box 23, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; Bainbridge Colby to Welles, May 25, 1920, box 23, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Norman Davis, August 19, 1921, box 63, Davis papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. Colby frequently praised Welles's work to Wilson, and Welles occasionally met with president to discuss questions related to the administration's Latin American policies during these years. That it was the Wilson administration that took the first practical steps toward repairing relations with Latin America see Daniel M. Smith, "Bainbridge Colby and the Good Neighbor Policy, 1920-1921," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, vol. 50, no. 1 (June 1963), 56-78.

¹¹ "Is America Imperialistic?" by Sumner Welles, Atlantic Monthly, September 1924. For an excellent examination of Welles's views of U.S. policy toward the Caribbean, see Gail Hanson, "Ordered Liberty: Sumner Welles and the Crowder-Welles Connection in the Caribbean," Diplomatic History, vol. 18, no. 3 (1994), 311-332. Hanson concludes that Welles's efforts to check disorder and instability in the Caribbean established a useful pattern for Washington's post-World War II relations with the Third World.

armaments and increasing international economic integration. Welles considered the urbane and austere New Yorker one of America's greatest statesmen and a suitable model for emulation. The admiration was mutual and Hughes made Welles his personal envoy for Latin America.¹²

Despite his feelings for Hughes, Welles subsequently resigned due to his marital difficulties. During the years since his marriage to Esther Slater, he had been involved with several other women (and perhaps, according to the account by his son, even a few men) and had surreptitiously used \$100,000 of his wife's fortune to purchase jewelry for a mistress. Under the circumstances, Welles felt a desperate need to earn a larger income to make a complete break with his wife and pay for his complicated lifestyle.¹³ He left the department in March 1922 in search of a more lucrative career, only to change his mind and accede to Hughes's pleadings that he become U.S. commissioner to the Dominican Republic.¹⁴ While still serving as commissioner he accepted a number of other short-term diplomatic missions, including a temporary appointment as President Coolidge's personal mediator in the Honduran civil war. Welles sought to restore order and equilibrium to the region, and his efforts in Honduras brought him national attention, as the drama of his mediation efforts reached millions through the U.S. press.¹⁵

Soon thereafter, in July 1925, Welles again resigned. He may have been discouraged that his meteoric rise meant that, due to his age and tenure, he could for the moment rise no

12 "In my opinion," Welles, who was not prone to flattery, wrote to Hughes in 1922, "there has never been a period in the history of the country when the foreign relations of the United States were so ably directed as they are by you today." Welles to Charles Evans Hughes, March 15, 1922, box 23, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL.

13 In 1942 Esther eventually retained the services of Henry Stimson, Roosevelt's secretary of war, to recoup some of the money owed to her by Welles. See Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist, 95, 389.

14 Bainbridge Colby to Welles, March 20, 1922, box 23, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Charles Evans Hughes, March 6, 1925, box 23, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

15 Welles to Norman Davis, April 29, 1926, Davis papers, Library of Congress; "Overall History of D.O.S." (Sumner Welles) 4E3, 6/29/D, Box 1, RG 59, War History Branch Studies, National Archives; Nation, August 1, 1942; Welles to Hughes, October 23, 1922, Foreign Relations of the United States[hereafter referred to as FRUS], 1924, vol. II, 75-76.

further.¹⁶ After his second resignation, he maintained an active interest in Latin American and Caribbean affairs. He briefly considered becoming a banker, but longed for another diplomatic posting. In late 1925, the new secretary of state, Frank Kellogg, considered appointing Welles assistant secretary for Latin American Affairs, or even minister to one of the Central American republics, but the idea encountered the opposition of President Coolidge who disapproved of Welles's chaotic personal life. "So long as I am President, that young man will never even be a minister," Coolidge is alleged to have said. Washington newsmen later speculated that Coolidge's dislike for Welles was a result of Welles's divorce from Esther and his relationship with the heiress Mathilde Townsend Gerry, whose husband was Senator Peter Gerry of Rhode Island, a Coolidge friend. Welles did not help his cause when he attended the 1924 Democratic convention, which sought to nominate Coolidge's opponent, in the company of Mrs. Gerry.¹⁷

In 1925 Welles and Mathilde married in a quiet ceremony in upstate New York, but it was announced to the world the following day on the front page of the New York Times.¹⁸ Welles moved with Mathilde and a staff of fifteen servants into the gigantic Townsend Mansion on Massachusetts Avenue, which had been copied from Marie Antoinette's *Petit Trianon*.¹⁹ But for the most part Welles resided a few miles outside of Washington at

¹⁶ When Joseph Grew replaced William Phillips as under secretary in early 1924, Welles's mistress, the heiress Mathilde Townsend Gerry, wrote to Welles in Santo Domingo, "How stupid of old Charles Evans to give that drunken Joe Grew Phillips's place and not you." Mathilde Townsend to Welles, March 10, 1924, box 19, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁷ Norman Davis to Welles, September 2, 1925; Welles to Davis, April 23, 1926, Welles to Davis, April 29, 1926, box 63, Norman Davis papers, Library of Congress; Welles, The Time For Decision, 188; "Welles/Slater divorce papers," box 19, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁸ As the former wife of a senator, Mathilde was already a formidable Washington presence. Furthermore, her grandfather had made his millions developing the Pennsylvania Railroad and her mother was one of the social arbiters of Washington society at the turn of the century. Her family had also been close friends of the Oyster Bay branch of the Roosevelts, and when Teddy became president he often visited their home in Washington. "Mathilde Welles: Autobiography: My Girlhood Days," box 19, folder 8, Welles papers, FDRL; "Mathilde Welles: Autobiography: Today," box 20, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁹ "Mathilde Welles: Autobiography: 1910-1925," box 19, folder 6, Welles papers, FDRL.

the massive 49-room Oxon Hill Manor.²⁰ Without an official position in the state department, Welles spent the next several years working on a book, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic, 1844-1924, which was completed in 1928 and brought him considerable notice despite selling few copies. The book took its name from the Biblical story in which Naboth is murdered at the instigation of Jezebel so she can obtain a vineyard. In Welles's telling, the vineyard represented the Dominican Republic and the United States, Jezebel. It concluded with an appeal for stronger trade ties and a more considerate and cooperative policy toward Latin America, and can be seen as a prelude to the future Good Neighbor Policy. In Welles's view, before the United States could begin to play a greater role in the world, it had to first establish its hegemony over the western hemisphere. To that end, the United States should remove many of the grounds for past distrust by pursuing a policy of more benign relations. "No nation can live unto itself alone," he wrote. "If the United States, therefore, is to maintain itself as one of the greatest forces in the world of the future . . . the time is at hand when it must reach the conviction that in the Western Hemisphere lies its strength and its support."²¹

With the severing of his official ties to the Republican administrations of the 1920s, Welles began working with Franklin Roosevelt, exchanging views on foreign affairs and drafting Democratic policy papers. Welles drew closer to Eleanor Roosevelt as well, corresponding with her frequently and visiting her at Hyde Park.²² He also became active in the foreign policy establishment of the 1920s, joining the Woodrow

20 "Oxon Hill: Architecture and Survey," box 9, folder 6, Welles papers, FDRL; interview with Mary White of the Oxon Hill Manor Foundation, April 4, 1996, Oxon Hill, Maryland; "Mathilde Welles: Autobiography: Oxon Hill Manor," box 19, folder 10, Welles papers, FDRL. Welles would make great use of Oxon Hill during his career at state, feting foreign dignitaries and diplomats, entertaining the president, and hosting informal meetings of senior officials. Roosevelt, too, liked the location, and would steal away to Oxon Hill, only a twenty minute drive from the White House, to imbibe mint juleps with Welles on the veranda overlooking the Potomac.

21 Sumner Welles, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic, 1844-1924 (New York: Dayson and Clark, 1928), 936-937.

22 Welles memorandum to Roosevelt, January 20, 1928, FDR Papers: Family, Business and Personal Correspondence, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, February 24, 1928, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, September 27, 1928, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; Eleanor Roosevelt to Welles, September 13, 1928, Welles to Eleanor Roosevelt, September 27, 1928, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Eleanor Roosevelt, November 9, 1928, box 148, folder 8, Welles papers, FDRL.

Wilson Foundation and the Council on Foreign Relations, and he began dabbling in party politics, using his friendship with Eleanor and Franklin to gain access to senior Democratic figures. Welles even toyed with the idea of seeking the Maryland Democratic Party's nomination for U.S. senator. As Roosevelt plotted his next political moves Welles sent him regular briefings on Latin American affairs and offered his assistance to Democratic candidates such as the 1928 presidential nominee, Al Smith. Welles made a number of foreign policy speeches in support of Smith, testing some of the themes he would seek to implement in the 1930s, such as pledging non-intervention and closer trade ties with Latin America.²³ Roosevelt, who was chairing Smith's effort, dangled the possibility of Welles receiving a senior appointment in a future Democratic administration, and the two men worked closely together throughout 1928, drafting a foreign policy paper under Roosevelt's name which appeared in the prestigious journal Foreign Affairs. In the article, Welles had Roosevelt suggest that U.S. intervention in the region should take place only in a multilateral context. With Welles's assistance, Roosevelt now advocated international limitations on naval forces and attacked Coolidge's dispatch of Marines to Nicaragua, thus unconsciously implying that Roosevelt's previous opinions on Central America and the Caribbean were somehow misguided. The article also promoted several objectives that would later feature prominently in his future presidential administration, such as expanded regional economic integration and a desire to work in concert within the inter-American system to pursue U.S. interests in the region through subtler means.²⁴

After Roosevelt became governor of New York in 1928 Welles served as part of a virtual shadow cabinet, responding to Republican foreign policy initiatives and briefing Governor

²³ "Washington Democratic Meeting Address," 1928, box 194, folder 1, speech files, Welles papers, FDRL; "Campaign Speech, 1928," box 194, folder 2, speech files, Welles papers, FDRL.

²⁴ Roosevelt to Welles, March 7, 1928, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; Roosevelt telegram to Welles, June 1, 1928, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, July 7, 1928, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; "Our Foreign Policy: A Democratic View," by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Foreign Affairs, July 28, 1928, FDR papers: Articles by FDR, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, September 8, 1928, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Norman Davis, February 17, 1931, box 63, Davis papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

Roosevelt on world affairs. Similar to the service the Brain Trust provided Roosevelt in the realm of domestic economic policy, Welles contributed in the area of foreign affairs. He made frequent calls at Hyde Park and the governor's mansion in Albany and he prepared attacks on the foreign policy of President Hoover and Secretary of State Stimson.²⁵ During the 1932 campaign Welles attended the Democratic National Convention in Chicago which nominated Roosevelt and helped draft the party's platform plank on Latin America, working closely on the platform with the journalist Drew Pearson, whom Welles subsequently introduced to Roosevelt.²⁶ Welles advised Roosevelt throughout the fall campaign, gave a number of speeches on foreign affairs, and strengthened his hand through a generous financial contribution to Roosevelt's coffers. Welles was elated by Roosevelt's victory.²⁷

The press assumed Welles would receive an important post in the new administration. Some even speculated that Welles, although only 40, would be named secretary of state.²⁸ Roosevelt instead appointed him assistant secretary for Latin America, making him part of a small group of senior advisers to the new secretary of state, Cordell Hull.²⁹ Roosevelt made many of the other appointments beneath Hull, and the emerging working environment at state did not bode well for the future.³⁰ Dean Acheson later recalled that the Department was a "house divided against itself," with both Hull and Welles surrounding themselves with loyalists. "Suspicious by nature," Acheson recalled of Hull, "he brooded over what he thought were slights and grievances, which more forthright handling might have set straight. His brooding led, in accordance with Tennessee-

25 Welles to Roosevelt, February 17, 1931, box 148, folder 10, Welles papers, FDRL.

26 Welles draft of Democratic party statement, 1932, box 148, folder 12, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Marguerite LeHand, October 27, 1932, box 148, folder 11, Welles papers, FDRL.

27 Welles to Norman Davis, November 19, 1932, box 63, Davis papers, Library of Congress.

28 Baltimore Post, September 28, 1932.

29 Roosevelt to Welles, March 9, 1932, President's Personal File [PPF] 2961, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, December 19, 1932, PPF 2961, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, February 1, 1933, PPF 2961, FDRL; Eleanor Roosevelt to Sumner Welles, December 7, 1932, box 148, Welles papers, FDRL; Eleanor Roosevelt to Mathilde Welles, February 17, 1933, box 149, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

30 For an account of Hull's inability to control U.S. foreign policy see, for example, Julius Pratt, "The Ordeal of Cordell Hull," Review of Politics, vol. 28 (January 1966), 76-98.

mountain tradition, to feuds. His hatreds were implacable -- not hot hatreds, but long cold ones. In no hurry to 'get' his enemy, 'get' him he usually did.³¹ Matters were further complicated because during most of Hull's tenure at state he suffered from the debilitating effects of tuberculosis and diabetes. Hull kept his condition secret, but his frequent absences from Washington raised speculation in the capital and later forced him to turn the department over to Welles for long periods of time. Neither was Hull's cause helped by his unfortunate lisp and an almost inaudible public speaking voice which limited his public role.³² His usefulness was also undermined by his lack of personal compatibility with the president. From the early months of the administration it became clear that Roosevelt would bypass Hull.³³

Roosevelt paid deference to Hull but sometimes the secretary's plodding style exasperated him. Roosevelt would cheerily open cabinet meetings by turning to Hull and asking, "Cordell, what's the news from abroad," to which Hull's deflating answer would usually be: "Not very encouraging." John Gunther, the peripatetic chronicler of events during the 1930s and 1940s, would later recall that if Welles was present in place of Hull, "the reply would be swift, precise, and comprehensive. FDR must have wished at least ten thousand times that Welles, not Hull, was the actual Secretary. But he could not possibly get rid of Hull because of his pivotal power in the Senate and his prestige in the country at large."³⁴ This fact was not lost on the foreign diplomatic representatives in Washington. The British Embassy described Hull as "a man of the utmost integrity, dignity and charm. He behaves with great courtesy to the heads of missions, and replies at great length to any question they may put to him; but when they return to their houses they usually have difficulty remembering anything

³¹ Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation, 9-11.

³² Irwin F. Gellman, Secret Affairs: Franklin Roosevelt, Cordell Hull, and Sumner Welles (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1995), 161, 25-26.

³³ Louis B. Wehle, Hidden Threads of History: Wilson Through Roosevelt (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 115; Julius W. Pratt, Cordell Hull (New York: Cooper Square, 1964), 16-19; Acheson, Present at the Creation, 8-9.

³⁴ John Gunther, Roosevelt in Retrospect: A Profile in History (New York: Harper, 1950), 131-132.

he has said that deserves to be repeated."³⁵

Uncertain about his own status, Hull was uncomfortable with Welles's presence in the department. Welles maintained his own base of power separate from Hull and Welles's friendship with Drew Pearson aroused Hull's suspicions. By the mid-1930s Pearson had become the most influential and the highest paid newspaperman in the country, his syndicated column, "Washington Merry-Go-Round," appearing in more than 600 newspapers.³⁶ Welles and Pearson became intimate friends and Welles served as one of Pearson's more valued sources. Pearson wrote glowingly of Welles's accomplishments, while Welles reciprocated by feeding Pearson gossip and insider information.³⁷

* * *

Prior to the inauguration, Welles prepared a memorandum for Roosevelt which served as the genesis of the Good Neighbor Policy. "The creation and maintenance of the most cordial and intimate friendship between the United States and other republics of the American Continent must be regarded as a keystone of our foreign policy," Welles wrote to Roosevelt in January.³⁸ A few months later, Welles spelled out in greater detail the key components of his proposed new approach to Latin America. He suggested a policy whose features would include non-interference in the affairs of other nations, non-intervention, increased trade, and low tariffs.³⁹ Welles persuaded Roosevelt to use his Pan American Day speech on April 12 to enunciate these new policies toward Latin America. "The Continent," Welles wrote to the president, "is awaiting very

35 FO 371/21541 "Records of Leading Personalities in the U.S." January 12, 1937, British Public Record Office [hereafter cited as PRO].

36 Time, February 13, 1939; Collier's, April 22, 1939.

37 Welles to Pearson, June 12, 1933, box 146, folder 8, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Pearson, June 8, 1933, box 146, folder 8, Welles papers, FDRL; Pearson to Welles, August 11, 1933, box 146, folder 8, Welles papers, FDRL; Drew Pearson to Welles, July 23, 1937, box 146, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

38 Welles to FDR: "A Memorandum on Inter-American Relations," January 10, 1933, box 149, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL. For a more detailed examination of this document see Charles C. Griffin, ed., "Document Section: Welles to Roosevelt: A Memorandum on Inter-American Relations, 1933," The Hispanic American Historical Review, vol.34, no. 2 (May 1954), 190-192.

39 Welles to Hull, April 4, 1933, with annex: "Memorandum for the President," by Welles, box 149, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

eagerly some official announcement by you of the policy which you intend to pursue with regard to inter-American affairs, and it seems to me that the opportunity afforded on April 12 would be a very suitable occasion upon which you might make such a declaration of policy."⁴⁰ In a letter to Hull, Welles added, "It seems to me essential, if the President is to speak at all upon this occasion, that he should seize the opportunity to announce a constructive, remedial policy, and not limit himself solely to the expressions of friendship and good will which convey nothing concrete and which will not satisfy Latin American public opinion."⁴¹

Welles understood that Great Britain and France, small as they were geographically, added considerable weight to their status as world powers due to their claims to speak for millions around the world in their colonial empires. Perhaps the United States, too, needed to speak for millions more beyond its own population. Welles claimed that bitter personal experience during the 1920s taught him that the United States stood to gain far more through a policy of cooperation with Latin America than through intervention and intimidation. But the Good Neighbor Policy got off to a rocky start. Welles served only a few weeks as assistant secretary before accepting an ill-fated assignment as the president's personal envoy to the strife-torn Cuban republic.⁴² In Cuba, the rhetorical idealism of the Good Neighbor Policy came up against the pragmatic realities of maintaining U.S. hegemony.⁴³

Roosevelt and Hull may have felt that with Welles's long experience mediating disputes in Central America, the new assistant secretary might be on familiar ground in Havana. "The

40 Welles to Roosevelt, April 6, 1933, box 149, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

41 Welles to Hull, April 7, 1933, box 149, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

42 Press statement by Welles, April 24, 1933, FRUS, 1933, vol. V, 278; Welles memorandum of conversation with Roosevelt and Charles Taussig, April 24, 1933, box 149, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

43 For a summary of Welles's mission to Cuba see, for example, Irwin F. Gellman, Roosevelt and Batista: Good Neighbor Diplomacy in Cuba, 1933-1945 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 35-68; as well as Louis A. Perez, Jr., Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 193-201; E. David Cronon, "Interpreting the New Good Neighbor Policy: The Cuban Crisis of 1933," Hispanic American Historical Review, vol. 39 (November 1959), 538-567; Louis A. Perez, Jr. "Army Politics, Diplomacy and the Collapse of the Cuban Officer Corps: the 'Sergeant's Revolt' of 1933," Latin American Studies, vol. 6, no. 1, 59-76; William S. Stokes, "The Welles Mission to Cuba," Central America and Mexico, vol. 1 (December 1953), 3-21; Luis E. Aguilar, Cuba 1933 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972).

situation [in Cuba] frankly is rather more precarious than even I had anticipated," Welles wrote to Drew Pearson. "There is a tension in the atmosphere and a bitterness of feeling generally which I have not previously experienced except during the brief weeks I was in Honduras at the time of the revolution of 1924."⁴⁴

After a decade of repressive rule, Cuban strongman Gerardo Machado violently confronted an effective political opposition. Welles initially assumed he could compel Machado to resign and restore stability in Cuba through patient mediation. "Bearing in mind the fact that I think at this time we have the best opportunity in my lifetime to lay down the foundation for a beneficial and sane Latin American policy, both commercial and political, I cannot admit the possibility of intervention," he wrote after his arrival in Havana. "Intervention would at once create suspicion and distrust, notwithstanding our treaty rights here, throughout Latin America, with very great prejudice, of course to our improving relations in Latin America during the next years."⁴⁵ Although Welles initially succeeded in forcing the departure of Machado,⁴⁶ he soon became deeply immersed in Cuban political intrigues. Welles wanted to restore order to Cuba but he also sought to teach the Cubans to select "good men." In the wake of Machado's departure Welles moved to secure the presidency for his longtime friend, Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, who Welles assumed would form a government more amenable to U.S. interests.⁴⁷ But the diminutive and professorial Cespedes never captured the imagination of the Cuban masses and Welles did not help the new president's cause when the two men were photographed for the Cuban newspapers embraced in a warm *abrazo*, a careless blunder in a nation sensitive to the appearance of U.S. domination. At times during Cespedes's tenure Welles virtually ran Cuba himself. "Owing to my intimate personal friendship with President Cespedes,"

⁴⁴ Welles to Pearson, May 17, 1933, box 146, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ This feat brought Welles to the attention of the nation, as he was profiled in numerous magazines and newspapers. A New York Times headline called him "Our Man of the Hour in Cuba." New York Times Magazine, August 20, 1933.

⁴⁷ Welles to Hull, August 12, 1933, FRUS, 1933, vol. V, 358-359.

Welles wrote to Hull, "and the very close relationship which I have formed during these past months with all the members of his Cabinet I am now daily being requested for decisions on all matters affecting the Government of Cuba. These decisions range from questions of domestic policy and matters affecting the discipline of the Army to questions involving appointments in all branches of Government."⁴⁸

Cespedes's accession, and his intimate relationship with the new U.S. ambassador, led to unrest in the streets of Havana.⁴⁹ When a coalition of workers, students, and young military officers led by Ramon Grau San Martin ousted Cespedes, Welles reacted angrily and recommended a "limited" U.S. military intervention to restore "stability." As mobs in Havana shouted "Down with Welles" and the Cuban press accused him of acting as a "proconsul of Yankee imperialism," Welles pressed for the introduction of U.S. troops under the provision of the 1901 Platt Amendment which provided for Washington's continued intervention into Cuban affairs. Roosevelt and Hull flatly rejected his request.⁵⁰

The call for a military solution may seem strange coming from an official such as Welles who was, after all, instrumental in implementing the Good Neighbor Policy. But Welles may have thought it wholly consistent with the Wilsonian policy of non-recognition and intervention that the former president had employed against successive Mexican regimes, as well as against the Bolshevik government in Russia. Wilson, the father of the Fourteen Points and the League of Nations, frequently relied upon military power to gain his idealistic ends in world politics, ordering unilateral armed interventions in Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and contributing troops to the allied attempts to overthrow the Bolsheviks in

48 Welles to Hull, August 19, 1933, FRUS, 1933, vol. V, 367-368.

49 According to Louis Perez, "the new regime was overshadowed by the omnipresence of the American Minister." "See Perez, "Army Politics, Diplomacy and the Collapse of the Cuban Officer Corps: the Sergeants' Revolt of 1933," 60.

50 Memorandum of telephone conversation between Hull and Welles, September 5, 1933, FRUS, 1933, vol. V, 386; "Mathilde Welles Autobiography: Cuba," box 19, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL; Americana, October 1933. More detailed accounts of these events can be found in Perez, Cuba and the United States, 193-201; and Gellman, Roosevelt and Batista, 35-68. That Welles employed the specter of communism in Cuba in an attempt to obtain Hull's backing for intervention see Robert E. Bowers, "Hull, Russian Subversion in Cuba, and Recognition of the USSR," Journal of American History, vol. 53, no. 3 (December 1966), 549.

Russia. Many presidents have used force to achieve their aims, but few so frequently as Wilson. Consequently, Welles's demand for military intervention in support of his diplomatic aims in Cuba in 1933 partially undermined his later efforts to embroider his reputation as a innovative liberal. Welles later explained that he merely sought to restore a sense of order to Cuban society. While the United States did not land troops in Cuba, U.S. naval forces maintained a threatening offshore presence throughout the crisis. The question of intervention became moot when a revolt led by Sergeant Fulgencio Batista overthrew Grau with the seeming approval of Welles. In any event, Welles, having become so deeply involved in Cuban politics, had clearly overstayed his usefulness. After being burned in effigy by angry crowds in Havana, Welles returned to Washington and his old post as assistant secretary. His controversial seven-month tour in Cuba further strained his relations with Hull, temporarily undermined him in the eyes of some colleagues and might have ended his career had it not been for his personal friendship with the president and first lady. Welles spent the next three years trying to live down the interventionist reputation he had acquired in Cuba.⁵¹

The Cuban imbroglio illustrated larger truths about Welles and the Good Neighbor Policy. Welles believed in hemispheric comity, but only so long as other nations did not interfere with U.S. interests or the drive for greater economic integration. The United States might tolerate some degree of diversity in the Caribbean, but only so long as it did not disturb order and the economic and political equilibrium of the region. This was amply demonstrated in Cuba and would be again during Welles's years as assistant secretary. While he sought to promote a "new era" in U.S. relations with its hemispheric neighbors, he continued to work from the assumption of Washington's economic and political domination of Latin America. He understood that Washington, through its extensive economic ties and the implied threat to intervene militarily,

⁵¹ "Mathilde Welles Autobiography: Cuba," box 19, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, May 18, 1933, Official File 470, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, June 24, 1933, Official File 470, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, July 7, 1933, Official File 470, FDRL; memorandum of conversation between Hull and Welles, September 5, 1933, FRUS, 1933, vol. V, 386-87; Phillips to Roosevelt, November 23, 1933, FRUS, 1933, vol. V, 525-26; Time, February 19, 1940, 15; Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 315-317.

exercised ultimate influence in the region and that mere disapproval from a state department official could still destabilize a regime.⁵² Despite numerous pronouncements by U.S. officials about a new approach, there was little change in Washington's view of Latin America.⁵³ The only tangible difference between Welles's new approach and that of the interventionism of the past was one of method. Control of the hemisphere would now be pursued by subtler means: friendlier diplomatic relations, the strategic use of inter-American trade, a stronger cultural policy, increased respect for Latin American customs and protocol, the strategically planned distribution of economic aid, a greater reluctance on the part of Washington to intervene militarily in the political affairs of the other American republics and the full support of repressive military regimes friendly to U.S. interests.⁵⁴ As for intervention, the Good Neighbor Policy sought to work hand-in-hand with its favored Latin American regimes to head off the potential for upheaval, thus making U.S. intervention unnecessary. Washington would work with the Latin Americans to suppress leanings toward either fascism or communism, make the regional investment climate hospitable to U.S. economic interests and restrain radical labor organizations. Welles further sought to ameliorate tensions by recognizing all governments in the region, no matter how repressive, demonstrating that he had no difficulty supporting non-democratic regimes so long as they remained amenable to Washington's strategic and economic interests. Whatever else the Good Neighbor Policy was, one thing is for certain: it was

⁵² See, for example, the essay by Gerald K. Haines, "Has Anything Changed? The United States and Its Relations with Latin America," Diplomatic History, vol. 17, no. 4 (Fall 1993), 627-631.

⁵³ For example, when the Dominican Republic's strongman Rafael Trujillo subsequently demanded that Washington replace its US-appointed collector of customs, Welles suggested that "the Dominican Government will have to be told just where it gets off." Welles to Pullman, August 24, 1933, box 147, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁵⁴ Throughout the era of the Good Neighbor Policy regional leaders became highly skilled at discerning Washington's desires. "When Welles and Hull spoke of a government capable of guaranteeing order," Lester Langley writes, "Batista provided one." See, for example, Lester D. Langley, The United States and the Caribbean in the Twentieth Century (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 134.

never a boon to regional democracy or individual rights.⁵⁵

There were, however, several areas where Welles made lasting improvements in the relations between the United States and the rest of the hemisphere. Welles sought the genuine friendship of Latin American diplomats, showing them a warmth and affection which surprised his colleagues. Furthermore, after returning to Washington at the end of 1933, Welles sought to make amends with Cuba and at the same time push the Good Neighbor Policy forward by negotiating the repeal of the despised Platt Amendment.⁵⁶ He also began negotiations with Panama over revisions to the 1903 Canal Treaty which had been unpopular throughout Latin America. He sought to modify the treaty, allowing for limited Panamanian involvement in the canal's control. His efforts to end the 1935 Chaco War between Paraguay and Bolivia led him to persuade Roosevelt to call an inter-American peace conference at Buenos Aires in 1936, where Welles played a major role in rallying support for a declaration that established the principle of collective consultation and nonintervention. Similar success followed inter-American conferences at Lima in 1938 and Panama in 1939, as well as the administration's tempered response to Mexico's

55 For an account that the Good Neighbor Policy sought to achieve traditional U.S. goals in Latin America merely through new rhetorical approaches, see David Green, The Containment of Latin America: A History of the Myths and Realities of the Good Neighbor Policy (Chicago: Quadrangle books, 1971). For a more orthodox account, see Irwin Gellman, Good Neighbor Policy: United States Policies in Latin America, 1933-1945 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979). Still, Gellman explains that the Good Neighbor Policy sought to concede only those U.S. advantages which had already become obsolete while retaining those it still considered necessary to its national interests. Gerald K. Haines has argued that Roosevelt and Welles justified their policy of supporting repressive dictatorships by claiming that they were technically "republics." See Gerald K. Haines, "Under the Eagle's Wing: The Franklin Roosevelt Administration Forges An American Hemisphere," Diplomatic History, no. 1, vol. 4 (Fall 1977), 374. Whereas Paul Varg has explained that the Good Neighbor Policy sought merely to maintain the economic dominance of the United States in the region. See Paul A. Varg, "The Economic Side of the Good Neighbor Policy: The Reciprocal Trade Program and South America," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 45, no. 1 (February 1976), 70-71.

56 Memoranda of conversations between Welles and Roosevelt regarding Cuba, January 26 and 30, 1934, box 149, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; memorandum of conversations between Welles and Roosevelt regarding Cuba, March 3, 1934, box 149, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Roosevelt, August 14, 1934, box 149, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

nationalization of American commercial property in 1938.⁵⁷

While the U.S. for the most part remained aloof from European political matters during the interwar years, Washington's involvement in Latin America was comparatively far-reaching. Washington sought to shape the hemisphere's economic, diplomatic, political and social policies along lines amenable to U.S. interests. Welles's approach to Latin American affairs during these years anticipated his unique brand of nationalistic internationalism during his later tenure as under secretary, seeking to achieve national aims through international means. Furthermore, his later enthusiasm for collective security and world organization stemmed partially from his experiences organizing his "American system" in the 1930s, where he called for pan-American unity and a permanent regional body to resolve disputes.⁵⁸

As part of Welles's effort to redefine the Monroe Doctrine in more regionally multilateral terms, the Good Neighbor Policy also had success, at least theoretically, in having the Latin American republics adhere to a hodgepodge of quasi-Wilsonian aims. At numerous hemispheric conferences between 1936 and 1942 U.S. delegations met with success in reaffirming principles such as the promotion of self-determination, the non-aggrandizement of territory, no territorial changes without self-determination, the restoration of independence and sovereignty, equal access to raw materials and support for some form of collective security or world organization. Thus, when it came time to construct the new world order during the war, Welles would argue that this "American system" could be exported outside the western hemisphere, providing a model for the other Great Powers in their relations with each other, but

57 "On the Margin of War," September 25, 1939, by Sumner Welles, Panama, speech files, box 194, folder 13, Welles papers, FDRL; Robert Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-45 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 122-24, 175-76. Welles received much of the credit for the Good Neighbor Policy at the time. In a revealing "tell-all" article in the New York Herald Tribune in the autumn of 1936, William Castle, former under secretary of state (1931-1933) wrote that it "would probably be fair to say that Mr. Hull generally becomes aware of American policy in Latin America only after the fact," and that Welles "is perfectly willing to assume responsibility and to act independently even when such action may possibly be contrary to the policy of the Secretary." New York Herald Tribune: This Week, October 18, 1936. Such stories did little to improve the Welles-Hull relationship.

58 "On the Margin of War," by Sumner Welles, September 25, 1939, Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the American Republics, speech files, box 194, folder 13, Welles papers, FDRL.

also for those nations within their spheres of responsibility.⁵⁹

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59 For Welles's belief in the exportability of the "American system" see his speeches "On the Margin of War," September 25, 1939, Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the American Republics, speech files, box 194, folder 13, Welles papers, FDRL; and "The Victory of Peace," by Sumner Welles, February 26, 1943, speech files, box 196, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL; as well as Welles, The Time For Decision, 240-241. For an account of how Roosevelt and Welles sought to use the western hemisphere as a model for regionalism during the Second World War, see Warren Kimball's essay titled "'Baffled Virtue . . . Injured Innocence': The Western Hemisphere as Regional Role Model," in Warren F. Kimball, The Juggler: Franklin D. Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 107-125.

CHAPTER TWO
Under Secretary of State:
The Welles Plan and Reorganizing the Department
1937-1938

Welles's experience implementing the Good Neighbor Policy reinforced his commitment to collective action and underscored the importance of Washington's leadership in the western hemisphere. But his elevation to under secretary in the spring of 1937 enabled him to push for American leadership in the world at large. Immediately after his appointment Welles would move to reorganize the department and would endeavor to have Washington play a more active role in the coming world crisis through his promotion of the Welles plan.

Roosevelt's first term had coincided with the high tide of isolationism in the United States. The president himself had dealt a setback to the cause of international cooperation when he scuttled the London Economic Conference in the summer of 1933. The following year, the Nye committee began its investigation of the armaments industry and in 1935 the senate rejected American participation in the world court, while the neutrality acts of 1935, 1936 and 1937 signaled the United States's continued desire to avoid political and military entanglements.

In the summer of 1936, when the position of under secretary became vacant upon the retirement of William Phillips, three assistant secretaries -- Welles, Walton Moore and Wilbur Carr -- vied for the job. The press described the behind the scenes infighting for the position as the "battle of the century," but Roosevelt hesitated to make a choice and the position remained vacant for ten months.¹ U.S. Ambassador to Italy Breckinridge Long, noted in his diary that "It seems to be the impression that Cordell wants Judge Moore as Under-

¹ "Undersecretary of State Welles," Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives; Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 509-510; Graham H. Stuart, The Department of State: A History of its Organization, Procedure and Personnel (New York: Macmillan, 1949), 328-329.

Secretary and that the President wanted Sumner Welles. . . . the President has probably ceased his advocacy of Welles and left it up to Hull, but each of the two seem to have threatened to resign in case the other is appointed."² Carr, a Republican in a Democratic administration, was a serious candidate mostly in his own mind, while many observers assumed that the seventy-six year old Moore had the advantage. A former member of Congress from Virginia and a strong isolationist, he was considered one of the most loyal "Hull men" in the department. William C. Bullitt, the former ambassador to Moscow, now serving in Paris, backed Moore, whom he considered a surrogate father. Bullitt even made a pilgrimage to Roosevelt's winter retreat at Warm Springs, Georgia, to plead Moore's case in person.³

Roosevelt settled the matter with one of his characteristic compromises, sending two nominations to Capitol Hill in May 1937: Welles would become under secretary and Moore would revive the defunct position of state department counselor. It was publicly announced that both men would occupy positions of equal rank and that they would receive equivalent salaries of \$10,000. In reality, Moore gradually disappeared from the centers of power in the department soon after the appointments.⁴ "I congratulate you on your appointment as Under Secretary of State," Bullitt wrote to Welles from the Paris Embassy. "I had hoped that the post would go to Judge Moore who has been as kind to me as a father; but I am sure you know that you will have my fullest and heartiest cooperation and that I shall do everything I can to assist your work."⁵

To some, such as former Brain Truster Adolf Berle,

² Breckinridge Long Diary, February 15, 1937, box 5, Long Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division; As a backup, Welles considered purchasing a newspaper in Baltimore, and he even contemplated running for the U.S. Senate from Maryland. Incumbent Democrat Millard Tydings, who was up for reelection in 1938, had earned the wrath of President Roosevelt for not sufficiently supporting the administration's legislative program.

³ Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 509-510; New York Times, March 20, 1937. The British foreign office, tracking the controversy, noted that Welles "has vanity and ambition and occasionally falls into the errors which these qualities may lead to. He has no sentimentality and his manner is stiff and reserved, but once the exterior is penetrated he is a good man to do business with." See FO 371/21541 "Records of Leading Personalities in the U.S.," January 12, 1937, PRO.

⁴ Congressional Record - Senate, 1937, vol. 81, May 20, 1937; Time, May 31, 1937; Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 510.

⁵ Bullitt to Welles, May 28, 1937, box 39, folder 12, Welles papers, FDRL.

Welles's ascendancy and Moore's virtual exile to oblivion represented a step toward a more effective and activist state department. "If Walton Moore is mildly sidetracked as counselor," Berle wrote, "we shall have systematic relations restored at all events."⁶ Not everyone agreed with Berle's optimistic assessment. In a letter to Bullitt, Moore expressed his displeasure with the new arrangement and predicted that Welles would find a way to expand his power in every area of the department and take over as acting secretary in Hull's absences.⁷

Moore's concerns were well founded. Welles craved and gloried in his new power and he sought to muscle Walton Moore out of his way. His promotion gave him new and broad responsibilities and he immediately moved to expand his control of the department by purging it of his opponents. Much of this occurred against the wishes of Hull, who continued to resent Welles's relationship with the president and his eagerness to bypass the normal chain of command.⁸ Brain Truster Rex Tugwell recalled that "FDR saw more of Sumner Welles than Hull," and that the president "confided in the younger man and entrusted him with missions and maneuvers he would not allow Hull even to know about."⁹ Hull's various ailments soon forced him to turn the department over to Welles for long periods at a time, despite Moore's attempts to serve as acting secretary.¹⁰ But, as Hull's health continued to decline during the second term, Roosevelt increasingly relied on Welles to run the department. While convalescing, Hull would receive daily briefings over the telephone from Welles. Many outside the administration soon took notice of this strange state of affairs. "The State Department has two actual bosses," noted a Newsweek story in 1938. "A strange team, these co-bosses differ in type as much as they differ in philosophy: Hull is a tight-lipped politician from the Tennessee mountains; Welles is a suave, dapper, career

⁶ Berle Diary, April 26, 1937, box 210, Berle Papers, FDRL.

⁷ Orville H. Bullitt, ed., For the President. Personal and Secret: Correspondence Between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 214-215.

⁸ Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department (New York: Norton, 1972), 11-12.

⁹ Rexford Tugwell, The Democratic Roosevelt (Garden City: Doubleday, 1957), 622.

¹⁰ FO 371/21541 "Records of Leading Personalities in the U.S.," January 12, 1937, PRO.

diplomat who has been in the Department for 23 years. But, from the grimy architectural monstrosity that houses their activities, the two guide America's ever-fluctuating foreign policy without openly clashing. Each pushes evenly on the wheels until he has a chance to plug his own theory publicly."¹¹

In his new role as under secretary, Welles established daily contact with the president, sending Roosevelt frequent memos and speaking with him regularly on matters related to the department and the world.¹² With Welles's enhanced responsibilities he and Roosevelt began having informal daily meetings, either in the president's office or residential study, over dinner at the White House or at Welles's home. The president encouraged such personal contacts and, as Welles continued to operate independently with the president, he became a more powerful figure in the administration, exerting increasingly greater influence.¹³

Welles's friendship with the first lady also aided his cause. When Eleanor Roosevelt felt that something needed the attention of the state department, she communicated directly with Welles, bypassing Hull. "It was only with the president's promotion of Welles to the under secretaryship," recalled Eleanor's friend Joseph Lash, "that Eleanor began to feel a genuinely sympathetic presence in the department."¹⁴ Welles's position also gave him new opportunities to serve as a valued source for important members of the Washington press corps such as Pearson, Walter Lippmann, Anne O'Hare McCormick and James Reston. "Sumner Welles is an extremely satisfactory man to interview," noted Henry Luce. "His mind is clear and precise. He has not the slightest hesitancy in telling you exactly what he thinks - or at any rate, what he says he thinks. He never hurries you, but you feel you should not waste a minute of the time of a man who wastes so little himself."¹⁵

¹¹ Jesse H. Stiller, George S. Messersmith: Diplomat of Democracy (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 136; Newsweek, June 6, 1938.

¹² Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 546; "Undersecretary of State Welles," Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives.

¹³ Kenneth Davis, FDR: Into the Storm, 1937-1940 (New York: Random House, 1993), 187.

¹⁴ Joseph Lash, Eleanor and Franklin: The Story of Their Relationship (New York: Norton, 1971), 571

¹⁵ The Ideas of Henry Luce, John K. Jessup, ed, (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 349.

After his confirmation by the senate, Welles immediately moved to reorganize the state department, employing bureaucratic hardball to reward allies and punish potential enemies, while putting his personal stamp on the departmental bureaucracy. He folded the Latin American and Mexican Divisions into one American Republics Division to be headed by his loyal assistant, Lawrence Duggan, whose appointment would allow Welles to continue by proxy his domination of Latin American policy. He next ousted Robert Kelley, who for years had been chief of the Eastern European Division and a staunch anti-Soviet who had influenced policy toward Russia for nearly two decades. Welles combined Kelley's division with the Western European Division and created a new entity to be headed by his friend and former Groton schoolmate, J. Pierrepont Moffat. Kelley was shipped off to a post in Turkey. Welles also sought to protect and promote his favorites in the department and he called on the president to immediately find posts for people who he thought had exceptional ability. He further cleared his own path in the department by orchestrating the removal of many other officials, exiling several to postings abroad, and demanding that all embassy employees submit their public utterances to him for prior approval.¹⁶ He also moved to strip the commerce department of its Bureau of Domestic and Foreign Commerce, which had served as a springboard for Herbert Hoover's intrusion into foreign affairs in the Harding and Coolidge administrations. Welles believed this would increase the power and prestige of the state department and give him a stronger hand in determining foreign economic policy.¹⁷

He also sought to extend his power in the department by bringing in outside allies such as Adolf Berle and Norman Davis. The Anglophobic Berle, a precocious former member of the Brain Trust who graduated from Harvard with honors at the age of seventeen, had a reputation for arrogance.¹⁸ The short,

¹⁶ "Reorganization of the State Department, 1937," box 43, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, June 18, 1937, box 149, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; "Draft Circular Telegram," by Welles, July 7, 1937, box 149, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁷ Despite Secretary of Commerce Daniel Roper's threat that he would resign, Welles went ahead with his plan to remove the bureau from the commerce department.

¹⁸ Raymond Moley noted that while Berle once may have been considered an infant prodigy, he continued to be an infant long after he had ceased to be a prodigy.

white-haired Norman Davis was a lifelong diplomat and longtime friend of Welles. Their relationship dated back to when Davis was under secretary of state during the last years of the Wilson administration. Both Berle and Davis would prove to be valuable allies to Welles in the years ahead.

As the months passed, Welles and Hull executed an informal division of departmental responsibilities. Welles would run the day-to-day operations of the department, handle most personnel matters, oversee inter-American affairs and have a strong influence over European matters. Hull attempted to direct American policy in East Asia (although Welles intruded even there), handled relations with Congress and struggled to keep abreast of events in the rest of the world. Welles had thus succeeded in achieving the kind of unequal division of the spoils that Hull, Moore and Bullitt had originally feared.¹⁹

* * *

Welles next began seeking a way for Washington to play a more active diplomatic role in averting the coming world crisis. He feared that continued threats to the global equilibrium would be injurious to American interests. This goal dovetailed with Roosevelt's halting attempts during the first half of 1937 to find a way to loosen the isolationist hold on the country. To that end, Welles thought the administration should make clear to the world that the United States would not merely stand aside, but would instead act affirmatively to prevent another war.²⁰ Welles proposed ways of restoring a sense of international order during a nationally-broadcast speech from the University of Virginia at Charlottesville on July 7, 1937. The very day of Welles's speech, the world crisis had escalated when fighting broke out between Japanese and Chinese troops ten miles west of Peking.²¹ In his speech, Welles outlined ways for the United States to contribute to world

¹⁹ Graham H. Stuart, The Department of State, 328-330; "Summary," Under Secretary Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives.

²⁰ Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper, 1950), 8.

²¹ "Present Aspects of World Peace," by Sumner Welles, July 7, 1937, speech files, box 194, folder 10, Welles papers, FDRL.

peace without violating the provisions of the neutrality laws. He expanded upon the concept of America's vital interests by reminding the assemblage, as well as the nationwide listening audience, that if war broke out anywhere in the world the United States could not long stay clear of its consequences. Implying that the inter-American system offered a suitable model for emulation, he laid down four points upon which the United States might take the lead. These included the establishment of a set of vaguely Wilsonian "international standards," the reduction of global trade barriers, the limitation of armaments and the regular convening of international conferences. His address caught the attention of officials in London and Paris but met with little enthusiasm in his own state department.²²

Throughout 1937 Roosevelt and Welles sought to focus the nation's attention on the increasing dangers of the world situation. The president told Welles he had been immensely pleased by the United States's active role at the December 1936 Inter-American conference in Buenos Aires, where the delegates pledged collective action if the peace of the hemisphere was threatened. Roosevelt thoroughly enjoyed what had amounted to his debut on the international stage. He and Welles shared the desire to pursue a more assertive role in world affairs, and during his first summer as under secretary, Welles and the president began discussing the possibility of erecting a naval barrier, or "quarantine," around Japan if she continued her threatening behavior toward China. When Welles departed for his annual visit to Europe in the late summer of 1937, Roosevelt asked him to broach secretly with various European officials their receptivity to a possible U.S. peace initiative. Roosevelt was still smarting over the hostile reaction to his court-packing fight. He wanted to avoid further controversy in the immediate future, but he continued to seek to play a role on the international stage.²³

22 FO 371/20808, July 9, 1937, minute by Eden, British Public Record Office, PRO; FO 371/20666, Lindsay to Foreign Office, July 10, 1937, PRO.

23 Welles to Sam Rosenman, June 17, 1949, box 140, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL; Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper, 1950), 71-72; Washington Star, September 13, 1937; Baltimore Sun, September 11, 1937.

A presidential address in Chicago in the autumn of 1937 offered such an opportunity. With Welles still overseas, Norman Davis prepared a speech for Roosevelt which hinted at the possibility of taking a firmer foreign policy than the administration had previously taken. On October 5, an estimated 750,000 people lined the streets of Chicago to see Roosevelt make his way in the back seat of an open car to the dedication ceremonies for Chicago's Outer Link Bridge, where another 500,000 waited to hear his remarks.²⁴ Keeping his comments about the dedication brief, he then called upon the United States to play a leading role in organizing the other nations of the world to secure peace, making this address, hereafter known as the "quarantine speech," one of the most controversial he had ever delivered. "When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread," he said, "the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease." The president warned that because another war would "engulf states and peoples remote from the original scene of hostilities," Washington would become active in the search for peace. These seemingly innocuous words had great significance, for only a year before during a campaign stop at Chautauqua, New York, Roosevelt had virtually endorsed the isolationist cause.²⁵

Welles returned from Europe only a few days before the quarantine speech and he shared the sentiment behind it, later describing it as "something you could get your teeth into."²⁶ Roosevelt had been somewhat surprised by the degree of criticism the address provoked and Welles lamented that within the cabinet only Harold Ickes, Henry Morgenthau and Henry Wallace expressed their support. Welles thought the speech offered an opportunity to restore international equilibrium and thus sought to keep the momentum going by drafting a more

²⁴ The New York Times, October 6, 1937; Welles to Sam Rosenman, June 17, 1949, box 140, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL.

²⁵ "Outerlink Bridge Dedication," October 5, 1937, FDR Speech Files, #1093, FDRL; Chautauqua Address, August 14, 1936, FDR Speech Files, #889, FDRL; The New York Times, October 6, 1937.

²⁶ Welles, Seven Decisions, 13.

specific plan of action.²⁷

The following day, October 6, Welles proposed that the president host diplomatic representatives from all nations at the White House on Armistice Day 1937 -- only one month away -- and then urge adherence to "basic standards of international law" which would restore "world order." The president would then call for sweeping arms reductions, the lowering of international trade barriers and the unity of the neutral powers in quarantining aggressor nations. Welles's suggestions followed the points made in his July 1937 speech from Charlottesville. He hoped the proposal would send a message to the world that the United States was prepared to play a more assertive role in world affairs, even going so far as to seek a revision of the Versailles settlement.²⁸ But his proposal provoked opposition from Hull who said he would soon offer his own suggestions for pursuing the aims expressed in Roosevelt's speech. Hull believed the president should avoid doing anything which might alarm the great powers or disturb public opinion at home.²⁹

The president nevertheless encouraged Welles to proceed. Welles told Roosevelt that while the plan would "definitely strengthen the hands of the powers that are seeking to avert world anarchy" its references to "the probable need for readjustment of the settlements arrived at after the conclusion of the World War would, I think, almost inevitably create a favorable reaction on the part of Germany."³⁰ The president

27 Memorandum by Welles, October 6, 1937, President's Secretary's Files 76, FDRL; Welles, Seven Decisions, 13-18. For an interpretation of the Welles plan which argues that it was an *alternative* to Roosevelt's quarantine speech, see Dorothy Borg, The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-1938 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), 412-413. That the president had a specific plan in mind, one consistent with Welles's proposal, see John McVickar Haight, Jr. "Franklin D. Roosevelt and a Naval Quarantine of Japan," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 40, no. 2 (May 1971), 203.

28 Welles later argued that the plan sought to assist the ongoing Brussels conference (see Welles, Time For Decision, 65) but at the time Welles told the president that the plan "should be dealt with independently of any other conference, consultation, or exchange of views." See Welles to Roosevelt, October 9, 1937, President's Secretary's File 76, FDRL. Arnold Offner and Frederick Marks see the Welles plan as part of a larger policy of American appeasement during these years. See Arnold Offner, "Appeasement Revisited: The United States, Great Britain, and Germany, 1933-1940," Journal of American History, vol. 64, no. 2 (September 1977), 379, and Offner, American Appeasement: United States Foreign Policy and Germany, 1933-1938 (New York: Norton, 1969), 191-192; as well as Frederick Marks, Wind Over Sand: The Diplomacy of Franklin Roosevelt (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 136-137.

29 Ibid; Welles to Roosevelt, October 6, 1937, President's Secretary's File 76, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, October 9, 1937, PSF 76, FDRL; Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 547-548; Welles, Seven Decisions, 23-27.

30 Welles to Roosevelt, October 26, 1937, PSF 76, FDRL.

endorsed Welles's plan because it appeared to offer a middle way to continue the quest for peace without military or political commitments that could antagonize congress and the isolationist elements of the press and public. "From the standpoint of public opinion at home," Welles wrote to Roosevelt, "I would think that your making this proposal four days before the opening of the Special Session of Congress would put a very definite quietus upon those individuals who have been deliberately attempting to misinterpret your Chicago speech."³¹ Welles drafted an address for the president to deliver at the Armistice Day gathering, laying out the plan's essential points.³² "If we get out of this business without a war," Adolf Berle confided in his diary, "it will be principally due to Sumner. He is the only one who apparently keeps his head working aside from his emotions."³³

Welles understood that the plan still had numerous obstacles to overcome, particularly within his own department. To bring Hull to his point of view, Welles enlisted the help of Norman Davis, who enjoyed Hull's confidence. Welles hoped that Davis's support and encouragement might induce Hull to lessen his opposition, so Welles arranged to have Davis sit with Hull during his presentation to the secretary on the details of the plan.³⁴ Hull expressed no opposition to the plan during Welles's briefing but privately he thought the plan "thoroughly unrealistic" and "illogical and impossible" and sought to obstruct it by demanding that the British be consulted. Hull worried that to "spring" the plan on London and Paris without warning might seriously jeopardize their efforts to appease Hitler and Mussolini. As Hull later remarked, "Welles kept

³¹ Ibid.

³² In the statement he prepared for the president, Welles wrote, "It is possible that before the foundations of a lasting peace can be secured, international adjustments of various kinds must be found in order to remove those inequities which exist by reason of the nature of certain of the settlements reached at the termination of the Great War." See Welles to Roosevelt: "Draft Proposal for Concerted International effort to Reach Common Agreement on the Principles of International Conduct Necessary to Maintain Peace," October 26, 1937, FRUS, I, 668-670.

³³ Welles's original notes for "Welles plan", October 1937, box 162, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt: "Draft Proposal for Concerted International effort to Reach Common Agreement on the Principles of International Conduct Necessary to Maintain Peace," October 26, 1937, FRUS, I, 668-670; Berle Diary, October 13, 1937, box 210, Berle Papers, FDRL.

³⁴ Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions, 20-21.

pushing the President on, while I kept urging him to go slow."³⁵

Hull's objections succeeded in stalling Welles's plan, and several weeks passed before the president could once again give it his full consideration.³⁶ After being counseled by Norman Davis in January 1938, the president, while keeping Hull's misgivings in mind, decided to revive a slightly amended version of Welles's Plan. Hull still opposed calling a conference of any kind and instead argued for a new trade treaty with Britain. Welles objected to Hull's approach, arguing that it overlooked the fact that the political questions involved were just as important as the economic ones. But Hull stuck to his position that, if the economic problems were resolved, the political questions would soon follow. To Hull's dismay, Roosevelt sided with Welles. "I understand the President backs Sumner's plan," Berle wrote. "I agree with Sumner in this, though it is not a clear case: there are dangers either way, but I think less by following Sumner's plan than by taking the Secretary's view . . ."³⁷

To obstruct the latest version of Welles's proposal, Hull repeated his demand that Welles seek the support of London before proceeding with any plans for an international conference. Welles feared that Prime Minister Chamberlain would oppose the plan, but he proceeded to arrange a series of meetings with British Ambassador Sir Ronald Lindsay. Welles knew it would be difficult to sell the plan to the British. Writing to Bullitt in Paris, Welles had already warned that "Lindsay told me in a confidential vein, which, as you know, is a vein quite rare with him, that he felt his own Foreign Office had for some little time been verging upon a state of hysteria, and that Chamberlain was more than ever determined to conduct foreign policy himself without the intromission of the F.O."³⁸

In an effort to win British support for his proposal,

³⁵ Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 547-548; "Cordell Hull," by Donald Drummond, in Norman Graebner, ed, An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century (New York: McGraw Hill, 1961), 200.

³⁶ Berle Diary, December 2, 1937, box 210, Berle Papers, FDRL; Welles memorandum to Roosevelt, January 10, 1937 [actually 1938], FRUS, 1938, vol. I 115-17.

³⁷ Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 546-549; Berle Diary, February 7, 1938, box 211, Berle Papers, FDRL.

³⁸ Welles to Bullitt, December 1, 1937, box 39, folder 12, Welles papers, FDRL.

Welles dined with Lindsay on the evening of January 11 and explained Roosevelt's enthusiasm for the plan. He told Lindsay of the president's concern over the deteriorating world situation and his desire to work more closely with London to align world opinion behind the plan. Welles said Roosevelt believed that the international situation was now sufficiently dangerous that it presented the opportunity to move American public opinion. Lindsay, apparently convinced, told the foreign office that Welles's plan offered "a genuine effort to relax the tension of the world, to stop the prevalent deterioration and to restore the influence of the democracies." Lindsay hoped his government would get behind the proposal as a way of gently influencing American public opinion.³⁹ But the plan met with considerable opposition in London, where British officials were already somewhat wary of Welles. The foreign office had recently protested what it interpreted as Welles's public characterizations of the British and French as being largely responsible for the current breakdown of international comity, and Chamberlain harbored concerns that Welles's plan had the real, if unstated, intention of eliminating the imperial preference system. Worse still, Germany and Italy might get wind of Welles's plan and seek to exploit those features that might be contrary to British interests. Chamberlain's suspicions may also have been fueled by the circulation of the foreign office's secret annex of its profile of Welles, which warned that Welles was "an intriguer and a rather hard-boiled individual. . . . He is unlikely to use his influence at the State Department in furtherance of the ideal of Anglo-American intimacy."⁴⁰ On the other hand, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden supported Welles's plan, fearing that its rejection would be an injurious setback to the cause of better Anglo-American relations. Eden feared the consequences if Chamberlain completely scuttled the plan and he noted in his diary that one of the prime minister's "chief objections to Roosevelt's initiative was that with its strong reference to

³⁹ Welles memorandum to Roosevelt, January 10, 1937 [1938], *FRUS*, vol. I, 115-17; Chamberlain to Roosevelt, January 14, 1938, *ibid*, 120-22; Welles draft of Roosevelt to Chamberlain, January 17, 1938, *ibid*, 126-30; Anthony Eden, *The Eden Memoirs: Facing the Dictators* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 624.

⁴⁰ Memorandum by Welles, October 6, 1937, President's Secretary's File 76, FDRL; CAB 23/92 (38) 1, January 24, 1938, PRO; FO 371 21541 "Records of Leading Personalities in the U.S." January 12, 1937, PRO.

International Law it would greatly irritate the dictator powers."⁴¹ Sir Alexander Cadogan, the deputy under secretary at the foreign office, noted that Chamberlain "hates" Roosevelt's plan, ". . . but I tried to point out that we mustn't snub him." Writing to the prime minister, Cadogan added: "FDR's readiness to enter the arena is obviously a fact of the first importance, and I should say that we must not discourage him, although the prospects of the success of his system are problematical and the risks, maybe great."⁴²

In any event, Chamberlain directed Ambassador Lindsay to inform Welles that the British wanted a postponement of his proposal, to which Welles protested vigorously. The under secretary continued to have an ally in Eden.⁴³ The foreign secretary went to great lengths to defend Welles's plan, explaining its details to the cabinet in late January, and fearing the "alienation of popular opinion in the U.S." But Chamberlain replied that the American plan offered "nothing new" other than merely "old principles" which the prime minister feared would "most likely be unpalatable to the Dictator States" and would undermine any attempt "to bring about world appeasement."⁴⁴ "What a fool Roosevelt would have looked if he had launched his precious proposal," the prime minister later wrote. "What would he have thought of us if we had encouraged him to publish it, as Anthony was so eager to do? And how we, too, would have made ourselves the laughing stock of the world."⁴⁵ Chamberlain's rejection of Welles's plan had important consequences in London. Within a few weeks, Eden resigned from the cabinet, ostensibly over the prime minister's appeasement of Italy, but also, as Eden explained in his memoirs, over Chamberlain's refusal to take Welles's plan more

⁴¹ Eden, Facing the Dictators, 634-636.

⁴² The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, 1938-1945, David Dilks, ed. (London: Cassell, 1972), 36; FO 371/21526, Cadogan to Chamberlain, January 12, 1938, PRO.

⁴³ Eden said of Welles that he had "known no man in the United States who had a clearer perception than he of the course of international diplomacy in the last years before the second world war." Eden, Facing the Dictators, 645.

⁴⁴ Eden, Facing the Dictators, 624, 635; CAB 23/92 (38) 1, January 24, 1938, PRO; CAB 23/92 (38) 6, February 19, 1938, PRO.

⁴⁵ Lloyd C. Gardner, Spheres of Influence: The Great Powers Partition Europe, from Munich to Yalta (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1993), 3.

seriously.⁴⁶

The prime minister's response greatly disappointed Roosevelt and Welles, both of whom viewed it as a crippling setback to their effort to move public opinion and have the U.S. play a larger role on the world stage. Welles later called Chamberlain's opposition a "douche of cold water," but after the war he would place most of the blame on Hull. "The truth is," Welles wrote a decade later to Roosevelt's former speechwriter, Samuel Rosenman, "the failure of that first attempt of President Roosevelt to exert American influence in Europe as a means of arresting the rapid disintegration that was then going on was due far more to Mr. Hull than to Mr. Chamberlain."⁴⁷ Years later, Welles summarized his differences with Hull over the plan when he wrote that "the Secretary of State was temperamentally disposed to put off dealing with controversial issues as long as possible. He preferred not to cross the proverbial bridge until he came to it. A remedial policy was to him preferable to a preventive policy, even though, as events so often showed, a preventive policy adopted at the psychological moment and carried out with decision and dispatch might later save a world of remedy."⁴⁸

Winston Churchill would later describe the Welles plan as the "last frail chance to save the world from tyranny otherwise than by war."⁴⁹ Churchill's comment is exaggerated. Had Welles's plan proceeded it most likely would have been disregarded by Berlin, just like every other diplomatic proposal made during these years. Nevertheless, the plan might have had some success shifting U.S. public opinion, and it might have allowed the president a greater role in pushing U.S.

⁴⁶ Winston Churchill, The Second World War, vol. I, 199; Anthony Eden, Facing the Dictators, 560; for another account asserting that Chamberlain's opposition to Welles's plan led to Eden's resignation, see also Stephen Roskill, Hankey: Man of Secrets, vol. III, 1931-1963, pp. 298-299, 300, 302. Eden's efforts on behalf of Welles's plan established a bond of sorts between the two men, and in December of 1938, long after Eden had left the cabinet, Welles hosted a luncheon in Eden's honor at Oxon Hill Manor, inviting, among others, Henry Wallace, Henry Morgenthau, Woodrow Wilson's widow, Edith, and William C. Bullitt. Interestingly enough, the press in both Britain and the United States often referred to Welles as an "American Anthony Eden."

⁴⁷ Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper, 1944), 66; Welles to Rosenman, June 17, 1949, box 140, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁴⁸ Welles, Seven Decisions, 134-135.

⁴⁹ Winston Churchill, The Second World War, vol. I, 199. Eden put it somewhat more modestly: "The growing tendency for confidential Anglo-American discussions on a deteriorating world scene, which I had been doing my best to encourage, was clumsily nipped." Eden, Facing the Dictators, 627.

participation in efforts to avert the world crisis. Had Welles's plan gone forward and been rejected by Berlin, it might have had some success even if it had only increased America's psychological commitment to Britain and France.

Welles would later recall the late 1930s -- and the administration's inability to act effectively in the international arena -- as a "nightmare of impotence and of frustration."⁵⁰ Welles assumed that Hitler's policy was not based on long-term planning but on opportunism. He wanted Washington to act affirmatively because he thought Hitler would continue to read carefully the mood of the other great powers before determining how far he could push. Welles held to the belief that a demonstration of allied unity might give Hitler reason to pause.⁵¹

At a number of times during 1938 and 1939, Welles sought to revive his proposal for an international peace conference, particularly during the Munich crisis in September 1938 and again after Germany annexed Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939. But events in Europe now had their own momentum and for the most part officials in Washington merely watched from the sidelines.⁵² The Welles plan thus represented the most concentrated effort by the United States to reduce world tensions prior to the outbreak of war.

On the night of September 2, 1939, only a day after Hitler had launched his invasion of Poland, British Ambassador Lord Lothian dined with Welles at Oxon Hill and told the under secretary that London would declare war the following day. Welles's immediate focus was not on Europe, but on the western hemisphere, where he sought to revive the Monroe Doctrine to safeguard the hemisphere. He acted at once to organize an inter-American conference in Panama, hoping to obtain hemispheric approval for policies designed to keep the war as

50 Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions, 1.

51 Welles to Joseph E. Davies, March 21, 1938, box 45, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

52 Welles to Steve Early, March 29, 1939, President's Secretary File 76, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, March 29, 1939, President's Secretary's File 7, FDRL; Welles draft of Roosevelt speech on Czech crisis, March 29, 1939, President's Secretary's File 76, FDRL. For accounts arguing that Roosevelt's policies had almost no effect on German foreign policy during these years, see Gerhard L. Weinberg, The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Starting the Second World War, 1937-1939 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); and E.M. Robertson, "Hitler's Planning for War and the Response of the Great Powers," in Aspects of the Third Reich, H.W. Koch, ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 196-234.

far as possible from the Americas. Welles had received alarming intelligence reports of German work on a bomber capable of attacking the Americas from the Azores. In strategic terms, Welles believed the security of the United States was intimately linked to the safety of the western hemisphere and its adjacent waters.⁵³

Borrowing a concept from Wilson's World War I diplomacy, the state department created a hemispheric security zone to keep open the shipping lanes and lines of communication, and the president called for an extension of the three-mile limit to one thousand miles. "It really does change the status of the New World," Berle wrote, "a kind of *pax Americana*."⁵⁴ Welles then attended the Panama Conference and he saw its proceedings and the accompanying declaration which confirmed the United States's views on hemispheric security as the capstone of the Good Neighbor Policy. Welles thought the new world could teach the old world a few lessons about reordering world politics. In his speech before the delegates he called on the neutral American republics, led by the United States, to show the way toward a "reestablishment of a world order based on morality and on law" that would restore peace to the old world. "We have created an American system," he told the delegates, "an American way of life, which is our chief contribution to world civilization."⁵⁵

* * *

Only a few months after his appointment as under secretary, Welles had quickly emerged as a driving force behind the administration's reorientation of its foreign policy. The main features of Welles's 1937 peace plan -- promoting collective security, free trade and the calling of regular international conferences -- had been the cornerstones of the

⁵³ Sumner Welles file, "Conferences and Missions: Conference at Panama," overall history of the department of state, 4E3, 6/29/D, Box 1, RG 59, War History Branch Studies, National Archives; "On the Margin of War," by Sumner Welles, Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the American Republics, September 25, 1939, speech files, box 194, folder 13, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁵⁴ Berle Diary, August 26, 1939, box 210, Berle Papers, FDRL.

⁵⁵ "On the Margin of War," by Sumner Welles, September 25, 1939, Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the American Republics, speech files, box 194, folder 13, Welles papers, FDRL.

Good Neighbor Policy. By applying these principles to the international crisis, Welles had sought to transfer them to a larger stage. But he faced opposition from the British and a lack of enthusiasm in his own department. Furthermore, the plan had other problems. Welles's aims needed to be tempered by political realities, for even if the British acquiesced there were no guarantees the American people would have given their support. Isolationism remained strong. But while Welles and Roosevelt retreated for a time, they would continue to search for ways for Washington to play a more active role in the world crisis and Welles would continue to speak publicly about creating "a new world order" based upon the rhetoric of the Good Neighbor Policy and his "American system." What neither Roosevelt nor Welles realized -- and failed to realize until the German invasion of France and the Low Countries in May 1940 -- was that the opportunity for a diplomatic solution to the crisis had long since passed.

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CHAPTER THREE

Creating War and Peace Aims: The Welles Mission, the Atlantic Conference and the Origins of Postwar Planning, 1939-1941

In the autumn of 1939, when the war in Europe was still in its first few weeks, Welles already had his mind focused on planning the peace that would follow. Soon after the outbreak of war in Europe, Welles sought to promote a peaceful resolution of the war without violating the provisions of the neutrality acts and moved to the forefront of the administration in expressing his belief in the war's potential to bring about an American-led new order. Like many of those who recalled President Wilson's efforts to reorder international relations, Welles believed the very lack of such early planning during the last war had led to the chaos of the Paris Peace Conference. He thus wanted to begin immediately planning for the postwar world.

By embarking upon postwar planning in 1939, Welles sought to avoid the confusion that had characterized American efforts a generation ago. But the president remained cautious of getting too far ahead of public opinion and within his own administration he received divided counsel. Several officials, such as Hull, feared that premature discussion of postwar planning would immediately resurrect the bitter controversies that had surrounded the League debate. Welles felt otherwise. A few weeks after the outbreak of war, he asked Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the director of the Council on Foreign Relations, to produce a number of studies about postwar planning and make them available to the department. Welles worked closely with Armstrong and took a personal interest in the selection of the council's postwar planning research staff.¹ Furthermore, in November 1939 state department planner Harley Notter suggested Washington immediately embark upon "the planning of a better peace than followed the last war" and he sent Welles a proposal outlining plans for an investigation of the problems of postwar

¹ Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper, 1950), 180; Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-1945 (Washington: U.S. Department of State, 1949), 19.

peace. Welles strongly agreed with Notter's proposal that departmental planning should begin at once. After a number of discussions with state department officials, Welles suggested to Hull that they launch an official postwar planning operation.²

For guidance, Welles looked to the Wilsonian precedent of the so-called "Inquiry," where President Wilson and Colonel Edward House assembled a group of experts to study the war aims of the great powers and formulate American policies. House and Wilson had excluded congressional representation and state department personnel from the panel and instead looked to the worlds of academia and journalism.³ Notter believed the absence of formal planning in the state department had forced President Wilson to rely too strongly on the services of House and his Inquiry. Notter argued that because the Inquiry had operated outside the state department, it had "greatly and unfavorably affected the effectiveness and the prestige of the Department of State, and to varying degrees the whole Executive, in regard to the making of peace." Notter added that due to America's potential to tilt the world balance of power, it would be impossible for the United States to stand aloof from the peacemaking process in the current war. "In fact," Notter noted, "it would seem desirable from the standpoint of our national interests that we should participate in that peace construction."⁴

Welles agreed with Notter's assessment that a major flaw of Colonel House's investigation had been its exclusion of the state department and congressional representation, and that the Inquiry had not been created early enough to give it sufficient time to look into the complex problems of shaping the postwar world. Furthermore, he believed the Inquiry and the state

² "Memorandum on United States Participation in Peacemaking at the End of the War," by Harley Notter, November 13, 1939, box 54, folder 14, Welles papers, FDRL; "Division for the Study of Problems of Peace and Reconstruction," by Harley Notter, December 12, 1939, Appendix 1, in Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy, 453-454.

³ "Memorandum on the House Inquiry," July 15, 1941, box 8, Notter files, RG 59, National Archives. Colonel House enlisted Isaiah Bowman, head of the American Geographical Society, Archibald Carey Coolidge, a professor of history at Harvard, and the journalist, Walter Lippmann.

⁴ "Memorandum on United States Participation in Peacemaking at the End of the War," by Harley Notter, November 13, 1939, box 54, folder 14, Welles papers, FDRL; Stanley Hombeck memorandum to Welles, November 22, 1939, box 54, folder 14, Welles papers, FDRL.

department had often worked at cross purposes.⁵ Thus, a few days before the end of 1939, Welles and Hull created an "Advisory Committee on Problems of Foreign Relations" to explore the possibility of peace terms and to study postwar recovery. Unlike the Inquiry, this new committee would function squarely within the department and would have three subcommittees, one focusing on political problems, another on limiting arms and a third studying postwar economic problems. The subcommittees would handle much of the work and present the advisory committee with recommendations. According to state department officials, the planning committees would seek to "survey the basic principles which should underlie a desirable world order to be evolved after the termination of present hostilities, with primary reference to the best interests of the United States" The state department planners added that in "light of the principles indicated above and of past experience, [the committee would] determine policies which should be pursued by the United States in furtherance of the establishment of such a world order, both as a basis of our own action and of our attempts to influence other nations" Thus, roughly two years before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, state department planners, guided by the active encouragement and participation of Welles, began to study the prospect of shaping a postwar order which would be commensurate with American interests.⁶

Meeting for the first time in January 1940, the Welles-chaired "Advisory Committee on Problems of Foreign Relations" had a vague enough title to avoid raising the suspicions of Congress or the public. Concern still existed in the state department that rumors or leaks about the committee might arouse opposition. The committee thus issued a public statement explaining its functions. The statement differed significantly from the department's secret discussions, as any mention of constructing an American-led "world order" after the war was

⁵ "Division for the Study of Problems of Peace and Reconstruction," December 12, 1939, in Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy, 453-54; "Memorandum on the House Inquiry," July 15, 1941, box 8, Notter files, National Archives, RG 59, National Archives; Sumner Welles, Where Are We Heading?, (New York: Harper, 1946), 20.

⁶ "Subcommittee on Economic Problems of the Intradepartmental Committee on Peace and Reconstruction: Program of Work," January 3, 1940, appendix 2, in Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy, 454-455.

carefully omitted.⁷

Welles saw his leadership of postwar planning as an opportunity to realize his neo-Wilsonian vision of a world reordered along lines desired by Washington. He hoped to use his membership on the newly formed subcommittee on political problems to exert his influence over all aspects of planning. In reality, Welles served as the *de facto* chairman of the subcommittee. Its official chairman, New York lawyer George Rublee, whom Welles once described to Drew Pearson as "a pompous fathead," was usually too ill to attend meetings. Welles further consolidated his power when the Subcommittee on Limitation and Reduction of Armaments, which had met only once, merged with his own subcommittee. Furthermore, he took personal responsibility for reporting the activities of the committees back to Hull, thus controlling what little information the secretary received about the planning process.⁸

Initially, the committee dusted off the Welles plan of 1937, as the state department once again began to focus on the possibility of organizing the other neutral nations to promote peace. The planners considered a conference of forty-seven neutrals with invitations later extended to the belligerents. Welles's subcommittee on political problems also began preliminary discussions on building a new world organization. In light of the failures of the League of Nations and the relative success of the inter-American system, the committee began to consider the prospect of creating a number of smaller, regional leagues. But these discussions were merely preliminary, and the plan to organize the neutral nations would

⁷ Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy, 20-21; "Advisory Committee on Problems of Foreign Relations: Department of State Announcement, January 8, 1940," Department of State Bulletin, vol. II, 19.

⁸ Welles to Pearson, June 8, 1933, box 146, Welles papers, FDRL; Department of State Bulletin, vol. II, (January 13, 1940), 19; "Under Secretary Welles," Sumner Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives; "Committee on Peace and Reconstruction," box 191, Postwar Foreign Policy file, 1940-41, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL; "Subcommittee: Organization of Peace," January 3, 1940, box 191, Postwar Foreign Policy files, 1940-41, Welles papers, FDRL; "Memorandum on World Order," by Hugh Wilson, January 22, 1940, box 191, Postwar Foreign Policy files, 1940-41, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL.

soon be overtaken by the events of the war.⁹

At the beginning of 1940, Roosevelt and Welles sought to pursue a number of efforts to promote an American-brokered peace. Roosevelt wanted it made clear that he was prepared to act as a mediator to "reduce and reconcile" the world conflict. He thus gave further consideration to reviving the Welles plan of 1937, where international arms control and economic stability would be the chief aims of an international conference, and where the neutrals might consider acting as a mediating body between the belligerents.¹⁰ But by far the most important move of Roosevelt's winter of 1939-1940 peace offensive was the decision to send Welles on a mission to Europe. The president had a number of reasons for choosing Welles for such a task. Welles's knowledge of the issues, his close relationship with the president, his leadership of postwar planning and his willingness to go outside the normal bounds of authority made him the logical choice for the mission. Perhaps most importantly, Roosevelt and Welles shared a desire to establish an American claim to participation in any future peace settlement. Quite apart from the president's faith in Welles, Roosevelt was also fond of such bold moves, later telling Breckinridge Long that the idea for the Welles mission "came to him as an impulse."¹¹

The postwar planning committees had accomplished little in their first few weeks because Welles's impending mission to Europe and the overall pressures of the war made more specific

⁹ Pasvolsky to Welles, January 29, 1940, box 155, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; "The Bases of an International Economic Program in Connection with a Possible Conference of Neutrals," by Leo Pasvolsky, January 29, 1940, box 155, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; "Memorandum by Hugh R. Wilson Arising From Conversation in Mr. Welles's Office, April 19 and April 26," May 1, 1940, box 191, postwar files, 1940-41, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL; "Subcommittee: Organization of Peace," January 3, 1940, box 191, postwar files, 1940-41, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL; "Memorandum on World Order," by Hugh Wilson, January 22, 1940, box 191, postwar files, 1940-41, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁰ Welles to Roosevelt, January 12, 1940, President's Secretary's File 76, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, February 1, 1940, President's Secretary's File 76, FDRL.

¹¹ "Mission to Europe," Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, 44; Breckinridge Long Diary, March 12, 1940, box 5, Long Papers, Library of Congress. Roosevelt may also have been seeking a bold move to aid him in his efforts to secure an unprecedented third presidential term. See, for example, Herbert S. Parmet and Marie B. Hecht, Never Again: A President Runs For a Third Term (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 31-34, as well as Bernard F. Donahoe, Private Plans and Public Dangers: The Story of FDR's Third Nomination (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965).

planning difficult. This was the period of the "phony war" and Welles hoped that the current lull in the fighting might offer an opportunity to seek a peaceful resolution. But his mission was also indelibly linked to postwar concerns. Welles remained concerned that the world powers might achieve a settlement inconsistent with U.S. interests. He would thus discuss with European leaders a series of vague proposals which resembled his 1937 peace program, complete with its call for disarmament, its promotion of free trade, and equitable access to the world's resources. Furthermore, Welles would emphasize the postwar restructuring of the world and his reports back to the president would underscore the prospects for creating a world order more favorable to Washington's aims.¹²

Welles and Roosevelt thus sought to exploit the opportunity presented by the "phony war" to explore the possibilities of a resolution. It is possible, as some have argued,¹³ that even at this late date Welles sought a revision of the Versailles settlement that would have appeased several German aims, while at the same time seeking to sooth allied opinion through arms control and the reconstitution of some form of a "rump" Czechoslovakia and a "rump" Poland. Welles certainly went to Europe seeking to explore the contours of what might be the basis of a potential settlement (particularly from the Axis powers, whose aims and positions were less clear to Washington) and he would have been elated had he been able to achieve a Wilsonian "peace without victory" in Europe. That failing, Welles had other, more practical, goals: namely, to explore the depth of the Rome-Berlin axis and consider what measures might be taken to weaken Mussolini's commitment to Hitler.¹⁴ At the very least, the mission might subtly aid the

12 Pasvolsky to Welles, February 14, 1940, box 155, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; "The Bases of the Economic Foreign Policy of the United States," February 1940, box 155, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL; Hull to Welles, February 15, 1940, box 155, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

13 See, for example, Frederick W. Marks, Wind Over Sand: The Diplomacy of Franklin Roosevelt (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 153-160; Arnold A. Offner, "Appeasement Revisited: The United States, Great Britain, and Germany, 1933-1940," Journal of American History, vol. 64, no. 2 (September 1977): 384-393; William Langer and S. E. Gleason, The Challenge to Isolation: The World Crisis of 1937-1940 and American Foreign Policy (New York: Harper, 1952), 363-370.

14 See Stanley E. Hilton, "The Welles Mission to Europe, February-March 1940: Illusion or Realism?" Journal of American History, vol. 58, no. 1 (June 1971), 93-120. That the Italians might still have been wooed over to the allied side, even as late as the phony war, see James J. Sadkovich, "Understanding Defeat: Reappraising Italy's Role in World War II," Journal of Contemporary History, vol. 24, no. 1 (January 1989), 30.

allied powers by delaying a German offensive in the west. Welles and Roosevelt worried that Hitler was preparing a massive spring offensive against the western allies. They hoped the mission might cause a delay in the Fuhrer's war plans, or even avert a German offensive altogether. They thought even a brief delay would benefit the allies by allowing them more time to supply their armies and build up their defenses.¹⁵

Furthermore, Welles feared that the stakes now included more than a mere reshuffling of European boundaries and colonial spoils and that continuation of the war would increase the risks to U.S. interests. Worse still, Berlin's domination of Europe could lead to German economic penetration of the western hemisphere, thus undermining Welles's efforts to safeguard the *Pax Americana*. Roosevelt and Welles may have had fears that Prime Minister Chamberlain might seek an Anglo-German agreement that would, in effect, exclude the United States from trade and business opportunities in Europe, Africa and Latin America.¹⁶ "It will be a very important trip -- that is, it may be," Breckinridge Long noted in his diary. "If Sumner can find any willingness on the part of the various responsible officials of any of those Governments to cease hostilities, it will be important, but if he does not find any such situation, it will probably mean that the war will continue on *ad infinitum*."¹⁷

A Wilsonian precedent existed for sending Welles on the mission to Europe. On the eve of the First World War, Wilson had sent Colonel House to Europe to assess the general war situation. House and Wilson sensed an opportunity for the United States to play a leading role in resolving European tensions and both men sought to convince the European powers to accept American mediation. Opponents of Roosevelt's foreign

¹⁵ See Welles's introduction in the English-language edition of Ciano's diaries, Hugh Gibson, ed., *Ciano's Diaries, 1939-1943* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1946); as well as Hilton, *ibid*, 115, 120, and Frederick Marks, *Wind Over Sand*, 155.

¹⁶ "Relations with the President," Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives; Roosevelt statement to press on Welles Mission, February 9, 1940, Department of State *Bulletin*, II, 155; Sumner Welles, *The Time For Decision* (New York: Harper, 1944), 73-74.

¹⁷ Breckinridge Long Diary, January 4, 1940, March 12, 1940, box 5, Long Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

policy jumped on this Wilsonian parallel, charging that House had dragged the neutral United States into the war and that Welles might do the same.¹⁸ "The United States will not be minding its own business," lamented California Senator Hiram Johnson, "if it sends . . . Welles to Europe as a roving listening post."¹⁹

Preparing for the mission, Welles drafted Roosevelt's letters of introduction to Chamberlain, Hitler, Mussolini and Daladier, assuring the foreign leaders that the special envoy would report only to Roosevelt and Hull while avoiding public pronouncements and leaks to the press.²⁰ The president told Breckinridge Long that the Welles mission "could not do any harm" and would help learn more about the views of Mussolini and Hitler. Secretary Hull disagreed. He felt that Welles had once again usurped him by lobbying the president about the mission, and that it would raise undue hopes for a settlement, rekindle fears of American intervention and run the risk of angering the isolationists. Hull continued to believe that the best course for Washington was the pursuit of bilateral trade negotiations.²¹

Prior to his departure, Welles learned that William Bullitt had been responsible for fueling much of the press criticism of the mission. Bullitt thought himself mandated by the president to report on the general European scene and he deeply resented Welles's interference. Breckinridge Long noted that Welles "told me that the stories in the press which were so critical of him and indicated that he and the Secretary had had some dispute on the subject of his mission had all emanated from the vitriolic tongue of Bill Bullitt and that Bullitt had taken the trouble to go to the Capitol and to talk to a number of Senators and that they arranged a story of this nature to go

¹⁸ Roosevelt Statement, February 9, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL; "Mission to Europe," Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Harold F. Gosnell, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, 44; Lloyd E. Ambrosius, Wilsonian Statecraft: Theory and Practice of Liberal Internationalism during World War I (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1991), 35-36.

¹⁹ Life, February 19, 1940; Chicago Tribune, February 10, 1940.

²⁰ Welles draft of Roosevelt letter to Chamberlain, February 14, 1940, President's Secretary's File 76, FDRL.

²¹ Breckinridge Long Diary, March 12, 1940, box 5, Long Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; Mario Rossi, Roosevelt and the French (Westport: Greenwood, 1993), 35; Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. I, 737-739; Newsweek, February 19, 1940.

to Chicago and to appear in the Chicago papers so that it would not have the earmarks of a Washington story."²²

Welles left for Europe with U.S. Steel's Myron Taylor, who was bound for the Vatican as the president's special envoy to the Vatican, raising speculation that Pope Pius XII might be urged to help broker a Welles-designed peace plan. "[Welles] is off on what looks to me like one of the most difficult and unhappy trips a man ever started on," Adolf Berle confided in his diary. "The Chicago Tribune is sending along a man to write him up as unpleasantly as possible and make political capital against the Administration."²³

Welles arrived in Italy on February 22, 1940. At that point in the war Rome was still a neutral capital, and Welles hoped he could successfully prevent Italy from entering the war on the side of the Germans. He assumed that France would have a greater chance of survival if Hitler could be prevented from obtaining the political and military support of Mussolini. Welles met with Count Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister who also happened to be Mussolini's son-in-law. Welles explained the need for a free trade regime and disarmament. He interpreted Ciano's open dislike for the Germans as a signal that the Italians might be drawn away from its alliance with Berlin. Sensing the possibility of a diplomatic opening during his subsequent meeting with Mussolini, Welles went so far as to subtly hint at the prospect of Washington's eventual recognition of Italian imperial gains in Africa. Welles and Mussolini agreed to meet again after Welles's visits to Berlin, Paris and London. The warm reception Welles received in Rome pleased and surprised him and he began to believe that Mussolini might hold the keys to a general settlement.²⁴

Welles next traveled to Berlin. He was granted a remarkable opportunity to observe the Nazi hierarchy up close when he was immediately escorted to a meeting with Foreign Minister Joachim Ribbentrop, where he presented his ideas for a

²² Time, February 19, 1940; Breckinridge Long Diary, February 17, 1940, box 5, Breckinridge Long Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

²³ Newsweek, February 19, 1940, 16; Berle Diary, February 17, 1940, box 211, Berle Papers, FDRL.

²⁴ Memorandum of Conversation with Mussolini, by Welles, February 26, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part I, PSF 6, FDRL; Hugh Gibson (ed.), The Ciano Diaries: 1939-1943, February 26, 1940 (New York, 1946), 212.

settlement, such as the promotion of free trade and general disarmament. Ribbentrop proceeded to lecture Welles for the next two hours. "I have rarely seen a man I disliked more," Welles noted of Ribbentrop. Welles also had little success in his conversations with Hitler, Goering and Hess.²⁵ In Paris, Welles met with Prime Minister Edouard Daladier, cabinet minister Paul Reynaud and numerous other French officials. Welles sensed a reluctance on the part of the French to discuss the prospects for peace without consulting London.²⁶ After arriving in London, Welles had a series of meetings with Chamberlain, Halifax and a number of other senior British statesmen including Eden, Churchill and David Lloyd George, as well as an audience with King George VI. Chamberlain's anger at the Germans surprised Welles, but before the end of the visit the prime minister spoke of the possibility of appeasing Berlin with colonial concessions in Africa.²⁷ Welles also called at the Admiralty to see Winston Churchill, once again the First Lord.²⁸

Upon his return to Italy, Welles met with Pope Pius XII, and again with Mussolini and Ciano. Welles still thought Mussolini might prove amenable. In his report to the president,

25 Before leaving Germany, Welles had a remarkable interview with Hjalmar Schacht, president of the Reichbank, who told the envoy of a plot by a number of leading German generals to overthrow Hitler. Schacht also warned Welles that the atrocities being committed in Poland were "far worse than what was imagined, as to beggar description." Memorandum of Conversation with Schacht, by Welles, March 3, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part I, PSF 6, FDRL.

26 Memorandum of Conversation with Chautemps and Bonnet, by Welles, March 8, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, PSF 6, FDRL; Memorandum of Conversation with Reynaud, by Welles, March 9, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, PSF 6, FDRL; Memorandum of Conversation with Sikorski, by Welles, March 9, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, PSF 6, FDRL; Bullitt, who was highly regarded by the French leadership, did not want it to appear that he approved of the mission, and instead sought to snub Welles by leaving Paris. He felt slighted that the president sent Welles to confer with the French leaders when he already had a perfectly capable representative in Paris. Bullitt told the president that the French harbored serious misgivings about Welles's visit, adding that Daladier feared Welles would leave the impression that France and Britain should seek a compromise peace. See Orville H. Bullitt, ed., For the President, Personal and Secret Correspondence Between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 402-403.

27 Memorandum of Conversation with Chamberlain, by Welles, March 13, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, PSF 6, FDRL. While dining at Number Ten, Welles took note that the only photograph in one room was of Mussolini.

28 Welles was one of the few Americans who remained consistently impervious to Churchill's charms. Welles reported to the president: "When I was shown into his office Mr. Churchill was sitting in front of a fire, smoking a 24-inch cigar, drinking a whiskey and soda. It was quite obvious that he had consumed a good many whiskeys before I arrived." After the preliminary courtesies, Churchill proceeded, like Ribbentrop two weeks before, to speak without interruption for the next two hours. "I was never given an opportunity to say a word," Welles reported. "It would have impressed me more had I not already read his book Step by Step (of which incidentally, he gave me an autographed copy before I left) and of which his address to me constituted a rehash." See the unedited version of Welles's report in Memorandum of Conversation with Churchill, by Welles, March 12, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, PSF 6, FDRL.

Welles explained that Italian policy was dominated by Mussolini, who sought nothing less than "the re-creation of the Roman Empire."²⁹ Welles assumed that Mussolini wanted to play the French and British off against the Germans in the hope that they would engage in competitive bidding for concessions to Italy, but he noted that "there is no doubt in any one's mind that if Mussolini gives the word, the Italian Army will enter the war on the German side." Welles suggested the United States seek to improve relations between Washington and Rome in an effort to wean Mussolini away from the Germans. "In my considered judgment a close relationship with Italy today is feasible, and the recognition of the Ethiopian conquest is not immediately necessary."³⁰

Welles told the president that Europe might not be capable of making peace. "What is imperatively required is statesmanship of the highest character, marked by vision, courage and daring," he wrote. "I saw no signs of statesmanship of that kind in any of the countries I visited, nor do I know of any of that character in any other European country. . . . The Pope, I fear, is discouraged and, in a sense, confused. Mussolini is too closely associated with Hitler." Nevertheless, Welles then combined two ideas which had focused his attention for the past seven years: he returned to the original concept for his October 1937 plan of organizing the neutral powers and he also placed particular emphasis on the role the new world would play coming to the aid of the old world. "There remains only the United States, supported by the other neutral states, particularly those of the New World," he wrote. "If the moment arrived when the Government of the United States felt it possible to move, I am confident that both the Vatican and Mussolini would support such an initiative."³¹

Welles's mission made newspaper headlines for a month, but yielded little of substance in the way of a diplomatic opening. All of the principals with whom Welles had met, including Chamberlain and Daladier, remained committed to their positions. There seemed to be very little the United States

²⁹ "Italy and the Peace in Europe," by Welles, March 19, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, PSF 6, FDRL.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Conclusion of Welles Report, March 19, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, PSF 6, FDRL.

could do to forestall an expanded war.³² The mission also deepened Welles's rift with Hull. "Welles is reporting in cipher to the President," Berle noted in his diary, "and the Secretary does not have the cipher: he learns what the President tells him."³³ While Welles was in the midst of his conversations with Ciano and Mussolini, Hull complained to Breckinridge Long that "Welles thinks so fast and moves so rapidly that he gets way out in front and leaves no trace of the positions he has taken or the commitments he has made, and the Department is sometimes left in the dark as to his meanings and actions." Hull further charged that Welles always acted independently of him and refused to keep him apprised of his thinking. Hull thought Welles spoke with the president too frequently and that Welles insisted upon maintaining his power in the area of Latin American policy through his confidant, Laurence Duggan. Hull also feared that Berle was too close to Welles and that there were other officials "in key positions whose presence is due to Welles and who act as if they were part of his organization as opposed to the regular establishment."³⁴

Criticism of the Welles mission also came from Roosevelt's political opposition. Only a few days after the envoy's return, Ohio Senator Robert Taft, seeking the nomination for president on the Republican ticket in 1940, publicly expressed his concern that the Welles mission meant that the administration had not "wholeheartedly accepted" the American people's determination to remain out of the war. Another presidential hopeful, Manhattan District Attorney Thomas E. Dewey, asked: "What faith can we place in any promise by this Administration to keep this nation out of war?" Warning of an ominous Welles-Colonel House analogy, North Carolina's "Tobacco Senator," the isolationist Democrat Robert Reynolds, told the Senate: "Mr. Welles has returned. The American people are extremely desirous of ascertaining from Mr. Welles personally information as to where he went, with whom he talked, when he talked, what he said, what was said to him. This is no time for secret

³² New York Times, March 23, 1940, 1; New York Times, March 29, 1940, 1.

³³ Berle Diary, March 18, 1940, Berle Papers, box 211, FDRL.

³⁴ Breckinridge Long Diary, March 15, 1940, box 5, Long Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

diplomacy. If we must have a 'House' in Europe I insist that we have a glass house in order that all may see and in order that all may know what is in it. . . . Colonel House was sent to Europe, and that was prior to our entrance into the World War . . . many persons allege and contend that as a matter of fact Colonel House's tour of and sojourn in Europe really contributed to a large extent to our eventual involvement in the war, and much criticism has been aimed in that direction." Congressman Roy Woodruff of Michigan warned that the Welles mission would be used to "entangle us in Europe's quarrels" and added that the "citizens were not reassured by the secrecy surrounding" the mission by "Mr. Roosevelt's Colonel House."³⁵

Before anyone in the administration could act upon Welles's recommendations the "phony war" came to an abrupt end when on April 9 Hitler launched an attack on Denmark and Norway.³⁶ On May 5, British Ambassador Lord Lothian warned Welles that the collapse of Chamberlain's government might be imminent. Some in Washington speculated that Lloyd George might replace Chamberlain but Welles grew concerned that Chamberlain's resignation might mean a new government led by Churchill, and Roosevelt remarked that he "supposed Churchill was the best man England had, even if he was drunk half of the time."³⁷ As Welles anticipated, Churchill became prime minister on May 10, the very day Hitler launched his western offensive. But by the end of May Welles's fears were now focused on the prospect that Hitler's stunning triumphs would appeal to pro-Fascist elements in Latin America. To Welles, the possible defeat of France, the Netherlands and perhaps even Britain, opened up dark possibilities for the Americas. The Axis might threaten the new world through the French colonial empire in West Africa, or through European colonial possessions in the western hemisphere. Clearly, a reassessment of regional defense

35 Life, April 8, 1940, 32; Congressional Record - Senate, April 1, 1940 and April 2, 1940, (3748, 3821); Congressional Record - House of Representatives, 1940, (3969).

36 Reporting to Roosevelt from Paris, Bullitt used the occasion to step up his criticism of Welles: "There are, of course, a lot of defeatists in this country, including Bonnet, who attempt to make great use of Sumner's praise of Mussolini, but their campaign was cut short by Mussolini's approval of the German invasion of Denmark and Norway." See Rossi, Roosevelt and the French, 37.

37 David Reynolds, in Douglas Brinkley and David Facey-Crowther, eds. The Atlantic Charter (London: Macmillan, 1994), 134; Berle Diaries, May 8, 1940, box 211, Berle Papers, FDRL; Life, April 8, 1940, 32.

was needed, as Welles became increasingly worried about German propaganda efforts in Latin America. Welles warned that the Nazi threat to the Americas was very real and that the "majority of the American Republics would run helter-skelter to Hitler just as so many of the remaining small neutral nations of Europe are doing today."³⁸

Rather than bringing Welles and Hull together, the crisis in Europe divided them like never before. By mid-June, when the French situation had become desperate, Welles and Roosevelt supported sending aid to France but Hull feared that such a move would draw America into the conflict. Welles opposed Hull and backed the president's desire to, at the very least, send a message to Reynaud pledging future support. "The Secretary was not happy about Welles having over-ruled him in the White House on the message," Berle noted in his diary. "He likes to mull things over, whereas Welles likes to act fast. But I think in this particular case there is a difference of principle. Welles and the President are emotionally much more engaged than the Secretary."³⁹

In the midst of the crisis on the western front, the state department planning committees revived Welles's old proposal to organize a peace conference but German successes in battle undermined any such efforts. Why would Hitler listen to peace overtures when victory came with such ease?⁴⁰ On May 28 the Belgians surrendered and on June 3 the British completed their evacuation from Dunkirk. The prospect of a German victory in the west suddenly transformed the nature of postwar planning in Washington. Welles and the planners suspended broad discussions of peace and war and limited their aims to the security of the Americas. The term "postwar planning" suddenly had a new

³⁸ Roosevelt to Welles, May 20, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, May 24, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, May 25, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL; Gerhard L. Weinberg, A World At Arms: A Global History of World War II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 505. Welles underscored this concern in a letter to the President at the height of the battle of France, and he included a translation of an Uruguayan newspaper editorial titled "Welles the Ruffian" which began with the sentence, "Sumner Welles, the ruffian, was sent by Roosevelt, the Jew, to Europe to interview the chiefs of state of the nations included directly or indirectly in this great conflict." Welles to Roosevelt, May 24, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, May 25, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL

³⁹ Welles to Roosevelt, June 18, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL; Berle Diary, June 13, 1940, box 212, Berle papers, FDRL.

⁴⁰ Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy, 29-31.

meaning, as American officials began to consider the possibility of German control of the French, Dutch and British empires, and, most urgently, the possibility of German control of European possessions in the new world. Welles and the other planners feared Germany might seek to establish stronger economic and political relationships with the American republics. Welles warned that the administration's policy of neutrality might soon break down and that the United States might find itself drawn into the conflict by attempting to defend its interests in the western hemisphere.⁴¹

The immediate prospects for building a new world order faded completely when France surrendered in late June. With the war on the continent seemingly decided in favor of the Axis, Welles devoted less of his time to matters of postwar planning and the work of the subcommittees was suspended.⁴² With France defeated and Britain encircled, the events of the summer of 1940 provoked a complete reassessment of postwar planning. For now, there would be no talk of creating a new world order and recasting the League of Nations. But in a series of meetings throughout the winter of 1940-1941, Welles considered the possibility of launching a research division within the department to examine postwar matters.⁴³

Throughout 1941 postwar planning continued to gather strength. During the first half of the year incremental research had begun into the question of building a new postwar order and postwar planning took on a new urgency and sense of purpose. In February 1941, Welles and senior officials in the state department established a "Division of Special Research" to study the desired nature of the postwar world. The division had a full-time staff consisting of economists, political

41 "Menace to the United States Through the Other American Republics of a German Victory," January 24, 1941, by Harley Notter, box 8, Notter files; Hugh Wilson to Welles, May 31, 1940, with Wilson memorandum, box 191, postwar file, 1940-41, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL.

42 Roosevelt to Welles, July 16, 1940, Welles to Roosevelt, July 19, 1940, PSF 76, FDRL; "Undersecretary of State Welles," Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, RG 59, National Archives; "Division for the Study of Problems of Peace and Reconstruction," December 12, 1939, in Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy, 453-54; "Memorandum of Conversation in Welles's office, by Wilson," April 19 and 26, 1940, *ibid.*, 458; Department of State Bulletin, II (January 13, 1940), 19.

43 "Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy: Preliminaries," no date, 1941, box 54, Notter files.

scientists and state department officials.⁴⁴

The June 1941 German attack on the Soviet Union also had important consequences for postwar planning. A perceptible change of mood occurred within the state department and a consensus began to emerge that further discussions on postwar problems should begin anew. By the summer of 1941, anticipating a revival of the postwar planning committees, the division began reexamining the work of Colonel House's Inquiry.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Welles continued to make public statements on the possibility of creating a new world order, putting into practice Woodrow Wilson's emphasis on the importance of public diplomacy in influencing national opinion. Through the use of speeches, press conferences and timely interviews with reporters, Welles intensified his efforts to promote American leadership in recasting the world order.⁴⁶

Welles sought to use his public pronouncements to offer a more definitive statement of America's war and peace aims. A month after Hitler launched his attack against the Soviet Union, Welles delivered his most detailed vision to date of what a postwar world might look like. On July 22, 1941, with the ailing Hull out of Washington, Welles spoke for the administration as "Acting Secretary" at a dedication for a new wing of the Norwegian Legation. Welles sought to offer a pledge that Norwegian independence, as well as the independence of other nations engulfed by the war, would one day be restored.⁴⁷ His address, broadcast nationwide and throughout occupied Europe in twenty-six languages, called for the creation of a world organization that would restore law and order and ensure

44 "Memorandum, Pasvolsky to Welles," April 11, 1941, appendix 7, in Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy, 462; "Menace to the United States Through the Other American Republics of a German Victory," January 24, 1941, box 8, Notter files; Hamilton Fish Armstrong to Welles, July 14, 1941, box 67, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL; "Post-War Reconstruction Political Problems of Study: Assuming the Defeat of Germany," June 12, 1941, box 8, Notter files.

45 "Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy: Preliminaries," no date, 1941, box 54, Notter files; "Memorandum on the House Inquiry," July 15, 1941, box 8, Notter files.

46 "Public Relations," Undersecretary of State Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Harold F. Gosnell, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives; "An Association of Nations," by Sumner Welles, July 22, 1941, speech files, box 195, Welles papers, FDRL; "Commercial Policy After the War," October 7, 1941, speech files, box 195, Welles papers, FDRL; "Wilson and the Atlantic Charter," by Sumner Welles, November 11, 1941, speech files, box 195, Welles papers, FDRL.

47 New York Times, July 23, 1941.

peace at the close of hostilities. He also paid homage to Wilson, and added that a lasting peace would have to include military, political and economic planning on a global scale. He called for an open door approach to the world's resources, which he assumed would remove the need for future wars of territorial conquest and undermine the imperial impulse, and pledged the restoration of independence and sovereignty for the subjugated nations of the world. Most importantly, he concluded his remarks with a call for the creation of a new league: "I cannot believe that peoples of good will will not once more strive to realize the great ideal of an association of nations through which the freedom, happiness, and the security of all peoples may be achieved. That is the objective before us all today -- to try and find the means of bringing that to pass."⁴⁸

Welles had announced his belief that American war aims should seek to forever change the global "status quo." He desired a postwar settlement based not on great-power politics and the balance of power, but on a universal vision of a new world order where disputes between nations would be resolved by regional and worldwide councils. He recognized that a great power such as the United States would naturally wield vast influence in such councils. His emerging vision of the postwar world resembled a combination of the old League of Nations and the Good Neighbor Policy writ large, a system that would grant regional hegemony to the great powers while operating within a framework of international laws, buttressed by the joint pillars of capitalism and free trade.⁴⁹

Much of the press hailed Welles for offering the most thorough explanation of the administration's war aims while simultaneously articulating the war's larger meaning. The New York Times quoted liberally from Welles's address, and its editorial page hailed the speech as "the most specific declaration of peace aims that has been made by the spokesman of any Government since the war began. . . . It is certainly 'not premature' as Mr. Welles asserted, to publish the specifications of the order we stand for when the war is

48 "An Association of Nations," July 22, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

49 *Ibid.*

over."⁵⁰ Henry Luce's Time magazine called the speech the "heaviest brickbat any high official of the United States had yet thrown at Adolf Hitler," describing it as a "trial balloon" for a new League of Nations. Somewhat surprisingly, Time noted approvingly that Welles had called for a worldwide New Deal at the end of the war, and described Welles as the administration's leading spokesman on foreign policy.⁵¹ Not everyone was so enthused. William Randolph Hearst's isolationist newspapers charged Welles with advocating the "Abolition of our navy, free trade and our entry into a new league of nations. As a postwar program nothing more completely ruinous to the people of this country could be thought out."⁵²

Welles's statement of war aims, made less than three weeks before the Atlantic Conference and more than five months before Pearl Harbor, was almost certainly approved by the president. Welles and Roosevelt had been discussing war and peace aims in early July 1941, and according to Welles, the president had remarked "that nothing would be more valuable from the standpoint of keeping alive some principles of international law, some principles of moral and human decency, than for [Welles] to make some kind of public statement of the objectives in international relations in which the Government of the United States believed." Welles's speech at the Norwegian Legation was certainly a step in that direction, but it seemed to go beyond what the president was prepared to support publicly at the time and may have been part of a larger strategy of having Welles issue a series of "trial balloons" to gauge the public mood.⁵³

Welles's address anticipated by three weeks the major political points to be debated at the upcoming Atlantic Conference, where the United States would clarify its war aims in the Atlantic Charter and would for the first time seriously

50 The New York Times, July 23, 1941.

51 Time, August 8, 1941.

52 New York Journal and American, August 2, 1941; Chicago Daily Tribune, July 24, 1941.

53 Langer and Gleason believed Welles's speech deliberately foreshadowed the Atlantic Conference. See William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Undeclared War, 1940-41 (New York: Harper, 1953), 680-81; "Atlantic Conference and Charter," Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, RG 59, National Archives.

reveal the nature of its desired world order. A few days before he departed for the historic first meeting between Roosevelt and Churchill, Welles spoke of his postwar vision in an interview with James Reston of the New York Times. Welles expressed the aims he would emphasize throughout the war: a more activist foreign policy on the part of the United States, the need for a world organization to promote collective security, and the promotion of free markets and the elimination of global trade barriers. The prescient Reston sensed that Welles's focus was not so much on American entry into the war -- for that seemed an ever-growing likelihood -- but on the question of the peace that would follow. "This is the heart of the philosophy he is propounding in his almost daily conversations with the President," Reston concluded. "It is a hard-headed, pragmatic, professional diplomat's philosophy, aimed not so much at 'winning the war' as at 'winning the peace.'"⁵⁴ Coincidentally, as Welles prepared for his rendezvous with Roosevelt and Churchill, Time featured Welles in a cover story alleging that Welles, as the chief instigator of U.S. diplomacy, actually ran the state department, and that his elevation to secretary of state would soon follow.⁵⁵

* * *

Welles and other senior officials in the state department remained concerned about the specter of a reprise of the troublesome secret treaties of the First World War. They now feared that London might seek agreements that would bind the great powers after the war. After the German attack on the Soviet Union, disturbing reports had arrived in Washington that London was discussing with Soviet officials territorial concessions involving eastern Poland and the Baltic Republics. The British were reported to be offering inducements to prevent the Russians from signing a separate peace. Furthermore, in July it was rumored that British officials had discussed territorial questions with the governments-in-exile in London.

⁵⁴ New York Times Magazine, August 2, 1941.

⁵⁵ Time, August 8, 1941.

"It is now evident," Adolf Berle told the president, "that preliminary commitments for the post-war settlement of Europe are being made, chiefly in London. Perhaps you are being kept informed of these. I am not clear that the State Department is being kept informed of all of them by the parties. . . . You will recall that at Versailles President Wilson was seriously handicapped by commitments made to which he was not a party and of which he was not always informed. I have suggested to Sumner that we enter a general caveat, indicating that we could not be bound by any commitments to which we had not definitely assented."⁵⁶

Shortly thereafter, the president had Welles meet with British Ambassador Lord Halifax and underscore Washington's desire that no secret treaties be reached between Moscow and London.⁵⁷ Not totally satisfied with the results of his meeting with Halifax, Welles urged the president to formally warn Churchill against territorial settlements prior to the conclusion of the war. Roosevelt agreed with Welles and they both considered issuing some sort of statement about self-determination, which was of growing importance to the Americans,⁵⁸ and to many of the subjugated nations and neutrals of Europe as well. Welles believed that Woodrow Wilson should have urged the allies to agree to American war aims at an earlier juncture in the last war. Why not act now, despite the fact that America had not yet entered the war, to take advantage of British desperation? If Wilson had approached the allies with his war aims when they most needed him, Welles reasoned, the United States might have had more success in achieving its aims at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.⁵⁹

In anticipation of his meeting with Churchill, the president had dispatched Harry Hopkins to meet with the prime minister in London, where Hopkins warned British senior officials about Washington's fear of secret treaties, telling

⁵⁶ Berle Diary, July 8, 1941, Berle papers, box 213, FDRL.

⁵⁷ Welles memorandum of conversation with Halifax, July 10, 1941, box 163, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁵⁸ The question of self-determination in American foreign policy is discussed in William Roger Louis, Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 3-4, 79, 81, 121-133.

⁵⁹ Welles to Winant, July 14, 1941 (containing text of Roosevelt message to Churchill), FRUS, 1941, vol. I, 342; Welles, The Time For Decision, 174.

the British that the United States did not want to enter the war and find London had commitments of which Washington knew nothing.⁶⁰ Hopkins suggested to Washington that he should next sound out Stalin in Moscow prior to the upcoming Churchill-Roosevelt meeting. The President agreed: "Welles and I highly approve Moscow trip and assume you would go in a few days."⁶¹

The meeting between Roosevelt and Churchill took place aboard the U.S.S. Augusta and the H.M.S. Prince of Wales on Placentia Bay off the coast of Newfoundland and is remembered chiefly for producing the Atlantic Charter, a joint declaration of Anglo-American war aims.⁶² It is remarkable that officials from Washington, (still technically a neutral capital), would even dare to meet with officials from the United Kingdom, (a belligerent power) to enunciate a declaration of common war aims. Roosevelt and Churchill also discussed the course of the war, aid to Russia and the possibility of jointly taking a harder line toward Japan. In fact both the American and British delegations came to Newfoundland more concerned with the war than about vague ideals for a far-off peace. Although British and American officials had been consulting for a number of months, they had not discussed common war and peace aims. Thus, no sooner had Churchill arrived aboard the Augusta on August 9 than the Americans suggested laying down a set of broad

60 Robert Sherwood, The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins (New York: 1947-48), vol. I, 237; Eden confided in his diary that "the spectacle of an American President talking at large on European frontiers chilled me with Wilsonian memories." Anthony Eden, The Eden Memoirs: The Reckoning (London: Cassell, 1965), 273.

61 Robert Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins (New York: Harper, 1948), 318, 321-322.

62 "Relations with the President," Undersecretary of State Welles file, Overall History of Department of State, Harold F. Gosnell, Division of Historical Policy Research, Department of State, War History Branch Studies, 4E3, 6/29/D, box 1, Record Group 59, National Archives. "Welles's presence and Hull's absence was another demonstration of Roosevelt's preference for his Undersecretary over his Secretary of State," wrote historian Robert Dallek. See Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy: 1932-1945 (New York: Oxford, 1979), 282. Theodore Wilson, the author of the most authoritative study of the Atlantic Conference, added: "Despite a persistent whispering campaign about Welles's homosexuality and the urgings of William C. Bullitt that the president fire him, FDR continued to deal with Welles and to bypass his secretary of state -- as was demonstrated by the secret invitation to the Under Secretary to go to Argentia. . . ." See Theodore A. Wilson, The First Summit: Roosevelt and Churchill at Placentia Bay, 1941 (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991), 31-32. In addition to Welles, Roosevelt's aides at the conference included his military chiefs; Harry Hopkins, who came with Churchill; and Averell Harriman, who was serving as Lend-Lease expeditor.

principles guiding their foreign policies.⁶³

Welles, whose chief concerns at the conference would be postwar aims, sought to take advantage of Britain's precarious position by inducing London to commit to pledges of self-determination and the open door. Welles and his British counterpart, Sir Alexander Cadogan, the permanent under secretary at the foreign office, immediately embarked upon the first of their lengthy discussions on political matters.⁶⁴ They began by discussing the Far East. Welles told Cadogan that he thought war between Japan and the United States "inevitable" but that Washington should delay a showdown with Tokyo until the timing was more advantageous for the United States. They also discussed the war situation in North Africa and the status of Spain and Portugal. More important to Welles was the question of secret treaties and territorial matters. He feared that any British commitments to territorial reconfigurations after the war would severely limit Washington's ability to shape the postwar world. He explained his unease that Washington had not yet received a reply to its July warning urging the British to make no secret commitments without the agreement of the United States. Cadogan offered his assurance that the British had reached no agreements on frontiers or territorial readjustments, with the minor exception of an oral commitment that had been made to Yugoslavia concerning Istria. This pleased Welles, but he reminded the British diplomat of the damage that had been done by secret treaties in the last

⁶³ There is no need to recount here the oft-told story of the Atlantic Conference. This account will limit itself to Welles's role at the conference and how it related to his ideas for postwar planning. For a more exhaustive accounts see Theodore Wilson, The First Summit; Warren Kimball, The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman (Princeton: 1991), 53-55, 132-139; David Reynolds, "The Atlantic 'Flop': British Foreign Policy and the Churchill-Roosevelt Meeting of August 1941," in Brinkley and Facey-Crowther, eds., The Atlantic Charter, 129-146; and Waldo Heinrichs, Threshold of War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Entry into World War II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 144-161.

⁶⁴ Memorandum by Welles of conversation with Cadogan, August 9, 1941, FRUS, 1941, vol. I, 345; Cadogan had attended the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and had held foreign office responsibilities for League of Nations affairs in the 1920s and early 1930s. He was somewhat unusual in the Foreign Office in that he thought the league, despite its limitations, to be a worthwhile attempt at world government. Like Welles, Cadogan had a reputation for being cold and aloof. The assessment of Cadogan by Churchill's bodyguard, that the British diplomat was "the coldest [man] I ever encountered – a real oyster," could equally have applied to Welles. Cadogan himself seemed not to have recognized this similarity. "I have hobnobbed with [Welles] a lot and have tried to get through his reserve," Cadogan told his colleagues. "It is a pity that he swallowed a ramrod in his youth." Theodore A. Wilson, The First Summit, 81.

war.⁶⁵

The discussion then turned to the question of foreign economic policy.⁶⁶ Welles and the state department had long sought to revise the Ottawa agreements of 1932, which had established a system of imperial preference.⁶⁷ Welles had been greatly alarmed by the comments of British economist John Maynard Keynes who, during a recent mission to Washington, commented that the British desired closed economies at the end of the war. To Welles, abolishing imperial preference would contribute to the establishment of global political and economic stability and he stressed to Cadogan the importance U.S. officials placed on the question of trade discrimination. Cadogan replied that he personally had been bitterly opposed to the Ottawa agreements and added that he agreed with Welles that the events of the past decade had demonstrated the futility of restrictive trade practices, but he suggested that the matter be taken up by Churchill and Roosevelt.⁶⁸

Cadogan began the second day of their discussions by presenting Welles with a series of draft statements. The first proposed simultaneous declarations by the United States, Britain and the Dutch government-in-exile on the situation in the Far East. It stated that any further encroachment by Japan in the southwestern Pacific would compel the three governments to go to war. Cadogan then gave Welles a draft of a joint Anglo-American declaration of principles. In anticipation of the conference, Welles had prepared his own statement of war aims, but the president, concerned that his under secretary's

65 Memorandum by Welles of conversation with Cadogan, August 9, 1941, FRUS, 1941, vol. I, 351-352.

66 Welles had brought with him the most recent draft of the Lend-Lease Consideration Agreement, and hoped to discuss with Cadogan article VII of the agreement, which sought to commit the British to the open door. See Alan P. Dobson, "Economic Diplomacy at the Atlantic Conference," Review of International Studies, vol.10, (1984), 147-149.

67 After the war, Welles summarized his view of the Ottawa agreements when he wrote that "by the Ottawa Agreements, the United Kingdom had placed the final stone upon the grave of those liberal trade policies -- first advocated by Cobden and the Manchester School -- which had done so much to increase the power and wealth of the British people, and, by freely opening the British Empire to the commerce of all nations, had contributed so notably to the maintenance of world peace during the two generations prior to the First World War." Sumner Welles, Where Are We Heading? (New York: Harper, 1946), 8.

68 Acheson to Welles, memorandum of conversation with John Maynard Keynes, July 15, 1941, PSF 77, FDRL; "Commercial Policy After the War," by Sumner Welles, October 7, 1941, speech files, Welles papers, box 195, file 2, FDRL; memorandum by Welles of conversation with Cadogan, August 9, 1941, FRUS, 1941, vol. I, 353-354.

draft might provoke a dispute over colonialism or free trade, initially preferred something from Churchill's pen. The British draft featured five points. Borrowing heavily from Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, the first four condemned aggression, promoted self-determination for all territorial changes after the war and pledged to promote fairer economic and trade practices. The fifth point pledged that the United States and Britain would seek "by effective international organization" to build a postwar world based on collective security.⁶⁹

Roosevelt and Welles discussed the British draft in private. Welles made substantial revisions, including the insertion of a statement calling for more radical liberalization of trade practices. On Monday, August 11, Roosevelt, Welles and Hopkins received Churchill and Cadogan aboard the Augusta. Welles began by suggesting that the American statement to the Japanese be based on a broader policy covering the entire Pacific region, thus including any Japanese moves north, such as an invasion of the Soviet Union. The president and Churchill agreed.⁷⁰ Welles then handed Churchill and Cadogan copies of his redraft of the declaration of principles. It generally followed the lines laid out earlier, with a few notable exceptions. Like Cadogan's draft, Welles's first article declared that neither Britain nor the United States sought any kind of territorial aggrandizement, while article two proclaimed that no territorial changes would be made without the consent of the peoples involved. Welles's article three sought to extend the call for the restoration of self-government to the colonial question. ~~Colonial self-government~~ In Washington a few days before the conference, Welles suggested that the president discuss the possibility of independence for India "in a very personal and confidential way directly with Mr. Churchill."⁷¹ During discussions on board the Augusta, Churchill suggested amending Welles's third point, suggesting the phrase "sovereign rights and" be inserted prior to the words "self-government." Churchill's insertion of the phrase "sovereign rights" was

⁶⁹ Memorandum of conversation by Welles, August 10, 1941, FRUS, 1941, vol. I, 355-358.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Welles to Hull, August 6, 1941, FRUS, III, 181.

clearly designed to make Welles's third point inapplicable to the British Empire.⁷²

Churchill objected to Welles's changes to the fourth point on economic policy, which in Cadogan's draft had mildly stated that the United States and Britain would strive to bring about a fair and equitable distribution of essential resources. Welles changed this passage into a more specific challenge to the imperial preference system.⁷³ Churchill pointedly asked Welles if this passage would apply to the terms of the Ottawa agreements, and Welles replied that it would, telling Churchill that he sought the removal of all trade barriers "which had created such tragic havoc to the world economy during the past generation." Welles told Churchill that he understood the problems such a revision might pose for the British, but he added that the insertion of certain qualifiers could imply that any changes did not mean an immediate obligation. Roosevelt added that he believed Welles's argument to be "of very great importance as a measure of assurance to the German and Italian peoples that the British and the United States Governments desired to offer them, after the war, fair and equal opportunity of an economic character."⁷⁴ Churchill said he was uncomfortable making such momentous decisions without first consulting the dominions, which might take some time.⁷⁵

To resolve the impasse, Harry Hopkins suggested that Welles and Cadogan come up with a compromise to avoid further delays. Welles immediately recognized this as a threat to his aims. He bluntly replied that he thought further modification of article four would "destroy completely" its meaning. He added that the problem was not one of phraseology, but one of "vital principle." Welles argued that if the United States and Britain did not fight for free and liberal trade practices "they might as well throw in the sponge and realize that one of the greatest factors in creating the present tragic situation

⁷² Memorandum of conversation by Welles, August 10, 1941, FRUS, 1941, vol.I, 356-358. See Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 123.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 361; "History of Negotiations with Respect to Point Four of the Atlantic Charter," September 11, 1941, by Notter and Rothwell, box 13, Atlantic Charter file, Notter files.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 362-363; Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, vol.II, 200.

in the world was going to be permitted to continue unchecked in the postwar world." Welles said they must pursue a policy of "constructive sanity" in world economics as a "fundamental factor in the creation of a new and better world... ." ⁷⁶

Churchill and Cadogan agreed with Welles that the question was not a mere matter of phraseology but they reiterated the need for consultation with the dominions. Churchill then suggested that the impasse could be eased by the inclusion of the passage "with due regard for our present obligations", prior to Welles's phrase about economic liberalization. Roosevelt thought this might resolve the impasse and suggested that Churchill and Cadogan work out the wording, and then have Welles go over it with them later. If Welles realized that he had suffered a defeat on this matter, he did not show it, and said nothing. The group then turned to points five and six, dealing respectively with economic collaboration and the establishment of a lasting peace. Churchill voiced no objections to these articles. Welles and Roosevelt had come up with an extra point -- to be known as article seven -- calling for freedom of the seas, with which the British also concurred.⁷⁷

Welles left the eighth point, regarding U.S. and British participation in an international organization, virtually intact, and Churchill asked the president if he would be amenable to including support for some kind of "effective international organization." On this matter, Welles and the prime minister were on the same side, as Welles had merely taken Churchill's earlier passage on a world organization and made it more explicit. But the president, concerned about domestic opposition, wanted to eliminate all references to international organizations. Roosevelt offered a new passage vaguely calling for disarmament of the aggressors, despite the urgings of Churchill, Welles and Hopkins for something stronger and more definitive. As Welles looked on in dismay, Roosevelt emphasized his opposition to the creation of a new league

⁷⁶ Ibid, 362.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 363; for the British record of discussions with Welles over the Ottawa Agreements see CAB 66/18 WP(41) 202, August 20, 1941, memorandum by Churchill on discussions at Atlantic Conference; and CAB 66/18 WP(41) 203, August 18, 1941, "Conference Between the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and President of the United States," Public Record Office.

because it might run the risk of stirring up domestic political opposition. The others eventually persuaded Roosevelt to agree to at least mention some form of international organization as a distant goal.⁷⁸ Welles said that he had been "surprised and somewhat discouraged" by the president's opposition to a new league. He told the president that if he thought Britain and the United States should police the world in the short term, it might also be desirable for the smaller powers to have some sort of assembly where they could voice their opinions. "I said it seemed to me that an organization of that kind would be the most effective safety valve that could be devised," Welles said. Roosevelt attempted to mollify Welles, but the president refused to budge on the question of support for an international organization.⁷⁹

The meeting then broke up and Welles conferred with Churchill and Cadogan before returning to the president. With Roosevelt's concurrence, the prime minister had weakened Welles's economic clause by inserting the qualifying phrase "with due regard for our present obligations," thus practically exempting the British Empire. Welles still vigorously opposed Churchill's insertion, which the under secretary thought would render the economic clause virtually meaningless. Churchill would go so far as to agree to a statement calling for equal access to raw materials, but the qualifying passages remained, and Welles had no choice but to settle for them.⁸⁰

* * *

When the Atlantic Conference came to an end on August 12 the participants felt that much had been accomplished. Welles had sought to weaken the British system of imperial preferences, to loosen London's hold on the British Empire, and to move Washington closer to a commitment to join a postwar international organization. By his own criteria he had little

⁷⁸ Ibid, 363.

⁷⁹ Memorandum of conversation by Welles, 365-366, *ibid*.

⁸⁰ Memorandum of conversation by Welles, August 11, 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, vol. I, 364-365; "History of Negotiations with Respect to Point Four of the Atlantic Charter," September 11, 1941, by Notter and Rothwell, Atlantic Charter file, box 13, Notter files.

success.⁸¹ The final version of the declaration concluded that neither nation would seek territorial gains during the war, nor would they make territorial changes without the agreement of the peoples concerned. The right of all peoples to choose their own governments -- self determination -- was endorsed on the basis that self-government be returned to all nations deprived of it by the war, although American and British representatives seemed to have differing interpretations of precisely where that clause would be applied. Welles had hoped for a more forceful declaration in this area, one that would more explicitly cover the entire colonial world. Furthermore, Britain and America committed themselves to improving the world's labor standards, while promoting economic justice and advancement, and providing "social security." They also stated that they hoped to establish a lasting peace which would provide nations with freedom from fear and want.⁸² If nothing else, the British and American delegations succeeded in better articulating war and peace aims.⁸³ Furthermore, as David Reynolds has explained, the charter served as a foundation for successive declarations of allied war aims from the United Nations Declaration of January 1942 to the United Nations Charter of April 1945.⁸⁴

Having been frustrated in his efforts to compel the British to accept his aims at the conference, Welles would instead seek to expand the meaning of the charter on his own through public pronouncements and his stewardship of postwar planning. Nonetheless, without Welles's presence at the conference, the Atlantic Charter might have been formulated quite differently. "It ought to be set down," recalled the president's son, Elliott, who attended the conference, "that

⁸¹ This may have been as the president intended, believing all along that American aims would ultimately be realized without the kind of pressure Welles sought to apply to the British. See Lloyd C. Gardner, "The Atlantic Charter: Idea and Reality, 1942-1945," in Douglas Brinkley and David Facey-Crowther, eds., The Atlantic Charter (London: Macmillan, 1994), 50-51. Some have interpreted the Atlantic Conference as a complete failure for American aims. See Alan Dobson, "Economic Diplomacy at the Atlantic Conference," 143-163.

⁸² "Joint Statement by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, August 14, 1941," FRUS, 1941, I, 367-368.

⁸³ For an account of the meaning of the Atlantic Charter from London's perspective, see David Reynolds, "The Atlantic 'Flop': British Foreign Policy and the Churchill-Roosevelt Meeting of August 1941," in Brinkley and Facey-Crowther, eds. The Atlantic Charter, 130.

⁸⁴ See Reynolds, "The Atlantic Flop," 146.

Sumner Welles was the man who worked hardest on the Charter, and who contributed the most. It was his baby, from the time it was first considered, back in Washington"⁸⁵ The charter's debt to Wilsonianism and the Fourteen Points is also immediately apparent. The first point of the charter, pledging that the allies would seek no aggrandizement, territorial or otherwise, had its antecedents in Wilsonian pronouncements. Similarly, the second point, dealing with territorial changes, had a Wilsonian precedent; as did the declaration's third point about the restoration of independence and sovereignty and self-determination; the fourth point calling for equal access to the world's raw materials; and the eighth point, calling for the establishment of a wider and more permanent system of general security and disarmament. The charter, incorporating elements of Wilson's Fourteen Points and Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, served Welles's aim of preventing the British from proposing overly specific war aims or making secret territorial concessions. But it also signaled a new tone on the part of the United States since the Welles mission of the previous year. No longer did Washington seem committed to a negotiated peace, for, as Welles understood, in order to secure the aims of the charter the Axis powers would have to be defeated militarily.⁸⁶

The Atlantic Charter was essentially a proclamation rather than a formal diplomatic document or treaty, as Welles and Roosevelt wanted to avoid anything that might look like a formal Anglo-American alliance. But in some respects the charter marked an even greater appeal to world opinion than Wilson's Fourteen Points because it hinted at an intensified American commitment to shape the postwar settlement. The charter hinted that restoration of the European balance of power was not sufficient reason to fight. Welles sought to provide higher and nobler war aims by resurrecting a Wilsonian vision and by proceeding, while the war still raged, to lay the foundations for postwar peace and reconstruction.⁸⁷ The charter

⁸⁵ Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), 39. Although Elliott Roosevelt assumed Welles had created a draft of the charter in Washington, this was not the case.

⁸⁶ "Wilson and the Atlantic Charter," by Sumner Welles, November 11, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁸⁷ Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 122; "Wilson and the Atlantic Charter," by Sumner Welles, November 11, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

thus offered a glimpse of American war aims and envisioned the establishment of a wider and more permanent system of general security. Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December broke most of the lingering doubts of mass opinion and opened the way to another crusade in which Americans would attempt to make world affairs an extension of their domestic values. "The United States did not enter the war in order to reshape the world," wrote Warren F. Kimball, "but once in the war, that conception of world reform was the assumption that guided Roosevelt's actions."⁸⁸

With the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 the United States had sought to prevent the reimposition or extension of European rule in the Americas. With the Atlantic Charter, Welles sought to globalize the Monroe Doctrine by giving notice that those liberated by the war would achieve self-determination.⁸⁹ Despite the earlier failure of Wilson's Fourteen Points, the Atlantic Charter made a significant impression throughout the world. It heightened the already high expectations about the postwar world and thus contributed to the disillusionment that followed, particularly over matters in Eastern Europe and the colonial world. While Welles and other administration officials would later argue that the charter was merely a statement of war aims and not a guarantee of specific action, expectations raised by the charter were not met at the conclusion of the war. As the war progressed and Welles was confronted with the hard realities of alliance relations with both Moscow and London, he would find that he could not always pursue the ideals of the Atlantic Charter. Not only would America's high-sounding principles do little for Eastern Europeans who fell under the Soviet sphere, but such principles also had no effect on the European colonial powers seeking to retrieve their possessions at the end of the war. In fact, by the late 1940s

⁸⁸ Warren F. Kimball, The Juggler, 17.

⁸⁹ Welles immediately understood and anticipated the impact the Atlantic Charter would have on world opinion. Not only did he put up a vigorous fight with the British over the provisions of the charter, but when he returned to the United States he quickly sought to use his public addresses, his discussions with foreign diplomatic representatives in Washington, and later, his leadership of the postwar planning process, to expand the meaning and interpretation of the Atlantic Charter. For the contrary view that the Atlantic Charter "quickly took on a life of its own, unanticipated by those who drafted it," see David Reynolds, "The Atlantic 'Flop': British Foreign Policy and the Churchill-Roosevelt Meeting of August 1941," in Brinkley and Facey-Crowther, eds. The Atlantic Charter, 130.

the United States would find itself supporting colonial powers in places Welles had once sought to liberate.⁹⁰

Welles understood that grand pronouncements such as the Atlantic Charter were often necessary to express broader goals important for public support in wartime. While Welles spearheaded the effort to commit America to an internationalist course, it should also be noted that his actions and public pronouncements helped push expectations so high that they were destined to be shattered by the political and military realities of 1945. When reality intruded, such grand rhetoric became a liability. After all, part of the disillusionment with the eventual postwar settlement stemmed from the fact that the Atlantic Charter had pledged the United States to guarantee a better world for millions of people for whom, in reality, it could do very little.⁹¹

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⁹⁰ "The Atlantic Charter and National Independence," November 13, 1942, Atlantic Charter file, box 13, Notter files; "Memorandum on Official Statements of Post-War Policy," January 3, 1942, Division of Special Research, Department of State, box 8, Notter files.

⁹¹ See, for example, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "What New World Order?" Foreign Affairs, vol. 71, no. 2 (spring 1992), 83.

CHAPTER FOUR

Creating a New League:

Sumner Welles and the Postwar Planning Process, 1941-1943

While the efforts of Welles's postwar planning committees would meaningfully influence U.S. policy both during and after the war, the first nine months of 1941 had been a period of uncertainty and doubt for the advocates of postwar planning. Welles had sought to promote the revival of more detailed planning but the realities of the war and other political restraints made further action difficult. Throughout 1941, Welles had discussed with other senior officials the possibility of creating new planning committees, and the Atlantic Charter in August had provided an opening for a broader discussion of postwar planning and international organization than had previously been possible. By the autumn of 1941 (nearly two months before America officially entered the war) a new timetable for action began to take shape, and before the end of the year Welles and his allies would obtain the mandate they desired with the president lending his support for specific and detailed planning for a new international order.¹

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After his return from the Atlantic Conference Welles remained anxious that the administration should at once begin long-term planning for the postwar period. Speaking in New York in October, he warned against the United States taking a passive policy of "wait and see" and repeated his call for an

¹ Armstrong to Welles, July 14, 1941, Welles papers, box 67, folder 3, FDRL; Welles to Pasvolsky, July 15, 1941, Welles papers, box 67, folder 3, FDRL; Harley Notter memorandums, October 20, 1941 and December 8, 1941, box 8, RG 59, Notter Files, National Archives. The most exhaustive account of the history of the postwar planning committees remains Harley Notter's Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation: 1939-1945 (Washington: Department of State Publication, 1950). An excellent account of the historiography of postwar planning can be found in William C. Widenor, "American Planning for the United Nations: Have We Been Asking the Right Questions?" Diplomatic History, vol. 6, no. 3 (Summer 1982), 245-265.

immediate examination of postwar reconstruction issues.² Welles sought to give a further boost to internationalism and postwar planning during his Armistice Day remarks at Woodrow Wilson's tomb in the Washington Cathedral, where he sought to expand the meaning of the Atlantic Charter by linking it to Wilson's Fourteen Points. Many of those gathered at Wilson's tomb came in anticipation of hearing a declaration of the internationalist cause. The world had been at war for more than two years, and the gathering at Wilson's gravesite knew it might not be long before Americans found themselves in the conflict, as the U.S. now seemed to be gradually departing from its announced neutrality and moving into an undeclared war.³ Welles sought to embolden those who wanted to hear a portent of what America's war and peace aims would be in the coming conflict. "The heart-searching question which every American citizen must ask himself on this day of commemoration is whether the world in which we have to live would have come to this desperate pass had the United States been willing in those years which followed 1919 to play its full part in striving to bring about a new world order based on justice and on a steadfast concert for peace."⁴

Although a month before Pearl Harbor, Welles did not hesitate to offer his most detailed explanation of his version of internationalism, going much further than President Roosevelt was willing to go at the time. At Wilson's tomb Welles called for participation in a new postwar international

² "Commercial Policy After the War," by Sumner Welles, October 7, 1941, speech files, Welles papers, box 195, FDRL. Welles increased the frequency of such statements because he continued to worry about the nature of public opinion. He feared that isolationist opinion in the United States would lead to yet another rejection of America's quest to play a leading role in world affairs. He and his fellow planners believed that the currently declining isolationist strength was almost wholly due to wartime factors. They felt that by the time a postwar settlement came before the Senate, the spur of wartime spirit would be a distant memory, and war weariness, combined with the traditional impulse to resume peacetime lifestyles, would further undermine internationalism. See, for example, Harley Notter memorandum, October 20, 1941, box 8, RG 59, Notter Files, National Archives; as well as "Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy: Preliminaries," not dated, 1941, RG 59, Notter Files, box 54, National Archives.

³ "Our people realize that at any moment, war may be forced upon us," Roosevelt said in his remarks that same day during Armistice Day ceremonies across the Potomac River at Arlington National Cemetery. The New York Times, November 12, 1941.

⁴ "Wilson and the Atlantic Charter," by Sumner Welles, November 11, 1941, speech files, box 195, FDRL. The late President's widow, Edith Bolling Wilson, wrote to Welles the following day. "I asked Mrs. Welles to tell you how deeply I appreciated your making the address yesterday. Aside from its personal side it will stand out as one of the noblest expressions of these soul-searching days." Edith Bolling Wilson to Sumner Welles, November 12, 1941, scrapbook, 1941, Welles Papers, box 241, FDRL.

organization, defining the Atlantic Charter as a continuation of the Wilsonian legacy, giving "new hope and new courage to millions of people throughout the earth." He called on the public to accept American leadership of a postwar organization founded on principles such as Wilsonianism, the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. U.S. participation in a new league remained central to Welles's vision of an American-led future. He assumed such participation would cement America's leadership of the world by committing Washington to an internationalist future. Only by taking its rightful role of global leadership could America begin to shape the world to its own interests. Economic planning on a grand scale would be necessary, Welles believed, for only through a systematic approach to the problems of postwar economic dislocation could the new international order ensure "freedom from want." Free markets, free trade and free access to the world's resources (the open door) would be the cornerstones of Welles's "new economic order."⁵

Welles also sought to expand the meaning of the Atlantic Charter through his leadership of postwar planning. Just a month earlier Welles had drafted a letter to Roosevelt urging the reestablishment of secret committees to begin work on all aspects of postwar planning, including the design of, and U.S. participation in, an international organization. Welles hoped to guide this effort personally and use it to create a blueprint for a new order for the postwar world.⁶ But the growing crisis with Japan and the subsequent attack on Pearl Harbor diverted the administration's attention from postwar issues for several weeks, and it was not until December 22 that a new letter proposing the creation of formal planning committees, this version signed by Hull, reached the president. On December 28, Roosevelt returned Hull's letter with the notation "C.H. I heartily approve. FDR." The president, who had been so reluctant to discuss postwar matters in the past, had

⁵ A number of Welles's speeches during this period repeated these themes. See, for example, "An Association of Nations," by Sumner Welles, July 22, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; "Commercial Policy After the War," by Sumner Welles, October 7, 1941, speech files, Welles papers, box 195, FDRL; "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁶ Welles to Roosevelt, October 18, 1941, Welles Papers, box 151, folder 9, FDRL.

finally signed on.⁷

The effort to commit America to a postwar organization received another important boost when on January 1, 1942 the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union, China and twenty-two other nations involved in the war against the Axis, signed a "Declaration by the United Nations." The declaration represented a major step in the direction of internationalism, for the signatories accepted the principles of the Atlantic Charter and vowed not to seek a separate peace. To Welles, the declaration thus expanded the Atlantic Charter into a universal constitution applying to all parts of the world.⁸

A few weeks later, Welles traveled to Rio de Janeiro to head the American delegation to a conference of foreign ministers of the American republics. His remarks at Rio stressed hemispheric solidarity, but he also reasserted his universal vision of what the war could achieve, telling the delegates that the new world order would bring about "the world's regeneration"⁹ The American delegation at Rio sought to obtain agreement on a joint declaration of war against the Axis, but Argentina and Chile objected, and the original declaration was replaced by more innocuous language merely recommending the severing of diplomatic relations.¹⁰ Welles's acceptance of this compromise generated a violent outburst from

⁷ Pasvolsky to Welles, October 8, 1941, Notter Files, Box 54; "Proposal for the Organization of Work for the Formulation of Post-War Foreign Policies," by Leo Pasvolsky, September 12, 1941, Notter Files, Box 54; Welles to Roosevelt, October 18, 1941, Official File 4351, FDRL; Hull to Roosevelt, December 28, 1941, Official File 4720, FDRL. Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle said that the advisory committee was Welles's idea. See, for example, notes from interview with Berle, by Harold Gosnell, February 2, 1948, "Overall History of Department of State," (Sumner Welles) 4E3, 6/29/D, Box 1, RG 59, War History Branch Studies, National Archives.

⁸ FO 371/26425, Churchill telegram to war cabinet, December 24, 1941, PRO; "Memorandum of Conversation by Welles," December 29, 1941, FRUS, 1942, vol. I, 21-22; rough drafts of Declaration, December 1941-January 1942, President's Secretary's File 168, FDRL; "Declaration by United Nations," January 1, 1942, FRUS, 1942, vol. I, 25-26; "Memorandum on Official Statements on Post-War Policy," January 3, 1942, Notter file, box 8, National Archives; Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper, 1944), 178.

⁹ "The Road Before the Americas," by Sumner Welles, January 15, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁰ For a more detailed account of the Welles-Hull feud over the Rio Conference see Michael J. Francis, "The United States at Rio, 1942: the Strains of Pan-Americanism," Latin American Studies, vol. 6, no. 1, 92-95.

Hull.¹¹ The differences between the two men over the resolution may have represented for the secretary the final straw in his ongoing battle with Welles, particularly when Welles appealed directly to the president for support against Hull.¹² Hull angrily rebuked Welles for acting without authority, but when the secretary looked to the president for support, Roosevelt backed Welles by suggesting that they leave the resolution unchanged. Hull, now beside himself, promptly drafted a cable replacing Welles as the U.S. representative at Rio but eventually relented. Hull, now exhausted by his confrontation with Welles, (and "nervously and spiritually torn to pieces," according to Berle), took to his bed and remained there for a week.¹³

Despite the increasing deterioration of his relationship with Hull, Welles now had a mandate to go forward with postwar planning. Most importantly, with the United States now in the war, and the president giving his backing, postwar planning could proceed without the fits and starts of the previous advisory committee efforts of 1940. Once again Welles sought to dominate the administration's plans to design and shape the postwar world. But the drafting of the United Nations Declaration and Welles's trip to Rio delayed an immediate convening of the new postwar planning committee. At the

¹¹ Welles's presence at the Atlantic Conference had already further strained his relationship with Hull. The press described Hull as "affronted and sore" at being left behind, and one newspaper reported that "Mr. Hull did not ask Mr. Welles where he was going and does not know." Chicago Times, August 12, 1941. Hull had also taken issue with the Atlantic Conference's joint Anglo-American statement on the Far East and Japan, which he thought dangerously provocative. He worried that the declaration's strong language opposing further Japanese territorial expansion would undermine his ongoing negotiations with Japanese diplomatic representatives, whereas Welles devoted himself to an effort, dubbed another "Welles plan" by the American press, to further squeeze the Axis powers by cornering the market on strategic materials necessary to wage war. Furthermore, Hull, who had devoted much of his career to promoting free trade, was keenly disappointed by article four of the charter. He believed Churchill's insertion of the phrase "with due respect for their existing obligations" had rendered article four virtually useless, and he blamed Welles for not holding his ground on behalf of free trade. See Hull, Memoirs, vol. II, 1018, 975, 1144; Washington Post, September 19, 1941.

¹² Welles cable to Roosevelt, January 24, 1942, Welles papers, box 151, folder 11, FDRL; Berle Diary, February 1, 1942, box 213, Berle Papers, FDRL.

¹³ According to observers, when Hull heard the radio reports of Welles's endorsement of the compromise resolution, he phoned Welles in Rio and a "violent conversation" ensued. "As I heard the conversation wear on," Berle wrote of the Welles-Hull telephone dispute, "I felt that several careers were ending that night. . . . For it is obvious that now there is a breach between the Secretary and Sumner which will never be healed — though the Secretary will keep it below hatches to some extent. Life in this Department under those circumstances will be about as difficult as anything I can think of." Berle Diary, January 24, 1942, box 213, Berle Papers, FDRL. According to one scholar of the Rio Conference, "The greatest significance of the meeting in retrospect may have been the degree to which it deepened the split between Hull and Welles." See Michael J. Francis, "The United States at Rio, 1942: the Strains of Pan-Americanism," *ibid*, 94.

beginning of the year, after Hull had departed for his lengthy annual leave from Washington, Welles took control of the state department. Discovering that Hull had failed to appoint the members of the new postwar planning committee, Welles promptly sent out his own invitations.¹⁴

The committee's ranks would include administration officials with an interest in postwar planning such as Leo Pasvolsky and Harley Notter of the state department's Division of Special Research; Benjamin Cohen and David K. Niles of the president's staff; Milo Perkins of Henry Wallace's Board of Economic Warfare; and another Wallace ally, Paul Appleby of the Department of Agriculture. Five invitations also went out to people from outside the administration, including Welles's longtime friend and ally, Norman Davis; Anne O'Hare McCormick, a columnist and foreign affairs correspondent for the New York Times who frequently wrote uncritically of Welles; Hamilton Fish Armstrong of the Council on Foreign Relations; Myron Taylor, formerly of U.S. Steel, who had served as Roosevelt's envoy to the Vatican; and Isaiah Bowman, a geographer, President of Johns Hopkins University, and formerly the leading member of Wilson's Inquiry. Welles thought that Bowman, whom he had befriended in the 1920s, would provide valuable knowledge of the Inquiry's work. State department officials such as Adolf Berle, Dean Acheson and Herbert Feis joined shortly thereafter, and the committee would also be expanded further to include a bipartisan group from the house and senate.¹⁵

Welles thought congressional representation particularly important, for it might help avoid a repetition of the political problems Wilson experienced, while at the same time serving as an informal liaison between the administration and Capitol Hill on matters of postwar planning and war aims. In the early summer of 1942 Welles warmly welcomed the addition of Senators Tom Connally and Warren Austin. Connally, a Democrat from Texas, had been a supporter of Wilson's foreign policies while a member of the House of Representatives. In 1941, he rose to become chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and

¹⁴ Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper, 1950), 182-183.

¹⁵ Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, February 12, 1942, Notter files, box 54, RG 59, National Archives.

became one of the Senate's most powerful supporters of a new international organization. Austin, a Republican from Vermont and a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, opposed the New Deal, but during the war he made a major contribution to the development of internationalism within the Republican Party. The membership of Welles's planning committees would later be expanded further with the addition of Democratic Senator Walter George of Georgia, a former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (1941-42); Democratic Senator Elbert Thomas of Utah, who spent five years in the Far East as a Mormon missionary and had been a consistent supporter of Roosevelt's foreign policies; Democratic Representative Sol Bloom of New York, the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee since 1939; and Republican Representative Charles Eaton of New Jersey, the ranking minority member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.¹⁶

Throughout the postwar planning process Welles kept Roosevelt apprised of the work of the planners, while the president, primarily concerned with the military aspects of the war, granted Welles a large amount of autonomy. "What I expect you to do," the president told Welles, "is to have prepared for me the necessary number of baskets and the necessary number of alternative solutions for each problem in the baskets so that when the time comes all I have to do is to reach into a basket and fish out a number of solutions that I am sure are sound and from which I can make my own choice." Welles thus sought to anticipate many of the political problems the president might confront during the war.¹⁷

From its very beginning the postwar planning committee sought to adhere to the spirit of the Four Freedoms, the Atlantic Charter, and the Declaration by the United Nations. These pronouncements would serve as guideposts for the peace settlement and the new international order that would emerge after the war. Welles thought the global expansion of these principles would benefit the United States, for if the rest of the world shared America's values and capitalist economics the

¹⁶ Ibid; Welles, Seven Decisions, 182-183.

¹⁷ Ibid.

postwar system would ultimately be more amenable to U.S. interests. Thus while Welles and the other planners began their work based on the assumption of the total defeat of the Axis powers -- and a lasting world peace would be the primary objective -- it was imperative that the peace somehow be reconciled with the values and interests of the United States.¹⁸

At the outset the committee agreed to keep its meetings secret, for the war appeared to be going badly for the allies, and Welles told the planners that he wished to delay telling the public of the committee's existence until a more favorable moment when an announcement about the creation of the postwar planning operation would appear as a confident gesture on the part of the allies. Welles told the planners that President Roosevelt would focus on the military aspects of winning the war, while the postwar planning committees would work out the details of complicated international political problems. Welles would thus provide the president with their recommendations on a regular basis.¹⁹ He reassured the other planners that their efforts would be just as important as the military conduct of the war, and reminded them that the failure to construct a lasting peace would make another war almost inevitable and thus nullify the sacrifices of millions of people around the world.²⁰

Due to the unrestricted nature of their mission, Welles told the members that it would be necessary to divide the group into a number of smaller subcommittees, each assigned to investigate more specific aspects of postwar planning. The subcommittees would meet weekly and report back to the full group on a regular basis. Welles desired a system whereby when the president faced war-related political questions, the subcommittees would provide him with options. In Hull's continuing absence, Welles appointed himself chairman of the subcommittee on political problems and assigned it the task of

18 "Official Statements of Postwar Policy," by Notter, January 2, 1942, Welles papers, box 190, FDRL; P minutes 2, March 14, 1942, Notter files, box 54, RG 59, National Archives.

19 Ibid. Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, February 12, 1942, Notter files, box 54, National Archives. Several scholars have criticized Roosevelt for being largely uninterested in postwar matters. See, for example, Wm. Roger Louis, Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 439-440; Robert Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 358-359.

20 Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, February 12, 1942, Notter files, box 54, National Archives.

nothing less than reordering world politics and designing an international organization. Welles arranged to have his friend Norman Davis chair the subcommittee on security problems, while another Welles ally, assistant secretary Berle, would run the subcommittee on economic reconstruction. The subcommittee on economic policy would be headed by assistant secretary Dean Acheson, and the subcommittee on territorial problems would be led by Isaiah Bowman.

As chairman of the subcommittee on political problems, Welles led the effort to draft a timetable for the peacemaking process. He initially favored a "transitional period" from the end of hostilities to the actual signing of the final peace because he thought the raw war-related emotions of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 had led to many rash and ill-advised decisions, and that such matters might be better handled after the formal end of the war. But he soon concluded that many postwar decisions could not be delayed and would have to be taken up immediately. The subcommittee thus focused on urgent and specific questions related to the future map of the postwar world and the launching of a new league.²¹

During one session at the end of March 1942, Welles suggested the creation of a "United Nations authoritative body" which might begin meeting during, rather than after, the war. He feared that certain matters, such as relief and territorial questions, could not safely be addressed until the creation of an international forum of some kind. He believed one of President Wilson's greatest mistakes had been his failure to reach firm agreements on the precise nature of the postwar order prior to the end of the last war. Welles understood that Washington would gain greater leverage over the other members of the Big Four on postwar matters by taking the lead in planning and then making detailed proposals to the other powers. He thus wanted Washington to quickly complete the details of its desired blueprint for world order so that it could sell its vision of the overall design to the other powers.²²

²¹ P minutes 4, March 28, 1942, box 55.

²² Ibid.

At this time, President Roosevelt supported a postwar great power consortium, a sort of continuation of the Grand Alliance, whereas Welles supported a world body which would include not only the great powers, but all the other nations of the world as well. Hamilton Fish Armstrong endorsed Welles's views, suggesting they would assist the United States in aligning the smaller nations into a pro-American bloc against the other great powers. A postwar Anglo-American partnership to run the world, which some officials in Washington and London supported, might not be sufficiently strong to impose its aims on the rest of the globe. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, U.S. and British war aims did not always converge, especially in the areas of trade, postwar economics and colonialism. But Benjamin Cohen feared that an organization consisting of all nations would degenerate into an unwieldy mess. He suggested that a smaller council of four or five great powers be created for more effective decision making.²³

Welles helped fashion a compromise between Armstrong's and Cohen's views. Welles suggested that any new international forum would need to contain both an assembly of all member nations, as well as a smaller executive council. He thought the members of the executive council could allow the smaller nations to join them on a rotating basis. He also enthusiastically supported the idea of endowing a postwar international organization with regional councils. His support for the regional concept stemmed from his belief in the effectiveness of the inter-American system and Pan American Union. A regional approach to world order might also satisfy America's desire to safeguard the Monroe Doctrine and would avoid compromising U.S. preeminence by preventing outside interference in what Washington considered its primary sphere of interest.²⁴

In a report to the full advisory committee in early April 1942, Welles outlined how his political subcommittee sought to create a "United Nations Authority" which would include all the countries fighting the Axis, but with the Four Policemen

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

consisting of the United States, Britain, Russia and China, playing dominant roles as permanent members of the executive council. France, Welles had decided, should be excluded from the executive council. Welles also repeated his suggestion that the organization feature strong regional groupings. If the regional bodies were unable to resolve specific problems, or if disputes emerged between regions, the matter would be appealed to the executive council. Welles thought the regional councils could help reconcile differences among the Four Policemen over the desired nature of the postwar settlement, allowing them to initially adjudicate disputes in their areas of responsibility. Such councils would thus preserve each great power's hegemony within its zone of responsibility. Regionalism might also resolve disputes within the Roosevelt administration over the best approach to take in building the new world organization.²⁵

When Hull returned to Washington in the spring of 1942, he disbanded the full advisory committee but allowed the subcommittees to continue their work. Hull's move inadvertently strengthened Welles's hand, as the under secretary's political subcommittee soon assumed the duties of the now-disbanded advisory committee. Welles's subcommittee soon became the pacesetter for postwar planning, its judgement sought by the other subcommittees and regular reports delivered to it about the progress of the other groups.²⁶

In an effort to provide for a more detailed examination of the particular problems related to designing a new world body, Welles proposed the creation of a special subcommittee on international organization.²⁷ This subcommittee, to which Welles also appointed himself chairman, assumed a position of major importance in the postwar planning process and would continue in existence as long as the political subcommittee itself, holding a total of forty-five meetings between July 1942 and June 1943.²⁸ Its tasks included an examination of international organizations (with special attention paid to the League of

²⁵ Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Policy, April 4, 1942, Notter files, box 54; Sumner Welles, Where Are We Heading? (New York: Harper, 1946), 19, 23-27.

²⁶ Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Policy, May 2, 1942.

²⁷ P minutes 17, June 27, 1942, box 55.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Nations), the drafting of a constitution for the new world body, an in-depth examination of international trusteeship, and later, discussions on endowing a new world organization with a military capability. During its existence the subcommittee on international organization would succeed in creating the blueprint for a new world body which would evolve into the United Nations.²⁹

Welles also used his leadership of the postwar planning process to spearhead three ultimately unsuccessful drives to shape the postwar world. Had these efforts succeeded, the United Nations and the postwar order might have evolved in notably different ways. First, based on his experience designing and implementing the Good Neighbor Policy and the "American system," Welles advocated a regional approach to a postwar organization that envisioned "open" spheres of responsibility, where the great powers would exercise enough influence to protect their physical security, but leave smaller nations alone to determine their own internal policies. Second, Welles desired to provide the United Nations with a strong and effective military arm. He believed the league failed because it did not possess sufficient military force to halt acts of aggression in the 1930s. He concluded that a new organization could only be effective if it contained a credible threat of force. Lastly, Welles sought to create an extensive system of international trusteeship over all colonial possessions where the world organization would implement and oversee a timetable for the gradual emancipation of all dependent colonial peoples.

Welles's lack of success in these three areas is noteworthy and an examination of these issues offers insight into the breadth of his internationalist vision. His inability to gain acceptance for a regional basis for the United Nations may have made it more difficult for Washington to countenance Moscow's aims in Eastern Europe, while the failure to endow the United Nations with a credible military force contributed to

²⁹ P minutes 17, June 27, 1942, box 55; P minutes 33, November 14, 1942, box 55; Minutes of the Special Subcommittee on International Organization, 34, April 9, 1943, box 85 [hereafter referred to as PIO minutes and PIO documents]; PIO document 95, "An International Trusteeship for Non-Self-Governing Peoples," October 21, 1942, box 56; S minutes 24, January 22, 1943, box 76; S document 44, "The Character and Functions of a Permanent International Security Organization," August 11, 1942, box 77; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization: July 17 to October 9, 1942," October 22, 1942, box 56.

that body's ineffectiveness in the postwar years. Furthermore, the failure of Welles's trusteeship plan meant that the United States would ultimately side with the European powers over the matter of colonialism in the postwar era.³⁰

Welles's advocacy of regionalism, for example, did not mean that he had abandoned his larger aim of creating a largely universalist world order. It instead demonstrated his conviction that the postwar settlement had to take into account local and regional practicalities. Welles still assumed that Wilson had been correct in pushing his Fourteen Points, but he believed the late president had been too rigid in the application of his principles. Welles thought a more flexible and creative approach to the problems of erecting a postwar order might succeed where Wilson had failed. While Welles respected many aspects of Wilsonianism, he believed much of the previous effort at postwar planning had been flawed from the outset. Welles sought to avoid a repetition of mistakes such as the failure to create the League Covenant during the war, Wilson's refusal to consult Congress (particularly the Republican members) in the planning process and the flawed nature of the mandates system. Welles also sought to avoid repeating other failures such as the league's inability to back collective security with the threat of force, the league's lack of safeguards for America's predominance in the western hemisphere and the failure to include Russia in the postwar settlement.³¹

Welles saw his leadership of the international organization subcommittee as an opportunity to succeed where Wilson had failed by creating a new league and securing American participation. Meeting weekly on Saturday mornings in Welles's office, the new subcommittee included other strong advocates of international organization such as Isaiah Bowman, Ben Cohen and Leo Pasvolsky, in addition to James T. Shotwell, a Columbia University history professor who had headed the League of Nations Association, Green H. Hackworth, the state

³⁰ It should also be noted that at various times during the war President Roosevelt appeared to support Welles on these issues, but in the wake of Welles's resignation, Roosevelt gradually moved away from these positions on regionalism, the collective use of force, and trusteeship.

³¹ Welles, Seven Decisions, 125, 182-183; Welles, Time For Decision, 367-368.

department legal adviser, and later, Hamilton Fish Armstrong. Clark Eichelberger, the director of the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, served as a consultant. Their experience on the international organization subcommittee would be applied in the months and years after its disbandment, most particularly during the August 1944 Dumbarton Oaks Conference, where all of the members of the subcommittee (with the exception of Welles and Shotwell) would play prominent roles.³²

Welles inaugurated the first meeting of his international organization subcommittee on July 17, 1942 by circulating a draft outline on world organization given to him by the exiled Dutch diplomat Eelco Van Kleffens, whose views resembled Welles's. Van Kleffens had spent most of the war in London serving as foreign minister of the Dutch government-in-exile. Welles thought Van Kleffens's outline worth examining in some detail, and he circulated it in the hope of framing future discussions. The draft began with a review of the strengths and weaknesses of the league and emphasized the importance of U.S. participation in a future world body. Van Kleffens endorsed the view that the old league should be abandoned, and replaced by something completely different. He criticized the concept of a purely universal world organization, questioning whether the great powers would ever truly give consideration to the wishes of smaller nations. Instead, Van Kleffens endorsed regional groupings arranged by oceans: Atlantic, Pacific and Mediterranean councils, and similar bodies for the Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic.³³

After discussing Van Kleffens's outline Welles suggested that the planners meet again in two weeks after each member had drafted their own individual blueprints for a world organization.³⁴ When the planners reconvened on July 31, they presented their respective plans for a world body. James Shotwell emphasized the importance of an international court of justice, while Isaiah Bowman underscored the need for an

³² PIO minutes 1, July 17, 1942, box 85, Notter Files, [all references to PIO minutes are from Notter Files, Record Group 59, National Archives, unless otherwise stated]. Robert C. Hilderbrand, Dumbarton Oaks: The Origins of the United Nations and the Search for Postwar Security (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1990), 18.

³³ PIO minutes 1, July 17, 1942; PIO document 1, "Statement by Van Kleffens," July 17, 1942, box 86.

³⁴ Ibid.

organization that would enjoy widespread support from the American people. Ben Cohen stressed the need for strong regional councils and Clark Eichelberger emphasized universality as the basis of a new world body. Welles merely sought to blend together what he thought were the best concepts from each proposal.³⁵

Welles next led the committee on an article-by-article examination of the covenant of the League of Nations. Like a team of pathologists performing an autopsy, they examined different aspects of the league and attempted to diagnose the reasons for its failures. Using Van Kleffens's arguments in his support, Welles soon convinced the other planners to avoid resurrecting the old league.³⁶ They thus began drafting blueprints for a new international organization which could then be submitted to the parent political committee.³⁷ Welles wanted to avoid having the draft extensively debated and revised by the larger political subcommittee, and thus wanted the smaller subcommittee on international organization to submit a draft that would be as complete and thorough as possible. For example, Welles also sought to address the question of where the colonial world would fit into the new order, and over the next two months he and the planners labored to produce a draft plan for trusteeship to be submitted along with a draft outline on an international organization.³⁸

By late October the draft outline of an international organization began to take shape. The details of the draft demonstrated the degree to which Welles and the other committee members wanted to reform the world through utopian means, but

35 PIO minutes 2, July 31, 1942; PIO document 2, "Preliminary Memorandum on International Organization," by James T. Shotwell, box 85; PIO document 3, "Memorandum by Isaiah Bowman on International Organization," box 85; PIO document 4, "Some Observations Regarding the Form of World Political Organization," by Benjamin Cohen, box 85; PIO document 5, "Preliminary Memorandum on International Organization," by Clark Eichelberger, box 85.

36 While the league would be abandoned, Welles and the planners sought to build upon its more useful features. In late August, for example, the committee once again returned to the Wilson era for instruction when it examined a 1918 draft by Colonel Edward House suggesting ways a world organization could be strengthened. See PIO document 24, "Draft of Colonel House, July 16, 1918: suggestion for a Covenant of League of Nations," box 86.

37 PIO minutes 5, August 14, 1942; Wallace to Welles, August 8, 1942, Henry A. Wallace Papers as Vice President, 1941-1945, FDRL.

38 PIO document 30, "Draft Article on International Trusteeship," August 21, 1942, box 86; PIO minutes, 7, September 4, 1942. The subject of trusteeship will be addressed more thoroughly in chapter six.

also the extent to which they desired to globalize their "American system." To Welles, the outline met many of the requirements of the Atlantic Charter by pledging to improve living standards and provide security, while at the same time offering safeguards for regional diversity. The key features of the proposed organization included an "Executive Committee" made up of the Four Policemen; a "General Council" consisting of all members; an "Annex" grouping the member nations by regions; and a "General Security and Armaments Commission" which would monitor arms making and enforce international laws through collective security backed by an international police force.³⁹

The draft outline also called for the creation of a number of agencies to support the world organization, such as an "International Court of Justice" for the resolution of global disputes. Welles appreciated how the United States's vast new power and wealth gave it leverage in shaping the postwar economic order, and he sought the creation of a multilateral world economic structure in which America's capitalist system would prosper and expand. Thus, an "Economic Organization" would feature an "International Monetary Commission" to stabilize exchange rates, and an "International Labor Organization" for regulating global employment practices, while an "Economic Commission" would oversee the regulation of international commodities, price stabilization, global investments and economic development. Such institutions would help establish a global economic order in which the U.S. economy would be predominant. Furthermore, an "International Organization for Health and Social Welfare" would oversee an "International Health Organization" and a "Commission on Drug Trafficking" while an "Organization on International Cultural Relations" would promote scholarship, the arts, education, the sciences, international radio broadcasts and the dissemination of motion pictures. Other proposed agencies included a "Refugees Board," an "International Committee on Nutrition," an "International Communications Organization" and an agency to

³⁹ PIO minutes 14, October 30, 1942; PIO document 99, "Provisional Outline of International Organization," October 28, 1942, box 87; PIO document 123, "Draft Constitution of International Organization," December 3, 1942, box 87.

coordinate international air traffic. These far-reaching proposals demonstrated the planners' efforts to erect a new international corporatist order to assist in the ultimate exportation and homogenization of American institutions, economic systems, culture and lifestyles throughout the world.⁴⁰

While the draft plan for an international organization continued to take shape, a number of problems emerged. Welles insisted that the new world order have a universal nature, even if the Four Policemen served as guardians of particular regions in the postwar era. Therein lay a dilemma, for it proved difficult to reconcile the notion of the Four Policemen with the universalist vision which foresaw nations everywhere, great and small, cooperating through a new league.⁴¹ Welles thus thought regional councils could help reconcile differences among the Four Policeman -- as well as within the administration -- over the desired nature of the postwar settlement. Several planners had expressed their concern that the great powers might be reluctant to cede to a world body the responsibility for their spheres of interest. Furthermore, regionalism might temper the kind of unqualified support for minority rights and national self-determination which had the potential to turn the new world order into a dysfunctional disorder. A regional approach to the postwar order might resolve some of those fears. With the memory of Wilson's struggle over the league in mind, Welles also sought a regional solution exempting the Monroe Doctrine from a world organization, thus avoiding the problem of outside powers interfering in the affairs of the new world. Regionalism might also prevent the postwar settlement from being undermined by bitter territorial disputes that might erupt at the end of the war, particularly in Eastern Europe, where Welles had noted that local national aspirations would inevitably clash with Moscow's desire for security and friendly neighbors. A regional approach might allow each of the great powers a measure of autonomy within their security zones. Welles sought regional

40 Ibid.

41 P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization: July 17 to October 9, 1942," October 22, 1942, box 56; Welles, Where Are We Heading?, 23, 27; Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 85-89, 110-114; P minutes 33, November 14, 1942.

integration for other areas along the lines of what he believed had been achieved in the western hemisphere. He spoke often of providing the rest of the world with an example to emulate after the war, seeing recent inter-American cooperation as an informal regional federation which might serve as "a cornerstone in the world structure of the future."⁴²

Welles's advocacy of a regional approach also sought to heal a breach within the administration. Several of Roosevelt's advisers and special envoys, such as Cordell Hull, Henry Wallace and Wendell Willkie, advocated a quasi-universal world order, where all nations would cooperate through a new league. Others, such as Henry Stimson and Frank Knox, thought Wilson's dream impractical, and advocated spheres of influence and power politics. Welles believed an organization designed with both regional and worldwide councils might reconcile these different views.⁴³

Welles had regularly briefed Roosevelt on the work of his subcommittee on international organization, at times bringing draft plans to the White House for the president's perusal. At the beginning of January 1943, as Roosevelt prepared for the upcoming Casablanca conference, Welles held a two-hour tutorial for the president on postwar planning, outlining the essential features of the subcommittees' findings. After forty meetings dating back to early 1942, a sketchy design had begun to take shape. Welles underscored that some form of postwar international organization was absolutely necessary to ensure a lasting peace. United States participation, he emphasized, would be essential to the future success of such a body.

42 "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, Arlington National Cemetery, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL. Welles may have borrowed this concept from Wilson, see, for example, Mark T. Gilderhus, "Pan-American Initiatives: The Wilson Presidency and 'Regional Integration,' 1914-1917," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 4, no. 4, (Fall 1980), 409-423.

43 Welles, *The Time For Decision*, 381; Welles, *Where Are We Heading?*, 23-27; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization: July 17 to October 9, 1942," October 22, 1942, box 56. "Roosevelt liked Welles's ideas because they combined the reality of regional power with the idealism of a world agency, and he operated with a strong regional orientation in his dealings with Josef Stalin and Winston Churchill. Although they devoted little of their attention to the subject, the Big Three leaders were in apparent agreement in general terms from the beginning. They wanted a universal body to foster continued cooperation among the great powers, as the most important requirement for a stable peace, but they also felt that the special interests of each in its own area had to be recognized." See J. Tillapaugh, "Closed Hemisphere and Open World? The Dispute Over Regional Security at the U.N. Conference, 1945," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 2, no. 1, (Winter 1978), 25-42.

Regional and local disputes would be resolved through regional councils which would be subordinate to the overall world organization and a program for international trusteeship would be created for dependent areas. Furthermore, efforts at economic and political sanction would be supported by endowing the world organization with police powers.⁴⁴

Drawing on the preliminary work done by the other subcommittees, Welles's political subcommittee had concluded that an international organization should be composed of an executive board consisting of representatives of the four great powers (the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union and China) with the addition of hand-picked representatives from the regions of Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Latin America, the Far East and possibly the Near East. While the executive council would have final decision on the terms of an armistice, a larger body, or general assembly, would consist of all the members of the United Nations.⁴⁵

Welles saw European-style colonialism as a threat to the world order he sought to create, believing these European empires a blight on the world's conscience, while creating a climate which made the colonial world ripe for future conflict. International trusteeship was thus an integral part of Welles's design. While the work of the subcommittees on the question of colonialism and international trusteeship will be assessed in chapter six, Welles proposed that a system of trusteeship might care for the world's "backward peoples" until they were able to stand on their own.⁴⁶ Welles feared the new international organization would not succeed unless more radical measures were taken with dependent colonial areas all over the world. Early on in the postwar planning process it had been agreed that the mandates system had been a dismal failure and that all responsibilities for the mandated territories should be

⁴⁴ Welles, *Seven Decisions*, 184-185; P document 121, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," October 22, 1942, box 56; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization: July 17 to October 9, 1942," October 22, 1942, box 56, Notter Files, National Archives.

⁴⁵ P document 121, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," October 22, 1942, box 56; P minutes 7, April 18, 1942, box 55.

⁴⁶ PIO document 95, "An International Trusteeship for Non-Self-Governing Peoples," October 21, 1942, box 56; P minutes 21, August 8, 1942, box 55; P document 33, "French Indochina," August 4, 1942, box 56; P document 42, "Netherlands East Indies," August 14, 1942, box 56.

transferred to the new international organization. But several committee members felt that trusteeship should be limited to the present mandated territories and the Axis dependencies. This divergence would continue to grow throughout the first half of 1943, with Welles leading the forces backing a more universal approach to trusteeship and Hull coming to lead those who favored a more moderate and less extensive plan.⁴⁷

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The early months of 1943 proved to be a significant turning point in the war. On the military front the Red Army had forced the Germans to begin withdrawing from the Caucasus in the wake of Stalingrad, while in the Pacific the allies had recently won a significant strategic victory during the battle of Guadalcanal. It would also prove to be an important moment for postwar planning. While Welles and his fellow planners had spent much of 1942 conducting a general survey of the new order they sought to create, in 1943 they hoped to begin presenting their more detailed blueprints to the other members of the Grand Alliance. Welles understood that his extensive plans for a new world order would succeed only if prior agreement existed among the Big Three. He had earlier told the planners that he remained concerned about British attitudes toward postwar planning.⁴⁸ U.S. officials had a better sense of British views on postwar planning in the wake of an August 1942 visit to Washington by foreign office official Richard Law, while the British came away with a better idea of the goals of Welles's planning committees. Welles reminded Law that one of the

⁴⁷ PIO document 95, "An International Trusteeship for Non-Self-Governing Peoples," October 8, 1942, box 86; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization," October 22, 1942, box 56.

⁴⁸ PIO minutes 4, August 14, 1942. Welles had begun a mid-August meeting of the subcommittee on international organization by reading aloud a confidential report prepared by the Republican foreign policy adviser John Foster Dulles regarding his recent trip to London. Welles told the planners that Dulles discerned a widespread feeling among the British that postwar Europe should be organized as a series of regional federations. Welles thought Dulles's report underscored the need for greater consultation and exchanges among the Big Three in the area of postwar planning. Dulles assumed the British had little interest in dismembering Germany and that there was no enthusiasm for reviving the League of Nations. He also sensed much resentment of the "current American tendency to condemn colonial imperialism." Dulles told the colonial office that the American people desired a "New Deal" for the dependent peoples of the colonial world, one which might be underwritten by the controlling powers themselves.

gravest errors of the last war was that the allied nations had not had sufficient time to coordinate peace aims among themselves.⁴⁹

The British foreign office shared U.S. concerns about reaching agreements over the shape and structure of the postwar world and became increasingly curious about Welles's postwar planning committees.⁵⁰ The British, too, had studied Van Kleffens's outline for an international organization and foreign office planners had taken a keen interest in regional arrangements, hoping the United States (and not China) would take a lead in a Far East regional body and noting that regionalism might be desirable in Eastern Europe to help resolve its many ethnic and territorial problems. British officials also noted that Welles and other U.S. officials had publicly called for a new world organization based on the wartime United Nations coalition. Several officials in London thus felt Britain should more definitively to establish its own postwar aims. "His Majesty's Government have not yet defined their views on questions or made any response to Mr. Welles's expression of opinion," wrote Gladwyn Jebb, head of the foreign office's economic and reconstruction department. "It is clearly important that the view of the two Governments should be harmonized as early as possible."⁵¹ Anthony Eden subsequently told the war cabinet that Welles's public pronouncements demonstrated an American desire to begin bilateral discussions about the postwar world and he urged that London should act soon to take advantage of the American eagerness to work toward an international organization.⁵² In January 1943 Eden explained

49 PIO minutes 4, August 14, 1942, box 85; FO 371/31525, Jebb to Eden, "World Organization," October 1942, PRO; Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, vol. 5, (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1976), 2; P document 117, "British Political Ferment Involving Post-War Objectives," October 17, 1942, box 56. Ambassador Halifax (who sat in on a portion of Welles's discussions with Law) was unsettled by Washington's support for a universal organization featuring equality of voting to all nations, saying he "could not see the wisdom or the practical possibility of giving Liberia an equal determination in world affairs as the British Government." See Welles memorandum of conversation with Law and Halifax, "Postwar Problems," August 25, 1942, box 164, Welles papers, FDRL.

50 See, for example, FO 371/34136 Campbell to Foreign Office: "Mr. Welles's Secret Advisory Committee on Post War Policy," February 16, 1943, PRO.

51 CAB 66/30 WP (42) 480 "Postwar Atlantic Bases," (Van Kleffens's views), November 3, 1942, PRO; FO 371/31518, minute by Gladwyn Jebb, September 3, 1942, PRO.

52 CAB 66/31 WP (42) 516 "Four Power Plan," by Eden, November 8, 1942, PRO; CAB 66/31 WP (42) 532 "Four Power Plan," by Cripps, November 19, 1942, PRO; CAB 65/28 WM (42) 159, November 27, 1942, PRO.

to the war cabinet that only through the construction of a new world body could Britain continue to function as a world power. He enthusiastically endorsed regionalism and, hoping to reassure Washington that the other powers did not seek to interfere in the affairs of the Americas, he suggested that matters concerning the western hemisphere might best be handled by the already-functioning Pan American Union. "If, therefore, we believe that the United Nations Plan offers the best hope for the future," Eden's draft concluded, "we should make every possible effort to get it generally agreed without delay."⁵³

In late March 1943, the day before Eden's arrival in Washington for a meeting with senior American officials, Welles again briefed the president on his postwar designs, particularly plans for an international organization.⁵⁴ Welles's draft sought to achieve a compromise among three different groups: the advocates of regionalism, those who supported a more universal world organization and those who desired supreme power be vested in the Four Policemen. When Roosevelt met with Eden the following day the president offered this blueprint as the kind of world organization he desired. But to Welles, the draft was still not complete, for it contained no provision for fully integrated international forces and merely called for

53 FO 371/34136 Campbell to Foreign Office: "Mr. Welles's Secret Advisory Committee on Post War Policy," February 16, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/33 WP (43) 31 "The United Nations Plan," by Eden, January 16, 1943, PRO. Before departing for Washington with Eden, Gladwyn Jebb drafted another paper, which not only served as the basis for future British discussions on the postwar order, but also demonstrated the extent to which Welles's neo-Wilsonian ideas continued to lead the way. Jebb's memorandum acknowledged that "The principles embodied in the [Atlantic] Charter will be the basis of any international world order after the war." See FO 371/35396, "Suggestions for a Peace Settlement," by Gladwyn Jebb, March 6, 1943, PRO.

54 For a more thorough account of Eden's visit, see Warren F. Kimball, "Anglo-American War Aims, 1941-43, 'The First Review': Eden's Mission to Washington," in The Rise and Fall of the Grand Alliance, 1941-1945, Ann Lane and Howard Temperley, eds. (London: Macmillan, 1995), 1-21.

each nation to make troops readily available.⁵⁵ Welles also believed that any decision to use force should require the approval of at least three of the four policemen, thus denying a veto to any one power. Welles felt they could not permit any nation, great or small, to veto action against itself if it undertook policies of aggression.⁵⁶

Welles offered a more detailed version of his postwar plans during a meeting with Eden and Halifax on March 24. Welles outlined the functions of the executive committee, the regional assemblies and the general assembly. He suggested that the members of the new world body be compelled to agree to a "Bill of Rights" which would expand the principles of the Four Freedoms to all member states. Welles also urged Eden to assist him in creating a joint Anglo-American working group to discuss political problems, (similar to the Combined Chiefs of Staff).⁵⁷ It soon became apparent to the British diplomats that Welles's views on postwar matters dominated American thinking, for the president had just explained an almost identical, if somewhat

55 Welles had less to do with formulating U.S. policy on the concept of international police power. He had instead delegated most of the initial work to Norman Davis's subcommittee on security problems. But to better discuss how the world organization could best be endowed with military force, in early April 1943 Welles's subcommittee on international organization began holding joint meetings with Davis's subcommittee. Two opposing views quickly emerged: one faction supported a system where nations would contribute forces from their own militaries. Proponents of this view argued that the contribution of individual national forces would pose less of a threat to the sovereignty of the member nations. It might also anticipate opposition from those who would oppose the concept of American forces fighting under the direct command of an international body. There was also some concern that international forces might pursue their own ends and prove impossible to oppose in an otherwise disarmed world. Advocates of the alternative view argued that a permanent, fully-integrated United Nations army would have consistent training and thus would possess better *esprit de corps*. Greater military readiness would be achieved and member nations would have more difficulty withholding support for United Nations operations if their forces were already committed in advance. But finding the means to provide the United Nations Authority with an effective military arm remained one of the most daunting challenges facing the planners. Despite the Welles-Davis joint meetings, the planners remained stymied as to how best to incorporate the concept of police powers into the draft charter. See, for example, PIO minutes 34, April 9, 1943; PIO minutes 35, April 16, 1943; PIO minutes 36, April 29, 1943; Hilderbrand, Dumbarton Oaks, 21; S document 44, "The Character and Functions of a Permanent International Security Organization," August 11, 1942, box 77, Notter files.

56 PIO document 99, "Provisional Outline of International Organization," October 28, 1942, box 86; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization: July 17 to October 9, 1942," October 22, 1942, box 56; Memorandum of conversation, by Welles, March 27, 1943, FRUS, vol. III, 35-38; "Cordell Hull," by Donald F. Drummond, in Norman Graebner, ed. An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 206-207; "Eden's conversations in the United States, March 1943," Notter Files, box 19, National Archives.

57 Memorandum of Conversation, by Welles, March 16, 1943, FRUS, III, 19-24; memorandum of conversation, by Hull, March 22, 1943, FRUS, III, 34; CAB 65/34 WM(43) 53rd, April 13, 1943, PRO.

less detailed, outline.⁵⁸ Despite Welles's private fear of the volatile nature of American public opinion, he told Eden that internationalism was beginning to build momentum throughout the country and that Republican Senator Joseph Ball of Minnesota would soon propose a resolution calling for the creation of a new international organization.⁵⁹

Eden's further meetings with Welles and the president succeeded in giving the British a better idea of American designs for an international organization. While Eden was in Washington, Churchill had called for the establishment of a world order based on regionalism, specifically recommending the creation of a "Council of Europe" and a "Council of Asia." Welles and the president expressed to Eden their opinion that while regional representation would be desirable, all nations should also be members of an all-inclusive body.⁶⁰ After his meetings in Washington, Eden told the war cabinet that London and Washington shared many of the same general aims and that the foreign office should move to achieve greater coordination

58 The British delegation had been in Washington only a few days when it took note of the tension between Welles and Hull, and particularly of Hull's lack of influence. Eden's private secretary, Oliver Harvey, thought Hull to be ill-informed and excluded from many decisions. Harvey noted in his diary: "It is an exhausting country where the President can, and insists on, discussing foreign policy without his Foreign Secretary being present and without even wishing him to know what his ideas are." The British also noted that the Welles-Hull feud spilled over into simple matters of protocol, as when the two men held separate receptions for Eden and his delegation. Harry Hopkins casually told the British that Welles and Hull always gave separate official receptions. During one discussion near the end of his visit, Eden expressed surprise that Welles and Hull were together in the same room. "Their relations were vinegar," Eden noted. See Oliver Harvey, The War Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1941-45, (London: Collins, 1970), John Harvey, ed., 229-240; Anthony Eden, The Eden Memoirs: The Reckoning (London: Cassell, 1965), 376-77.

59 Harvey, War Diaries, 232. Eden briefed Welles on Churchill's desire to have the United States take part in a regional council for Europe. Welles replied that the American people might not accept such expanded responsibilities for the United States unless they were sold in purely pragmatic and self-interested terms.

60 Memorandum of conversation by Hopkins, March 27, 1943, FRUS, III, 39.

of allied plans for a postwar organization.⁶¹ The president summed up his own views of Eden's visit in a news conference on March 30, where he publicly concurred with Welles's view that planning should be coordinated with the other members of the Grand Alliance as soon as possible. The president explained that such meetings served better to clarify allied views on planning and he offered a detailed account of what he hoped such meetings could achieve, particularly in the area of postwar planning and peacemaking. Roosevelt added that early and frequent meetings between the Big Three would be necessary to ensure the avoidance of the problems which had afflicted the peace process in 1919.⁶²

During a visit by Churchill to Washington in May 1943 he hosted a British embassy luncheon for Americans interested in postwar questions (such as Welles, Wallace, Stimson, Ickes, and Senator Connally) where the prime minister reiterated his support for regionalism.⁶³ At the end of the luncheon, Welles took Halifax aside and repeated his desire to reach concrete agreements soon on the essential outlines of postwar planning.

⁶¹ FO 371/35368, memorandum of conversation with Welles, by Halifax, April 12, 1943, PRO; Harvey, War Diaries, 232; "Eden's conversations in the United States, March 1943," Notter Files, box 19, National Archives; CAB 66/35 WP (43) 130 "Foreign Secretary's Visit to Washington," by Eden, March 30, 1943, PRO. Reporting on how Eden's visit was being received in official circles in London, H. Freeman Matthews, an American diplomatic official in London, told Washington that the British feared another American withdrawal from world affairs similar to 1919-1920. But Matthews also noted concern in London that a strengthened America would attempt to impose its views on the rest of the world, particularly on the British Empire. "The alternate, or perhaps I should say the corollary, fear of 'American imperialism' is likewise real," Matthews added. See Matthews to Hull, March 20, 1943, FRUS, III, 26-28. "[It] is no exaggeration to say," Matthews continued, "that fear of an American withdrawal from its due interest in the building of the new world is the dominant factor in British feeling toward the United States today. Neither the British public nor the British Government dares count too strongly that the changed world and the lessons of the aftermath of 1919 will effectively prevent another American 'back to normalcy' wave with all its power to destroy the spirit of cooperation founded on wartime need."

⁶² Notes from FDR's press conference of March 30, 1943, FRUS, III, 41-42. "If some of you go back," Roosevelt told the assembled reporters, "some of you can, like myself, go back to 1918, the war came to a rather sudden end in November, 1918. And actually it's a fact that there had been very little work done on the post-war problems before Armistice Day. Well, between Armistice Day and the time that the nations met in Paris early in 1919, everybody was rushing around trying to dig up things."

⁶³ FO 371/35366 "Eden memorandum of conversations in Washington," March 29, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/37 WP (43) 233 "The Structure of Postwar Settlement," by Churchill, June 10, 1943, PRO; FO 371/35435; "Churchill's views on postwar problems: May 1943," May 28, 1943, Notter Files, box 19. Back in London, Eden thought the prime minister's luncheon extremely productive. He felt that it had successfully reconfirmed the enthusiasm on the part of the United States, "and most notably Mr. Sumner Welles," for reaching wartime agreements with the other allies about the nature of the new international organization. See "Postwar Settlement," by Eden, July 1, 1943, PRO. For a more detailed account of Churchill's views on postwar planning and international organization see, for example, E.J. Hughes, "Winston Churchill and the Formation of the United Nations Organization," Journal of Contemporary History, vol. 9, no.4 (October 1974), 177-194.

Welles told the ambassador that he thought it particularly important to secure agreement with Moscow on postwar plans while relations among the Big Three remained reasonably friendly. Welles subsequently provided Halifax with further details about his plans for an international organization. (Welles did not put his ideas in writing because he had not yet discussed them with Hull, and he may have also feared that Halifax would leak the details of the plan to the press.) "[Welles] developed his ideas of a supreme world council and regional councils in great detail," Halifax reported to London, "and he hopes to be able to get the President's approval of his plans so that he could let us have it all on paper" Welles assured Halifax that the British should not fear a repeat of Wilson's failure. He told the ambassador that he was "more and more impressed with the way in which public feeling in the country as regards postwar cooperation was ahead of Congress."⁶⁴

But Welles's views on postwar planning continued to deepen his rift with Hull, most particularly Welles's backing of a senate resolution calling for the creation of an international organization during the war. Welles believed that despite the risks involved, a congressional resolution calling for U.S. participation in an international organization would crystallize public opinion and inform other governments of Washington's commitment to internationalism. In February 1943 Welles had taken the liberty of telling his political subcommittee (which had now been expanded, in addition to Senators Connally, Austin and Thomas and Representatives Bloom and Eaton, to include Senators Walter George and Wallace White and Representative Luther Johnson) that despite the opposition of Hull, Congress could best aid the postwar planning process

⁶⁴ FO 371/35434 Halifax minute to foreign office and prime minister, June 11, 1943, PRO; FO 371/ 35435 Halifax to FO, June 29, 1943, PRO. Halifax's discussions with Welles prompted the foreign office's Gladwyn Jebb to draft a memorandum for the war cabinet outlining the areas of Anglo-American agreement on matters related to the international organization, and Eden followed with a memo recommending the cabinet endorse Welles's ideas for regionalism. See FO 371/ 35435 "Memo by Jebb," June 12, 1943, PRO; FO 371/ 35435 Eden to Churchill, June 16, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/33 WP(43)31, "The United Nations Plan," by Eden, January 16, 1943, PRO.

and reassure the allies by passing such a resolution.⁶⁵ While Hull rested in Florida in the spring of 1943, Welles met with the resolution's sponsor, Senator Ball, at the state department, encouraging the senator to introduce the resolution as soon as possible. Welles also arranged a meeting between Ball and the president to discuss the proposal. Hull opposed a resolution of this type and he was further distressed when he later learned that Welles had already arranged meetings at the White House between the president, Harry Hopkins, James F. Byrnes, Senator Ball and a number of other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. To Hull, Welles's actions seemed reckless. Not only was Hull opposed to the measure, but the president, long Welles's chief defender, remained noncommittal. Hull was also displeased with Welles's efforts to sell the concept of regionalism to the British, as he remained opposed to anything other than a strictly universal world body.⁶⁶

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The controversy over the Ball resolution fostered the fears of Welles and the other planners that the U.S. public might resist America's increased responsibilities in world affairs. Welles desired that more strenuous efforts be mounted to develop public support for American participation. He believed administration officials should seek publicly to stress the urgent need for the United States to assume its rightful global responsibilities. Throughout his tenure as under secretary, Welles devoted much of his time to such public relations aspects of his position, believing that many of his postwar aims could be better promoted through public diplomacy. President Wilson's failure to sell the peace treaty after returning from Paris in 1919 taught Welles that the public presentation of diplomacy was a crucial component of a

⁶⁵ P minutes 45, February 20, 1943. While Welles emphasized that such a move would send a clear message to Moscow and London that the United States was prepared to play a role in the postwar settlement, he may also have hoped it might forestall further unilateral territorial moves on the part of the Kremlin.

⁶⁶ Robert Divine, Second Chance: The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II (New York: Atheneum, 1971), 94; Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York: Macmillan, 1942), vol. II, 1640; Welles, Seven Decisions, 188-189.

successful foreign policy. He also believed that public pronouncements by senior administration officials could be useful propaganda weapons in fighting the war. Welles thought the American people would be more inclined to support national war aims with a strong idealistic tinge. He explained that he believed "history clearly showed that peoples would fight indefinitely for ideals and for principles and for the attainment of liberty."⁶⁷ Writing to Archibald MacLeish in April 1942, Welles explained that "the creation of an offensive spirit among our people requires that we give them a cause to fight for. If our people believe that all we are fighting for is the *status quo ante*, it will be difficult to keep them fighting if the enemy offers a return to that *status*."⁶⁸

In late May 1942, Welles acted on this conviction when he explained the administration's postwar objectives during his Memorial Day remarks at Arlington National Cemetery. Welles sought to use the speech as an opportunity to clothe the sketchy framework of the Atlantic Charter with a more definitive program for the postwar era, while at the same time winning support for the administration's postwar program, but he also wanted to expand America's war aims to include the liberation of all peoples. "This is in very truth a people's war," he said. "It is a war which cannot be regarded as won until the fundamental rights of the peoples of the earth are secured."⁶⁹ With postwar planning going at full speed in the secrecy of the state department, Welles offered his most detailed public explanation of the aims and meaning of the war, claiming that the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations Declaration would be the basis of a new world organization. The reach of the Atlantic Charter would be stretched to cover the entire globe. "Our victory must bring in its train the liberation of all peoples. Discrimination between peoples because of their race, creed, or color must be abolished. The age of imperialism is ended. The right of a people to their freedom must be recognized The principles of the Atlantic

⁶⁷ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, February 20, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 522.

⁶⁸ MacLeish to Welles, April 16, 1942, Welles papers, box 81, FDRL.

⁶⁹ "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, Arlington National Cemetery, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

Charter must be guaranteed to the world as a whole -- in all oceans and in all continents."

Welles had thus expanded his vision of American war aims by publicly describing the current conflict as a "people's war" which would inaugurate global reform and lead to American leadership in the postwar era. By proclaiming the conflict a "people's war" he affirmed his view of the war's revolutionary potential to recast the world order, but he also hinted that when the war was over, the American people, and the peoples of the wider world, could expect something in return for their sacrifices. The war would lead to a realignment of world power, with new forces such as the Soviet Union and China joining with the United States to enforce the peace. Welles assumed that at the end of the war only the United States would have the strength and resources to lead the world toward a reformed world order.⁷⁰

Reactions to Welles's remarks came from many quarters. The New York Times placed its account of the speech on its front page, emphasizing Welles's call that the United Nations become the "nucleus of a world organization of the future." The Times hailed his proclamation of a "new frontier of human welfare" and called the Arlington speech a remarkable and advanced explication of war aims, once again going beyond Roosevelt's vision of what the war could achieve. The Times also highlighted Welles's call for the United States to lead the way toward a new world order where "freedom from want" could be achieved, and where the U.S. would accept its rightful place as a global power. The Pulitzer Prize winning playwright Robert Sherwood, now director of the Office of War Information's Overseas Division, applauded the speech as "revolutionary" and arranged its rebroadcast on All India Radio.⁷¹ Walter Lippmann, writing in his nationally syndicated column, added, "Mr. Welles was not making Utopian promises for the distant future but was announcing a policy which is very seriously meant," while Anne

⁷⁰ Welles to Archibald MacLeish, August 13, 1942, box 81, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL; "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁷¹ New York Times, May 31, 1942; FO 371/31518, "Proposal by Mr. Sumner Welles for the Organization of Peace," July 9, 1942, PRO; Sherwood to Welles, May 31, 1942, box 83, Welles papers, FDRL; Sherwood to Welles, June 25, 1942, box 83, Welles papers, FDRL.

O'Hare McCormick noted in her column that Welles's speech "is the most concrete statement of postwar intentions and policy yet made by a spokesman of this Government" adding that "the idea of a New Deal for the world" now represented the central theme of the administration's postwar planning policy.⁷²

Welles's Arlington remarks had once again revealed his aim that the war should bring about a worldwide extension of New Deal-style reforms. He assumed the war would give rise to America's eclipse of Europe in the areas of economic, military and political power, but also in terms of moral example. He assumed American leadership better suited to the challenges of the postwar world and that the two world wars had once again demonstrated the failure of European primacy.⁷³ Welles believed such public pronouncements went a long way toward persuading the American people to support a new world order as a result of the war. "I am only an amateur politician and therefore I may be wrong," Welles wrote to MacLeish in August 1942. "But if one can judge by the temper of the American people during the Civil War, they fight better when they know for what they are fighting and when that 'common hope' is responsive to their own aspirations and to their own idealism, and when they believe that its realization will make for the security of their country, their children and their faith."⁷⁴ Welles thus sought to lead an aggressive public relations effort for a new league in anticipation of the 1942 mid-term elections, delivering a series of partisan blasts at the Republicans, all the while decrying partisanship on the part of the opposition.⁷⁵

72 New York Herald Tribune, June 9, 1942; New York Times, June 1, 1942.

73 P minutes, March 7, 1942; "Free Access to Raw Materials," by Sumner Welles, National Foreign Trade Convention, October 8, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL; "Blueprint for Peace," by Sumner Welles, November 17, 1942, New York Herald Tribune Forum, speech files, box 195, folder 7, FDRL.

74 Welles to MacLeish, August 13, 1942, Welles papers, box 81, folder 1, FDRL.

75 New York Times, May 31, 1942; "Free Access to Raw Materials," by Sumner Welles, October 8, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 7, FDRL. Nevertheless, the Democrats did poorly in the 1942 elections, and the old dictum that the outcomes of American elections do not turn on foreign policy questions was once again set on its head. Former isolationists did well in the 1942 primaries, and in the general election the Republicans gained 46 seats in the House, and 10 in the Senate. Many interpreted the results as a repudiation of the president's handling of the war, and some supporters of internationalism voiced concerns that a political coalition was forming that would undermine and ultimately defeat the administration's internationalist goals, as happened to Wilson in 1918. The Democratic defeat at the polls in 1942 profoundly influenced the administration's efforts to promote the new world order. Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections, Second Edition (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1985), 110.

Welles and the planners often had great trepidation about the level of public support for their postwar plans.⁷⁶ Welles thus sought to convince the American people that only through active participation in an international organization could they avoid another disaster like the current war. Even after the 1942 elections he continued to attack the administration's opponents, whom, he said, must take responsibility for causing the current war and who once again stood poised to take America down the path of isolation.⁷⁷

Departmental infighting regularly flared up over Welles's handling of postwar planning, but his public remarks about a new world order particularly angered Hull, who sought to exert more control over the entire planning process, which he began to view as a runaway locomotive. The secretary eventually demanded that all statements on postwar matters be submitted to him for prior approval. Hull was further angered when Welles explained that the president had authorized him to use his public pronouncements to issue a series of "trial balloons" on postwar matters. To Hull, this seemed again to confirm Welles's disloyalty and insubordination.⁷⁸ But Welles feared the

76 They feared that Ohio Senator Robert Taft and other isolationists in the Senate would work to destroy internationalism. Welles thought political trouble might be brewing in the shape of an isolationist backlash in the west and mid-west. He also acknowledged that the political situation in these states had the potential to create political hazards for the administration's foreign policy, and that an accelerated public relations campaign might convince the American people of the virtues of internationalism. See, for example, PIO minutes 17, November 20, 1942. At one meeting shortly after the 1942 elections, Welles read aloud a letter from a recently defeated Democratic Congressman who warned that the country was heading down the same path as 1918-1920 and attributed his defeat to deep-seated isolationist feeling, predicting that the international question would dominate the elections of 1944. Isaiah Bowman told the committee that he had just returned from the mid-west and he warned the members that the attitude there was one of "Why should the United States help these people in distant countries?"

77 Welles pushed these accusations further during other speeches, pointing out that the mistakes of 1919 had led directly to the current war, while placing responsibility for avoiding another war in the hands of the American people. During a nationally broadcast address from upstate New York in December 1942, he repeated the theme that American participation in a postwar organization was a matter of self-interest. "Would we not as a people have been better advised if we had been willing twenty years ago to join with the other free peoples of the earth in promoting an international order which would have maintained the peace of the world and which could have prevented the rise of those conditions which have resulted in the total war of today?" See "Dedication to the Future," by Sumner Welles, Mount Vernon, NY, December 6, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL; as well as "The Victory of Peace," by Sumner Welles, February 26, 1943, speech files, box 196, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

78 Hull thus felt compelled to deliver a radio address of his own, where he warned it would be necessary to set limits on the Four Freedoms, thus taking a stance quite contrary to Welles's more sweeping aims. To make matters worse, the ailing Hull was unable to complete his address. Hull remained uncomfortable with Welles's aim of pressing the European colonial powers to grant self-government to their colonies. Hull assumed self-government would come naturally after an adequate period of years. New York Times, July 24, 1942; Welles, Where Are We Headed?, 19-24; Hull, Memoirs, 1227-1229, 1599.

administration risked missing an important opportunity to shape public opinion. He privately lamented that it would prove more difficult to find agreement on common ideals or "a common hope" as the war's conclusion neared. "I am more and more anxious," Welles wrote to MacLeish, "that the Administration should at least let people know what that common hope should be. And still the trend is . . . to deal solely in platitudes and generalities on the ground that politically it is unwise to hold up to the American people as a common hope anything more than the Beatitudes."⁷⁹ Despite Hull's admonitions, Welles continued to make unauthorized public remarks about postwar aims, and his efforts took another step forward in the summer of 1943 when Simon & Schuster came out with Prefaces to Peace, featuring addresses from Welles, Willkie and Wallace about their postwar aims, but not including any contributions from Hull. In June, Columbia University Press followed with a collection featuring twelve of Welles's best-known wartime speeches under the title The World of the Four Freedoms.⁸⁰

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Hull had grown increasing restive over his inability to control postwar planning and in the spring of 1943 he assumed the full-time chairmanship of the political subcommittee after its forty-seventh meeting. The bulk of its work had already been done, however, and the broad outlines of the kind of world order America desired had already begun to take shape. A number of problems still remained to be ironed out, but the subcommittees had thoroughly and systematically examined U.S. war and peace aims in some detail. The "Draft Constitution of

⁷⁹ Welles to MacLeish, August 13, 1942, Welles papers, box 81, FDRL. During a remarkable speech at the May 1943 commencement exercises of the North Carolina College for Negroes in Durham, Welles devoted the majority of his remarks to the question of race and equality in the new world order. Welles stated that ". . . in the kind of world for which we fight, there must cease to exist any need for the use of that accursed term 'racial or religious minority.' If the peoples of the earth are fighting and dying to preserve and secure the liberation of the individual under law, is it conceivable that the peoples of the United Nations can consent to the reestablishment of any system where human beings will still be regarded as belonging to such 'minorities?' . . . equality of human rights and to equality of opportunity every human being is by divine right entitled. If that cornerstone is laid as the foundation of the new world of the United Nations, the blot of the concept of minorities upon the fabric of our civilization will be erased." See "Commencement Exercises of the North Carolina College for Negroes," by Sumner Welles, May 31, 1943, speech files, box 195, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁸⁰ Sumner Welles, The World of the Four Freedoms (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), v-vii.

the United Nations" was by then largely completed and Welles briefed the president on the findings of the subcommittees at a White House meeting on June 19, where Welles obtained Roosevelt's approval of the latest drafts of the "United Nations Protocol" and the "Draft Constitution of the International Organization."⁸¹

The drafts urged that some form of world organization be launched before the war's end. The planners felt that the league, despite its failures, had established significant precedents for international cooperation, had marked a revolutionary advance over previous relationships among nations and should serve as a prototype for the new organization. The drafts explained that the league failed not only because the U.S. refused to join, but also because the league did not have sufficient power to carry out its will. A future international organization should thus have the power to enforce peace, with an international military force giving economic sanctions a meaning and substance which they had lacked under the league. The planners endorsed a system where nations would contribute armed forces as needed. The drafts also endorsed the need for a strong universal world organization, but argued that many local problems would best be handled by regional bodies. The regional bodies would be subordinate to the overall world organization, with the universal body having ultimate appellate jurisdiction.⁸² The members also foresaw some danger in forming regional bodies, particularly in the Far East and the Pacific region, where the interests of several great powers might come

⁸¹ P minutes 60, June 19, 1943; P document 234, "Universal International Organization," June 19, 1942, box 57; PIO minutes 44, June 19, 1943 with memo from Sandifer regarding Welles meeting with President, June 19, 1943 [attached], box 85; Welles, Seven Decisions, 189.

⁸² PIO document 95, "An International Trusteeship for Non-Self-Governing Peoples," October 21, 1942, box 56; P document 236, "Political Subcommittee Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," July 2, 1943, box 57, Notter files. Welles and the planners underscored the need for United States participation in a future world organization in stark economic terms. They believed the United States needed to participate in an international body to safeguard free trade and the open door. They also concluded that U.S. participation might be necessary to obtain basic resources in the years following the war. The planners thought support for internationalism might be more easily obtained if U.S. postwar aims were presented in more practical and self-interested terms, for example, as crucial to the safeguarding of American security, trade and standards of living.

in conflict.⁸³

When Hull finally disbanded the planning committees in July 1943 he had at last succeeded in ending Welles's domination of postwar planning. A few days after Hull's action, the "Draft Constitution of the United Nations" was made public, but over the next few weeks the decline of Welles's influence became more apparent, depriving the administration of a strong advocate for regionalism. Hull had now become a staunch opponent of Welles's regional ideas, and the secretary would see to it that the redraft of the plan omitted the concept altogether. Hull disagreed with Welles's belief that regionalism would serve to safeguard the western hemisphere. The secretary instead feared that regionalism would mean that European and Asiatic powers would find their way onto regional councils for the Americas. When Hull thus received Welles's "Draft Constitution" he instructed Leo Pasvolsky to make revisions in the area of regionalism.⁸⁴ Pasvolsky's revised version differed little from Welles's previous efforts and it became the foundation upon which much of the work would be conducted at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in the summer of 1944. But one important omission from the redraft was the concept of regionalism, which Hull succeeded in eliminating

83 Ibid. British officials had also been revising their own outline for a world organization. Following Eden's visit to Washington, successive British drafts demonstrated how strongly Welles's vision of a world organization continued to influence postwar planning on both sides of the Atlantic. British drafts during the summer of 1943 generally followed the outlines of Welles's proposals. After Churchill's return from the United States, he circulated to the cabinet an account of his conversations in Washington. Following Churchill's report, Eden circulated a memorandum examining in some detail the various proposals for regionalism, and by July 7, Jebb and the Foreign Office had come up with a draft which encapsulated British views on a postwar organization up to that time. The revised British plan closely mirrored the draft Welles had discussed with Eden in March, and restated that the principles embodied in the Atlantic Charter "will be the basis of any international world order after the war. See CAB 66/37 WP(43) 217, "Armistice and Related Problems," by Anthony Eden, May 25, 1943, PRO; CAB 65/34 WM(43) June 16, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/38 WP(43) 300, "United Nations Plan for Organizing Peace and Welfare," July 7, 1943, PRO. A few weeks later, on July 22, Deputy Prime Minister Clement Attlee endorsed Eden's proposal that the war cabinet form a standing committee to investigate and study specific questions of a postwar nature. Attlee also recommended that the war cabinet consider an exchange of ideas with the Soviet Union concerning the structure of the postwar world. See FO 371/35386, Attlee to Churchill, July 22, 1943, PRO.

84 Furthermore, in the wake of Welles's resignation Hull would reorganize and revive a new system of planning committees in the fall of 1943 to begin preparing the groundwork for the next steps in the postwar planning process, such as the Quebec, Teheran and Dumbarton Oaks conferences.

from all future drafts.⁸⁵

At the Moscow Conference⁸⁶ in October 1943 internationalism and the effort to construct a new league received an important boost when representatives of the Four Policemen at last consulted over postwar matters. Most importantly, the delegates reached a consensus agreement pledging to establish a postwar international organization. Hull interpreted the agreement as a triumph of his approach over Welles's. "The emphasis," Hull later wrote, "was now on a general international organization. Nothing was said of regional security organizations in the declaration, and in the discussions at Moscow I argued strongly against them."⁸⁷

Nevertheless, the political subcommittee's final report would become the basis for the next steps in the postwar planning process, including service as a blueprint of American policy goals at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, as well as at future allied conferences. When delegates from thirty-nine nations met at Dumbarton Oaks, for example, it soon became apparent that they relied heavily on the preliminary work and decisions made by Welles's subcommittees. Nearly all of the members of Welles's international organization subcommittee participated at Dumbarton Oaks, and the draft framework for a

85 "The Charter of the United Nations," August 14, 1943, in Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, Appendix 23, page 526-534; Julius W. Pratt, Cordell Hull (New York: Cooper Square, 1964), in Samuel Flagg Bemis and Robert Ferrell, eds. The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, 723; Hull, Memoirs, 1640-1643. During Welles's leadership of postwar planning, Roosevelt had supported the concept of regionalism and remained somewhat wary of Hull's brand of universalism. Roosevelt also supported Welles's more advanced interpretation of trusteeship. But the president's support for regionalism ebbed in mid-1943, roughly at the moment of Welles's resignation. By late summer the president was moving closer to the kind of universalism favored by Hull. By the time of the Teheran Conference in December 1943, Roosevelt seemed to have lost interest in regionalism, a startling change of mind in only a matter months. Nonetheless, at the San Francisco Conference in 1945 Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg successfully pushed for Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, permitting member nations to enter regional security pacts, which later served as a justification for U.S. participation in military alliances such as NATO and SEATO.

86 President Roosevelt had asked Welles to represent the United States at the Moscow Conference but Welles declined.

87 Hull, Memoirs, 1647. After his resignation, Welles used his syndicated column to promote the merits of regionalism. See "Welles Urges Regional Seats on World Executive Council," New York Herald Tribune, January 26, 1944. According to J. Tillapaugh, "No satisfactory planning occurred before the San Francisco Conference to relate the [western hemisphere] region to the world in a way acceptable to both the great powers and the American republics. In 1943, . . . Welles devised a plan for a universal structure based on regional cornerstones. . . . Hull rejected the draft because it placed too much emphasis on regional independence. Hull turned matters over to Leo Pasvolsky, who sought not to reconcile regional and global interests but rather to eradicate regionalism from subsequent proposals." See J. Tillapaugh, "Closed Hemisphere and Open World? The Dispute Over Regional Security at the U.N. Conference, 1945," Diplomatic History, vol. 2, no. 1, (Winter 1978), 25-42.

United Nations organization which emerged -- featuring a security council, a general assembly and an international court of justice -- differed little from the drafts Welles's committees had first created in 1942 and 1943. Furthermore, the San Francisco conference, which served as the inaugural meeting of the United Nations, was based on the draft proposals which had come out of the Dumbarton Oaks conference six months before. Thus, in many respects, Welles and his fellow planners had laid the foundations for the United Nations concept. The influence of the postwar planning committees would continue to be felt indirectly, reflected in the advice and proposals that Welles and the other planners had made to the president and the secretary of state. Many subsequent wartime decisions would demonstrate acceptance of the findings of the postwar planning committees, and their work would contribute to the shaping of American assumptions throughout the war, as well as significantly influencing the framework of America's strategic doctrine during the Cold War.⁸⁸

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⁸⁸ Several scholars have made use of the records of Welles's planning committees to trace the origins of U.S. policy in a number of areas. James Edward Miller, for example, notes that the Welles-led planning committees "created a body of coherent policy recommendations and detailed supporting studies, which would powerfully influence American decisions both during and after the war. The value of this kind of work was dramatically pointed out to the Americans at Casablanca, where they were humiliated by the better prepared British. Thereafter, Roosevelt ... did not overlook the existence of this body of information and policy recommendations in preparing for international conferences." See James Edward Miller, The United States and Italy, 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 43. See also the use of postwar planning records in Akira Iriye, Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941-1945 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 59-61, 92-93; as well as in Rudolf V.A. Janssens, What Future for Japan?: U.S. Wartime Planning for the Postwar Era, 1942-1945 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995), and Xiaoyuan Liu, A Partnership for Disorder: China, the United States, and their policies for the postwar disposition of the Japanese Empire, 1941-1945 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 34, 76-77.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Quest for a New World Order: Postwar Planning and the Great Powers, 1942-1943

Under Welles's leadership the planners initially sought to investigate how the peace could be reconciled with America's war aims. But they soon exceeded that mandate, moving from broad discussions of postwar matters to more specific investigations of the postwar status of particular powers. They consequently expanded their investigations to every corner of the globe. Over the course of the year-and-a-half between January 1942 and July 1943 the advisory committees would help shape Washington's policies in numerous areas. In addition to creating a new international organization and drafting a blueprint for international trusteeship for the colonial world, they would investigate and make recommendations for Washington's relations with the exile governments, plan for the postwar reconstruction of Germany, Italy and Japan, seek to chart the postwar future of China, and attempt to stabilize relations between Moscow and Washington. They would leave almost no part of the world, no continent, no nation, unexamined, and when Welles resigned in September 1943, the foundations of the postwar order America desired would already be in place.

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The discussions in Welles's subcommittees took place in an open and exploratory manner. This approach created a number of problems. Welles wanted the committees to reach agreements rapidly, but his open-ended methods ensured that while the planners conducted their survey of the world, America's vital interests continued to expand to areas not previously considered important to U.S. security. During the lifespan of the committees, one of the most common and successful arguments followed the line that anything threatening to the future peace of the world -- anywhere -- also threatened America's vital

interests. This line of thinking foreshadowed American strategic doctrine during the subsequent Cold War period, when events in seemingly unimportant areas increasingly took on a greater importance because of their supposed link to American security and prestige. Welles and his fellow planners would succeed in expanding the concept of Washington's vital interests to remote areas of the Far East, Africa, the Near East and Eastern Europe.¹

It soon became clear that as the planners surveyed the world situation, a dramatic change occurred in their view of the world, and their definition of America's vital interests expanded accordingly.² The planners would meddle gratuitously in the internal affairs of other nations and would go to great lengths to produce outcomes beneficial to U.S. interests. Welles endorsed, for example, a suggestion by Myron Taylor that the committees begin compiling lists of potential leaders of other nations who would be amenable to American interests in the postwar period. The United States might then actively seek to promote these officials within their native governments. Anne O'Hare McCormick thus asked Welles to clarify their true mission. Is it, she asked, to determine "the kind of world we want?"

"Exactly," Welles replied.³

Welles further suggested that the committees should begin to anticipate obstacles to an American-led world order and he and the planners began to grow concerned about the kind of delegates the other nations might send to an initial conclave of the United Nations. Welles wanted the other nations to select "good men." He thus thought Washington should have a strong say in the selection of other nation's delegates. He

¹ Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Policy, May 2, 1942, Notter files, box 54, RG 59, National Archives; P minutes 2, March 14, 1942, Notter files, box 55. During a number of his wartime addresses Welles repeated the theme that the threat of war anywhere in the world threatened U.S. security. He warned that the Four Policemen thus had to be prepared to use their powers to prevent future threats from materializing into wars. See P minutes, March 7, 1942; "Free Access to Raw Materials," by Sumner Welles, National Foreign Trade Convention, October 8, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 7, FDRL; "Blueprint for Peace," by Sumner Welles, November 17, 1942, New York Herald Tribune Forum, speech files, box 195, folder 7, FDRL.

² Some have persuasively argued that the world-wide nature of the war helped to promote a new *weltanschauung* among the American people, what Alan K. Henrikson called an emergent ideology of "Air-Age Globalism." See Henrikson, "The Map as an 'Idea': The Role of Cartographic Imagery During the Second World War," *The American Cartographer*, vol. 2, no. 1 (April 1975), 19-53.

³ Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, February 12, 1942, Notter files, box 54.

suggested Taylor's roster of amenable foreign leaders might come in handy for such an enterprise. This could be finessed, Welles said, if the great powers simply said, "We won the war, we won back for you your self-esteem and independence, and we wish your advice in all decisions. Therefore, we want representatives from yourselves, by regions, to sit with us in the making of all decisions. For that purpose we have selected these men from you to join us in our deliberations."⁴

Welles sought the creation of a new economic order in the postwar world, facilitated in part by massive U.S. postwar economic aid. Welles hinted that after the war the United States would transform itself from an arsenal of democracy supplying the world's military needs into the workshop of democracy providing the aid and material necessary for global reconstruction.⁵ But Welles sought to exert U.S. influence in other ways as well, such as through the manipulation of exile movements. Throughout the first few years of the war Welles played a pivotal role as the liaison between the administration and various exile movements. In this capacity, he sought to influence the future course of these occupied countries and use his relations with the exile movements to shape their postwar governments. Welles realized that the United States had much to gain through its dealings with the exile movements. The allies benefited from the collaboration of various national armed forces, some of which, such as the exiled Poles, constituted a force of some significance. They took advantage of several significant resistance movements, such as those in the Philippines, France and Yugoslavia, which often included vast networks of intelligence agents. They gained access to millions of tons of valuable merchant shipping, mostly Dutch, Norwegian, Greek and Yugoslav. The allies also benefited from the continued existence of the many exile governments functioning on allied territory, thus enabling the allied propaganda effort to better combat Axis political warfare.

Welles understood that the collapse of France, for example, and the controversies over the various French exile

⁴ P minutes 4, March 28, 1942.

⁵ "Commercial Policy After the War," by Sumner Welles, October 7, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

factions had given Washington an extraordinary opportunity to shape the destiny of France for years to come. But Welles's relations with the various Free French envoys sent to Washington represented some of the least cordial exchanges he had during the war. Welles's aims for a postwar France stemmed more from his vision of American interests than from personal animus. Welles held very precise aims for France's future. He saw the Franco-German rivalry as the chief cause of European instability and he thus sought to treat France little better than Germany. France would play no role in Welles's postwar designs and he welcomed the possibility that a weakened France would lead to a further reduction of European influence around the world. As part of Welles's "new European order" he wanted to see France disarmed, stripped of its empire and removed from the ranks of the great powers at the end of the war.⁶ He assumed that after the war the French empire would be a destabilizing force in the world. At one point during the postwar planning process Welles even sought to apply the Wilsonian principle of non-recognition to the provisional French government led by General Charles de Gaulle. Welles suggested that the United States could exert its leverage over the future of France by withholding recognition and aid if the postwar French government did not meet Washington's precise standards of legitimacy. Washington would determine for itself if the French people genuinely supported their future government, and whether the French government would be amenable to the implementation of certain reforms desired by Washington such as disarmament and a commitment to trusteeship for French colonial possessions. This resembled Woodrow Wilson's often arbitrary distinctions between *de facto* vs. *de jure* governments in Mexico, Russia and elsewhere, where the United States refused officially to recognize a government until it met precise standards of "legitimacy." Welles told his colleagues that only adherence to the Four Freedoms could ensure a stable,

⁶ Nevertheless, the administration had reassured Vichy leaders in January 1942 that "the word 'France' in the mind of the President includes the French Colonial Empire." See Hull to Leahy, January 20, 1942, *FRUS*, II, 123-124. Welles thus told the French ambassador in April 1942 that Washington recognized the jurisdiction of France over its overseas possessions. Robert Murphy also assured French General Henri Giraud that French possessions would be recovered after the war. Nevertheless, these comments did not stop Welles from plotting against the French empire, particularly Indochina, during his leadership of the postwar planning committees.

peaceful and legitimate postwar order in France. All governments, Welles argued, including the French, "must give their peoples such rights and apply them." Welles reminded his fellow planners that the United States should not wait for events to happen in places like France but should instead adroitly exploit opportunities and take the lead in shaping the postwar world. France might prove to be the ideal place for America to demonstrate its resolve in creating a new world order.⁷

During the first few years of the war, Welles remained one of the harshest critics of General de Gaulle's Free French.⁸ He saw de Gaulle as the chief obstacle to achieving Washington's goals for a postwar France. Welles would consistently ignore entreaties by the British to ease American hostility toward de Gaulle. He believed France, as one of the largest countries in Europe and the second largest empire in the world, would be a major factor in any effort to reconstruct Europe at the end of the war. But he thought the Third Republic had merely been temporarily suspended by the war and that "everything that has happened since June, 1940 is illegitimate." That included both the regime in Vichy⁹ as well as de Gaulle's Free French committee based in London. Welles's stubborn opposition to everything the Free French leader represented would have important consequences for the allies and Welles's views on the General may have contributed to President Roosevelt's deep dislike of the Free French.¹⁰

Furthermore, Welles distrusted de Gaulle as a dangerous and reckless incompetent ever since his failed attempt to take Dakar in September 1940, an effort which had been undermined by numerous intelligence leaks which tipped off the defending

⁷ P minutes 4, March 28, 1942, box 55; P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P document 158a, "Official Statements and Views Affecting the Future Status of France and the French Empire," January 29, 1944, box 57.

⁸ An excellent account of the attitudes of Welles and Roosevelt toward de Gaulle and the Free French is DeGaulle and the United States: A Centennial Reappraisal, edited by Robert O. Paxton and Nicholas Wahl (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994), particularly the essay "The United States and the Free French" by Kim Munholland. Milton Viorst, Hostile Allies: FDR and Charles de Gaulle (New York: Macmillan, 1965) is more sympathetic to de Gaulle, as is Dorothy Shipley White, Seeds of Discord: De Gaulle, Free France and the Allies (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1964).

⁹ This despite U.S. diplomatic relations with Vichy until

¹⁰ P minutes 5, April 4, 1942.

Vichy forces. Perhaps most galling of all to Welles was de Gaulles's affront to Pax Americana when on Christmas Eve 1941 Free French forces took control of the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon off the Newfoundland coast. Welles's dim view of the Free French would be further reinforced by the French diplomat Alexis Leger, who had held a position

in the French foreign ministry from 1933 to 1940. Leger had become a zealous opponent of de Gaulle, whom he saw as an "apprentice dictator."¹¹ After arriving in Washington in early 1941 Leger told Welles that he was prepared to surrender his diplomatic passport. Welles replied: "As far as the State Department is concerned, you are still one of the foremost diplomats of France."¹² With the assistance of Welles's friend, Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish, Leger landed a position as a consultant to the library on French poetry. Once settled, he worked with Welles to convince Roosevelt that de Gaulle could never be the legitimate head of a French government-in-exile. Leger suggested that de Gaulle lacked legitimacy because he had never offered himself to the French people in an election.¹³

While Welles opposed de Gaulle he nonetheless believed France would need a strong and effective civil government after liberation. He was particularly concerned about the possibility of instability in a post liberation France. He was alarmed by reports of the rapid growth of communism in wartime France and expressed his concern about the possible emergence of radical "communes" in many of France's larger cities after liberation. To prevent communists from gaining power in local politics and exercising "undue influence" at the national level, the planners proposed that the United Nations be prepared to impose

¹¹ Leger doubled as a Symbolist poet writing under the name St. John Perse. He had been an ally of the French statesman Aristide Briand in the 1920s, and had fled Paris after the French collapse. See Elizabeth R. Cameron, "Alexis Saint-Leger Leger," in The Diplomats: 1919-1939, Gordon Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 378-405.

¹² Washington Times-Herald, January 6, 1941.

¹³ Leger to Welles, August 23, 1941, box 70, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Leger, August 25, 1941, box 70, Welles papers, FDRL; Raoul Aglion, Roosevelt and de Gaulle: Allies in Conflict. A Personal Memoir (New York: Free Press, 1988), 115; Nicholas Wahl supports Aglion's view of Welles's role in shaping the American attitude toward the Free French. Wahl adds that while Leger "didn't get to see Roosevelt personally, he did see Sumner Welles, and Sumner Welles was the single most important counselor for Roosevelt in foreign policy at the time." See DeGaulle and the United States, Paxton and Wahl, eds., *ibid*, 95-97. Welles ultimately brought Roosevelt and Leger together during a dinner at Oxon Hill Manor.

local and national administration in a liberated France. They felt that the United States, working under the guise of collective action, should seek to shape the postwar political future of France. They also proposed that outside powers should seek to ensure that the Four Freedoms be enforced in a postwar France and that France's transportation facilities be internationalized at the end of the war.¹⁴

Welles feared that it would be difficult to restore a legitimate government in a liberated France and he sought to oppose any effort by de Gaulle to impose himself as the governing authority in liberated French territory. Welles feared that de Gaulle was determined to manipulate future elections in a liberated France and he worried that Washington's choices remained too limited. As Washington's relations with Vichy continued to deteriorate in the spring of 1942, Welles anticipated a complete break. He recognized that Washington would need to deal with some other entity representing French interests, but he remained hostile to de Gaulle's movement. Welles thus began to pay greater attention to the composition of de Gaulle's Free French committee, and by the spring of 1942 he became convinced that it needed to be completely reformed, which for the most part meant that it had to be purged of the influence of General de Gaulle.¹⁵

In a top-secret, hand-delivered message sent in March 1942 to Admiral William Leahy, the U.S. Ambassador to Vichy,¹⁶ Welles acknowledged that the United States might soon have to recognize the Free French committee as the French government-in-exile. That did not necessarily mean that Washington would have to recognize a Free French committee headed by de Gaulle. Welles and President Roosevelt wanted Leahy to establish contact with their chosen candidate to replace de Gaulle: Edouard Herriot, the French statesman who had held numerous

¹⁴ P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 21, August 8, 1942, box 55; "The Possibilities of Revolution During and Immediately Following the Present War," by Notter and Rothwell, August 30, 1941, Notter files, box 8.

¹⁵ P minutes 5, April 4, 1942.

¹⁶ Welles had been behind Roosevelt's choice of Leahy in December 1940, angering William Bullitt who was not consulted in the appointment. In the wake of the already deep differences between Bullitt and Welles over the Welles Mission and the sleeping car porter scandal, the Leahy appointment further increased the animosity between them.

cabinet posts in the Third Republic, including premier. Welles and Roosevelt believed Herriot's long political career would help him garner the support of the French people and the empire. But perhaps most importantly, Welles knew Herriot, liked him personally, and thought he might prove to be more tractable than de Gaulle had thus far been. Welles never seems to have paused to consider the unfortunate consequences of a previous experiment in Cuba, where he had sought and failed to secure the presidency for his longtime friend Carlos Manuel de Céspedes. Welles thus ordered Leahy to approach Herriot about the possibility of catching a flight to a neutral capital like Lisbon for eventual transit to Washington, where Welles hoped to begin grooming him to take over a newly unified exile movement. Welles's scheme soon encountered opposition from other French exiles, who vehemently opposed Herriot on the grounds that he had recently served as president of the Chamber of Deputies in Vichy. Furthermore, Welles soon had to drop his plan when Herriot was placed under house arrest and deported to Germany.¹⁷

Welles continued his effort to find a substitute for de Gaulle. Furthermore, he understood that London presented a formidable obstacle to getting rid of de Gaulle. Welles's efforts to depose the French general inevitably brought him into conflict with the British foreign office, which continued to work through the Free French leader and worried that the Americans would not be content until they had demoted France from the ranks of the great powers. The British had protested in December 1941 when Washington officials omitted the Free French from the United Nations Declaration. A few months later the British minister in Washington, Sir Ronald Campbell, warned the foreign office that Washington remained steadfastly opposed to the Free French and that Welles believed de Gaulle to be a "fascist."¹⁸

In May 1942, Welles sounded out Ambassador Halifax on the prospects for toppling de Gaulle. Welles told Halifax that the French committee needed to be expanded to include a broader

¹⁷ Welles to Leahy, March 27, 1942, box 80, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁸ FO 371/31949 Campbell to Foreign Office, April 13, 1942, PRO.

spectrum of French public opinion. He argued that the Free French should not be granted provisional authority in liberated French territory and that London and Washington should seek to create a new French exile movement.¹⁹ Welles warned Halifax that it would be wrong to recognize de Gaulle and the Free French as the legitimate government; neither did Welles think it a good idea to recognize the French general as the head of the French resistance. Welles later told British parliamentary under secretary Richard Law that he thought the time would soon come when the British would have to set de Gaulle adrift. Welles acknowledged that deposing de Gaulle would be a great shock to certain segments of French opinion, but he believed the interests of the Anglo-American allies would be better served by settling the matter now, rather than delaying and allowing de Gaulle to grow more powerful. Welles feared that de Gaulle might never be removed from power if he were allowed to return to Paris with the allied armies.²⁰

"Welles thought it would be a fatal mistake for the United States Government to recognize any refugee group as a government," Halifax cabled London. "Nor was he disposed to recognize de Gaulle as chief of French resistance. He thought that he lacked the personal qualities to fill this role, and was very badly advised by those around him. . . . [Welles] thought that our two Governments would have to act together to [create a French exile government], even though we might dress it up as a spontaneous act of the Free French authorities."²¹ So much for open diplomacy.

A few days later, Halifax noted that "Welles agreed that General de Gaulle could hardly be expected to like the idea, but made it plain that the United States Government were not prepared to play with General de Gaulle as chief of all French resistance, which in their view placed him in a position of practical dictatorship, distasteful to them."²² Welles warned

¹⁹ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, "Free French movement," May 8, 1942, box 164, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL.

²⁰ FO 371/31965, Halifax to Foreign Office, May 8, 1942, PRO; Anthony Eden, The Eden Memoirs: The Reckoning (London: Cassell, 1965), 340-41.

²¹ FO 371/31965, Halifax to Foreign Office, May 8, 1942, PRO.

²² FO 371/31965, Foreign Office to Dominions, May 16, 1942, including copy of Halifax to Foreign Office, May 11, 1942, PRO.

Halifax that unless de Gaulle was removed the Anglo-American allies would find it difficult to expand the Free French committee to include qualified Frenchmen such as Alexis Leger.²³

Perhaps in an effort to derail Welles's effort to depose de Gaulle, Halifax leaked the substance of these discussions to The New York Times, provoking a stinging rebuke from Welles, who told Halifax he found it "incredible that highly confidential views which I had expressed to the Ambassador in recent conversations . . . should have appeared *in extenso* in recent news dispatches"²⁴ While de Gaulle was already aware that Welles had been pressuring the British to remove him, he was nonetheless infuriated by the Times's report.²⁵ Welles subsequently summoned Free French envoy Raoul Aglion to the state department to explain that his opposition to the General was nothing personal, but was merely a question of "legitimacy." "The National Committee of General de Gaulle," Welles told Aglion, "would not be, and could not be, recognized as a government in exile. Governments in exile are legitimate governments that have fled invasion. Such is not the case of France, where the government did not choose to go into exile but remained, and now is not free due to the pressure of the Nazis." Welles told Aglion that "the majority of Frenchmen, even those who are opposed to Vichy and Laval, do not recognize de Gaulle's authority"²⁶

Another of de Gaulle's wartime envoys, Adrien Tixier, had recently told Welles that de Gaulle might accept U.S. pressure to enlarge his committee, but Tixier added that it should not include anyone who was "in any way connected with the signing of the French armistice" and, most importantly, should not include anyone who had been critical of de Gaulle or any of his associates during the past few years. Welles lashed out at Tixier, saying that he found it "unbelievable in the present state of world affairs that French men and French women, who were supposedly determined to do their utmost to further the

²³ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, "Free French Movement," May 25, 1942, box 164, Welles papers, FDRL.

²⁴ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, May 28, 1942, FRUS, II, 521-523.

²⁵ *Ibid.* Aglion, Roosevelt and de Gaulle, 114-115.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

victory of the United Nations, should be spending ninety-five percent of their time in petty quarrels of the character which was only too evident among the Free French...." Welles charged Tixier with spreading inaccurate reports about Welles's handling of Washington's French policy. Tixier called Welles's accusations "malicious." Welles refused to accept Tixier's account. "What he said," Welles noted afterward, "and the manner in which he said it made it entirely clear that he had initiated the absurd reports which I had referred to."²⁷

The two continued to clash throughout the spring of 1942. When Tixier handed Welles a list of demands prepared by de Gaulle to help bolster the Free French movement, they included French participation in the allied joint staff conversations and a lengthy shopping list of war materiel. Tixier told Welles that de Gaulle thought the Anglo-American war effort had thus far been "calamitous" and that the General was prepared to discuss these matters only with the highest authorities but not "with little men who cannot see further than the ends of their own noses and who have no authority" -- a comment Welles thought directed at him.²⁸

Relations between Washington and the Free French continued to deteriorate. Welles scheduled the initial meeting between the president and Free French representatives for November 6, 1942, but the French envoys mysteriously failed to appear and after four hours the meeting was canceled. At the eventual White House meeting between Welles, the president and Free French envoys Andre Philip and Tixier on November 20, the French representatives reacted heatedly to Roosevelt's casual remark that the United States would unilaterally determine which, "if any," Frenchman would administer any liberated French territory in the future. "It would be quite impossible," Welles noted, "to attempt to report the latter part of the conversation held by these two individuals with the President. They both of them howled at the top of their lungs and spoke at the same time, and paid not the slightest attention to what the

²⁷ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Tixier, May 13, 1942, box 85, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

²⁸ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Tixier, June 21, 1942, box 85, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

President was saying to them."²⁹

Throughout the fall and winter of 1942 Welles and his fellow planners continued to debate whether France should be completely disarmed at the end of the war. On the one hand, they suggested that if Germany were disarmed, there would be no good reason for the rearmament of France. Welles and the other planners thought the enforced disarmament of the two major powers of continental Europe would be a step toward greater continental union, thus aiding in postwar reconstruction efforts. But they also noted that the French themselves would violently oppose such efforts and they feared that any diminution of French military power might ultimately redound to the advantage of the Soviet Union.³⁰

Welles grew increasingly concerned that a civil war might erupt in France unless the various factions of the French resistance patched up their differences. He warned of the possibility of massacres and reprisals along the lines of 1871. He feared that the new constituent assembly in postwar France might be controlled by the "extreme left" and he thus favored United Nations military control in France following the war. Noting that the Third Republic had been "disastrous" for the French people, he suggested that the United Nations should help draft a new constitution for France. Welles told the other planners that President Roosevelt was still determined to see France disarmed at the end of the war, but that France would need to be reassured that the new world organization would protect her national interests and defend her from a revanchist Germany. When Anne O'Hare McCormick reminded the committee that France had been defeated by the Axis and thus should not be treated as an enemy state, Welles told them not to forget that France had made a "separate peace" with Germany in June 1940 in

29 Memorandum of conversation between Roosevelt, Welles, Tixier and Philippe, November 20, 1942, box 85, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

30 P minutes 38, December 19, 1942, box 55; P document 158, "Policies Affecting the Postwar Position of France," December 18, 1942, box 57; P document 158a, "Official Statements and Views Affecting the Future Status of France and the French Empire," January 29, 1944, box 57.

violation of its pledges not to do so.³¹

Alexis Leger had previously warned Welles that de Gaulle and his movement sought communist support and that the general desired closer relations with Moscow as a means of escaping Anglo-American domination. Leger also told Welles that de Gaulle sought to scrap the Third Republic and replace it with a system featuring greater "order and discipline." As if that were not enough, Leger warned that de Gaulle remained "totally opposed to any type of international cooperation or world organization."³² Welles received similar warnings from other exiled French officials and American concerns about de Gaulle's alleged "fascist"³³ leanings were now compounded by fears of his possible ties to communists, fears which led to an FBI investigation of the Free French representatives in Washington.³⁴

At the end of 1942 Welles and his political subcommittee continued to maintain that the United States should "oppose recognition of General de Gaulle as the head of the French Government on the grounds that important French groups have failed to support General de Gaulle and that it is for the French people themselves to determine the character and the political head of the provisional and future French Government, possibly through the establishment during the war of a truly representative French national committee."³⁵ Just how the "legitimacy" of a "truly representative French national committee" was to be determined was anyone's guess. In any event, Welles failed to acknowledge that his own efforts to undermine de Gaulle may have contributed to the lack of support

31 Welles to Leger, November 26, 1943, with enclosure "Our Obligation to the People of France," by Sumner Welles, box 89, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; P minutes 38, December 19, 1942; P minutes 46, March 6, 1943.

32 Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Leger, August 13, 1942, box 80, folder 10, Welles papers, FDRL.

33 Despite de Gaulle's defiance of Hitler, the feeling persisted in Washington that he had fascist inclinations. "[The British] have built up this French Adolf for the past three years," wrote H. Freeman Matthews. See Walter LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," American Historical Review, vol. 80, no. 5 (December 1975), 1288.

34 Leger to Welles, August 15, 1942, box 80, folder 10, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Leger, October 19, 1942, box 80, Welles papers, FDRL; Munholland, "The United States and the Free French," in De Gaulle and the United States, 88-89.

35 P document 158, "Policies Affecting the Postwar Position of France," December 18, 1942, box 57.

for the general by a broader spectrum, and that it was this very lack of support which had provided Washington with the excuse to avoid extending recognition to the Free French. In the fall of 1942 Washington had excluded de Gaulle from participating in the planning and execution of Operation Torch, the Anglo-American invasion of North Africa, and instead the allies cut an expedient deal with the Vichy Admiral Jean Darlan. The U.S. had already taken a further step by seeking to push General Giraud as head of the French forces fighting alongside the allies.

At the beginning of 1943 Leger warned Welles that French trade union leaders feared de Gaulle's reactionary tendencies and that the General would never be able to unite the French people after the war. "Not a single step forward has been taken toward the creation of a common political platform that could be a guarantee against reactionary and fascist tendencies in a future France," Leger wrote to Welles.³⁶ Welles also received advice and proposals from Camille Chautemps, the three-time French premier during the 1930s, whom Welles had helped resettle in Washington. Welles maintained excellent relations with many of the French exiles not associated with de Gaulle, meeting with them frequently.³⁷ In early 1943 Chautemps proposed to Welles that a committee be created in Washington to assist the state department formulate its French policy. Chautemps thought the committee might be headed by himself and consist of several other anti-de Gaulle exiles, including Leger. But Welles feared that the department might have difficulty controlling the kind of French advisory committee proposed by Chautemps. Certainly the precedents for "controlling" the French exiles had not been very encouraging.³⁸

While in the spring of 1943 both U.S. and Free French officials made incremental, if clumsy, gestures toward greater

36 Leger memorandum to Welles, January 19, 1943, box 89, Welles papers, FDRL.

37 After their arrival in Washington, Chautemps and his wife began to annoy Welles after Madame Juliette Chautemps began making requests of Welles to arrange for her to perform with the National Symphony Orchestra. "I do not see my way to becoming a concert agent for his wife," Welles wrote. Welles to Dunn, May 27, 1942, box 77, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Juliette Chautemps, February 12, 1942, *ibid*; Juliette Chautemps to Welles, February 8, 1942, *ibid*.

38 Chautemps to Welles, February 17, 1943, box 87, Welles papers, FDRL; Atherton to Welles, March 1, 1943, box 87, Welles papers, FDRL.

understanding, hope of continued progress was temporarily shattered when Welles had a further confrontation with Free French representatives, bluntly telling Tixier that Free French intrigues "reminded me of nothing so much as an old fashioned farce which I used to see in my early days in the Palais Royal Theatre in Paris." Welles told Tixier that it was "pitiful" to see "General de Gaulle maneuvering for what he considered immediate political advantage rather than for effective and active cooperation in the war effort."³⁹ Clashes such as these only further confirmed Welles's view "that we will not recognize any committee or group of French authorities as a government of France until the French people themselves have been liberated and have been afforded the opportunity of selecting such a government."⁴⁰

Shortly thereafter, Drew Pearson (possibly with Welles's surreptitious assistance) wrote in his nationally syndicated column that President Roosevelt saw de Gaulle as a laughably comical figure of little importance. Pearson claimed that senior administration officials believed de Gaulle had a theatrical and inflated sense of himself and that Roosevelt thought de Gaulle "ridiculous" because he could not decide whether he was the reincarnation of Joan of Arc or Clemenceau. Pearson's column was repeated over Radio Paris and further soured U.S. relations with the Free French.⁴¹

The British, meanwhile, continued to think it essential that France be given a place among the great powers, if only because without a rejuvenated France at the center of Europe, the challenge of creating a sound and free postwar order would prove more difficult. During Eden's visit to Washington in March 1943, Welles told the foreign secretary that he favored "keeping the field open" in France so that any new administrative authority there could emerge with the backing of the French people. But Welles worried that British "prestige" required that London stick by de Gaulle. Welles concurred with the views recently put forth by the American embassy in London that "Whatever may be the consequences for the people of France

³⁹ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Tixier, March 23, 1943, box 162, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁴⁰ Welles to Atherton, June 16, 1943, box 88, folder 6, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁴¹ Washington Post, April 26, 1943.

or however fleeting his tenure may then be, it is required by British prestige that, when the day of liberation comes, 'the one Frenchman who stuck by us in the dark days of 1940' must be installed in France."⁴²

The alternatives to de Gaulle sought by Welles and Roosevelt never materialized, but the poisonous relations they had helped to foster between de Gaulle and the United States would continue to effect Franco-American relations for some time. For more than a year after Welles's departure from the state department, President Roosevelt continued his opposition to de Gaulle, even in the wake of the liberation of Paris and after Hull argued in favor of recognition in September 1944. When Welles's friend Jefferson Caffery was dispatched to Paris in early October 1944, the president had curiously sent an envoy to a government he still refused to recognize. A few weeks later Roosevelt relented but de Gaulle understandably reacted coldly.

During the first few years of the war Welles had cited his concern for self-determination as one of the key reasons for opposing de Gaulle, but Welles in effect undermined France's independence by his heavy-handed efforts to control its future. De Gaulle's self-assurance and his vision of a reborn France with pretensions as a great power ran contrary to Welles's desire for a pliable and disarmed France demoted from the ranks of the great powers and denuded of its empire. Perhaps history's verdict would be de Gaulle's revenge as he would ultimately prevail at the expense of his American opponents. While the once-powerful Welles would disappear into obscurity in the postwar years, the once obscure French general, who had risked everything in his defiance of Washington, would endure to one day remake France along the lines he desired.

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Welles welcomed the prospect that France, Germany and even Britain would emerge from the war weaker than ever before, thus affording Washington an unprecedented opportunity to reorder

⁴² FO 371/35994, Foreign Office Minute, April 1943, PRO; Welles to Harry Hopkins, January 2, 1943 with enclosed Matthews telegram to Welles, January 1, 1943, box 88, Welles papers, FDRL.

international affairs. Despite the Anglo-American alliance, throughout the war Welles sought to promote U.S. interests at the expense of Britain and the British Empire, which he saw as a potential source of postwar instability. Despite Cold War accounts warmly depicting an affectionate wartime Anglo-American "Special Relationship," Welles and many of the other planners saw Britain as a potential obstacle to U.S. interests in the postwar world. Welles often sought to cultivate relations with China and the USSR so that those powers might serve as effective counterweights to British aims and Welles and many of his colleagues in the planning process often saw Britain as a greater threat to their world aims than either China or the USSR. Stanley Hornbeck, for example, thought Washington should cultivate China and the USSR "to strengthen us for and in any critical controversies which might develop between us and the British." Hornbeck warned that Britain "will be the most conservative and the most aggressively minded, in the fields both of international politics and of international economics."⁴³

The British were thus correct in their wary initial assessment of Welles. Appearances notwithstanding, he was no Anglophile.⁴⁴ At the Atlantic Conference Welles had sought to exploit British weakness by pushing for far-reaching changes in imperial preference, as well as a more expansive British commitment to self-determination which might be interpreted as covering British colonial possessions, and throughout the war he publicly declared that Britain's imperial days had drawn to an end. Welles often opposed the appointment of U.S. officials

⁴³ Akira Iriye, Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941-1945 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 62. For accounts that wartime Anglo-American relations were less than harmonious, see, for example, Wm. Roger Louis, Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), and Christopher Thorne, Allies of a Kind: the United States, Britain, and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁴⁴ After Welles's first face to face encounter with Churchill in March 1940, for example, he merely reported to Roosevelt about Churchill's heavy drinking, long-windedness, repetitiveness and the ridiculous length of his cigar. See Welles report to Roosevelt on his conversation with Churchill, March 12, 1940, Welles Report, 1940, Part II, President's Secretary's File 6, FDR. Welles also had no compunction about openly clashing with Churchill at the Atlantic Conference. This contrasts with Harry Hopkins, who tended to be enamored of the British, and Churchill in particular. Upon meeting Churchill for the first time Hopkins sat in a chair muttering "Jesus Christ! What a man!" See FO 371/26179, minute by Cadogan, January 29, 1941, PRO. See also, for example, George McJimsey, Harry Hopkins: Ally of the Poor and Defender of Democracy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 137-139. For an official British assessment of Welles see FO 371/21541 "Records of Leading Personalities in the U.S.," January 12, 1937, PRO.

or emissaries whom he thought too pro-British and wanted to use Lend-Lease as leverage to pressure the British to open imperial markets and to relinquish parts of their empire, particularly their possessions in the western hemisphere, where Welles especially loathed the British presence. He would do nothing to aid British political aims and would not hesitate to blame British officials for press criticism of the administration. He distrusted the British as indiscreet leakers and he had a number of angry confrontations with British diplomats during the war.⁴⁵ Welles warned his colleagues that the official statements of British policymakers did not usually represent London's true aims. For example, he suspected the British only sought to revive France as a great power so that it would serve as a stalking horse for British aims on the continent.⁴⁶ Furthermore, despite London's assurances, Welles worried that secret British promises to the exile governments would tie Washington's hands at the end of the war and he complained about the attitudes of the wartime government in London. Welles never assumed that the word "Churchill" necessarily meant "Britain." He thought the wartime British government to be one of the most reactionary and hidebound of recent memory, and believed it unrepresentative of the true wishes of the British people.⁴⁷

Welles nonetheless took a keen interest in London's efforts at postwar planning. Welles sought to monitor those

⁴⁵ Welles to Atherton, March 6, 1943, box 88, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Campbell, March 4, 1943, box 164, Welles papers, FDRL. Although Welles often accused the British embassy of leaking information damaging to the U.S. administration this was in fact a favorite practice of his own. Welles often used the press to indirectly criticize British policies, but his own newspaper columns after his resignation, when he was suddenly freed from his official status and could now more freely speak his mind, often placed the blame more directly on the British. See, for example, Drew Pearson, "Confessions of an S.O.B." Saturday Evening Post, November 3, 1956; Roosevelt to Caroline Phillips, August 30, 1944, President's Secretary's Files, Roosevelt Papers, FDRL; Sumner Welles column, "Welles Sees Opportunity for U.S. to Lead in New Far East Policy," New York Herald Tribune, May 31, 1944; Sumner Welles column, "Welles Says Allied Conferences Must Deal with Colonial Issues," New York Herald Tribune, April 4, 1945.

⁴⁶ As Christopher Thorne has argued, "Britain urgently needed a strong, friendly France after the war, both for reasons of European defense and as a counterweight to the growing predominance in world affairs of the United States and the Soviet Union." See Christopher Thorne, "Indochina and Anglo-American Relations," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 45, no. 1 (February 1975), 85.

⁴⁷ An example of Welles's views toward the British government can be seen in P minutes 37, December 12, 1942, box 55. In his syndicated column Welles publicly described the Churchill cabinet as reactionary and intransigent. See, for example, "Welles Sees Colonial Policies Reshaped by Attlee Victory: Believes Labor's Sweep May Challenge Imperial Traditions and Result in Peace Settlements in Keeping With Popular Aspirations," New York Herald Tribune, August 8, 1945.

efforts and arranged to have Halifax exchange documents on their progress. But the British had taken only tentative steps in that direction, their work building upon the recently proclaimed Atlantic Charter. The foreign office remained particularly concerned about point four of the charter, worrying that the Americans seemed adamant about abolishing imperial preference.⁴⁸ Welles's vision of a postwar American-led new world order depended upon the steady diminution of Great Britain as a world power. Welles believed the United States stood poised to fill the void as war continued to erode much of Britain's military and economic strength. Welles would devote several postwar planning sessions to a detailed examination of the postwar status of Great Britain. The planners focused largely on the ways in which the United States could undermine the empire but they also examined ways to promote American's postwar political and strategic interests *vis a vis* the empire.⁴⁹

Welles believed the war had created an unstable and fragile environment on the British homefront. He noted that the British had been able to carry on the war only with large amounts of assistance from elsewhere, particularly the United States. Welles concurred with recent U.S. intelligence assessments that Britain was an exhausted power, incapable of defeating any power other than Italy and that after the war the British government would be largely preoccupied with homefront crises.⁵⁰ At one point in the spring of 1942 Welles shared with the president a report which concluded that Great Britain would emerge from the war as little more than "an overcrowded island kingdom" with little power to project around the world.⁵¹

48 CAB 65/19 WM(41) 89th, September 4, 1941, PRO; CAB 65/19 WM(41) 91st, September 8, 1941, PRO. The British also noted that the Russians seemed less than satisfied with the results of the Atlantic Charter. In London, Soviet ambassador Ivan Maisky complained to Eden that it seemed "as if England and the USA imagine themselves as almighty God called upon to judge the rest of the sinful world, including my country." See Lloyd Gardner, *Spheres of Influence: the Great Powers Divide Europe from Munich to Yalta* (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1993), 102.

49 P minutes 37, December 12, 1942; P minutes 48, March 20, 1943; "Problems confronting the United States in connection with the British Empire," by Division of European Affairs, December 12, 1942, box 193, Welles papers, FDRL; P document 218, "Agenda for Meeting of April 3, 1943," April 1, 1943, box 193, Welles papers, FDRL.

50 Donovan to Welles, February 21, 1942 and March 6, 1942, box 77, folder 12, Welles papers, FDRL.

51 Welles to Roosevelt, April 6, 1942, box 150, Welles papers, FDRL.

Welles's interest in the fate of postwar Britain also extended to the economic realm. In his thousands of contacts with British officials during the Second World War Welles wasted no opportunity to press the need for greater trade liberalization and he hoped that Britain's postwar exhaustion might help to destroy imperial preference.⁵²

The British government had been preoccupied with the prosecution of the war and had not undertaken extensive and specific planning for the postwar world on the American scale, but in response to rumors about the far-reaching nature of planning in Washington, the foreign office began drafting outlines of its own in 1942. Concerned with the shape of the postwar order, British officials gave some consideration to the future of Germany and France and wondered what would be the role of the Soviet Union. But the question of how Great Britain could maintain itself as one of the great powers topped the agenda. In October 1942, Gladwyn Jebb, head of the foreign office's Economic and Reconstruction Department, produced a long memorandum which became the basis for subsequent British discussions about postwar planning. In it, Jebb surveyed American views on the postwar world and openly questioned whether Great Britain would find it possible to continue as one of the great powers after the war. He warned that at the end of the war the industrial capacity of Britain and the empire would be far less than that of the United States and potentially less than that of the U.S.S.R. To a large extent, the United States would seek to impose its wishes on postwar planning and the Soviet Union would be a mighty continental power, while Britain seemed at the end of its tether. British production of munitions lagged far behind the United States and British manpower capacity had reached its limits. British currency reserves were depleted and much of her export trade had been lost during the war. After the war Britain might find itself with few financial resources and huge sterling imbalances and the integrity of the empire itself might be at stake. Britain would need powerful allies like the United States in order to maintain itself as a great power. Jebb thought the current

⁵² Welles memorandum of conversation with Law and Halifax, "Postwar Problems," August 25, 1942, box 164, Welles papers, FDRL.

American trend toward internationalism was a hopeful sign but he worried that if the United States returned to isolationism, Britain might even find itself seeking the collaboration of a postwar Germany to assist in the containment of the Soviet Union.⁵³

Welles's wartime pronouncements aroused Anthony Eden's concern that rather than returning to isolation the U.S. would instead push for a "New Deal for the World," or, even worse, "Tennessee Valley Authority nostrums for the organization of international society, which they tend to urge with missionary fervor."⁵⁴ Eden told the war cabinet that Welles's pronouncements represented the clearest indication to date of Roosevelt's seriousness about shaping the new world order and he thought British efforts at postwar planning should be accelerated in order to keep pace with the Americans. Speaking to Welles in late November, British Ambassador Lord Halifax praised the under secretary for his public remarks and endorsed Welles's suggestion that the Big Three should at once begin to reach wartime agreements. Halifax told Welles that Churchill had not yet seriously focused on postwar matters and hinted that only Roosevelt could prompt the prime minister to begin discussing an eventual postwar settlement. "He felt very strongly," Welles wrote after his meeting with Halifax, "that the President should take the lead on this issue and should keep the initiative in his own hands."⁵⁵

Welles worried that the British would seek to reestablish the balance of power in Europe by dividing the continent between a western bloc, allied to Britain, and an eastern bloc, dominated by the Soviet Union. He feared that British officials, particularly Churchill, desired a partitioned Germany that would be divided between British and Soviet spheres. Furthermore, he remained concerned that London would obstruct plans for a new international trading system after the war. He told the subcommittee that the British war cabinet

⁵³ FO 371/31525, "Four Power Plan," by Jebb, September 9, 1942, PRO; WP(42)516, "Four Power Plan," by Eden, November 8, 1942, PRO.

⁵⁴ FO 371/31525 "Four Power Plan," by Anthony Eden, November 8, 1942, PRO.

⁵⁵ CAB 65/28 WM(42) 157th conclusions, November 23, 1942, PRO; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, November 30, 1942, FRUS, III, 1-2.

itself remained divided over these matters and that there existed considerable differences of opinion between even Churchill and Eden. Welles warned the planners that if the past offered any hint of a pattern, Churchill's aims would ultimately prevail, and that while the planners might object to such views, there was very little they could do to change that result in the short term.⁵⁶

* * *

Woodrow Wilson had mistakenly called World War I "a war to end all wars." Thus one of the most crucial questions facing Welles and the planners was whether they could reconstruct Germany in a way that would finally curb its military ambitions. Only a few months after Germany's declaration of war on the United States, Welles and the planners began to chart a postwar future for Germany based on the assumption of its ultimate military defeat and unconditional surrender.⁵⁷ But during his Memorial Day remarks at Arlington National Cemetery Welles had unmistakably called for a "soft peace" for the Axis powers, adding that "no element in any nation shall be forced to atone vicariously for crimes for which it is not responsible, and no people shall be forced to look forward to endless years of want and starvation."⁵⁸

Welles had very definite views on the postwar future of Germany. He felt that Germany would have to be completely reconstructed and reconfigured before it could be allowed membership in his anticipated "new European order" where Germany would play a crucial role in European economic integration. Welles sought to return Germany to what he called the "pre-Bismarckian period" of German history. He believed Bismarck's unification of Germany had created a dangerous and disruptive force at the center of Europe and he assumed that

56 P minutes 37, December 12, 1942.

57 Welles often dominated such discussions because of his long association with the German problem. He had visited Germany almost annually throughout his life, beginning as a boy during his yearly visits to Europe with his family. He also spoke the language and had a number of German friends. Welles's long association with Germany is explained in Welles to Bailey, March 8, 1948, box 129, Welles papers, FDRL.

58 "The Realization of a Great Vision," May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

reducing Germany to its status when it was less centralized would provide Europe with greater postwar stability. For centuries, the German states had been a conglomeration of fragmented principalities. But unification made Germany stronger than either France or Austria-Hungary. "It had not been until Prussia had obtained a complete domination over all of their other German states that the danger to the world had arisen," Welles once said.⁵⁹ Furthermore, Welles did not completely exonerate the German people for the acts of Hitler and the Nazis. He believed the Germans had a tendency toward barbarism and cruelty and that strong measures would be needed to reform and control Germany in the postwar era so that it could once again become part of the international community.⁶⁰

Two months after the German declaration of war on the United States, Hitler declared that if the German people would not fight, they might as well disappear. But Welles and his fellow planners had no such draconian aims. Instead, they embarked upon their discussions of Germany with the assumption that a postwar Germany would by necessity be an integral part of their plans for Europe. Welles thought that "a careful study of the German federation set up as a result of the Congress of Vienna would be highly useful and appropriate when the need for a new European order arose." He thought that a federation such as the one constructed in 1815 would be "no menace to the rest of Europe or to the rest of the world."⁶¹

Initially Welles's subcommittee discussed the possibility

59 Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, February 18, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 520.

60 P minutes 7, April 18, 1942, box 55.

61 Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, February 18, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 520.

of dismembering Germany into several autonomous states.⁶² Welles's "new European order" required continental unity, and he worried that a strong and centralized postwar Germany would make it more difficult to unite Europe on a continental scale. But several planners feared -- as early as the spring of 1942 -- that a divided Germany might be rendered too weak to serve as a bulwark against the Soviet Union. They began to conclude that the division of Germany might be *inadvisable*.⁶³

Welles suggested that the committee sever Austria from Germany. Austria could again become an independent state and the centerpiece of a future "Danubian Federation" made up of the states located between Germany and the Soviet Union. Welles thought that separating Austria would enable the committee to focus solely on Germany.⁶⁴ In the middle of April 1942, Welles offered the committee his preliminary plans for a postwar Germany. He initially proposed a federation of German states, loosely connected, but without actual political union. As Welles described it, the federation would be held together by a German customs union, or *Zollverein*. He believed a loose federation could serve as a compromise between the status quo and more severe plans to fragment Germany into numerous tiny, autonomous parts. He warned that the German people might oppose Washington's aims and that his plan would have to be "imposed"

62 Several scholars have commented on the position Welles had taken at that moment on the Germany question. Keith Sainsbury has noted that "it is significant that the party in favour of partition in this committee was led by Sumner Welles, widely regarded as 'Roosevelt's man' in the State Department, and one who might be presumed to know the trend of presidential thinking." See Sainsbury, *Churchill and Roosevelt at War: The War They Fought and the Peace They Hoped to Make* (London: Macmillan, 1994), 146. But Welles's views were evolving as the committee discussed the German question. While he favored some kind of partition of Germany he sought to find a middle ground between complete unification and more draconian aims being developed in Washington to pastoralize Germany or fragment her into hundreds of tiny states. He soon came to support a federation of several autonomous German states within a new *Zollverein*, or German customs union. Welles also toyed with the idea of having autonomous German states integrated into a larger, federated, western Europe. See P document 175, "Agenda for Meetings on Germany," January 15, 1943, box 57; P document 186, "Memorandum to Welles from Division of Political Studies," January 22, 1943, box 57; P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 6, April 11, 1942; as well as Welles's chapter "The German Menace Can Be Ended" (including a detailed map of Welles's recommendations for Germany) in *The Time For Decision*, 336-359.

63 P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 6, April 11, 1942; P minutes 7, April 18, 1942; P document 12, "Why the Division of Germany is Desirable," 1942, box 56; Welles to Representative John Bennett, February 19, 1948, box 129, Welles papers, FDRL.

64 Throughout the course of the subcommittee's discussions on Germany, Welles would change his mind several times on the postwar status of Austria. By the June 20, 1942 meeting of the political subcommittee Welles would return to his initial impulse and recommend that an independent Austria be restored at the end of the war. He would note that this decision received "almost unanimous" approval. See P minutes 16, June 20, 1942, box 55.

on Germany at the end of the war.⁶⁵

Welles believed the subcommittee had to construct a solution that would seem "legitimate" in the eyes of the German people, one that would avoid "undue fragmentation." For example, he emphasized that Prussia should not be singled-out and punished as a scapegoat for all of Germany's ills. After all, Bavaria, not Prussia, had been the birthplace of Hitler's movement in the 1920s. Furthermore, divisions and federations should be considered along religious and historical lines, while all postwar German states should be joined together in a customs union which would allow for their economies to be easily integrated into the rest of Europe. Welles assumed that an economically prosperous Germany, tied to a continental system, might ameliorate many of the *revanchist* tendencies which had led to the current war.⁶⁶

Welles and the political subcommittee debated the reconstruction of a postwar Germany in great detail. The planners had a shared opposition to reparations, which they thought had been a cause of interwar instability and resentment. But for a time the committee remained divided between those who assumed that specific elements and institutions in Germany were the causes of German aggression and those who believed that the German people, by their very character and history, could never again be trusted. Members of the former group, including Welles, sought to create a federated democratic Germany, somewhat akin to the doomed Weimar Republic, but with the added safeguards of territorial readjustments, the punishment of war criminals, disarmament and the reeducation of the German people. Welles hoped that a federated Germany would bring about the kind of decentralization that would deprive the Junker class and the German General Staff of their traditional power.⁶⁷

The planners also divided over the question of the division of Germany. Welles counted himself among those, such

65 P minutes 7, April 18, 1942, box 55.

66 *Ibid.*

67 P minutes 42, January 23, 1943, box 55; P minutes 43, January 30, 1943, box 55; P document 187, "Some Economic Problems Involved in Application of a Proposals to Divide Germany into Three Independent States," January 30, 1943, box 57; P minutes 7, April 18, 1942, box 55; P minutes 30, October 24, 1942, box 55; P document 177, "Postwar Policies Related to Germany," January 15, 1943, box 57.

as Myron Taylor, Isaiah Bowman, Ben Cohen and Norman Davis, who favored some form of partition, even within a type of federation; while Anne O'Hare McCormick, Adolph Berle, Leo Pasvolsky and Hamilton Fish Armstrong supported a unified Germany. While Welles thought the allies should seek to avoid the kind of reparations that were demanded at the end of the last war, he desired German industries and transportation facilities to be under international control in the postwar era.⁶⁸

Welles also sought to organize an anti-Hitler exile movement which could be used for psychological warfare against Germany. Much of this effort centered around former Hitler aide, Ernst "Putzi" Hanfstaengl, whom Welles referred to by the code name "Sedgwick."⁶⁹ Welles succeeded in having Hanfstaengl interned at Fort Belvoir in northern Virginia and he used the newspaper columnist John Franklin Carter, who wrote under the pseudonym Jay Franklin, as a liaison between the administration and Hanfstaengl.⁷⁰ But after a few months it became apparent that Hanfstaengl either knew far less about the Nazi regime than he had claimed or for some reason was withholding information. He had also embarrassed Welles by publishing a series of sensational articles about the German leadership in the women's magazine Cosmopolitan. Little ever came of the Hanfstaengl episode, but it demonstrated the lengths to which Welles would go to make political use of exiles.⁷¹

In the fall of 1942 Welles's political subcommittee recommended to the president that unconditional surrender should be demanded of Germany. The Nazi Government in Berlin would have to be completely overthrown and the United Nations forces would occupy and disarm Germany at the end of the war.

68 P minutes 9, May 2, 1942, box 55; P minutes 16, June 20, 1942, box 55.

69 A Harvard graduate with an American mother, Hanfstaengl served Hitler for a time as a press adviser and unofficial court jester. While on a flight to Spain at the height of that country's Civil War in 1937, Hanfstaengl learned that he was to be thrown out in mid-air over Republican-held territory. He escaped during a stopover in Switzerland.

70 John Franklin Carter to Ronald Campbell, May 26, 1942, box 164, Welles papers, FDRL; "Memorandum for Mr. Welles: Plan to Recruit German and Italian Nationals," by John Franklin Carter, October 22, 1942, box 77, Welles papers, FDRL.

71 Ronald Campbell to Welles, January 27, 1943, Welles papers, box 164, FDRL; Welles to Carter, September 13, 1946, with enclosure, box 116, Welles papers, FDRL.

Welles's subcommittee also made a number of political and territorial proposals designed to ensure that Germany would never again become a threat to world peace. But they also endorsed proposals for a "soft peace," stressing that the German people should be assured of a prosperous and peaceful future, and that any settlement should avoid imposing harsh terms upon them. The members emphasized that such measures would help avoid a repetition of the mistakes of the Versailles settlement. The committee remained divided on the question of what to do about German partition, but it was generally agreed that if division became a necessity, Germany should not be dismembered into such small parts as to preclude its future economic viability.⁷²

Welles also remained concerned about the possibility of postwar economic chaos in Germany as a result of the mass movement of war refugees that would likely follow her defeat. He initially opposed the Russian proposal for a massive transfer of populations in Eastern Europe.⁷³ But the committee's surveys for 1942 showed that up to two million Germans might have to be forcibly removed from East Prussia at the end of the war, with another two million migrating from Pomerania and West Prussia, and upwards of three million leaving Bohemia. Several planners feared such upheaval might lead to a communist revolution in Germany.⁷⁴

In accord with Welles's desire that divisions and federations be considered along religious and historical lines, he generally favored a federated republic made up of three quasi-autonomous states: the first, consisting of Bavaria, Wurttemberg, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt and the Rhine-Ruhr region including the Saar and Palatinate regions, would be predominantly Roman Catholic and somewhat liberal in its political outlook; the second, a North German confederation

72 P minutes 30, October 24, 1942, box 55; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization," October 22, 1942, box 56.

73 P minutes 29, October 17, 1942, box 55.

74 T document 130, "Transfer of German Populations From Eastern Europe to the Reich," October 22, 1942, box 61; T document 131, "German Capacity to Absorb Additional Population into a Reduced Territory," October 21, 1942, box 61; P minutes 29, October 17, 1942, box 55; P minutes 30, October 24, 1942, box 55; P document 175, "Agenda for Meetings on Germany," January 15, 1943, box 57; P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 6, April 11, 1942.

made up of Hesse, Thuringia, Westphalia, Oldenburg and the Hamburg region including Schleswig and Holstein, would be largely Protestant; and the third would consist of Mecklenburg, Saxony, Silesia and a new Prussia, divested of East Prussia after its incorporation into Poland. Welles assumed that such a tripartite Germany would not possess a unified military organization, nor would it be centralized financially and commercially. While much concern had been expressed that a postwar Germany had to be disarmed and contained, the committee soon began to favor a reconstructed Germany which would have sufficient strength to halt Soviet expansion. The planners also worried that a partitioned Germany would be more difficult to integrate into an American-led global economic system and would undermine efforts for Germany to become an engine for Europe's economic revival.⁷⁵

As in the case of France, Germany, too, would be taught to choose "good men." To aid in the reconstruction of Germany the planners suggested the United Nations seek out Germans possessing "moral leadership" as well as experience in local and democratic government. Of fundamental importance would be the reeducation of the German people and a "Bill of Rights" in a future German constitution to ensure personal freedoms.⁷⁶ The planners considered it vital that future German economic prosperity not be jeopardized. They still feared that partition would reduce the efficiency of the German economy and thus hinder European reconstruction. But they also wanted numerous industrial and strategic areas in Germany to remain under international control, despite the failure of a similar experiment in the Saar and the Ruhr after the previous war. With regard to German territorial matters, they concluded that Germany would largely return to her pre-Munich frontiers. They envisaged no changes of her western boundaries, but feared that certain adjustments would be necessary in the east,

75 P document 175, "Agenda for Meetings on Germany," January 15, 1943, box 57; P document 186, "Memorandum to Welles from Division of Political Studies," January 22, 1943, box 57; P document 182, "Myron Taylor memorandum on Germany," January 23, 1943, box 57; P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 6, April 11, 1942; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization," October 22, 1942, box 56.

76 P document 236, "Political Subcommittee: Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," July 2, 1943, box 57; P document 182, "Memorandum Concerning an Approach to the Post-War Rehabilitation of Germany and to a Basis for Lasting Peace on the European Continent," Jan 23, 1943, box 57.

particularly along the Polish-German frontier to compensate for Polish losses on their frontier with the Soviet Union.⁷⁷

Some members of the political subcommittee questioned how the possibility of Poland's acquisition of German East Prussia, for example, could possibly be reconciled with the Atlantic Charter's pledges on territorial adjustments and self-determination. On such issues Welles sought to evade the details of the charter and a consensus began to emerge that perhaps the charter's last pledge, promising a system of general security at the end of the war, should take precedence over the earlier points about territorial changes and self-government. The planners thus rationalized that the charter should be interpreted as a general statement of principles, and should not be interpreted literally in situations that required a "balancing of factors."⁷⁸

Meanwhile, British officials continued to trail their American counterparts in the area of postwar planning. "In terms of hours of discussion," wrote William Roger Louis, "the amount of talk and paperwork [at the state department] must have surpassed the British equivalent a hundredfold."⁷⁹ Nonetheless, the British had given some consideration to the question of a future Germany. Eden thought that to avoid the danger of a postwar Russo-German alliance directed against the west, it would be best to convince the German people that their long-term interests would be better served within Western Europe. Eden thus seemed to hold views remarkably similar to Welles's when he noted that Germany could be divided into three independent, or quasi-independent states: North Germany, to include a "reformed" Prussia and Saxony; Western Germany,

⁷⁷ CAB 66/37 WP(43)217 "Annex: Armistice and Related Problems," March 24, 1943, PRO; P document 236, "Political Subcommittee: Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," July 2, 1943, box 57; P document 182, "Memorandum Concerning an Approach to the Post-War Rehabilitation of Germany and to a Basis for Lasting Peace on the European Continent," Jan 23, 1943, box 57; P document 186, Division of Political Studies memo to Welles (Germany), January 22, 1943, box 57; P document 186, "Postwar Policies Relating to Germany," January 15, 1943, box 57; P minutes 42, January 23, 1943, box 55.

⁷⁸ P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization," October 22, 1942, box 56; P minutes 42, January 23, 1943, box 55; P minutes 43, January 30, 1943, box 55; P document 187, "Some Economic Problems Involved in Application of a Proposals to Divide Germany into Three Independent States," January 30, 1943, box 57.

⁷⁹ Wm. Roger Louis, Imperialism at Bay (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 70.

encompassing the Rhine-Ruhr area; and Southern Germany, made up of Baden, Wurttemberg and Bavaria.⁸⁰ Eden assumed that a federal approach to the division of Germany would serve the purposes of world peace while not restraining Germany's economic reconstruction. The great difficulty was that while Germany should be tightly controlled for security purposes, a lasting peace and postwar reconstruction were dependent on a prosperous Germany. The British had thus discussed the question of postwar Germany in the only very broadest terms, but enough to sustain preliminary discussions with American officials. Nevertheless, the British began to plan for the future of Germany in greater detail after Welles's resignation in the summer of 1943.⁸¹

So, what were the long term consequences of the planning committee's findings on Germany? Welles had started his investigation of the German question with a few simple assumptions: first, unconditional surrender should be demanded of Germany; second, Germany should eventually be allowed back into the international system, without the burden of reparations payments that would disrupt its economic viability and which might destabilize Germany in the postwar period; third, Germany should be partitioned into several autonomous states, but in a way that would avoid creating a power vacuum at the center of Europe through undue fragmentation and would allow customs union; and finally, if the peace was to succeed at all there would have to be massive transfers of populations, mostly in East Prussia and the Germanic areas of Czechoslovakia.

When the question of Germany was raised after Welles's departure from the state department in the fall of 1943, Roosevelt at first criticized some of the postwar planning group's findings, particularly those opposing permanent

⁸⁰ CAB 66/34 WP(43)96, "The Future of Germany," by Anthony Eden, March 8, 1943, PRO.

⁸¹ Keith Sainsbury has argued that Eden tacked "backwards and forwards on the issue of German partition, which left both allies and colleagues in doubt as to his real views, and does not add to his reputation as Foreign Minister." See Sainsbury, Churchill and Roosevelt at War, 140. See also CAB 66/34 WP(43)96, "The Future of Germany," by Anthony Eden, March 8, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/35 WP(43)144, "The Future of Germany," by Lord Selborne, Minister of Economic Warfare, April 8, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/35 WP(43)322, "Postwar Settlement-Policy in Respect of Germany," by Attlee, July 19, 1943, PRO; CAB 65/35 WM(43)107th Conclusions, July 29, 1943; CAB 66/39 WP(43)350, "Ministerial Committee on Armistice Terms and Civil Administration," by Churchill, August 4, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/37 WP(43)218, "Austria," by Eden, May 25, 1943, PRO.

dismemberment. Like Welles, Roosevelt argued that because of his childhood vacations to Germany he understood the German problem far better than the supposed experts. But Roosevelt later admitted to Hull in October 1943 that dismemberment might not work and this was encouragement enough for the secretary to oppose a commitment to dismemberment at the Moscow Conference.⁸² Although at the November 1943 Teheran Conference Roosevelt took a hard line on the dismemberment of Germany, his opinions on the matter continued to evolve. The reaction to the publication of the draconian Morgenthau Plan for German dismemberment in the fall of 1944 embarrassed Roosevelt and when he departed for the February 1945 Yalta Conference he avoided an outright endorsement of dismemberment.⁸³

Throughout the war Welles had argued that a German economic revival would be essential to the postwar economic health of Europe. He foresaw that an economically powerful Germany would be necessary to serve as the engine of European reconstruction and his support for a "soft peace" for Germany eventually carried the day, as did his plan for a massive program of postwar reconstruction for the defeated Axis powers. What emerged finally, though in ways Welles had not foreseen, was a powerful West German state closely allied to the west, and rearmed by the west only a few years after the war. Nor had Welles anticipated how significantly Germany would be shaped by postwar tensions among the Grand Alliance partners. While he foresaw how a revived Germany might once again serve as a bulwark against the Soviet Union, his ideas for a loose federation of German states and Germany's permanent disarmament fell victim to Cold War considerations.

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Austria presented a less complicated challenge for the planners. Welles thought the allied powers should guarantee Austria's independence, with Vienna serving as the headquarters

82 Pasvolsky memorandum of conversation with Roosevelt and Hull, October 5, 1943, FRUS, 1943, I, 541-543; Minutes of the seventh meeting of the foreign ministers, Moscow, October 25, 1943, FRUS, 1943, I, 631-632; Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. II, 1265-1266.

83 John Lewis Gaddis, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 126.

of an East European Federation. Welles hoped that a federation based in Vienna might encourage an Austrian commitment to free trade and greater interdependence in Central and Eastern Europe. Welles and his fellow planners also sought to revive the prewar Czechoslovakia, which they hoped would serve as a bulwark of democracy and free trade within a future federation.⁸⁴

As early as the spring of 1942, Welles's political subcommittee began preliminary discussions on the possibility of creating an East European Federation which would encompass a band of states between Germany and Russia, running from the Baltic to the Adriatic.⁸⁵ Welles often repeated the Czech statesman Francis Palacky's maxim that if the Austrian Empire had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent it,⁸⁶ and he believed that any regional federation would have to serve as a "counterpoise to both Russia and Germany."⁸⁷ It was hoped that a union among Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, the Baltic states and possibly Finland, Greece and Turkey might successfully check and contain both Germany and the Soviet Union and could promote economic union and stability in the region. The committee subsequently discussed specific aspects such as customs and monetary union, as well as the elimination of borders.⁸⁸ Members sought to organize the nations in the region to provide a "strong and stable counterweight and buffer to Germany and Russia" so that the area would no longer "be a field for the intrigues and maneuvers" of Berlin and Moscow. They acknowledged that active American participation in an East

84 P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 7, April 18, 1942; P minutes 8, April 25, 1942; P minutes 9, May 2, 1942; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization," October 22, 1942, box 56; P minutes 31, October 31, 1942, box 55; P minutes 39, January 2, 1943, box 55. Czechoslovakia held a special place in many of their hearts. Several planners believed Woodrow Wilson had been the midwife of the Czechoslovak republic, born at Paris in 1919, and which between the wars formed an island of democracy in Central Europe. Welles had visited Czechoslovakia numerous times before the war and had much respect for Thomas Masaryk.

85 Welles's ideas for an East European Union will be discussed in greater detail in chapter seven.

86 Palacky: "Assuredly, if the Austrian state had not already existed, the interests of Europe and indeed of humanity would have required that we create it, and that as soon as possible." For Welles's use of Palacky's dictum see, for example, P minutes 45, February 20, 1943, box 55.

87 P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 10, May 9, 1942, box 55.

88 *Ibid.*

European Federation would represent a "departure from old conceptions" about America's vital interests.⁸⁹

Traditionally, the Habsburg Empire had stood as Europe's bulwark against Russian expansion. Thus Welles and the committee briefly considered a revival of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the return of Archduke Otto Habsburg, the pretender to the Imperial throne, who might also be groomed to serve as the leader of an Austrian exile movement. The planners assumed that the pretender hoped to return to Vienna at the end of the war as the head of a "federal Danubian state."⁹⁰ Before long, Welles developed serious misgivings about the mere mention of Otto. Fearing that discussions about the Habsburgs might become public, he warned Roosevelt against getting entangled with the pretender, whom Welles suspected was seeking the president's "official benediction."⁹¹ The exiled Italian Count Carlo Sforza warned Welles that the feeling in Eastern and Central Europe was one of "Better Hitler than the Habsburgs." Sforza added: "Peace and order cannot be based on rotten failures of the past."⁹²

Welles and the committee ultimately rejected reviving the Habsburg Empire but they conducted a detailed survey of the old Empire to determine if any of its institutions and political structures could serve as a model for a future federation. Welles thought the sporadic attempts at Central American Union might serve as an example for imitation in Eastern Europe and that a future federation for the region could begin with a customs union, advance to monetary union and, eventually, political union. The key features of Welles's plan for an East European Federation included a regional police force, an agency to control trade and industry, a regional judicial system and an East European parliament with a political executive, perhaps based in Vienna. An "Articles of Confederation" would be drafted for the region to determine the relationship among

⁸⁹ P minutes 11, May 16, 1942, box 55; P minutes 13, May 30, 1942; P minutes 14, June 6, 1942; P document 16, "Plan for Central European Union," May 27, 1942, box 56; E document 25, "Economic Subcommittee memorandum to Political Subcommittee: Tentative Economic Organization of the East European Federation: Economic Relations of the East European Federation with the United Nations Organization," box 56.

⁹⁰ P minutes 10, May 9, 1942, box 55; P minutes 8, April 25, 1942.

⁹¹ Welles to Roosevelt, March 31, 1942, box 77, folder 12, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁹² Sforza to Welles, November 21, 1942, box 83, Welles papers, folder 10, FDRL.

states within the federation.⁹³

The planners understood that the question of Eastern Europe remained inextricably linked to that of Russia. The Second World War had demonstrated the huge human, natural and industrial potential of the Soviet Union, and Welles assumed that Moscow and Washington might together do a better job of running world affairs than the previous great powers.⁹⁴ The subcommittee understood that the Kremlin would seek the restoration of its 1941 boundaries at the end of the war and that it might have even larger territorial aspirations. Welles thought the Russians might not be content until they recouped their pre-World War I boundaries. The planners assumed the U.S.S.R. would probably take whatever it saw as essential to its security and that it would, at the very least, insist that "friendly" governments be installed in all of the adjacent European countries. What that meant, however, was anyone's guess. The planners accepted the fact that the Red Army would be in control of many contested areas at the close of the war and that unless the United States was prepared to "fight World War III" against the Soviet Union in the near future, concessions to Moscow's demands would have to be made.⁹⁵

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Welles and his fellow planners also had specific ideas for the future of Italy.⁹⁶ Much like their approach to Germany, the planners desired that Italy be reconstructed along the lines of Welles's liberal economic and political system for a new European order. As early as the spring of 1942 the planners concluded that peace with Italy meant the overthrow of the

93 P minutes 12, May 23, 1942, box 55.

94 Welles's ideas on postwar planning for the Soviet Union will be discussed in greater detail in chapter seven.

95 T document 228, "Soviet Rule in Eastern Poland, 1939-1941," January 23, 1943, box 62; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization," October 22, 1942, box 56; P minutes 2, March 14, 1942, box 55; P minutes 19, July 18, 1942, box 55; P minutes 35, November 28, 1942; P document 236, "Political Subcommittee: Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," July 2, 1943, box 57; T document 378, "Soviet Rule in the Baltic States, June 1940-June 1941," September 16, 1943, box 65.

96 The most exhaustive study of U.S. postwar planning for Italy has concluded that the planning committees "had laid the basis for wartime American political reconstruction policy by mid-January 1943." See James Edward Miller, The United States and Italy, 1940-1950: The Politics of Stabilization (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 44.

Mussolini regime. Welles and the planners concluded that the United Nations should take advantage of any desire on the part of the Italian people to make a separate peace, but that no discussions should be undertaken with the Fascist regime in Rome. Before Fascism, the planners noted, Italy had been a liberal country and a respected member of the family of nations. Welles and the planners saw the Italian people as reluctant belligerents, unenthusiastic about their German ally. The planners feared that Italy would find it difficult to overcome postwar shortages of vital resources such as oil, coal and iron. But with New Deal-style planning on a large scale and increased emphasis on free trade and technical knowledge, Welles thought Italy might return to prosperity soon after the war. Money previously wasted on armaments and grandiose public works projects would be better spent on education, reconstruction, and agricultural technology.⁹⁷

As early as December 1942 Welles envisioned a future when Italy would be detached from its alliance with Germany and he began to cast about for a successor regime. The Vatican had warned Myron Taylor of the danger of a communist revolution in post-armistice Italy and underscored the urgent need for the Italian monarchy to play a central, stabilizing role. Welles tentatively considered the Royal House of Savoy, working under allied supervision, for the civilian authority in the immediate armistice period. Taylor and Anne O'Hare McCormick believed allied authorities should seek to strike a deal with King Victor Emmanuel III, but Welles feared such a move might undermine efforts to establish democratic institutions in Italy. The feeling emerged that Washington should avoid anything that might resemble another Darlan fiasco. Welles thought that perhaps Count Carlo Sforza, an early anti-fascist politician who had fled Italy in 1927 and had long lived in the United States, could be groomed into an effective leader of a "Free Italy" movement. Privately, Welles had doubts about Sforza's abilities and wondered whether he had the stature

⁹⁷ P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 26, September 26, 1942, box 55; P minutes 39, January 2, 1943, box 55; P document 121-a, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization," October 22, 1942, box 56; Miller, The United States and Italy, 35-37.

necessary to be transformed into a "Masaryk" for Italy.⁹⁸

Welles had briefed Roosevelt on Sforza in early 1942 and suggested to the president that the Italian exile could serve as the rallying point around which a campaign of psychological warfare could be waged against Fascist Italy. Welles told the president he had visions of organizing some 200,000 Italian prisoners of war into a "Free Italy" army.⁹⁹ This is curious, considering the headaches the Free French had given Welles, but he thought Sforza more pliable than de Gaulle. Welles arranged for Sforza to go to Uruguay and Argentina to rally the large Italian populations there against the Mussolini regime, an effort which Welles thought would have "very considerable propaganda value in opposition to the Axis efforts in those two countries." Sforza wanted Welles to secure Lend-Lease aid for his movement. He warned that if the United States did not fill the void after the departure of Mussolini, it might lead to communism in Italy.¹⁰⁰

State department specialists warned Welles that Sforza had very little support or prestige in Italy and cautioned that recognition of Sforza's movement as a government-in-exile might upset relations with anti-fascist forces currently in Italy.¹⁰¹ Eventually, Welles began to doubt if the energy expended on the Italian exiles was worth the trouble. To Welles, Sforza began to present problems much like de Gaulle. Sforza annoyed Welles, burdening him with numerous requests. One such request prompted Welles to complain to Adolph Berle, "What in the name of the Lord am I to reply to [Sforza's] telegrams?"¹⁰²

The planners assumed the future of the Italian colonies would be closely tied to the future status of the British and

98 P minutes 39, January 2, 1943, box 55; P document 163, "Italy," January 1, 1943, box 57; T document 202, "The Italian Empire: Political Considerations," December 29, 1942, box 61; Miller, The United States and Italy, 44.

99 Welles to Roosevelt, February 24, 1942, box 151, Welles papers, FDRL.

100 Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Ronald Campbell, "Free Italian Movement," August 14, 1942, box 164, Welles papers, FDRL; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Sforza, February 8, 1943, box 92, Welles papers, FDRL.

101 Jones to Welles, November 14, 1942, box 83, Welles papers, FDRL.

102 Welles to Berle, November 9, 1942, box 83, Welles papers, FDRL. Count Sforza returned to Italy in September 1943 but refused to join Marshal Pietro Badoglio's government until the abdication of King Victor Emmanuel, whom Sforza called the "Petain of Italy." Sforza was elected president of Italy's parliamentary assembly in September 1945.

French colonies in Africa, but they concluded that Italy's possession of Libya, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland was merely a matter of Italian "national pride" and not important to Italy's future economic health. The subcommittee agreed that Libya should be placed under international trusteeship but no consensus emerged over the future of Eritrea or Italian Somaliland, other than the conviction that Italy should be stripped of them.¹⁰³

The planners hoped that Britain and France could be induced to lead the way by transferring their colonies in the Near East and North Africa, along with Italy's, into a regional trusteeship. The planners thought the Italian possession of the Dodecanese Islands (the mostly Greek inhabited islands off the coast of Turkey which include Rhodes and Leros) should be granted to Greece, although the Italians had stripped the islands from Turkey in 1915. Welles even brought up the possibility of detaching the Mediterranean islands of Sardinia, Sicily and Pantelleria from Italy. Welles thought the tiny island of Pantelleria, lying astride the hundred mile wide strait separating Sicily from Tunisia, might serve as an international base after the war.¹⁰⁴

Welles sought a postwar solution for Italy which would be in accord with Washington's liberal internationalist ideals and he feared that London, merely seeking to reestablish its sphere of influence in the Mediterranean, would settle for nothing more than fascism without Mussolini, just so long as British interests in the Mediterranean were safeguarded. Welles also feared the British wanted to exercise control over a postwar Italy as part of London's larger effort to dominate the entire Mediterranean.¹⁰⁵

103 P document 236, "Political Subcommittee: Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," July 2, 1943, box 57; T document 202, "The Italian Empire: Political Considerations," December 29, 1942, box 61; After the war the guidelines for the future of Italy produced by the planners would be for the most part realized. Italy would be stripped of its African empire and reconstructed along liberal, democratic and capitalist lines.

104 Agenda for the meeting of January 2, 1943, "The Territorial Problems of Italy," box 193, Welles papers, FDRL; P minutes 39, January 2, 1943, box 55, Notter files; T document 202, "The Italian Empire: Political Considerations," December 29, 1942, box 61, Notter files; P document 168, "The Italian Colonies," January 2, 1943, box 57; P document 164, "The Dodecanese Islands," January 2, 1943, box 57; P document 167, "The Metropolitan Islands," January 2, 1943, box 57.

105 Berle Diary, May 12, 1943, Berle papers, FDRL.

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Japan, too, would be allowed rehabilitation within Welles's new world order. Based on personal experience, Welles had genuine regard for the Japanese people. During the First World War he had been entrusted with the task of supervising German prisoners of war and internees scattered throughout the Japanese home islands. He thus had numerous first-hand opportunities to observe Japanese interaction with foreigners, which he believed the Japanese handled with "decency and consideration" and with none of the xenophobia which the west had so often associated with Japanese behavior. Welles's views of Japan's postwar potential were largely a product of his exposure to Japan during the period of his residency and immediately after. Welles sought to revert Japan to a less militaristic state, a period he believed predated Tokyo's quest for regional hegemony, much as he believed Germany could be revived and reintegrated into the world system if only the planners aimed to recapture a distant "pre-Bismarckian" past. He envisioned an eventual rapprochement between Washington and Tokyo based on a developing pattern of strong commercial ties and economic integration.¹⁰⁶

Welles had very precise ideas on reordering postwar Japan. He believed the attack on Pearl Harbor was the climax of a long rivalry between Washington and Tokyo. He vividly recalled that after Japan entered the war on the side of the allies in August 1914 she lost no time in seizing Germany's Pacific possessions north of the equator. The allies again looked the other way when in 1915 Japan coerced a weak and divided China to grant it extensive economic privileges in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, as well as the right to German concessions on the Shantung Peninsula. In a moment of desperation in the darkest period of the war in 1917, the British secretly promised to support

106 Welles, Time For Decision, 272-276; P minutes 20, August 1, 1942, box 55, Notter files; P minutes 47, March 13, 1943, box 55, Notter files; P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: Part I: Treatment of Japan," March 10, 1943, box 193, Welles papers, FDRL

Japan's permanent claims to these former German possessions.¹⁰⁷

During the Second World War Tokyo developed extensive plans for the "new order" which would supplement its empire. In addition to the many territories Japan sought to swallow early in the war (such as Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore, Burma, Indochina, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, New Guinea, Guam, Wake, and the Gilbert, Bismarck, Solomon and Admiralty islands), the Japanese war ministry also had designs for all of Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon, much of India and perhaps even parts of western Canada, Alaska and possibly the state of Washington. They had even slated areas such as Central America, Colombia, Ecuador, Cuba and Jamaica for possible membership in Japan's co-prosperity sphere.¹⁰⁸

But to Welles and the planners, Japan would become a great laboratory for an experiment in national reconstruction and would be remodeled in a way that would lend support to U.S. interests in Asia. Welles and the planners concluded that in the wake of Japan's complete defeat it would be stripped of most of its empire, including Manchuria, southern Sakhalin, Korea, Formosa, the Kwangtung leased territory, all of its recent acquisitions since its taking of Indochina and all the Pacific islands placed under Japanese mandate in 1919. "Japan should not start off the new era with territories obtained through its aggressive action," Welles told the planners in August 1942. No one disputed that Sakhalin would probably pass to the USSR.¹⁰⁹

While Japan would lose these territories, its economic viability would be upheld by allowing it to become an active player in America's free trade regime in the Far East. Japan

107 Welles, Time For Decision, 272-276; P minutes 20, August 1, 1942, box 55, Notter files; P minutes 47, March 13, 1943, box 55, Notter files; P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: Part I: Treatment of Japan," March 10, 1943, box 193, Welles papers, FDRL; S document 18a, "Conditions for Japanese Surrender to the United Nations," March 13, 1943, box 76, RG 59, Notter Files; E document 155, Japanese Postwar Economic Considerations," July 21, 1943, box 82, Notter files.

108 Akira Iriye, Power and Culture, 66-69; Gerhard Weinberg, A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II (New York: Cambridge, 1994), 329, 497; Francis Clifford Jones, Japan's New Order in East Asia: Its Rise and Fall, 1937-1945 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 332.

109 P minutes 20, August 1, 1942, box 55, Notter files; P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: Part I: Treatment of Japan," March 10, 1943, box 193, Welles papers, FDRL

would thus become a key component of Welles's liberalized world order. He and the other planners believed Japan should be prohibited from reverting to economic autarchy but rather integrated into the larger regional and world economies. The planners discussed these proposals with an eye toward creating a postwar Japan which would play a preponderant role in the economic revitalization of the Far East, as well as a key position in the American-led new order in Asia. While Japan would be occupied and divested of its extensive military-industrial complex, democratic institutions would be reintroduced and free trade and open markets would be promoted as an alternative to militaristic expansion.¹¹⁰

To cement Tokyo to the new international economic order, Japan would be made dependent upon world markets. The planners assumed that free trade and free enterprise would enable Japan to obtain the raw materials she required without resorting to conquest. The Japanese aircraft, manufacturing and shipbuilding industries would be "liquidated" and a tolerable standard of living would be maintained by promoting an extensive manufacturing and export sector. The planners worried that Japan would need to find room for some seven million people repatriated from her former empire. Thus, in a further effort at social engineering, birth control would be mandated as a means of easing Japan's overpopulation.¹¹¹ President Roosevelt even went so far as to discuss the possible "cross-breeding" of the Japanese with "gentler" Pacific islanders. While the planners had been reluctant to raise such solutions for the other Axis powers, they did not hesitate to discuss eugenics for the Japanese.¹¹²

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¹¹⁰ Akira Iriye has noted, that even at this early date (c.1942) "postwar Japan was being visualized as a nonaggressive, noncolonial country whose survival would hinge upon the establishment of an economically interdependent world." See Iriye, Power and Culture, 61.

¹¹¹ P minutes 20, August 1, 1942, box 55; P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: Part I: Treatment of Japan," March 10, 1943, box 193, Welles papers, FDRL; E document 155, "Japanese Postwar Economic Considerations," July 21, 1943, box 82, Notter files.

¹¹² An excellent summary of American's more draconian suggestions for postwar Japan can be found in Rudolf V.A. Janssens, What Future For Japan?: U.S. Wartime Planning For The Postwar Era, 1942-1945 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995), 52-54; as well as in Michael Schaller, The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 3-4.

One of the key issues which precipitated the Japanese-American war in the Pacific was the refusal of the United States to accept Japanese hegemony in China. The future status of China had also come to represent a significant area of disagreement among the allies. Whitehall and the Kremlin harbored suspicions that the United States sought to promote China in an attempt to obtain support for American aims on a future security council of an international organization. There was much truth in those suspicions.¹¹³ In accordance with the president's wishes, Welles sought to promote China as one of the Four Policemen and as a great power in the postwar world. A strong China might serve to check the power of Britain, the USSR and a reconstructed Japan. While such views may have been in conflict with Welles's rhetoric about forever ending spheres of influence and the balance of power, he justified such a course because he saw China as essential to the success of postwar system of collective security. Thus, like Roosevelt, Welles saw China as absolutely fundamental to Washington's postwar plans.¹¹⁴ He believed the Chinese had been betrayed at Versailles. The Chinese delegates at the peace conference in 1919 refused to sign the treaty after learning that the allies would do nothing to remove the Japanese from Chinese territory.¹¹⁵ This time around, Washington would have to avoid such mistakes and instead make a strong showing on behalf of Chinese sovereignty. Welles and Roosevelt thought that as the colonial powers faded into history, China would emerge as the

113 Roosevelt and Welles were less concerned about a Soviet or revolutionary threat in East Asia than they were about the continuance of the British Empire in the region. According to Michael Schaller, the British "in particular feared that American policy had determined to pull down the foundations of the empire even before a final verdict was rendered. ... Churchill believed Roosevelt's game was to make China strong enough to 'police' Asia while remaining essentially dependent upon the United States. The prime minister complained to subordinates that the Americans expected to use China as a 'faggot vote on the side of the United States in an attempt to liquidate the British overseas Empire.'" See Michael Schaller, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 91-93.

114 Welles offered a detailed description of his wartime views of China in his "Milwaukee Town Hall Speech," October 23, 1950, speech files, box 199, FDRL. See also E document 109 "Postwar Problems of China," April 15, 1943, box 81, RG 59, Notter Files; and P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: further problems for consideration: part II: the Problems of China," March 10, 1943, box 193, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; as well as P minutes 47, March 13, 1943, box 55, Notter files.

115 For a detailed analysis of U.S. policy toward China during the First World War see, for example, Warren I. Cohen, "America and the May Fourth Movement: The Response to Chinese Nationalism, 1917-1921," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 35, no. 1, (February 1966), 83-100.

"keystone" to a "new order" to be established in the Far East and they feared that no other nation had the potential to fulfill or defeat their plans for Asia. They assumed that in the wake of the dissolution of the colonial empires, China would emerge as a great Asiatic power. In an effort to strengthen the Generalissimo's hand, they desired to return all territory which had been stripped from China since 1895. Washington itself would surrender its extraterritorial rights in China and not oppose Chinese emigration to the United States. China would be groomed into a cooperative regional policeman in Asia, one ready to aid in the promotion of U.S. interests in the Far East. For example, while Formosa would be returned to China, Welles wanted the Chinese to allow its use as a strategic base for an international police force.¹¹⁶

Welles feared that a continuation of the civil war in China had the potential to engulf the great powers much like the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s. He thus sought to create a strong and economically prosperous China. But during the war the Chinese central government had only a tenuous hold throughout much of the country. To further compound matters, Welles and the state department planners had only a superficial understanding of the current and future prospects for China. The planners acknowledged that the "Chinese Communist Problem holds the greatest danger to Chinese unity in the postwar period, and upon Chinese unity the stability of the Far East area may depend," but they were blind to many of the more specific aspects of China's turmoil. They feared that Soviet troops would be in control of Manchuria at the end of the war and might attempt to destabilize the rest of China. They thus believed Washington should assume a larger role in attempting to resolve China's civil war and should make a greater effort at strengthening China. Pacification of the country should be buttressed by an immense program of internal improvements and development -- a virtual Tennessee Valley Authority for China -- underwritten by American investment. The plan would include the promotion of industry, the development of public utilities

¹¹⁶ "Milwaukee Town Hall Speech," by Sumner Welles, October 23, 1950, speech files, box 199, Welles papers, FDRL; P minutes 47, March 13, 1943, box 55, Notter files; Ta Jen Liu, A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations 1840-1974 (Taipei: China Academy, 1978), 250-251.

extending electricity to the countryside, the improvement of communications, the utilization of China's mineral resources, expansions and improvements in public health and education, water and soil conservation, drought control and the promotion of greater agricultural stability. Interestingly enough, democracy was not deemed absolutely necessary for China. Like Latin America, China would merely be required to support U.S. interests in exchange for Washington's continued largess.¹¹⁷

But how best to create a China on American terms? Appeasing Chinese desires in the region (if only so long as China's desire for status remained consistent with Washington's political and economic requirements) might be one way to promote a postwar China willing to follow the U.S. lead in the Far East.¹¹⁸ This meant giving strong consideration to ending European control of Hong Kong and Macao, while protecting Manchuria, Outer Mongolia, Sinkiang, Tibet and Korea from Russian designs. Chinese demands for an end to European control in India and Indochina should also be supported. When the Office of War Information's Asia expert, Owen Lattimore, (who had been an advisor to Chiang and who would later become a target of Senator McCarthy and the China Lobby) warned that the Chinese would oppose any effort at international control in Asia, Welles asserted that the Chinese would not always be allowed to have the final say in the region because after the war the United States would also be a powerful presence in the

117 "What Do We Desire of China? Preliminary Considerations," no date [c.1942], box 11, Notter Files; P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: further problems for consideration: part II:the Problems of China," March 10, 1943, box 193, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles, Where Are We Heading?, 290.

118 Welles views on the promotion of postwar Sino-American relations resembled the track he pursued with regard to Brazil. Welles sought to direct strategically targeted economic assistance to promote Brazil at the expense of her neighbors so that she would emerge from the war as the dominant policeman in the southern hemisphere, one which would also be amenable to U.S. interests. Brazil actively cooperated with the United States during the war and sent a division to Europe. Welles sought to promote Brazilian strongman Getulio Vargas in much the same way Washington backed Chiang. Welles admired Vargas's corporatist effort to manage Brazil through his *Estado Novo*, which Vargas patterned after Italian and Portuguese corporatist/fascists models. Welles assumed Brazil might provide the U.S. with a valuable ally in the southern hemisphere, one willing to undertake postwar policing responsibilities in South America and perhaps even West Africa. See, for example, Sumner Welles, Time for Decision, 220-223. See also: Irwin Gellman, Good Neighbor Policy: United States Policies in Latin America, 1933-1945 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 172-174; and Frank McCann, Jr., The Brazilian-American Alliance, 1937-1945 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 53, 282-283, 325.

Far East.¹¹⁹

Throughout the war, Churchill and the foreign office opposed American attempts to foster a great power China amenable to U.S. interests. Considerable rancor occurred between the allies over the issue.¹²⁰ Far from believing that China would emerge from the war as a great power, British officials thought China lacked internal stability and military power and would probably descend into chaos. While this was somewhat foresighted, Churchill, in his disdain for China, did not sufficiently consider that China's stubborn refusal to capitulate to the Japanese effectively tied down substantial Japanese forces in China that might otherwise have been available for the Burma-India theater. Furthermore, London felt threatened by American plans to promote China. The British felt they could only reluctantly accede to Chinese involvement on an executive council of a future world organization and they sought to prevent Chinese participation in regional councils where China did not have a direct national interest. The British detested Chinese interference in the affairs of India and Hong Kong.¹²¹ (Indeed, the state department's planners had already concluded by the fall of 1942 that Hong Kong's postwar status should be geared toward aiding China's "postwar unity and strength" through repatriation with the mainland.¹²²) The British also worried about Chinese participation in a regional council for the Near East, where China might make trouble for the British on matters such as the future status of the Suez Canal. Furthermore, London vehemently opposed the prospect of future Chinese involvement in European matters and determined

119 P minutes 47, March 13, 1943, box 55, Notter files; P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: further problems for consideration: part II: the Problems of China," March 10, 1943, box 193, Welles papers, FDRL; P minutes 21, August 8, 1942, box 55, Notter files.

120 A detailed account of Britain's prewar indifference toward the plight of China can be found in Aron Shai, "Was there a Far Eastern Munich?" *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.9, no.3 (July 1974), 161-169; while London's low opinion of the Chinese during the war is partially explained in Shai's "Britain, China and the End of Empire," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 15, no. 2 (April 1980), 287-297.

121 FO 371/31632 Foreign Office Minute on China, January 26, 1942, PRO

122 T document 137, "The Problem of Hong Kong: Possible Solutions," October 25, 1942, box 61, Notter files; T document 136, "The Problem of Hong Kong: Basic Data," October 23, 1942, box 61, Notter files; P minutes 22, August 15, 1942, box 55, Notter files. During Eden's March 1943 visit to Washington Roosevelt suggested the British relinquish Hong Kong as a matter of "good will." See Walter LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," 1280.

against Chinese participation on a European regional council.¹²³ The British had some cause to fear China as a member of the Four Policemen. During the war American officials told British officials that China might serve as a useful counterweight to the U.S.S.R. both in the Far East and in the councils of a new international organization. No doubt the British privately feared that China would also serve as a counterpoise to British interests in those areas.¹²⁴

Welles's efforts to have China share responsibility for a stable postwar order may have been misguided and China may have been nothing more than a mythical great power during the war.¹²⁵ But by supporting China, Welles saw vast benefits for U.S. foreign policy in other areas. Regardless of what happened to Chiang after the war, Welles believed Washington's support for China placed the United States on the side of the oppressed in the colonial struggle. Furthermore, throughout the war China would serve as a useful proxy for a number of Welles's foreign policy goals, particularly decolonization. China also had the potential to serve as a counterweight to London's and Moscow's aims in the Far East. To maintain this balance into the postwar period Washington sought to groom China as an ally on the security council of a future world organization. Throughout the war Welles seemed to believe that Washington should continue to support Chiang while urging him to reach a peaceful accord with the communists and to introduce democratic reforms and vast internal improvements. Welles never fully understood that Washington could do little to determine the terms of China's path to great power status. Furthermore, the U.S. could in no way ensure that China's rise would occur on terms favorable to

123 FO 371/31632 Foreign Office Minute on China, January 26, 1942, PRO; Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, vol. IV, 488-522; T document 302, "The Suez Canal and Egyptian Interests," April 1, 1943, box 63, Notter files.

124 CAB 65/34 WM(43) 53rd, April 13, 1943, PRO; P document 117, "British Political Ferment Involving Postwar Objectives," October 17, 1942, box 56, Notter files.

125 See, for example, Steven W. Mosher, China Misperceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality (New York: Basic Books, 1990), 46-50. Washington's extensive investments in China went beyond the political and military spheres and included the state department's pursuit of an aggressive cultural policy toward China. See, for example, Frank Ninkovich, "Cultural Relations and American China Policy, 1942-1945," Pacific Historical Review, 1980, vol. 49, no. 3 (August 1980), 471-498; as well as Wilma Fairbank, America's Cultural Experiment in China, 1942-1949 (Washington: Department of State, 1976); and Christopher Jespersen, American Images of China, 1931-1949 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

American interests in the Far East.¹²⁶

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By the time the planning committees were disbanded in the summer of 1943 Welles and his fellow planners had succeeded in conducting the first in-depth examination of Washington's postwar aims toward the other powers. At the time of Welles's resignation in August 1943, the planners had already concluded that Germany, Italy and Japan should be reconstructed and eventually rehabilitated after the war with an eye toward postwar stability, disarmament and economic viability.¹²⁷ They had also held detailed discussions on how China should be promoted as one of the four policemen, and they hoped that China would serve as a future counterweight to Russian, British and Japanese interests in the Far East. When considering the postwar status of Eastern Europe, the planners feared that postwar instability and fragmentation would make the region susceptible to Russian hegemony, and they sought ways to provide Eastern Europe with greater unity and cohesion. As for France, Welles and the planners failed to reach a definitive decision about recognizing an exile movement but their hostility toward de Gaulle would continue to animate America's French policy throughout the war, as would their conviction that France should be kept out of the ranks of the great powers in the postwar era. In short, not only did these discussions serve as a foundation for future decisions on matters related to postwar planning and reconstruction, they would also influence U.S. decisions at future wartime conferences.

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126 With the American island-hopping campaign in the Pacific, the Chinese theater became more peripheral to Roosevelt's wartime strategy. In any event, in May 1944 Roosevelt began easing his efforts to develop China as one of the four policemen. See LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," 1288. For an account that Roosevelt held exaggerated beliefs about China's prospects, see Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 307-309, 724. Furthermore, Michael Schaller in his *The U.S. Crusade in China* sees U.S. officials as blind to significant changes occurring within wartime China.

127 The July 1945 Potsdam declaration on Japan closely mirrored the conclusions of Welles's planning committees. Akira Iriye has declared that "the Potsdam declaration was clearly an American product, summing up more than three years of planning and deliberations within the United States government. See Iriye, *Power and Culture*, 263.

CHAPTER SIX

The War Within the War: Sumner Welles and American Anti-Colonialism 1941-1943

Among the many responsibilities confronting Sumner Welles as a result of U.S. entry in the war was the challenge of formulating a response to the emergent nationalism in the colonial world. He believed that regardless of the war's outcome, much of the colonial world would be profoundly changed and the question of how to ally the United States with these nationalist movements would become one of the most important challenges after the war. America's entry into the war presented Welles with an enormous opportunity to press for reform in the colonial empires. He understood that the United States would no longer have to settle for merely offering advice on colonial matters from the periphery, because with American productivity and manpower directly supporting the war, Washington's leverage over wartime political issues had grown immensely.¹

What Welles sought was nothing less than the internationalization of the Monroe Doctrine. Welles would use a combination of public pronouncements, private diplomatic discussions and his leadership of the postwar planning process, to press for change and promote a reordering of the postwar colonial world. Just as John Quincy Adams² had promulgated the Monroe Doctrine as a warning to the European powers that the United States would oppose any effort to establish or reclaim colonies in the new world, Welles sought to stretch the meaning of the Atlantic Charter to ensure that the colonial masters would not seek a return to the status quo at the end of the war. As Welles saw it, decolonization was inevitable. Thus, the United States should take advantage of the radical changes that

¹ Welles sought to utilize this leverage to pressure the British over colonial matters and the question of trade. Walter LaFeber has argued that "an examination of British and American records can lead to the speculation that the diplomats of each nation, with their eyes on postwar advantages, devoted more time to maneuvering against one another than to fighting the Japanese." See Walter LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," *American Historical Review*, vol. 80, no. 5 (December 1975), 1280.

² Welles, an admirer of Adams, had the former secretary of state's portrait hung in a place of honor in his state department office.

would come in its wake. He believed the demand for self-determination would be a hugely important political factor during and after the war and Washington would best promote its postwar interests by supporting the aspirations of the colonial peoples.³

Welles's Wilsonianism, such as his commitment to self-determination and free trade, helped shape his anti-colonialism.⁴ But this is not to say that his views on the subject were consistently idealistic. Like Wilson, Welles partly derived his anti-colonialism from a realistic assessment that the continuation of the colonial empires would adversely effect U.S. national interests. Welles's anticolonialism blended with his pursuit of more self-interested aims. Welles wagered that any diminution of the colonial empires would work to the benefit of the United States by increasing its power and influence in the world. He also assumed the United States stood to gain from any weakening of the colonial economic systems because it would enable the U.S. to obtain valuable raw materials and markets and to extend its free trade regime. Welles feared the United States might slip into another economic depression after the war. He thus desired a policy of the open door in colonial areas to smooth the way for America's manufactured goods. Furthermore, with increasing wartime demands for oil and other resources for military and industrial purposes, the colonial question assumed even greater importance for Welles and the planners.

But Welles often sought to take the colonial debate to the next level. His opposition to colonialism also had subtle links to the larger question of race, not only in the colonial world,

³ According to two Indian scholars, an examination of Welles's role "during and after 1942 indicates a possibility that even in 1941 he might have had a clearer perception than the President of the larger issues brought to the fore by the war." See M.S. Venkataramani and B.K. Shrivastava, Quit India: The American Response to the 1942 Struggle (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1979), 18. In 1944 Welles said that he understood earlier than most that the "startling development of Japan as a world power, and the slower but nevertheless steady emergence of China as a full member of the family of nations, together with the growth of popular institutions among many other peoples of Asia, notably India, all combined to erase very swiftly indeed the fetish of white supremacy cultivated by the big colonial powers during the nineteenth century. The thesis of white supremacy could only exist so long as the white race actually proved to be supreme. The nature of the defeats suffered by the Western nations in 1942 dealt the final blow to any concept of white superiority which still remained." See Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper, 1944), 297-298.

⁴ The anticolonial sentiment of the Fourteen Points and the Atlantic Charter notwithstanding, the United States had also entered the race for colonies at the end of the nineteenth century, and had intervened militarily in several Latin American countries.

but also in the United States. While American opposition to colonialism has often been premised upon assessments of British power and the exclusion of American business and trade interests, Welles's wartime addresses often focused on the impact on the colonial peoples themselves. Throughout the war Welles proclaimed that the U.S. could not fight imperialism abroad while maintaining it at home by oppressing minority groups. The very nature of the war, with German and Japanese emphasis on racial questions, further underscored for Welles the spuriousness of the racial arguments that had been used to justify colonial domination.⁵ Welles proclaimed that the principles of the Atlantic Charter could not be limited to "the White race." "Peoples capable of autonomous government," Welles said, "should be possessed of that right whether be yellow or brown, black or white."⁶ In several of his wartime speeches he sought to equate the effort to oppose the racialist aims of the Axis powers with the fight for racial equality in the United States, thereby demonstrating his belief that the persistence of racism at home (while America pledged itself to destroy racial hatred abroad) ensured that war aims and colonialism would remain mired in the question of race on the homefront. Shortly before his resignation he sought to make a connection between the effort to destroy fascism abroad and continued reform and expanded civil liberties at home, publicly linking American attempts to liberate those living under colonial rule and Axis domination with the struggle for civil rights and

⁵ In May 1942, Walter White of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People met with Welles and suggested the president call a "Pacific Conference" along the lines of the Churchill-Roosevelt meeting off the coast of Newfoundland. White proposed Roosevelt meet with Indian leaders such as Nehru and Gandhi and a Chinese delegation led by Chiang Kai-shek, and proclaim a "Pacific Charter" dedicated to ending colonial rule in Asia. He further suggested that a delegation led by Wendell Willkie and including "a distinguished American Negro whose complexion unmistakably identifies him as being a colored man" should proceed to India and proclaim U.S. solidarity with the Indian struggle under the aegis of the Pacific Charter. In light of Hull's steadfast opposition to such a summit Welles suggested to the president that he tell White that it was not "the appropriate moment for the United States individually to undertake an effort of this character." Nonetheless, Welles's discussion with White no doubt reinforced in Welles's mind the connection many were making between Washington's policy toward colonial rule and the persistence of racism on the homefront. Welles to Roosevelt, May 22, 1942 and the attached Walter White to Roosevelt, May 4, 1942, box 151, folder 14, Welles papers, FDRL. The role of African Americans in U.S. policy toward colonialism has been the subject of renewed interest of late, most notably Penny M. Von Eschen's Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

⁶ "Address Before the Foreign Policy Association of New York," by Sumner Welles, October 16, 1943, speech files, box 196, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

better treatment for America minorities.⁷

Welles's views on the European colonial empires did not extend to Washington's relations with its Latin American neighbors, who were usually seen in the context of the Monroe Doctrine. While Welles's opposition to imperialism in Africa, the Near East and the Far East has been acknowledged, his record of "informal imperialism" in the western hemisphere must be conceded. Like Wilson before him, Welles saw no contradiction between his opposition to European-style colonialism and Washington's perpetuation of a virtual "informal empire" in the western hemisphere. Welles saw clear distinctions between the behavior of the European powers in their empires and the U.S. sphere of influence in Latin America. Unlike the imperialism of other nations, Welles assumed that many of the U.S. interventions sought to promote the protection, happiness and well-being of the Latin American peoples. Furthermore, he disingenuously justified much of Washington's historic interference in the hemisphere by arguing that, unlike the more formal colonial empires of other nations, the U.S. was merely interested in maintaining its own security. Welles thus justified interference in the region aimed at bolstering the kind of hemispheric order Washington desired, while seeking to keep other powers out. And with regard to the question of self-determination, his own experiences in Cuba and the Dominican Republic made America's support for such a principle look at best ambiguous, and his support for dictatorships throughout the region made his wartime pronouncements about the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter look highly selective and hypocritical.⁸

Nonetheless, Welles attacked the colonial "status quo" in several of his wartime addresses. This would not be a war, he

⁷ "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, Address at the Arlington National Amphitheater, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL; The New York Times, May 31, 1942; "Commencement Exercises of the North Carolina College for Negroes," by Sumner Welles, May 31, 1943, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁸ Welles once wrote that he believed that U.S. interference in the affairs of other nations in the hemisphere amounted to mere "friendly advice" and that "thinking" Latin Americans would welcome Washington's interference in their affairs. See, for example, Sumner Welles, "Is America Imperialistic?" Atlantic Monthly, September 1924; as well as "Joint Action in the Americas," by Sumner Welles, February 16, 1942, address to the opening session of the Meeting of Foreign Ministers at Rio de Janeiro, speech files, box 195, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL; and Sumner Welles, "A New Era in Pan-American Relations," Foreign Affairs, April 1937.

suggested, to merely resurrect or enlarge the empires of the victors. He assumed that the British, by agreeing to the self-determination clause of the Atlantic Charter, had unintentionally lent moral strength and legitimacy to the question of anti-colonialism. Welles thus used his public pronouncements to give the self-determination clause of the charter a more universal application covering the colonial empires. To many British officials the self-determination clause applied only to the conquered nations of Europe and had little to do with the British Empire. But to Welles self-determination meant nothing if not broadened to encompass the European empires.⁹

Welles was by no means the only American to challenge the colonial status quo during the war. The war had emboldened opponents of colonialism throughout the United States. Both Vice President Henry Wallace and the 1940 Republican nominee Wendell Willkie called for immediate independence in the colonial world and powerful congressional voices from the west such as Senators Tom Connally and Robert LaFollette, Jr. urged President Roosevelt to put more pressure on the British over the issue of colonialism. Powerful news organs such as Henry Luce's *Time-Life* empire also jumped on the anti-colonial bandwagon.¹⁰

The British resented American anticolonial views, and tension between London and Washington over colonialism played a greater role in the Second World War than it had in the First. Few issues so threatened the Anglo-American wartime alliance as did the tensions created by the colonial question. "I am not going to accept less favourable terms from the other German Willkie than I could get from Hitler," Churchill declared,

⁹ "Wilson and the Atlantic Charter," by Sumner Welles, November 11, 1941, speech files, box 195, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, Address at the Arlington National Amphitheater, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL; "The Atlantic Charter and National Independence," November 13, 1942, box 13, Notter files, National Archives.

¹⁰ Robert Dallek, The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 126-127; Wm. Roger Louis, Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 198. In a 1942 "Open letter to the people of England," Henry Luce's *Life* magazine added: "One thing we are sure we are not fighting for is to hold the British Empire together. We don't like to put the matter so bluntly, but we don't want you to have any illusions. If your strategists are planning a war to hold the British Empire together they will sooner or later find themselves strategizing all alone . . . In the light of what you are doing in India, how do you expect us to talk about 'principles' and look our soldiers in the eye." *Life*, October 12, 1942.

while Leopold Amery, the British Secretary of State for India, added that he would prefer Hitler's "New Order" to Hull's "Free Trade." Nor did the British accept Washington's high-minded justification for supporting self-determination. According to Anthony Eden, Roosevelt hoped the colonies, "once free of their masters will become politically and economically dependent upon the United States." Other British officials saw the Americans as "economic imperialists" or "economic expansionists" who sought to supplant British interests throughout the world.¹¹ The British had good reason to feel insecure about their imperial possessions. Compounding the problem of American opposition, Japanese propaganda efforts in the Far East sought to capitalize on allied failures by emphasizing the racial aspects of colonial rule, calling for an "Asia for Asians" and a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."¹²

Welles sought to develop a broad policy to counter these Japanese initiatives. One important component of his colonial strategy was the acceleration of independence for the Philippines. The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 made the Philippines a self-governing commonwealth, with full independence scheduled for 1946. In the wake of the Japanese invasion of the islands the United States formally pledged that the Philippines would be independent immediately upon its liberation from Japan, and Philippine President Manuel Quezon set up a government-in-exile in the Shoreham Hotel in Washington. Welles maintained close contact with Quezon and his entourage. The under secretary sought to make the Philippines a "case study" for criticizing the other colonial empires. He assumed that America's treatment of the Philippines would set a useful example for the rest of the world and he convinced the president to allow the Philippines to sign the Declaration by

¹¹ Tony Smith, America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 125; Anthony Eden, The Eden Memoirs: The Reckoning (London: Cassell, 1965), 513.

¹² David Reynolds, Britannia Overruled: British Policy and World Power in the 20th Century (New York: Longman, 1991, paper), 149-150.

the United Nations.¹³

Welles assumed that a similar approach to India would provide a boost for the allied cause.¹⁴ He understood that resentment against the British ran deep in India and he sought to ally U.S. war aims with those of the colonial peoples.¹⁵ In this vein, President Roosevelt¹⁶ suggested to Churchill at the height of the fighting in Burma in March 1942 that radical change in the British Empire "might cause the people [of India] to forget hard feelings, to become more loyal to the British Empire, and to stress the danger of Japanese domination, together with the advantage of peaceful evolution as against chaotic revolution."¹⁷ Thus, when London subsequently sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India in an attempt to reach a settlement with the Congress leaders by proposing dominion status for India, Roosevelt simultaneously dispatched to India Colonel Louis Johnson, a former assistant secretary of war.¹⁸ Roosevelt sought to demonstrate America's commitment to reducing political tensions on the subcontinent, but also to show solidarity with the aspirations of the Indian people.¹⁹ The

¹³ P document 240, "Official Statements and Views Pertaining to the Administration of Dependent Areas After the War," July 12, 1943, box 57 [all planning documents and planning minutes are from the Notter files, National Archives, Record Group 59, unless otherwise noted]; Hamilton and Hornbeck to Welles, April 14, 1942, FRUS, I, 902-903; Welles to Roosevelt, April 17, 1942, FRUS, I, 903-904; Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper, 1944), 298-299.

¹⁴ This despite the fact that Welles was initially reluctant to tell British officials what course they should pursue with regard to India. Welles's impatience with British policy in India steadily increased after the United States entered the war, when many British actions might thus be interpreted as having Washington's tacit approval. For an account of Welles's earlier hesitation to press the British, see, for example, Gary R. Hess, America Encounters India, 1941-1947 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 25-31, 45, 181.

¹⁵ Welles and other U.S. officials had already pressured the British to allow India to sign the Declaration of the United Nations as a separate entity. Welles to Roosevelt, April 13, 1942, FRUS, I, 1942, 870-872; Welles to Roosevelt, April 17, 1942, FRUS, I, 1942, 903-904; P document 64, "India," August 27, 1942, box 56.

¹⁶ For Roosevelt's views on colonialism see, for example, Warren F. Kimball and Fred E. Pollock, "'In Search of Monsters to Destroy': Roosevelt and Colonialism," in Kimball's The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 127-157; as well as John J. Sbrega, "The Anticolonial Policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt: A Reappraisal," Political Science Quarterly, vol. 101, no. 1 (Spring 1986), 65-84.

¹⁷ CAB 66/22 WP(42)118 "India," March 11, 1942, PRO; Roosevelt to Churchill, March 10, 1942, FRUS, I, 1942, 615-616.

¹⁸ For the reasoning behind Johnson's mission, see, for example, Kenton J. Clymer, "Franklin D. Roosevelt, Louis Johnson, India, and Anticolonialism: Another Look," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 57, no. 3 (August 1988), 261-284. Johnson's mission is also discussed in Venkataramani and Shrivastava, Quit India, 96-136; Christopher Thorne, Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War Against Japan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 236-246; and Warren Kimball, The Juggler, 134-136.

¹⁹ P document 64, "India," August 27, 1942, box 56; P document 218, "Agenda for the meeting of April 3, 1943: India," box 193, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

British deeply resented the presence of Colonel Johnson, for it appeared Roosevelt had sent an envoy to mediate between the British and the Indians. Furthermore, some British officials suspected that the true intent of American interference was to secure a large share of the Indian postwar market.²⁰

Welles originally wanted to take up the Indian question at the Atlantic Conference, but he instead had to accept the vague declaration on self-determination. But with much of colonial Asia overrun by the Japanese in early 1942, Welles thought India an ideal place for the allied powers to act affirmatively in the name of self-determination. In April 1942 Welles expressed to the president his hope that the allies would support self-government throughout the colonial world. "In brief, what I had in mind," Welles wrote to Roosevelt, "was to recommend the announcement of a broad policy of liberation, insofar as the peculiar circumstances covering the Netherlands East Indies and Burma might make such an announcement possible, . . . unfortunately, the breakdown of the Indian negotiations eliminates, at least temporarily, that possibility."²¹

A few days later Welles sent the president a second proposal further advocating "a broader and more far-reaching policy" of liberation in the colonial world:

I hope that the opportunity may be presented when the United States can join with the other nations directly interested in the Pacific regions in announcing their common determination to restore their liberties to all of the peoples whose territory has been invaded by Japan and to recognize the right to full independence of the Philippines and Korea and perhaps, if conditions seem to make it wise, Indochina. As I said in that letter, the reaching of an agreement for the dominion status or independence of India would have offered an admirable springboard for a declaration of this kind. It may be, however, that some other favorable opportunity will be presented before long for a broad announcement of this kind which would really imply that the United Nations were joined together in a war for liberation, namely, a war to end imperialism.²²

20 John Kent, British Imperial Strategy and the Origins of the Cold War, 1944-1949 (London: Leicester University Press, 1993), 5.

21 Welles to Roosevelt, April 13, 1942, FRUS, I, 1942, 870-872.

22 Welles to Roosevelt, April 17, 1942, FRUS, I, 1942, 903-904.

Welles publicly articulated his desire to define the Atlantic Charter as part of the struggle against imperialism during his Memorial Day Address at Arlington National Cemetery, where he described the present conflict as a "people's war" and called for complete liberation in the colonial world.²³ It was perhaps the most far-reaching public pronouncement on the subject of colonialism issued by a senior American official during the Second World War and it was consistent with Welles's view that colonialism was anachronistic and reactionary and posed a threat to his vision of a new order in the postwar world.

The following day, the New York Times ran a front-page story on the speech, highlighting Welles's comments on colonialism with the pronouncement: "Age of Imperialism Ended."²⁴ Playwright Robert Sherwood, who also served as Welles's ally in the Office of War Information, arranged to have the speech broadcast in English and numerous Indian dialects over All India Radio and transcribed in more than 500 newspapers throughout the subcontinent.²⁵ But Welles's Memorial Day address immediately met with disapproval from Cordell Hull, who thought it premature and too far-reaching. Hull later claimed that Welles had acted independently and had never cleared the speech with him or the president. Hull thought Welles had misrepresented his views and was moving dangerously close to causing a breach between Washington and London. Hull thus reacted on July 23 with a radio address of his own on the question of colonialism, where he pointedly refrained from proclaiming an end of imperialism and tempered his remarks by saying that independence would come only to those who were prepared for it. "It has been our purpose in the past -- and will remain our purpose in the future -- to use the full measure of our influence to support attainment of freedom by all peoples who, by their acts, show themselves worthy of it

23 "The Realization of a Great Vision," by Sumner Welles, Address at the Arlington National Amphitheater, May 30, 1942, speech files, box 195, box 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

24 The New York Times, May 31, 1942.

25 Sherwood to Welles, June 25, 1942, box 83, folder 11, Welles papers, FDRL; Robert Aura Smith, New Delhi, to Sherwood, Washington, cable #145-149, no date, box 83, folder 11, Welles papers, FDRL.

and ready for it."²⁶

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Welles warned the president in July 1942 that India was on the brink of chaos. To head off the approaching crisis, Welles suggested that the United States and China send representatives to New Delhi to serve as intermediaries between the Indian Congress officials and the British Government. He thought such action "might serve in bringing about some satisfactory arrangement which would hold during the war period and could in any event, in view of the critical nature of the situation now existing, do no harm." But Roosevelt feared Churchill's reaction to Welles's proposal, particularly because of the inclusion of the Chinese, whom Churchill distrusted.²⁷ The British sought to ensure that the United States did not interfere in the Indian problem. When the Maharajah Holkar, of the once powerful Holkar dynasty of Indore, wrote to Roosevelt endorsing Welles's plan for U.S. and Chinese intervention in the current impasse, British authorities intercepted the letter. When Welles protested the matter in a subsequent conversation with Sir Ronald Campbell, the British Minister in Washington, the British diplomat described the Maharajah as a "psychopathic case" to whom no importance should be attributed.²⁸ Nevertheless, the British became increasingly sensitive to every nuance of American statements about India, at one point protesting to Welles about several comments in the press implying that the administration sought to pressure "both sides" in the Indian crisis.²⁹

Not easily deterred by British protests, Welles had the planners take up the question of India in greater detail. They proceeded to discuss the fate not only of India, but of all the

²⁶ Harley Notter, Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation (Washington: Department of State, 1950), 109; Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, vol. II, (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 1228, 1230, 1484-1485; Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 175-77.

²⁷ Welles to Roosevelt, July 29, 1942, FRUS, 1942, I, 699-700; Roosevelt to Churchill, July 29, 1942, FRUS, 1942, I, 700.

²⁸ Memorandum of conversation by Welles, June 1, 1942, FRUS, I, 666-667.

²⁹ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Campbell, "Situation in India," August 18, 1942, box 164, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

empires, in an uninhibited and informal atmosphere. Welles understood that their views would necessarily clash with London -- more so now because the United States had expanding interests around the world. Welles inaugurated the discussion by asking: "what has been the result of the situation we are now contemplating? With few exceptions there has been exploitation by European powers with very little if any advantage to the peoples concerned."³⁰

As Welles had predicted, his survey of the colonial world coincided with the biggest civil disturbance in the British Empire since the Indian Army Mutiny of 1857. The so-called "Quit India" rebellion reached its height in August 1942, leading to the internment of many of the top Indian nationalist leaders.³¹ Yet Churchill maintained his strong aversion to negotiating with Congress officials. This contributed to a delicate division of opinion within the United States, where the Indian struggle enjoyed some sympathy. To many, the crisis in India looked like another example of the excesses of Imperial rule.³² The crisis also captured the attention of the American public because U.S. troops now served on the subcontinent helping with the resupply of China. Welles understood that the presence of American troops in India might be interpreted as support for British imperial aims and he worried that upheaval in India would disrupt the allied war effort and degenerate into an Indian "Easter Rebellion."³³

Welles closely monitored the situation in India. He saw

30 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942.

31 See Venkataramani and Shrivastava, Quit India, 249-258.

32 "This war can be lost in India," the American journalist and social reformer Oswald Garrison Villard wrote in a letter to the New York Times. "From the very beginning of the war in Asia it has been the greater danger that this struggle would degenerate into a war of the colored races against the white." The noted British biologist and writer, Julian Huxley, added: "The world's conscience is beginning to grow a little uneasy over the fact of one country possessing another country as a colony, just as it grew uneasy a century or so ago over the fact of one human being possessing another as a slave." See "Summary of Opinion and Ideas on International Postwar Problems," September 9, 1942, Division of Special Research, box 190, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 1, Welles papers, FDR. While Washington was somewhat familiar with the question of Hindu nationalism, much less was known about Muslim nationalism in India. See Betty Miller Unterberger, "American Views of Mohammed Ali Jinnah and the Pakistan Liberation Movement," Diplomatic History, no. 5, vol. 4 (Fall 1981), 313-336.

33 New York Times, August 13, 1942; CAB 65/27(42)109 August 10, 1942, PRO; CAB 65/27(42)113 August 17, 1942, PRO; P document 113, "British Views with Respect to Colonies and Dependent Areas," October 2, 1942, box 56; P document 154, "The British Empire: Empire Institutions," December 9, 1942, box 57; Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 8; P minutes 21, August 8, 1942.

the Indian question as much more than a petty quarrel between British and Indian statesmen. To Welles, it was part of a larger experiment in the complete liquidation of imperialism. Welles framed the debate by telling the other planners that political consciousness was sprouting up throughout the entire colonial world and that the United States should attempt to lead these movements, rather than follow in the wake of chaos.³⁴

Welles and the planners believed Britain sought to pursue its traditional strategy of "divide and conquer" in India by pitting the Muslim minority against the Hindu majority. Several planners saw this as just another example of a centuries-old British strategy, once employed during the American Revolution. The planners pointed out that the American colonists had succeeded against similar odds after the British departed because they reached an agreement among themselves and, most importantly, on their own terms. Some argued that it would be far better to allow India to work out its own destiny in a similar manner, by trial and error, and perhaps even through bloodshed. The prospect of war between Muslims and Hindus was real enough to the planners, but a colonial war between India and Britain seemed a possibility far more threatening to long-term U.S. interests in Asia.³⁵

In the fall of 1942 Roosevelt decided to dispatch William Phillips to India as a special envoy. Phillips would hold ambassadorial rank while on his mission, a significant designation in a nation that was still a British possession. Welles hoped the mission might "make it possible for the Indian people to know of our sympathy while at the same time avoiding even the semblance of friction with the British."³⁶ Welles continued to believe that the best course the British could pursue in India would be a pledge of independence, much like the United States had given to the Philippines. But Welles had misgivings about Phillips's qualifications for the mission, because he thought Phillips "soft" on the question of British

³⁴ P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P minutes 22, August 15, 1942; P minutes 51, April 10, 1943, box 55.

³⁵ Ibid; P minutes 37, December 12, 1942. Welles never believed the Muslim population of the subcontinent would be able to build an economically and politically viable state. See Sumner Welles, Where Are We Heading? (New York, Harper, 1946), 325-327.

³⁶ Welles to Mrs. William Phillips, November 3, 1942, box 82, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

colonialism and too much of an Anglophile.³⁷ Welles thus sought to convince Hull and the president to reconsider the appointment. Welles hoped that if they learned of Phillips's hidebound views he might be recalled or, at the very least, given firm instructions to avoid siding with the British. "As you know," Welles wrote to Hull, "Mr. Phillips has not the slightest familiarity with the Indian picture. He has no knowledge whatever of present conditions in India, and his views on the subject, I assume, must be limited to the general impressions he has been given in London. In view of the tremendous importance of this question . . . it would seem to me that Mr. Phillips ought to be brought back to Washington for full discussion of the policies of this Government in order that he may be intimately familiar with the President's views and those of this Department before he sets out on his journey."³⁸ Indeed, Phillips was initially flattered by his acceptance by British officials. Once Phillips arrived in India, however, he became sympathetic to the cause of Indian self-rule and, much to London's displeasure, he sought to mediate between Congress leaders and British officials.³⁹

Welles and his fellow planners knew the British would steadfastly oppose complete independence. They thus briefly discussed placing India under some form of international trusteeship to help smooth its transition to independence, but they soon realized there was little they could actually do beyond gentle prodding. Furthermore, they faced the daunting realization that any sudden change in the current status of India might mean a tremendous loss of British and, by

37 For an account arguing that Phillips was not as ignorant of Indian affairs as Welles assumed, see Kenton J. Clymer, "The Education of William Phillips: Self-Determination and American Policy Toward India, 1942-1945," *Diplomatic History*, no. 8, vol. 1 (Winter 1984), 17, 19. Nevertheless, Clymer writes that "someone less likely than William Phillips to sympathize with the Indian nationalist leaders, much less with the masses, could scarcely be imagined."

38 Welles to Hull, November 7, 1942, box 82, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL. Welles's fears may have been confirmed in a letter he received from Phillips just prior to his departure for India. "I am not a miracle man," Phillips warned Welles, "and I only hope that the Department fully appreciates that they have put up to me a job which nobody but a miracle man could accomplish. In reading my instructions very carefully I am wondering whether those in the Department who have prepared them fully realized the terrific internal dissensions, religious and political, which have gone on for hundreds of years and which make the situation so wholly different from that in the Philippines, which the instructions refer to as an example to be followed in India." See Phillips to Welles, December 10, 1942, box 82, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

39 Kenton Clymer, "The Education of William Phillips," *ibid.* 21-35.

extension, allied, power and prestige in Asia. It might also sever China's support link with the United States through the supply base in India. London's repeated threats that any change in the status of India would upset the allied cause had apparently carried some weight with the planners.⁴⁰

Welles asked the committee what other options they could pursue with regard to India. Norman Davis warned Welles that they did not know enough about the subject to act independently, adding the whole matter was "loaded with dynamite" that could disrupt wartime relations with Britain and undermine the war effort. Davis suggested the administration merely encourage Britain to make a stronger commitment to India's eventual independence. Welles conceded that any gestures on behalf of India which undermined the allied cause would obviously not promote the interests of the United States.⁴¹ The planners wanted to see change come to India and desired close and friendly relations with a future postwar government there, but they feared doing anything beyond gentle persuasion to alter the situation on the subcontinent. While they reaffirmed their commitment to self-determination, the fire-eating rhetoric of the spring of 1942 had clearly ebbed.⁴² This shift laid bare their growing emphasis on wartime priorities at the expense of liberation, but also foreshadowed a continuing problem Washington would face with regard to other colonial areas in the postwar era.⁴³

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Welles also looked to the rest of Asia to demonstrate the

40 P minutes 37, December 12, 1942, box 55.

41 Ibid.

42 P document 218, "Agenda for the meeting of April 3, 1943: India," box 193, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

43 See, for example, the account by Lloyd C. Gardner, "The Atlantic Charter: Idea and Reality, 1942-1945," in Brinkley and Facey-Crowther, eds., The Atlantic Charter (London: Macmillan, 1994), 61-62. A year after Welles's departure from the state department he allegedly leaked to Drew Pearson classified materials charging that the administration was missing a valuable opportunity to lead the forces of nationalism in Asia. Pearson's column touched off a storm of protest from British officials sensitive to the public revelation that U.S. officials had recommended postwar independence for India and the establishment of an interim coalition government in wartime. See Drew Pearson, "Confessions of an S.O.B.," Saturday Evening Post, November 3, 1956; as well as Roosevelt to Caroline Phillips, August 30, 1944, PSF, Roosevelt Papers, FDRL. Welles also criticized British handling of the Indian question in his books The Time For Decision and Where Are We Heading? See Time For Decision, 301-302; Where Are We Heading?, 324-328.

U.S. commitment to the liberation of colonial peoples. He thus led the planners on a broad survey of the colonial situation in the entire Far East, while keeping in mind ways the United States might shape a "new order" in the region after the war. Welles sought a peaceful and orderly postwar Far East which would be receptive to U.S. interests. He thought the great powers had exploited their colonies in Asia and that the dependent peoples had received nothing in return. He suggested the United States "must do more than say we hope these powers do something about their territories." The planners thus worked from the consensus that the United States should actively use its influence for the "liberation of the peoples of the Far East."⁴⁴

The war had forced the United States to reexamine its interests in many areas of the world, particularly the Far East, and Welles believed French possessions in Asia a major obstacle to a new order in the region. The French empire had no place in Welles's postwar designs. He had already proposed France be completely disarmed at the end of the war as part of his aim to demote France from the ranks of the great powers. Stripping France of its possessions would complement this strategy and might make possible an eventual American takeover of French naval bases in Indochina and Africa. In Indochina, for example, the U.S. Office of Strategic Services aided Vietnamese nationalism, including Ho Chi Minh's Vietminh, which was seen as the most effective group resisting the Japanese within Indochina.⁴⁵ More importantly (and somewhat surprisingly in light of later events) Washington assumed that Ho would provide the United States with a useful ally in Indochina to carry forward American interests in the postwar period. Ho appealed to the Americans by showcasing Indochina as a "fertile field for American capital and enterprise" and holding out the possibility of a future American naval base at Camranh Bay, a

44 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942, box 55.

45 P minutes 4, March 28, 1942; Welles, Where Are We Heading?, 287; P minutes 38, December 19, 1942; Welles to Leger, November 26, 1943, with enclosure "Our Obligation to the People of France," by Sumner Welles, box 89, folder 9, Welles papers, FDR; P document 158, "Policies Affecting the Postwar Position of France," December 18, 1942, box 57; P document 158a, "Official Statements and Views Affecting the Future Status of France and the French Empire," January 29, 1944, box 57; George C. Herring, America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975 (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979, 1986, second edition, paper), 7-10.

location the American planners considered the fourth best naval site in the world.⁴⁶

Welles believed Indochina's strategic importance had been strikingly demonstrated by Japan's use of the region as a launching point for further conquests. Before the war, Washington's interest in Southeast Asia had been growing steadily, with the volume of trade increasing throughout the 1930s and the U.S. importing greater amounts of natural rubber. But the Japanese takeover had jolted Washington's attention to the region's importance as a producer of foodstuffs and raw materials and as a key strategic point near the major shipping routes of East Asia. The Japanese occupation of the colony was a major factor in sparking the Pacific war. At the time of the Japanese takeover Welles publicly denounced the French for violating the Wilsonian prohibition against territorial changes without the consent of those affected. Welles feared postwar instability in Indochina might destabilize the strategic equilibrium of the Far East, threatening the sea routes between America's trading partners. Southeast Asia continued to be the world's largest producer of natural rubber, as well as an important source of oil, tin, tungsten and other strategic materials. Welles believed control of this region would be crucial to the reconstruction of the postwar world.⁴⁷

Welles said he believed the United States could not bring itself to a peace table without having ended French dominance of Indochina. He and his colleagues felt strongly that France had lost its claim to Indochina when French authorities allowed the Japanese to occupy the region. "There is a great moral question involved here and it is a question that will shape and color the history of the world after this war is over," Welles told the committee. "To get right down to the question, what inherent right has France to territory which she seized, sometimes by war, as recently as the 1880s, any more than has

⁴⁶ P minutes 4, March 28, 1942; P document 33, "French Indochina," August 4, 1942, box 56; Herring, America's Longest War, 7-10; E document 77 and T document 283, "Preliminary Draft: the Economic Relations of Indo-China," March 23, 1943, box 63.

⁴⁷ P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P document 33, "French Indochina," August 4, 1942, box 56; P document 158, "Policies Affecting the Postwar Position of France," December 18, 1942, box 57; P document 158a, "Official Statements and Views Affecting the Future Status of France and the French Empire," January 29, 1944, box 57; E document 77 and T document 283, "Preliminary Draft: the Economic Relations of Indo-China," March 23, 1943, box 63, Notter Files.

Japan to seize by force certain territories of China which she has now occupied? The only difference is in point of time."⁴⁸

Welles sought to make sharp distinctions between the colonial practices of each European nation and he had somewhat different views with regard to the Netherlands East Indies. He told the committee that he approved of the way the Netherlands government-in-exile had lately decided to handle its colonial affairs.⁴⁹ He explained that the Dutch diplomat Eelco Van Kleffens had recently told him that a new constitution had been prepared to extend Dutch rights and responsibilities to the inhabitants of the Netherlands East Indies. How this was to be reconciled with self-determination, Welles never explained. Most importantly to Welles, the Dutch also pledged that the postwar Netherlands East Indies would be open to American trade and influence. Throughout the war, the state department would thus maintain better relations with the Dutch government-in-exile over the issue of colonialism than with any other power, partly due to Welles's high opinion of Van Kleffens and the Dutch pledge to honor the open door.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, Welles feared that unless serious reforms were undertaken, the present situation in the Netherlands East Indies, where Dutch and Chinese landlords dominated an impoverished indigenous population, would lead to postwar instability.⁵¹ The committee's staff produced studies underscoring the importance of the colony's rich resources for the postwar reconstruction of the world, focusing particularly on oil, as the East Indies ranked fifth among the oil-producing regions of the world. The planners also noted that the colony possessed strategically

48 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942.

49 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942. In early 1944 Roosevelt would tell Halifax that the Dutch empire "had done a good job but the French were hopeless." See Walter LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," *American Historical Review*, vol. 80, no. 5 (December 1975), 1285.

50 Millions of Indonesians, however, disagreed with the state department's rose-colored views of the Dutch colonial masters, and Sukarno's nationalist anti-colonial movement had much public support. A quarter-of-a-million Indonesians voluntarily worked for the Japanese war effort and the ferocity with which much of the population opposed the return of the Dutch authorities at the end of the war demonstrated the depth of their loathing for continued European rule. During the Indonesian war for independence (1945-1949) which followed the war, Van Kleffens vigorously opposed United Nations attempts to mediate between the Dutch and the Indonesian nationalists. See, for example, Robert J. McMahon, "Anglo-American Diplomacy and the Reoccupation of the Netherlands East Indies," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Winter 1978), 1-23.

51 Minutes of the Advisory Committee, February 12, 1942, box 54, Notter files; P document 42, "Netherlands East Indies," August 14, 1942, box 56; P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P minutes 22, August 15, 1942.

important bauxite deposits (the source of aluminum). Furthermore, the planners called attention to the fact that the region, one of the most densely populated areas of the world, occupied a strategically crucial location between the Indian and Pacific oceans, a position that would be vital to regional security in the postwar period.⁵²

Welles also desired to accelerate an end to more than four centuries of Portuguese rule in Asia. He reserved his deepest scorn for the Portuguese colonies of Macao and East Timor which he described as the "worst" examples of colonial exploitation. He suggested they be forced into a system of international trusteeship, or at least have Macao handed over to China. To Welles, the horrible conditions in the Portuguese colonies should not "be continued in any healthy or reasonably logical world."⁵³ The members feared London's opposition to such a radical approach to Macao and East Timor and it was suggested that every effort be made to pressure the British to cooperate in dismantling the Portuguese empire.⁵⁴

On the Korean Peninsula, Welles suggested every effort should be made to establish an independent nation at the end of the war. To many of the planners, Korea had a sentimental appeal, having been subjected to Japanese colonialism longer than anywhere else. Made a Japanese protectorate in 1905, and annexed outright in 1910, many planners could recall with some regret that in 1919 Korea tried to persuade the conferees at Paris to recognize its right to self-determination. But Japan had been an ally during the Great War and the peacemakers ignored Korean pleas.⁵⁵

In the eyes of Welles and the planners, Korea's

52 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P document 42, "Netherlands East Indies," August 14, 1942, box 56; P document 43, "Indonesian or Malaysian Federation," August 11, 1942, box 56; P document 37, "British Borneo," August 14, 1942, box 56; P document 106, "Netherlands Indies, Now Under Japanese Occupation," September 18, 1942, box 56.

53 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P document 40, "Macao," August 14, 1942, box 56; P document 41, "Portuguese Timor," August 14, 1942, box 56.

54 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P document 35, "British Malaya," August 14, 1942, box 56; T document 375, "The Problem of British Malaya: Possible Solutions," October 13, 1943, box 65.

55 Furthermore, the 1905 Taft-Katsura agreement had already affirmed Washington's recognition of Japan's domination of Korea in return for Tokyo's pledge to respect U.S. control in the Philippines. See Jongsuk Chay, "The Taft-Katsura Memorandum Reconsidered," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 37, no. 3 (August 1968), 321-326; as well as Ralph Eldin Minger, William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy: The Apprenticeship Years, 1900-1908 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

industrialization in the 1930s, coupled with its rich mineral resources and extensive coastline, made it an important strategic point in the Far East.⁵⁶ Welles had already discussed with the president the possibility of creating a Korean government-in-exile. He also contemplated the creation of a Korean guerrilla army to sabotage the Japanese war effort.⁵⁷ Welles suggested that the questions posed by places like Korea needed to be discussed in a more systematic manner, at which point he introduced the subject of international trusteeships, where regional boards would oversee the administration of dependent areas after the war. The details of such a plan, Welles added, would be worked out in his subcommittee on international organization.⁵⁸

While debating what to do if the colonial powers sought to recover their lost possessions, Welles proclaimed "the liberation of peoples should be the main principle" guiding American policy and that those who could not yet govern themselves should be placed under international trusteeship. "Many of these peoples cannot undertake self-government at this time," Welles added. "This is where trusteeship comes in. The United Nations should endeavor to develop the ability of these peoples to govern themselves as soon as possible."⁵⁹

Welles introduced the topic of trusteeship at a political subcommittee meeting in August 1942. He warned the planners that if they allowed the colonial powers to maintain their possessions, it would not only dash the hopes of the dependent peoples of the world, but would also undermine the U.S. aim of fostering a new world order. Worse still, it would place the United States on the side of the colonial masters, thus damaging America's long-term interests in the third world. On the other hand, Welles continued, it would be equally wrong to

56 James I Matray, "An End to Indifference: America's Korea Policy During World War II." *Diplomatic History*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Spring 1978), 181-196; P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P document 123-b, "International Trusteeship," December 8, 1942, box 56; P document 213, Agenda for meeting of March 13, 1943, box 57; S document 18a, "Conditions for Japanese Surrender to the United Nations," March 13, 1943; E document 155, Japanese Postwar Economic Considerations," July 21, 1943, box 82, Notter files.

57 Welles to Roosevelt, April 13, 1942, *FRUS*, I, 1942, 870-872.

58 P minutes 20, August 1, 1942.

59 P minutes 21, August 8, 1942.

insist that at the end of the war all dependent peoples be "turned loose to their own devices." This would lead to instability, and worse, chaos. Welles said much of the colonial world was not yet ready for complete independence and that they did "not possess adequate economic resources, political capacity, nor education." "After a while," Welles added, "there would be anarchy in all of the areas with sad results for world peace."⁶⁰

Welles thus explained that international trusteeships offered the best middle ground. He elaborated that the world organization would assume responsibility for trusteeship to ensure that "these peoples are given certain rights through continuing supervision and inspection." That the United States would probably be the dominant power in the new world organization, and thus have a powerful voice in determining the course of trusteeships, was a given. Welles hoped trusteeships would save the colonial world "from the otherwise inevitable result that the peoples will be exploited by the colonial powers." He desired a system that would teach the rudiments of self-government and advance dependent peoples toward independence, while ensuring that the raw materials of the colonial world would no longer be subject to the exploitation of the imperial powers, making such resources more available for strategic purposes after the war.⁶¹ The planners made it clear that the United States was committed to eventual independence for the colonial peoples, but perhaps not because of the ideals expressed by Welles in his Memorial Day address. Welles and his fellow planners hoped that reform of the colonial world would once and for all destroy autarchic economic systems. They proposed that international trusteeships should be established not only to assist the dependent peoples to attain political maturity and self-government, but also to promote the development and use of their economic resources in the interest of the rest of the world. Better still, trusteeship would work hand in glove with the open door by eliminating colonial monopolies in dependent areas.

⁶⁰ P minutes 22, August 15, 1942. Welles also provides a detailed account of his views on international trusteeship in his Time For Decision, 300-305, 383-384.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Welles wanted to avoid the perils of the old mandates system, which he believed had become a mere smokescreen for continued imperialism. He believed the mandatory powers had exploited the territories entrusted to them and had done nothing to prepare the way for eventual independence.⁶² He hoped international trusteeships might offer a safe middle ground between continued colonial rule and complete freedom. Trusteeships might promote a more evolutionary approach to the quest for independence and a more regulated and controlled use of colonial resources for international purposes.⁶³

Unlike the mandates, where the mandatory powers had only to make annual reports to the league, Welles's plan envisaged a program of continuous assessment and review. The trustee nations would be regulated by the regional organizations, which would have the authority to send administrators and observers to monitor the behavior of the trust powers. Rather than acting as a mandatory power, the administering nation would act merely as the "trustee" of the regional boards. Real authority over the territory would thus reside with the regional boards and not with the trust powers, while disagreements between the trust powers and the regional boards would be appealed to the executive council of the international organization.⁶⁴

In the Pacific, for example, Welles thought a "Pacific Council" or an "Association of South Pacific Nations" should oversee progress toward independence in Burma, Malaya, the Netherlands East Indies and French Indochina. Welles wanted Portuguese Timor to be handed over to the Dutch or placed under trusteeship, while Macao would be returned to China. He envisioned "international control" of Hong Kong and Singapore for "international police purposes." Furthermore, he hoped an independent but amenable Philippine Republic would have a seat

⁶² For a discussion of the many inherent weaknesses of the mandates scheme see Andrew Crozier, "The Establishment of the Mandates System 1919-1925: Some Problems Created by the Paris Peace Conference," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 14, no. 3 (July 1979), 483-513.

⁶³ PIO minutes 5, August 21, 1942, box 85; PIO minutes 13, October 23, 1942, box 85.

⁶⁴ P minutes 22, August 15, 1942; P minutes 33, November 14, 1942; PIO document 95, "An International Trusteeship for Non-Self-Governing Peoples," October 21, 1942, box 56; P document 123-b, "International Trusteeship," December 8, 1942, box 56; P minutes 51, April 10, 1943. At Teheran, Roosevelt explained to Stalin a trusteeship plan remarkably similar to this. See minutes of the Stalin-Roosevelt meeting, November 28, 1943, *FRUS: Cairo and Teheran*, 486.

on the regional body exercising trusteeship authority in the Pacific, thus giving the United States a proxy on the regional oversight board. Welles even sought to make Manila the headquarters of any future regional institutions.⁶⁵

The questions raised by the mandated islands in the Pacific revealed the selective nature of the American approach, where Welles sought to expand the Monroe Doctrine far across the Pacific. Welles believed these "relatively uninhabited" islands should not be turned over to international control but instead retained by the United States for security purposes. Norman Davis explained that the mandated islands would be needed in the postwar period to serve as American air bases. Welles assumed that due to the U.S. desire to retain the islands purely for security reasons, a "reasonable distinction" could be made between them and the areas where Washington was calling for trusteeship and eventual independence. Welles suggested that London's potential opposition to such a move could perhaps be quelled by allowing continued British strategic control of Singapore, for example, as a quid pro quo.⁶⁶

This raised the larger question of how the British would react to these proposals. During one discussion about the British Empire, Welles read aloud the text of recent proclamations by the British Liberal Party and the British Labour Party calling for a solution in the colonial world akin to suggestions offered in the political subcommittee.⁶⁷ While Welles sought a system of trusteeship that would ultimately undermine the British empire, he understood that the views of London, and particularly those of Churchill, could pose a serious threat to his colonial strategy. British officials

65 T document 336, "Regionalism in Southeast Asia: Background," June 24, 1943, box 64, Notter files; S document 43, "The Strategic Importance of Singapore and Hong Kong," October 26, 1942, box 77, Notter files; P document 213, "Agenda for the meeting of March 13, 1943: Part II: South Pacific Regional Supervisory Council," March 10, 1943, box 192, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, Welles papers, FDRL; draft memorandum on Malaysian or Indonesian federation, August 14, 1942, box 192, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles, Time For Decision, 303.

66 P minutes 27, October 3, 1942.

67 P document 113, "Resolution of the Assembly of the Liberal Party (July 18-19, 1941)," October 2, 1942, box 56; P document 113, "Charter of Freedom for Colonial Peoples: Resolution of the Third War Conference of the British Labour Party, May 25-28," 1942, box 56; P document 113, "British Views with Respect to Colonies and Dependent Areas," October 2, 1942, box 56.

vehemently opposed American attempts at trusteeship. Many in London believed Welles's plan a guise for an American quest for greater profits and resources. These concerns may have been reinforced after the American planners sought formally to clarify postwar colonial policy by issuing a "World Charter" which would extend the Atlantic Charter to regions other than Europe, most particularly the Pacific. Concerns about the scope of Welles's plan for international trusteeship, coupled with alarm over the possibility of a "World Charter" and recent anti-colonial pronouncements from administration officials, led the British to attempt to mollify American opinion.⁶⁸

During Eden's March 1943 visit to Washington, British and American officials discussed postwar colonial policy and Roosevelt presented Eden with Welles's trusteeship formula. Eden and U.S. officials also considered the prospect of issuing some kind of joint declaration on colonialism.⁶⁹ The foreign secretary found the American ideas unsatisfactory, for the Americans proposed the fixing of dates for granting full independence to all colonies.⁷⁰ Eden expressed his dislike of such ideas. London instead preferred to see full responsibility remain in the hands of each parent country. Eden wanted to keep other powers out of European colonial matters. He understood that if Washington began seeking the dismantling of French possessions the British empire might not be far behind. He thus suggested that bilateral treaties between the controlling powers and their dependencies might be a more satisfactory

68 FO 371/31527 "U.S. Views on Colonial Policy," November 21, 1943, PRO; FO 371/31527 "The United States and the Open Door in the British Colonial Empire," by A.G.B. Fisher, December 2, 1942, PRO; CAB 65/28 WM(42) 166th Conclusions, December 9, 1942, PRO; FO 371/35366, Eden memorandum of conversation in Washington, March 29, 1943, PRO; CAB 65/34 WM(43) 53rd Conclusions, April 13, 1943, PRO.

69 The president also shared with Eden his views on the necessity of a strong China and the establishment of international trusteeships for French Indochina and Korea.

70 FO 371/35366, Eden memorandum of conversation in Washington, March 29, 1943, PRO; CAB 65/34 WM(43) 53rd Conclusions, April 13, 1943, PRO; "Declaration by the United Nations on National Independence," March 9, 1943, Hull Papers, folder 262, Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

approach.⁷¹

Welles acknowledged that the tensions arising over the question of trusteeship could threaten the stability of the alliance, but he also believed that a return to the colonial status quo would equally jeopardize American interests. Welles charged London with assuming the United Nations should fight to reconstruct and safeguard the British Empire.⁷² He wanted to find a means to force London to relinquish some control over its dependent areas. How to achieve this, he acknowledged, was another matter. One possibility Welles considered was the issuance of a "Pacific Charter" which would reaffirm the universality of the Atlantic Charter. Welles believed that at the very least a reformed British Empire might conceivably become a valuable asset to the United States in the postwar era, but only if induced to cooperate politically and economically in a new international system. While the planners agreed it would be in America's interest to eliminate European control in dependent areas, they failed to achieve a consensus on any means to achieve that result before the war's end.⁷³

Welles thought the upheaval in the Pacific and the Far East, coupled with Britain's loss of power and prestige, would force a radical reconsideration of postwar alignments in the region. Welles and the planners had already considered the implications of these changes and sought ways to exploit this state of affairs. As U.S. interests in the Pacific continued to expand the planners considered the postwar creation of an economic and military perimeter of friendly states in the

⁷¹ CAB 65/28 WM(42) 166th Conclusions, December 9, 1942, PRO; FO 371/35366, Eden memorandum of conversation in Washington, March 29, 1943, PRO; CAB 65/34 WM(43) 53rd Conclusions, April 13, 1943, PRO; Eden to War Cabinet, "Foreign Secretary's Visit to Washington," March 30, 1943, PRO. He also thought American suggestions about stripping France of Indochina so harsh that they might warp the political situation in a postwar Paris. "A Right Wing Government in France to be confronted with the dismemberment of the French Empire hardly seems a good idea," Eden wrote. As Walter LaFeber has concluded: "For the sake of British interests in both Europe and Asia, London officials felt they had no choice but to fight for a fully restored France." See LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," 1280. During this discussion between Eden and Roosevelt, Welles warned the president that Washington had already gone on record, with statements from both Hull and Robert Murphy, for the restoration of French possessions. Roosevelt said the commitment referred only to North Africa, but Welles warned that no such modification existed. See Eden, The Reckoning, 378.

⁷² During the war American officials in the Far East claimed the acronym S.E.A.C. (the Southeast Asia Command) should more accurately have meant "Save England's Asiatic Colonies."

⁷³ PIO minutes 5, August 21, 1942, box 85.

region. Welles told the planners in December 1942 that the United States should continue to use its growing influence in the Pacific to pressure the British.⁷⁴ Welles and the planners wanted to classify British Malaya, for example, as a strategic area subject to international control at the end of the war,⁷⁵ while they assumed that the future status of Hong Kong and Singapore would be wholly dependent on American war aims.⁷⁶ The special research division, for example, provided Welles and the planners with a number of policy options for Hong Kong, none of which included continued British rule.⁷⁷

To the further horror of the British, Welles and his political subcommittee gave surprisingly serious consideration to Chinese views on European colonialism in the Far East. Welles believed it crucial that China be included if the reconstruction of the world was to be successful. And in any event, having more than 400 million Chinese as allies might prove very useful in the postwar years. Keeping in mind Roosevelt's desire that China be considered one of the Four Policemen, Welles often gave more consideration to Chinese war aims than to those of either London or Moscow.⁷⁸ Welles felt that China, having been dominated by foreign powers for most of its recent history, would feel threatened if global trends appeared to be heading in the direction of a "new imperialism" at the end of the war. Furthermore, China had become a symbol

⁷⁴ P document 113, "British Views with respect to Colonies and Dependent Areas," October 2, 1942, box 56; S document 43, "The Strategic Importance of Singapore and Hong Kong," October 26, 1942, box 77; P minutes 37, December 12, 1942; Division of European Affairs memorandum to Welles, "Problems confronting the United States in connection with the British Empire," December 12, 1942, box 193, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, Welles papers, FDR Library; P minutes 47, March 13, 1943. For an account that officials in Australia and New Zealand were more in agreement with the U.S. state department than with London on many questions, see Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 18. See also G. St. J. Barclay, "Australia Looks to America: The Wartime Relationship, 1939-1942," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 66, no. 2 (May 1977), 251-271.

⁷⁵ P minutes 21, August 8, 1942; P minutes 22, August 15, 1942; P document 113, "British Views with respect to Colonies and Dependent Areas," October 2, 1942, box 56; P document 35, "British Malaya," August 8, 1942, box 56; T document 375, "The Problem of British Malaya: Possible Solutions," October 13, 1943, box 65; P document 43, "Indonesian or Malaysian Federation," August 11, 1942, box 56.

⁷⁶ P minutes 22, August 15, 1942; for an account of the impact of the fall of Singapore on British thinking, see Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 134-146.

⁷⁷ P minutes 22, August 15, 1942; T document 137, "The Problem of Hong Kong: Possible Solutions," October 23, 1942, box 61.

⁷⁸ Welles to Ambassador to China Clarence Gauss, March 25, 1942, FRUS, China, 1943, 730; P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; see also Steven W. Mosher, China Misperceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality (New York: Basic Books, 1990), 46-47; Ta Jen Liu, A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations, 1840-1974 (Taipei: China Academy, 1978), 250-251.

for the aspirations of millions of people beyond its frontiers. Any advance of China's status might change the very nature of the world order, leading to an erosion of imperial prestige throughout the colonial world and thus, indirectly, an increase in U.S. influence. Welles feared that Sino-American relations in the postwar world might be jeopardized if the United States did not make a strong gesture of support for Indian independence, as opposed to merely backing the British preference for dominion status.⁷⁹ Welles assumed that American power, supported by China, would supplant European power as the hegemonic force in the Far East. China might also prove a useful ally in the non-European world, with considerable clout and prestige in colonial areas. Chiang would remain a thorn in the side of British imperial interests throughout the war and Welles hoped to exploit this by bringing China's influence and prestige to bear in critical matters such as India, French Indochina, Hong Kong and the Dutch East Indies.⁸⁰

Welles and the planners thus sought to promote China as a great power on the assumption that the Chinese would support Washington's war aims against those of London and Moscow. Furthermore, American officials often found themselves in agreement with Chinese war aims and Welles assumed that China might serve as a counterweight to America's other alliance partners.⁸¹ In March 1943 Welles briefed the planners on Chinese postwar aims in the Far East. He explained that China and the United States had similar views, as Chiang enthusiastically supported America's pledge to free the Philippines. China also desired independence for Korea as soon as possible. In addition, Welles added, the Chinese vehemently opposed British aims in the region, wanting the British completely excluded

79 P minutes 47, March 13, 1943.

80 Ibid; FO 371/31633, Churchill to Eden, February 13, 1942, PRO; Warren Kimball, *The Juggler*, 139. Against British opposition, Chiang visited the Indian subcontinent in February 1942, where he publicly expressed sympathy for the nationalist cause

81 P minutes 47, March 13, 1943. Roosevelt conceded as much to Eden when he predicted that China would undoubtedly side with the United States in the advent of a future clash with the Soviet Union. The president deliberately downplayed Chiang's intense dislike of the British and the fact that the Generalissimo would most likely also oppose British interests. Memorandum of Conversation by Harry Hopkins, March 27, 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, III, 38-39.

from any trusteeship responsibilities in the Far East.⁸²

As a gesture of good faith to the Chinese, Welles recommended to the planners that Hong Kong and Macao should somehow be returned to China. Welles told the planners the British did not care about the fate of Portuguese Macao, but London would have to be offered something substantial in return for Hong Kong. Stanley Hornbeck, the chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, added that the Chinese detested the British presence in Hong Kong. He explained that the Chinese felt so strongly that they would prefer any method of international solution to the status quo. But Welles feared that little could be done to change the British role in Hong Kong so long as Churchill remained in power. Welles added that he had "no illusions regarding the policy of the present British Government" in the colonial world. Welles warned the committee that Churchill had "announced in no uncertain terms that he would not undertake the liquidation of the British Empire."⁸³

Welles thought Chiang would accept U.S. support for a continued Dutch presence in the East Indies so long as the Dutch government-in-exile carried out its pledges to extend the rights of Dutch citizens to its dependent peoples and made the area open to outside economic penetration. As for Burma and Malaya, Welles assumed that Chiang would demand complete independence but, most importantly, Welles said the Chinese felt strongly that there could "never be any peace or stability in the Far East until the Indian people have their independence . . . and the only way is to grant full independence, with protection for legitimate British interests." Welles warned that the Chinese remained totally opposed to dominion status for India, instead favoring independence.⁸⁴

Norman Davis warned of the possibility that as China's power increased the Chinese might become unreasonable and aggressive, seeking to overstep their authority in Asia and

⁸² P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; P document 113, "British Views with Respect to Colonies and Dependent Areas," October 2, 1942, box 56; S document 43, "The Strategic Importance of Singapore and Hong Kong," October 26, 1942, box 77; P minutes 51, April 10, 1943; memorandum of conversation by Welles, July 28, 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, I, 698-699.

⁸³ P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; P minutes 51, April 10, 1943.

⁸⁴ P minutes 47, March 13, 1943.

coming into conflict with U.S. aims in the region. Welles disagreed, retorting that he "did not think that the [Chinese] demand that the Indian people be independent and self-governing was [unreasonable]," while saying he did not believe any of China's aims were inherently imperialistic or implied a desire for territorial expansion. In any event, whatever Chiang's true intentions, Welles felt it imperative that the U.S. side with the colonial peoples in Asia. If Chiang sought to speak for the dependent peoples of the world, so much the better that he seemed to share so many of America's postwar aims. "The future of China is necessarily a question mark," Welles said. "We do not know whether the present government will remain in power or what type of government will [emerge], [but] the trend in the Far East is the development of an Asia for the Asiatics, the abrogation of the colonial regime of European powers in Asia, and in particular, the elimination of the British Empire as far as the Far East is concerned. The question arises as to what is the interest of the United States."⁸⁵

Welles told the planners that the Chinese demanded trusteeship for Indochina. "The truth concerning Indo-China," Welles told the committee, "is that in the hundred years the French have had it, very little has been done for the benefit of the dependent peoples in that area, and according to the present Chinese Government, the people there are far better fitted to obtain their independence than the people of any other protected area in the Far East." But as the months passed, heightened concerns about France's stability in the immediate postwar years would lead to a reassessment of the French colonial empire and its relationship to postwar France. Several planners feared independence for Indochina would deal a heavy blow to France's role as the postwar nexus of European reconstruction. While Welles may have continued to seek to prevent France's return to the ranks of the great powers, he also believed a revived Europe would only be possible with an economically viable France. He thought a compromise might be reached where the French could temporarily stay on in Indochina as the chief administrator in the trusteeship plan, but only if

⁸⁵ Ibid.

France pledged to adhere to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, promised to grant eventual independence to Indochina and made Indochina more available to outside economic interests.⁸⁶

As the planning committee's discussions of Asia progressed, American interests in the Far East continued to expand. Welles and the planners assumed that mastery of the Pacific would pass to the United States as a result of the war, and they wanted to ensure that no power, including the Chinese, would challenge U.S. hegemony in the region. Their attention thus focused on Taiwan, which, they understood, had been of considerable strategic value to the Japanese, who had used it to administer the Pescadores, Hainan and the Spratly islands. Democratic Senator Elbert Thomas of Utah, who had spent five years in the Far East as a Mormon missionary, warned that if the United States gave Taiwan and Hainan to the Chinese, Chiang might build a large navy to defend the islands, thereby threatening postwar American naval supremacy in the Pacific. Senator Thomas suggested that the U.S. maintain naval and air bases on Taiwan to discourage the construction of a Chinese navy and to protect America's strategic interests in the Far East.⁸⁷ The Senator told the planners that this could be done with very little difficulty because China trusted the United States and had a "youthful attitude" and a "student psychology" toward Washington. Welles assumed that Taiwan would probably have to be returned to Chinese "sovereignty" but he did not rule out the possibility that the island could be used for some kind of "international security purposes." After all, a Taiwan

86 P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; P document 158, "Policies Affecting the Postwar Position of France," December 18, 1942, box 57; P document 158a, "Official Statements and Views Affecting the Future Status of France and the French Empire," January 29, 1944, box 57; Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, vol. IV (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975), 531. Roosevelt was prepared to go further than Welles with regard to Indochina. In July 1943, the President told a gathering of the Pacific War Council that the French should be stripped of their colonial possessions in the Far East because they had "done nothing for the population, but had misgoverned and exploited it," and their return to Indochina after the war would "make bad feeling throughout the Far East." "Indochina should not be given back to the French Empire after the war," he concluded. See Warren Kimball and Fred Pollock, "In Search of Monsters to Destroy": Roosevelt and Colonialism," in Kimball's The Juggler, 140.

87 P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; S document 18a, "Conditions for Japanese Surrender," March 13, 1943, box 77. "American concern for Taiwan," according to Leonard Gordon, "was first stimulated by knowledge of China's 'sudden public interest' in the island shortly after Japan's expansion of hostilities in the Pacific in December, 1941." See Leonard Gordon, "American Planning For Taiwan, 1942-1945," Pacific Historical Review, vol. 37, no. 2 (May 1968), 201-202.

in friendly hands would have economic advantages for the United States and, more importantly, great strategic value.⁸⁸

Welles constantly sought to focus the attention of the planners on what he defined as the larger issues at stake in Asia and the Pacific: "The question is," he emphasized, "whether you can foresee a peaceful world when many millions of peoples are forced to accept a rule they do not wish to accept." He persisted in his belief that the United States had nothing to gain by supporting the "status quo" in the colonial world and should instead continue to look for a way to benefit from the inevitable upheaval. "Should we not try to make something advantageous to ourselves out of what is going to happen in the Far East?"⁸⁹

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As U.S. interests and influence in the Middle East continued to grow during the war the region became another area where British and American aims clashed over the question of imperialism. In principle, Welles acknowledged London's primacy in the Near East, but he assumed that the United States, due to its lack of colonial pretensions, might better appeal to the peoples of the region. Welles assumed the peoples of the Near East sought to be free of the French and British and would thus embrace postwar American leadership in the region as more acceptable. The history of the Middle East in the decades after the war would not see the realization of that delusion.⁹⁰

Leading the planning committee's survey of the colonial situation in the Middle East in the summer of 1942, Welles introduced a proposal for a "Middle Eastern Federation." Its membership would include Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, as well as Syria, Lebanon, Palestine-Transjordan and possibly the British protectorates in Arabia. He argued that a federation would help smooth the

⁸⁸ P minutes 47, March 13, 1943; Gordon, "American Planning For Taiwan," *ibid*; S document 18a, "Conditions for Japanese Surrender," March 13, 1943, box 77.

⁸⁹ P minutes 47, March 13, 1943.

⁹⁰ After his resignation Welles used his syndicated column to offer a scathing criticism of British and French rule in the Near East. See, for example, "Welles Criticizes Both French and British Imperialism on Crisis in Levant," New York Herald Tribune, June 13, 1945.

transition of peoples in the region to independence, while resolving the Near East's many political disputes and promote regional economic development. As in the case of his designs for the former territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Welles sought to promote a sense of greater unity and cohesion in the former Ottoman lands of the Near East. He believed the Ottoman Empire had lent a degree of stability and coordination to the region that had been dangerously lacking in recent decades.⁹¹

Welles's committee also proposed the construction of a smaller Levantine Federation which would include Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan. Welles hoped a Levantine Federation would encourage TVA-like cooperative measures in agriculture, irrigation, power development, customs and currency union. It might also help distract or circumvent British opposition to the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. According to Welles's preliminary aims for the region, the British and French mandates would be terminated and complete political independence would be granted to the new Levantine Federation. The war had brought enormous changes to the area, Welles told the political subcommittee in the summer of 1942, and complete independence for these mandates was an absolute necessity. Welles worried that Axis propaganda would attempt to equate the United States with British aims in the region. He thus hoped Washington's backing for liberation might demonstrate America's independent standing in the Arab world.⁹²

France's collapse had seriously called into question French hopes of maintaining their possessions in the region, which they suspected Britain and the United States of secretly coveting. For the most part Welles believed French fears over their Levant possessions were nothing more than paranoia, but he suspected the British had designs on other strategically located French possessions such as Tunisia and Jibuti.⁹³ Although the Free French felt compelled to promise eventual

⁹¹ P minutes 24, August 29, 1942; P document 47 "Regional Aspects of the Near and Middle East," August 27, 1942, box 56. Welles understood that the British would support a federation in the region.

⁹² P minutes 24, August 29, 1942; P document 48, "Syria and the Lebanon," August 27, 1942, box 56.

⁹³ P minutes 48, March 20, 1943; P minutes 49, March 27, 1943; PIO minutes, November 20, 1942; P minutes 24, August 29, 1942; P minutes 37, December 12, 1942.

independence for their Levant mandates in the autumn of 1941, Welles feared their pledge would never be fulfilled. In August 1942, de Gaulle told an American diplomat in Syria that the future of Syria and Lebanon could only be decided by a postwar French government and in the meantime there would be little change in their status. But the American planners persisted in their commitment to independence for these possessions. "France at no time, under any government, has taken seriously its mandate responsibilities," warned the minutes of Welles's political subcommittee. "The French have been disposed to consider the obligations of the mandate as just a phrase."⁹⁴ Welles told British diplomats in Washington that he would never accept de Gaulle's wishes to uphold the colonial status quo in Syria and Lebanon because the United States did not even recognize de Gaulle as empowered to make any such decisions. Welles told the British Minister in Washington, Sir Ronald Campbell, that the Anglo-American Allies should provoke a "showdown" with de Gaulle over the issue.⁹⁵

Although the British encouraged change in the French mandates, they bristled when discussing their own possessions in the region. Some members of Welles's political subcommittee assumed the British could be compelled to grant independence to all of their Near East possessions east of Suez. Furthermore, Welles told the planners that the Suez Canal might become a potential "security problem" in the postwar era and they discussed the prospect of internationalizing the canal (along with Gibraltar and Singapore) and occupying it with a multinational force of Arabs and Jews.⁹⁶

94 P minutes 48, March 20, 1943. The British did not hesitate to encourage the independence of French possessions like Syria and Lebanon, arguing that such a gesture would help to promote the allied cause in the region.

95 FO 371/31965, Halifax to FO, May 14, 1942, PRO; FO 371/31949, Halifax to FO, June 22 1942, PRO; Woodward, British Foreign Policy, vol.IV, 228-229.

96 P document 218, "Agenda for the meeting of April 3, 1943," (Egypt), box 193, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; P document 52, "Egypt," August 27, 1942, box 56, Notter files; Eichelberger memorandum to Welles, "Some Notes on Security and International Police," 1942, box 190, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL; T document 302, "The Suez Canal and Egyptian Interests," April 1, 1943, box 63; P minutes 24, August 29, 1942. When, at Welles's request, Isaiah Bowman discussed trusteeship with Sir Cosmo Parkinson of the colonial office, Parkinson emphasized that the survival of the British Empire after the war was thought by London to be the desire of the colonized. Parkinson illustrated his point by telling Bowman about an "Arab at Aden" who recently sent most of his wages, "small as they were," to King George VI to help repair a bomb-damaged Buckingham Palace. See memorandum of conversation between Bowman and Parkinson, February 25, 1943, box 191, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

The British also feared the United States would attempt to usurp British petroleum interests in and around the Persian Gulf region. There was some basis for this fear, for American engineers had discovered vast reserves in the Persian Gulf region in the mid-1930s. With the increasing wartime demands for oil in mind, Welles and the planners took a keen interest in the future welfare of Iran.⁹⁷ The planners noted that Iran contained "valuable oil resources" and was thus becoming a country "of vital importance." The British owned the oil concession in Iran, the fourth largest producer in the world, and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company maintained a virtual stranglehold on the Iranian economy. British and Soviet forces entered Iran in 1942 and state department planners expressed concern that the Russians might seek to gain an outlet on the Persian Gulf through Iran, thus disrupting the flow of oil.⁹⁸

The committee's consultant on Near East affairs, Wallace Murray, told Welles and the planners that the Iranians detested the British and Russians, but the United States stood to gain much in Iran due to the warm feelings Persians had for Americans. He added that the war department was "building up a large mission there to take charge of the whole situation without appearing to do so" and that the United States was "running the police force" and had "the country's finances under our direction." Murray added that the United States had now become "the favored power in Persia." The minutes of one meeting noted that "there is very little left in Persia that is not being run by Americans except the Crown, and Mr. Murray said he did not know whether we wanted to bother with that."⁹⁹

When Welles briefed Roosevelt on Washington's growing interests in the region he emphasized how Iran had the potential to be reshaped in America's image. Numerous American

⁹⁷ For accounts of U.S. involvement in Iran during the war see, for example, Stephen L. McFarland, "A Peripheral View of the Origins of the Cold War: The Crisis in Iran, 1941-1947," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 4, no. 4 (Fall 1980), 333-351; Eduard M. Mark, "Allied Relations in Iran, 1941-1947: The Origins of a Cold War Crisis," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, vol. 59, no. 1 (Autumn 1975), 51-63; James A. Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 18-19.

⁹⁸ P document 55, "Iran," August 27, 1942, box 56; P minutes 48, March 20, 1943; PIO minutes, November 20, 1942; P minutes 24, August 29, 1942; P document 215, "Agenda for the meeting of March 20, 1943," March 19, 1943, box 193, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL; P minutes 48, March 20, 1943; P minutes 49, March 27, 1943.

⁹⁹ P minutes 48, March 20, 1943.

missions would provide food and supplies, restructure the Iranian economy and government, coordinate efforts at public health and reorganize the Iran police forces under the guidance of American officials. Welles told Roosevelt this would bring about "the ultimate conversion of Iran into an active and willing partner on our side."¹⁰⁰ Welles and the planners agreed that the United States should continue to exert "its disinterested influence in Iran after the war to strengthen the country and to support its independence against a possible resurgence of the continuing contest between Russia and Britain for special influence."¹⁰¹

* * *

In the spring of 1943, Welles gave a detailed report to the political subcommittee explaining the specifics of American policy in the Near East and North Africa. As Welles saw it, the United States held a unique position in the Near East and American influence and prestige there were quite high, largely because "the people of the Near East realized that we have no vested political or territorial interests in the region."¹⁰² One of the greatest antagonisms that developed between London and Washington, however, occurred over the postwar status of Palestine. The years between the wars had been tumultuous ones for the former Ottoman possession. Tension in the area was heightened by the fact that British strategic planners considered Palestine crucial to the defense of the Suez Canal, and also because of the urgent pressure for higher levels of Jewish immigration and resulting Arab resentment. Palestine had an importance disproportionate to its size and population, not only as a shield for the Suez Canal lifeline or as an important spiritual site for three great religions but also as the terminus of petroleum supplies for Britain and the bridge

¹⁰⁰ Welles to Roosevelt, October 20, 1942, box 152, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁰¹ P document 215, "Agenda for the meeting of March 20, 1943," March 19, 1943, box 193, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹⁰² P minutes 49, March 27, 1943.

between Asia and Africa.¹⁰³

Welles dominated the administration's early discussions on Palestine. His enthusiastic support for the Zionist cause in Palestine in many ways anticipated America's later commitment to the state of Israel and in the years immediately following the war he became one of America's most vigorous supporters of Palestine as an independent homeland for the Jews.¹⁰⁴ On the issue of a homeland for the Jews, Welles operated in an occasionally hostile environment in the state department, where Anti-Semitism persisted.¹⁰⁵ Welles's Zionism played a large role in influencing the kinds of policies he advocated in the Middle East.¹⁰⁶ His belief that only Palestine could provide the Jewish people with a homeland was reinforced by previously failed efforts to obtain a safe haven for Jews in other countries in Latin America and Africa. Since 1938 Welles had publicly castigated previous German persecutions of the Jews and he understood the desperate situation the European Jews faced. He served as a liaison between the Jewish leaders and the American legations abroad, channeling preliminary information about the

103 P document 52, "Egypt," August 27, 1942, box 56; T document 302, "The Suez Canal and Egyptian Interests," April 1, 1943, box 63; P document 50, "Palestine," August 27, 1942, box 56; P minutes 24, August 29, 1942.

104 Welles was also active on the domestic side of the Palestine question, working with the various lobbying groups such as the American Palestine Committee, the Zionist Organization of America and the Christian Council on Palestine. When Welles resigned, Rabbi Stephen Wise, the leading Zionist in the United States, wrote: "Your vision and your wisdom, your courage and effectiveness cannot long be lost to the American people, which cherishes your service, as my fellow Jews in all free lands will, when the whole story can be told, bless your name." In his 1944 book The Time For Decision Welles presented his views on a Jewish homeland and criticized British policy in its mandate, and three years after the war he wrote We Need Not Fail, which passionately expressed his commitment to a Jewish homeland in Palestine. See Rabbi Stephen Wise to Welles, October 3, 1943, box 93, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles, The Time For Decision, 262-267; Sumner Welles, We Need Not Fail (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948).

105 Irwin Gellman, Secret Affairs (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1995), 38.

106 Welles had deep admiration for Jewish leaders such as Rabbi Wise, the president of the American Jewish Congress; Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organization, who would later become the first president of Israel; and Judge Joseph Proskauer, a prominent American Zionist and friend of President Roosevelt. Welles frequently spoke before Jewish organizations and sought to arrange meetings for Weizmann and Wise with President Roosevelt. In fact, Welles's initial skepticism about a Middle Eastern Federation stemmed from his fear that it might pose a threat to the Jewish population of Palestine, but he concluded that a Jewish-controlled, or bi-national Palestine would become a fully-integrated member of a federation. Wise telegram to Welles, October 4, 1942, box 86, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Wise, June 19, 1942, Welles Papers, box 86, folder 5, FDRL; Welles to Wise, October 7, 1942, box 86, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL.

"final solution" to Jewish leaders in the United States.¹⁰⁷

In their quest to find some solution to the problem of Palestine, American planners drew up a series of detailed reports which sought to address questions of Jewish immigration and Arab resettlement. Welles and the planners endorsed complete independence for Palestine at their meeting of August 29, 1942. While some members advocated trusteeship for Palestine, Welles argued vigorously for independence. He thought the United States might help underwrite public works projects in the region to enable Palestine to better accommodate more immigration so that "the Jewish people could realize the ambition gathering for many hundreds of years for a homeland, and nationality of citizens of Palestine would be on par with that of any other country."¹⁰⁸

Welles warned that negotiations with the Arab population would be a waste of time. He suggested the United Nations use their police powers to enforce Jewish immigration to Palestine and that the future of Palestine be tied to a complete reordering of politics in the region. "If we simply throw up our hands and say we are going to leave this to negotiation," Welles said, "it would merely be that we were going to allow an open sore to continue for an indefinite period . . . [but] if the United Nations are prepared to encourage an Arab Federation and do what is necessary to push them along the road to prosperity and security, should not the Arab world be willing to agree to a solution which would accord Palestine to the Jews? A bargain might be struck with the Arabs, but the threat of force could be held over their heads."¹⁰⁹

The planners feared that increased Jewish immigration would provoke an Arab backlash. They thus suggested that a

107 As early as 1942 Welles and Wise held a number of discussions about setting up a war crimes tribunal to investigate atrocities against European Jews, and at one point that same year Welles even discussed with General Eisenhower the possibility of creating a Jewish army of Palestine to aid the allied forces in the region. Eisenhower to Welles, March 28, 1942, box 86, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL. For an account that Welles was indifferent to the plight of the European Jews see David S. Wyman, The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945 (New York: Pantheon, 1984). "Welles's reaction to the Holocaust remains an enigma," Wyman writes. "On many occasions, he cooperated with Jewish leaders and seemed on the point of forcing middle-level officials to act. But he seldom followed through." (page 191). For a less critical assessment see Henry Feingold, The Politics of Rescue: the Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945 (New York: Holocaust Library, 1970), which explores the bureaucratic politics involved.

108 P minutes 24, August 29, 1942.

109 Ibid.

"Bill of Rights" would be necessary for the protection of both populations. When members raised the question of protection for the Arabs, Welles said that "Jewish nationalism could not be pushed aside" and that an independent Palestine, "composed of a homogeneous population, would not be in danger from the Arab federation" At one point, the committee discussed whether a Jewish/Arab bi-national solution to the Palestine question would be more in accord with the principles of the Atlantic Charter, as opposed to a solution imposed by force. Welles added that "Moslems are not always reasonable" but might accept international trusteeship of some of the holy sites in Jerusalem so that access would not be restricted to any particular group.¹¹⁰

Welles's views on Palestine were destined to clash with those of London. The foreign office tended to be pro-Arab and anti-Zionist, and many British officials assumed American policy toward Palestine was influenced by Zionist propaganda in the United States. British officials had warned Welles that a homeland for the Jews in Palestine would undermine the war effort by playing directly into the hands of Nazi propagandists and they feared that continued Arab agitation about Jewish immigration would undermine British influence and prestige in the region.¹¹¹ The British embassy in Washington often saw Welles as a virtual Zionist agent in the administration, an idea given some credence during Eden's March 1943 Washington visit, when Welles suggested that the British should accommodate at least another 500,000 Jewish immigrants to Palestine. Eden's objections did not move Welles. The under secretary hinted that at the very least Palestine should be removed from British control.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ P minutes 25, September 5, 1942; P minutes 49, March 27, 1943; "The Atlantic Charter and National Independence," November 13, 1942, Atlantic Charter file, box 13, Notter files; P minutes 24, August 29, 1942; P document 215, "Agenda for the meeting of March 20, 1943: Annex: Palestine," March 19, 1943, box 193, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 9, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹¹¹ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Butler, April 21, 1941, box 163, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL.

¹¹² FO 371/35034 "Palestine," memorandum by Cripps, May 4, 1943, PRO; CAB 66/37 WP43) 246 "Palestine," by Richard Casey, Minister of State, June 17, 1943, PRO; Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, vol.IV, 353. Eden's private secretary Oliver Harvey noted that the foreign secretary remained "immovable on the subject of Palestine. He loves Arabs and hates Jews. Our only hope is a firm Anglo-American agreement over Palestine -- Sumner Welles and the President favor a Jewish State as Winston does." John Harvey, ed., The War Diaries of Oliver Harvey 1941-1945, (London: Collins, 1978), 247.

Welles's resignation in the fall of 1943 would free him to speak his mind publicly about issues such as Palestine and he would more openly work to aid the Zionist cause.¹¹³ Meanwhile, the British remained divided over the issue. Like Welles, Churchill had considered British policy toward the Jews a breach of faith. Eden, meanwhile, continued his opposition to increased levels of Jewish immigration. After Welles's resignation Roosevelt created a War Refugee Board made up of Morgenthau, Stimson and Hull. Still, few Jews got through to Palestine during the war. Nevertheless, it soon became apparent that the Zionist cause was growing into an unstoppable movement which would soon overwhelm British and Arab opposition to a Jewish state in Palestine.¹¹⁴

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Welles and the planners also held a series of meetings on North Africa, where they recommended a regional supervisory board of Turkey, Egypt, Britain, Spain, Greece and perhaps representatives from a reconstructed France and Italy. These nations would oversee a Tangier-based regional council responsible for Spanish and French Morocco, French Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and the Spanish colony of Rio de Oro. Welles thought the United States could accrue power and influence in North Africa by demonstrating its sympathy for the dependent peoples of the region against their former colonial masters.¹¹⁵

Welles and his committee also undertook a survey of the rest of Africa, where over the course of the previous half-century only tiny Liberia had escaped the interference or colonization of the European powers. Prior to the war, Africa ranked low on the list of America's foreign policy priorities. But that began to change with Washington's growing fears of

¹¹³ See, for example, the column by Sumner Welles, "Welles says British Should Give Palestine Mandate to U.N.O.," New York Herald Tribune, October 31, 1945.

¹¹⁴ "American Anti-Colonialism and the Dissolution of the British Empire," by WM. Roger Louis, in Louis and Bull, eds., The Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations Since 1945 (London: Oxford, 1986, paper), 264-265.

¹¹⁵ P minutes 26, September 26, 1942; P minutes, 27, October 3, 1942; T document 202, "The Italian Empire: Political Considerations," December 29, 1942, box 61; P document 79, "Algeria," September 17, 1942, box 56; P document 81, "Morocco-French Zone," September 15, 1942, box 56.

possible Axis penetration of West Africa, as well as when Africa became an important theater of war for the allies. Africa also loomed large as a site of valuable strategic materials, while its proximity to allied shipping lanes gave it a strategic value in the eyes of American planners.¹¹⁶

During the war many Africans observed the weakening of their old colonial overseers and it became increasingly clear that regardless of the war's outcome, the colonial powers would emerge greatly diminished. Once again, American planners thought the United States might fill the void. After all, Welles had long sought to extend the Monroe Doctrine to the coast of West Africa. But the committee's examination of Africa laid bare one of the underlying weaknesses common to their survey of the colonial world. As the planners continued to discuss the postwar future of Africa, they encountered a vast array of cultural, political and ethnic diversity, leading to their realization that the entire continent of Africa could not easily be lumped into one large regional council.¹¹⁷ Thus after several weeks of discussions, Welles and his colleagues proposed four regional councils for north, south, east and west Africa.¹¹⁸ Welles believed the subcommittee should still adhere to the idea of bringing the peoples of other continents together in larger regional councils, but he reluctantly concluded that the geographical, political and ethnic realities of Africa did not lend themselves to larger, more unified, groupings. While the U.S. would not itself be a member of any of the African regional councils, the planners sought to exert American influence through Liberia (the diminutive West African republic founded in 1822 by emigrant freedmen from the United States with the support of colonization societies) where the Firestone Rubber Company controlled huge portions of territory

¹¹⁶ P minutes 26, September 26, 1942; P minutes 27, October 3, 1942.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid; "Provisional Composition of Regional Supervisory Councils," September 25, 1942, box 193, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, Welles papers, FDRL; P document 168, "The Italian Colonies," January 2, 1943, box 57; P minutes 33, November 14, 1942.

and much of the economy.¹¹⁹

The committee's discussion of Africa also led to the sobering realization that the colonial powers might have to be left temporarily in control after the war (but conditional upon their pledge to adhere to principles such as the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter). Welles thought that while North Africa's prospects for success looked reasonably good, the rest of Africa might have to be brought along the path to independence more slowly, partly due to the lack of development in the region but also because, as Welles told the planners, "the Negroes are in the lowest rank of human beings."¹²⁰ When Welles brought this matter up during a meeting in October 1942, Norman Davis added that due to the backwardness of Africa the U.S. would most likely have to work closely with the European colonial powers. But Welles said he still favored stripping mandates from those powers such as the British and French who had considered them their personal property for the last twenty-five years.¹²¹

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Throughout the war the European colonies in the new world gave Welles particular concern. U.S. war plans in the 1920s and 1930s had emphasized the danger facing strategic positions in the western hemisphere and Welles and the other planners remained preoccupied with the security of Latin America. Welles thus sought ways to preserve and strengthen the Monroe Doctrine as one of the chief foundations of American foreign policy.

119 P minutes 26, September 26, 1942; P minutes 27, October 3, 1942; P minutes 33, November 14, 1942. Norman Davis described Liberia as "a great independent state . . . happy as a clam." See Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 171. For an account of U.S. control of the Liberian economy, see, for example, Judson M. Lyon, "Informal Imperialism: The United States in Liberia, 1897-1912," Diplomatic History, vol. 5, no. 3 (Summer 1981), 221-243; as well as Lloyd N. Beecher, Jr., "The Second World War and U.S. Politico-Economic Expansionism: The Case of Liberia, 1938-1945," Diplomatic History, vol. 3, no. 4 (Fall 1979), 391-412.

120 For Welles's comments see P minutes 27, October 3, 1942, a stark example not only of the racial arrogance of a senior state department official but also of Welles's class prejudices. Welles views on race could be contradictory. While he thought American blacks deserved better treatment he persisted in his belief that many other races were inferior. His views were shared by many in the state department. For example, blacks who entered the foreign service during these years were often relegated to postings in Liberia. See, for example, Martin Weil, A Pretty Good Club: The Founding Fathers of the U.S. Foreign Service (New York: Norton, 1978), 90, 125.

121 P minutes 27, October 3, 1942.

Welles and his colleagues suggested all of the British, French and Dutch possessions be placed in a regional council for the Caribbean basin. He hoped that a regional council for the area would assist in the transition to dominion status, or even independence, and acknowledged that not every colony in the region was ready for independence, adding that the "colored races in the Guianas were as unfit for self-government as anywhere in the Western Hemisphere."¹²²

Welles also sought to pressure the British to abandon the hemisphere after the war. Britain should be induced to turn over the Falkland Islands to Argentina and the British naval base at Port Stanley should be taken for international police purposes. The planners believed the Falklands gave Britain a huge advantage in naval strategy. Welles described relations between Britain and Argentina as "a messy situation" and told the planners he thought Argentine claims to the islands "well-founded." In this case, self-determination was of less concern to Welles than strategic factors. Welles acknowledged that the strategically vital question of Port Stanley was intricately tied to the psychology of British prestige, but he hoped the future of the port and its naval base could somehow be linked to a larger strategy seeking the internationalization of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal and Singapore for "international police purposes."¹²³

Welles told the planners they should seek "the obliteration of European power in Central America." He detested the British presence in the region. He advocated political union for the nations of the region and thought Britain should cede British Honduras to Guatemala. Isaiah Bowman told the committee he believed that most of British Honduras was owned by four or five prominent Britons, whose presence should be "liquidated" at the end of the war. The planners claimed that Britain no longer had a good reason to remain in the region, but they feared London would refuse to leave because it would be a further blow to British national prestige. Welles agreed, but hoped British Honduras might somehow be freed from British

¹²² P minutes 34, November 21, 1942; PIO minutes 10, October 9, 1942, box 85; P document 148, "A Tentative Plan for a Caribbean Council," November 21, 1942, box 57.

¹²³ P minutes 34, November 21, 1942; P document 143, "Falkland Islands," November 19, 1942, box 57.

control after the war. He hoped London might accept some undefined face-saving measures in the region and that Lend-Lease aid might provide some leverage.¹²⁴

* * *

By the spring of 1943 the planners began to disagree over whether, as Welles argued, trusteeships should cover all colonial areas or whether, as Hull argued, they should be limited to former mandates and other territories controlled by the Axis powers. All of the planners agreed with Welles that the mandates system had failed and that all responsibilities for the mandated territories should be transferred to the new international organization. Where they disagreed was over the future status of the rest of the European possessions.

While the planners may have wanted to supplant the European colonial dependencies, they realized that not all areas were ready for independence and they could think of no viable alternative to European rule in the short-term. Hull's position that trusteeships be limited to the mandated territories and Axis dependencies gradually gained support. "It was assumed," one of the political subcommittee's "top secret" summaries concluded, "that the United States would favor the general principle of international trusteeship ... [but] would not seek to destroy any existing empire or to dictate to other countries concerning colonial administration." The postwar planning committees had thus significantly retreated from their original aims for trusteeship, but they still sought to erect numerous regional supervisory councils which would oversee the gradual emancipation of the colonial world.¹²⁵

By April 1943 the committee's enthusiasm for trusteeships had noticeably abated. In the wake of Eden's visit the planners confronted the sobering realization that it would be difficult to impose their plans for trusteeship on the European empires. The planners also feared pursuing policies that might ultimately undermine the allied war effort. Furthermore,

¹²⁴ PIO minutes 10, October 9, 1942; P minutes 34, November 21, 1942.

¹²⁵ P document 123, "International Trusteeship," box 56.

Secretary Hull attended the meetings with greater frequency now, and his allies in the planning process, such as Leo Pasvolsky, Harley Notter and Republican Congressman Charles Eaton of New Jersey, felt less inclined to hold their tongues. Hull moved to halt Welles's expansive schemes for colonial independence and trusteeship, which the secretary thought "extreme." Hull instead favored a vague joint Anglo-American statement on colonialism along with a curious and unexplained proposal he called "international cooperation." He reaffirmed his aim of narrowing the goals of the planning committees by applying trusteeship only to the former league mandates and Axis territories. In this, he was seconded by many of the other planners.¹²⁶

But Welles continued to push for his version of the trusteeship plan. When he presented his draft proposal for trusteeship to the political subcommittee on April 10 Representative Eaton facetiously criticized the document as a "wonderful and idealistic scheme." Secretary Hull endorsed Eaton's criticism by pointing out that the American public would balk at the costs of Welles's plan. But Welles defended the proposal by reminding the planners that the United States would probably limit its own trusteeship responsibilities to the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific. He added that the trusteeship plan was predicated upon the creation of an international organization and the revenues of dependent areas would go toward trusteeship expenses and that the principal administrative powers in a given territory would most likely cover other costs. He underscored his belief that trusteeship would ensure future world peace and reminded the committee that the British Labour Party and the British Liberal Party had called for a program akin to his trusteeship plan. Both British proposals, Welles added, went well beyond many of the suggestions in his own draft plan. He also warned that many of the peoples of the colonial world had already demanded the complete overthrow of European rule. If the United States did

¹²⁶ FO 371/31527 Halifax to F.O. December 12, 1942 and December 26, 1942, PRO; Donald Wright, "That Hell Hole of Yours," *American Heritage*, vol. 46, no. 6 (October 1995), 58; Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. II, 1638-1639; Notter memorandum to Hull on trusteeship, April 15, 1943, box 190, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

not back his trusteeship proposals, Welles added, the dependent peoples of the world might seek postwar guidance from China, or even worse, the Soviet Union. He also darkly hinted that there were perilous political forces already at work throughout the colonial world which would lead to instability after the war unless Washington took daring measures.¹²⁷

Welles reminded the members that colonialism had contributed to the tensions which had led to the last two wars. He explained to them what he believed were the sources of instability and war in the colonial world: "In the first place, there is the unsatisfactory manner in which the mandate system has worked. In the second place, in various parts of the world there are many people who are clamoring for freedom from the colonial powers. Unless some system can be worked out to help these peoples, we shall be encountering trouble. It would be like failing to install a safety valve and then waiting for the boiler to blow up."¹²⁸

In a final effort to defend his trusteeship plan, Welles emphasized that it would not be extended to American territories such as the Virgin Islands, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Welles even sought to temper his previous views by telling the members that in some cases trusteeship might effectively impede potentially destabilizing independence movements.¹²⁹

Despite Welles's efforts, it soon became apparent that the initial enthusiasm for the trusteeship plan had ebbed. In some ways the argument over trusteeship had only further divided the department. Hull sought merely to press the colonial powers to pledge themselves to eventual independence and to observe particular standards of conduct in their colonies. The secretary thought this course offered a more realistic approach than those ideas which had been discussed in the committee meetings during the period of Welles's ascendancy. Hull believed that "we could not press [the British] too far with

127 P minutes 51, April 10, 1943.

128 Ibid.

129 Ibid. Welles singled out areas such as the Belgian Congo, where, he added, it might take more than a hundred years for home rule. When New York Representative Sol Bloom, Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, said it might take "more than a thousand years" before the Belgian Congo would be prepared for independence, Welles agreed and added that in cases such as Portuguese Timor it might take a thousand years.

regard to the Southwest Pacific in view of the fact that we were seeking the closest possible cooperation with them in Europe. We could not alienate them in the Orient and expect to work with them in Europe."¹³⁰

While Welles thought Hull's views reminiscent of the failed mandates scheme, he himself had been steadily backing away from some of the more radical positions he had initially taken. Many of the discussions on the planning committees had contributed in part to altering his views, as did the stubbornness of the British, who continued to demonstrate that they would fight any American initiatives in the colonial sphere that threatened the war effort. After the war Welles lamented that at the time "no step could be taken politically, however beneficial it might promise to be later on, if it jeopardized or threatened to postpone victory."¹³¹

Hull's views ultimately prevailed. When the political subcommittee released a summary of its conclusions on trusteeship in July 1943, it recommended its application only to the present mandated territories and Axis dependencies.¹³² After Welles's resignation in August 1943, the state department encountered further opposition to the trusteeship plan from within the United States government, as well as from the British. The U.S. military chiefs argued that national security requirements demanded that the United States keep the Pacific mandates, rather than have them placed in trusteeship. Hull, who had always been ambivalent about the more radical aspects of the proposal, had long concluded that the whole program was tainted by Welles's involvement.¹³³ The administration made a number of efforts to alter trusteeship, but the plan as it existed in Welles's original concept continued to lose support. By late 1944 the United States demonstrated its retreat when it notified the British, French and Dutch that it would not oppose

¹³⁰ Hull, Memoirs, 1599.

¹³¹ Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper, 1950), 133.

¹³² P document 236, "International Trusteeship: Summary of Conclusions," July 2, 1943, box 57; P document 240, "Official Statements and Views Pertaining to the Administration of Dependent Areas After the War," July 12, 1943, box 57; Cordell Hull, Memoirs, vol. II, 1638-1639.

¹³³ Trusteeship received little attention at the October 1943 Moscow Conference, at which Hull was the chief U.S. delegate.

a reimposition of European control in Southeast Asia.¹³⁴ The U.S. thus weighed in against support for independence or even trusteeships for much of the colonial Far East.¹³⁵ The U.S. military chiefs had long viewed the European colonial empires as sources of international stability, which would in some ways be supportive of American strategic interests around the world in the postwar era. This view gained strength as the war neared its end.¹³⁶

* * *

The upheavals of the Second World War did not resolve the issue of the future status of the colonial empires. In the minds of many senior American officials, Cold War considerations would begin to take precedence over the national aspirations of the colonial peoples.¹³⁷ As for the Pacific mandated islands that the United States picked up at the end of the war, they largely turned out to be burdens rather than strategic assets. The ring of U.S. strategic bases in Asia and the Pacific proved useless when the United States sought to extend its hegemony to the Asiatic mainland in places like Korea and Vietnam. As for the European empires, they would later be dismantled for reasons that had nothing to do with American pressure.¹³⁸

Furthermore, Welles's ideas on trusteeship failed to anticipate what would happen in the postwar colonial world, where the rapid pace of decolonization would overwhelm careful

¹³⁴ Shortly before the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, Harry Hopkins reassured British officials that Washington's plans for reform in the colonial world extended only to the economic field. At Dumbarton Oaks the U.S. proposal on colonial matters made no reference to independence and at the second Quebec Conference the American Joint Chiefs told the British that Washington would allow Britain to reclaim Singapore and help the Dutch return to the East Indies. See Walter LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," *American Historical Review*, vol. 80, no. 5 (December 1975), 1289-1290.

¹³⁵ The case has been made that the trusteeship plan might have averted postwar conflict in places like French Indochina. See, for example, Gary R. Hess, "Franklin Roosevelt and Indochina," *Journal of American History*, vol. 59, no. 2 (September 1972), 366-367.

¹³⁶ Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. II, 1234-1238, 1304-1305; Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 225, 230.

¹³⁷ For example, as Roosevelt retreated from his commitment to trusteeship he accepted the French returning to Indochina. De Gaulle effectively played upon these American fears when he told Jefferson Caffrey that France might "fall into the Russian orbit but we hope you do not push us into it." See LaFeber, "Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina," 1293.

¹³⁸ Louis, *Imperialism at Bay*, 567-568.

planning for the future. Welles also failed to give adequate consideration to the problems of underdevelopment that would plague much of the post-colonial world. Hull had argued that the dependent areas would never raise sufficient capital to support themselves and modernize their economies. Welles gave little thought to the possibility that the European colonial empires occasionally served as stabilizing forces throughout the world. Neither did he understand that the void created by decolonization might not be filled by the United States. By the late 1950s the United States would be confronted with an unmanageable crisis in the former colonial world, one in which one of Welles's successors as under secretary would complain that in the early 1960s American foreign policy found itself "focused on problems involving the bits and pieces of disintegrating empires."¹³⁹

In some cases, the very chaotic revolutions and instability Welles sought to avoid came about due to the rapid nature of decolonization. During the war, Welles spoke with great moral fervor about self-determination, independence and liberation in the colonial world. But decolonization often led to instability in the years that followed and the paramount concern for order became the basis upon which policy toward nationalist movements would be constructed. Thus, concerns about self-determination and nationalism would take a back seat to strategic concerns in the context of the Cold War struggle. No longer would there be talk of promoting change and upheaval throughout the world. When America became a superpower and hegemon it also became the chief defender of the global status quo, a prospect Welles might have found odd in the midst of his optimism in 1942.

¹³⁹ George Ball, The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs (New York: Norton, 1982), 175.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Limits of Universalism: American Postwar Planning for Eastern Europe and the USSR 1941-1943

Welles's efforts to shape the administration's postwar designs for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe amply demonstrated the difficulties of applying Wilsonian principles, such as self-determination and free trade, all over the world. Welles believed postwar planning should be predicated upon the fact that in the years after the war the United States and the Soviet Union would be the world's two greatest powers. But Welles had been alarmed by Moscow's territorial ambitions in Poland, Finland and the Baltic states between 1939 and 1940, and after leading the planners in the spring of 1942 on a survey of Soviet territorial aims, Welles more fully understood that the Russians would be in control of vast territory in Eastern Europe at the end of the war. While he concluded that Moscow's aims would clash with the principles of the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms, he continued to believe that entente with Moscow remained paramount to all other considerations. After all, good relations with Moscow would be absolutely necessary to bring about the kind of world order he desired. With Britain so weakened by the war, and China still an uncertain player in the realm of world and regional leadership, an understanding with Moscow seemed vitally important.¹

As the planners continued their investigations, Welles grew more concerned that his desired new order hinged not so much on the creation of an international organization, or even upon the threat of upheaval in the colonial world, but rather on what the Kremlin would insist upon to achieve its security and how these Russian aims could be reconciled with

¹ Eduard Mark, among others, has made the case that from the moment it became apparent that the USSR would survive the war, officials in Washington anticipated Moscow's hegemony in Eastern Europe. Mark writes: "American efforts in Europe, consequently, represented neither a utopian scheme to rid the continent of spheres of influence nor a Faustian bid to dominate it, but a search for stable spheres of a kind consonant with the interests of the principal victors of World War II." See Eduard Mark, "American Policy toward Eastern Europe and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1946: An Alternative Interpretation," *The Journal of American History*, vol. 68, no.2 (September 1981), 314.

Washington's. Welles and his fellow planners anticipated that difficulties might arise between Moscow and Washington, but their inability to find some way to resolve the impending crisis in Eastern Europe illustrated their failure to reconcile Washington's and Moscow's aims. The frustration Welles and the planners faced underscored the futility of extending their principles everywhere in the world. But at the same time it also demonstrated the willingness of U.S. officials to look the other way when faced with the evasion of their principles and foreshadowed the uncertainty of the American response to Soviet power in the years after Welles's resignation.

* * *

Throughout the 1930s Welles held ambivalent views toward the Soviet Union. While he was often dubious of Moscow's sincerity, he at times supported closer relations, if only to promote U.S. interests. Throughout his career, for example, Welles would often seek ways the Soviet Union might aid American interests in the Far East. As early as two months before the first inaugural Welles emphasized to Roosevelt the possibility of using Russian recognition as a means of putting subtle pressure on Japan, which was then engaged in the conquest of Manchuria.² Welles acknowledged that the Soviet Union had been prescient about the Nazi threat during the mid-1930s and he thought Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet foreign minister (1930-1939) and later ambassador to Washington (1941-1943), was one of the more capable statesmen of the war. Like Welles, Litvinov had sought to organize an international conference in 1938 to avert the world crisis. Curiously, despite Welles's later praise, he opposed Litvinov's plan at the time. Welles did not believe Washington should put much

² Welles to Roosevelt, January 12, 1933, box 149, folder 1, Welles papers, FDR Library. By the end of 1933, Roosevelt formally recognized the Soviet regime, sending William C. Bullitt as ambassador. For an account that Moscow and Washington came together out of mutual distrust of Japan, see Robert L. Morris, "A Reassessment of Russian Recognition," *The Historian*, vol. 24, no. 4 (August 1962), 480-482. For an account arguing that Welles opposed Russian recognition see Robert E. Bowers, "Hull, Russian Subversion in Cuba, and Recognition of the U.S.S.R.," *The Journal of American History*, vol. 53, no. 3 (December 1956), 542-554.

stock in a plan devised in the Kremlin.³

At the same time, Welles had poor relations with the state department's Russian specialists, led by Robert Kelley, the head of the Eastern Europe Division (1926-1937) and an admirer of Czarist Russia who had supervised the training of George Kennan, Loy Henderson and Charles Bohlen. During these years the administration contained two antagonistic camps regarding Russia. One side, consisting of Kelley, Kennan and Henderson, had been schooled in the environs of Riga during the period of non-recognition, studying Russian language and culture and socializing with Russian exiles, Baltic peoples and other opponents of the Soviet system.⁴ The other faction consisted of Welles, U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Joseph Davies (1937-1938), Henry Wallace and Eleanor Roosevelt. Welles believed that despite all of the difficulties, Washington should seek better relations with Moscow and attempt to work out the smoothest possible relationship. Shortly after Davies's appointment, Welles told the new ambassador that "friendly relations and cooperation should be restored particularly in view of the Chinese-Japanese situation and the possibility of world war starting in Europe."⁵ Ambassador Davies agreed, and was subject to constant criticism from the Riga camp, who believed Welles and Davies to be naive.⁶

Loy Henderson, who had served William Bullitt in Moscow, often as his acting chief of mission, warned his fellow Russianists that Welles was "extremely able and ambitious" and "impatient with any person or thing that might restrict his

³ Memorandum of conversation, by Welles, March 23, 1938, FRUS, The Soviet Union, 1938, 541; Sumner Welles, The Time for Decision (New York: Harper, 1944), 318-320. He also notably ignored Moscow during his 1940 mission to Europe. Welles instead arranged to have Soviet specialist George Kennan meet him in Italy to offer advice. But upon arriving in Italy, Welles ignored Kennan and left him stranded in Rome. George Kennan, Memoirs: 1925-1950 (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 115-116.

⁴ Thomas R. Maddux, "Watching Stalin Maneuver Between Hitler and the West: American Diplomats and Soviet Diplomacy, 1934-1939," Diplomatic History, vol. 1, no. 2 (Spring, 1977), 142-143; Daniel F. Harrington, "Kennan, Bohlen, and the Riga Axioms," Diplomatic History, vol. 2, no. 4 (Fall, 1978), 424.

⁵ Thomas Maddux, Years of Estrangement: American Relations with the Soviet Union, 1933-1941 (Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1980), 90.

⁶ There may have been some truth in that charge. During Davies's tenure, which coincided with the height of the Moscow show trials, he sent Welles numerous "backchannel" communications, recounting his "great admiration" for Stalin and praising the Soviet dictator for having done so much "for the benefit of common men." Davies to Welles, June 28, 1937, Welles to Davies, July 23, 1937, box 40, folder 5, Welles papers, FDRL; Davies to Welles, March 1, 1938, box 45, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL; "Interview with Stalin and Molotov," by Davies, June 9, 1938, box 166, USSR files, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

activities or block his advancement." Robert Kelley would discover this for himself in June 1937, when Welles, reorganizing the department, summoned Kelley to his office to inform him that his job had been abolished, exiling him to a posting in Turkey. "We have been liquidated," Kelley lamented to his colleagues.⁷

The Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of August 1939 had shattered most good will Welles had for the Russians. Hitler's "carrot" for Stalin in the Pact included an opportunity for the Soviet Union to recover the western territories of the old Russian Empire lost during the First World War. These included Estonia and Latvia, the Rumanian province of Bessarabia, and dominance in Finland (but not at this stage Lithuania). Stalin also made substantial territorial gains at Poland's expense.⁸ Welles summed up the administration's disapproval of Moscow's aggression against Poland during a tense meeting with Soviet Ambassador Constantine Oumansky (1939-1941), who brought along the new counselor at the Soviet embassy, Andrei Gromyko. Welles, angry about the Soviet invasion of Poland, sat in sullen silence as Oumansky nervously sought to make conversation. After the meeting Welles reported that he had deliberately "adopted a completely negative attitude throughout the conversation, making it necessary for the Ambassador to take the initiative in any topics he brought up, even though conversation lapsed upon occasion for as much as a minute or two."⁹

When the "Winter War" between the U.S.S.R. and Finland began on November 30, 1939, Welles's mood darkened further, and for a time he considered recommending the severing of diplomatic relations with the Kremlin. Moscow's subsequent actions in August 1940, absorbing the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, also angered Welles and further

⁷ H.W. Brands, Inside the Cold War: Loy Henderson and the Rise of the American Empire 1918-1961 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 78-79, 111; Daniel Yergin, Shattered Peace: the Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 34.

⁸ Memorandum by Welles, November 17, 1939, FRUS, The Soviet Union, 1939, 794-795; T document 228, "Soviet Rule in Eastern Poland, 1939-1941," January 23, 1943, box 62, Notter Files, Record Group 59, National Archives [all planning documents and minutes are from the Notter files, Record Group 59, National Archives, unless otherwise noted].

⁹ Memorandum by Welles, November 17, 1939, FRUS, The Soviet Union, 1939, 794-795.

soured Washington's relations with the Soviets. Welles saw the terms of incorporation as totally contrary to international law. Only a year before, the Baltic states had been admitted to the League of Nations, thus confirming their sovereign status. But the Nazi-Soviet Pact justified their disappearance on the grounds that they were geographically and historically part of Russia. Fraudulent elections held in each country in mid-July had returned majorities which immediately called for their admission into the Soviet Union.¹⁰ In response, the State Department froze the assets of the Baltic nations and Welles issued a statement to the press calling the elections "devious," adding that the tiny Baltic nations had been "deliberately annihilated" by a larger and more powerful Soviet Union which practiced "predatory activities" backed by "the use of force"¹¹

Welles advised the president that while there was little they could do about the Soviet takeover of the Baltic states, they should refuse to acknowledge its legality by continuing to recognize the Baltic diplomatic missions and consulates.¹² United States policy toward incorporation (as publicly articulated by Welles himself) was clear: the United States would not recognize the disappearance of the Baltic states and would remain "opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one State, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak."¹³

To give substance to U.S. disapproval of Soviet actions in the Baltic, the administration imposed a "moral embargo" to curtail trade with the Soviet Union. Washington placed numerous restrictions on imports from the Soviet Union and even more

¹⁰ Sumner Welles, The Time for Decision, 169; "Statement respecting the Baltic Republics by Acting Secretary of State Welles, July 23, 1940," Department of State Bulletin, 1940, III, 48. For the admission of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union see, for example, David Kirby, "Incorporation: the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact," in Graham Smith, ed., The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 78-80. Stalin seems to have concluded that mere protectorate status for the Baltic states did not meet Moscow's security needs vis a vis Germany. See, for example, Jonathan Haslam, "Soviet War-Aims," in Ann Lane and Howard Temperley, eds., The Rise and Fall of the Grand Alliance: 1941-1945 (London: Macmillan, 1995), 29.

¹¹ Press statement by Welles, July 23, 1940, FRUS, 1940, I, 401-402.

¹² Welles to Roosevelt, August 19, 1940, FRUS, I, 1940, 424-425.

¹³ Statement by Welles, July 23, 1940, FRUS, 1940, I, 401-402. Welles had apparently forgotten his proconsulships in the Dominican Republic and Cuba in 1933.

stringent prohibitions were placed on American exports to the U.S.S.R. Roosevelt also considered breaking off diplomatic relations. He had earlier complained to Welles about Moscow's "downright rudeness" and suggested Welles tell Oumansky that "the President honestly wonders whether the Soviet Government considers it worthwhile to continue diplomatic relations." By the summer of 1940, relations between the two nations were at their lowest ebb since formal recognition in 1933.¹⁴

Welles remained angry at Moscow's indifference to international standards and world opinion. To Welles, Moscow's desire for security and territory on its western frontier flew in the face of Wilsonian strictures about territorial aggrandizement and self-determination. Welles assumed the "moral embargo" would influence Soviet behavior and throughout the war he believed the United States so economically strong and Moscow so desperate for U.S. aid that such sanctions could influence the Kremlin's aims. Welles also thought relations between Washington and Moscow were not completely irreparable. He believed German expansionism far and away a greater threat to U.S. interests than Soviet aims and he hoped the U.S.S.R. could provide a counterweight to Germany. He suspected that the nonaggression pact between Moscow and Berlin was incompatible with the long term aims of both nations and he became alert to the prospect of dissension between them. Furthermore, he thought France's abrupt defeat in June 1940 would alarm Stalin. After a meeting with British Ambassador Lord Lothian during France's collapse, Welles noted that "while there was no indication that the Soviet Union was as yet prepared to break away from her agreements with Germany, there was a very clear indication that increasing apprehension existed on the part of Mr. Molotov and of the Soviet Government with regard to the unexpected German victories and the strengthening of Germany's position vis-a-vis Russia as a result thereof."¹⁵

Welles broached with the president the possibility of opening discussions with Ambassador Oumansky as a way to offer

¹⁴ Roosevelt to Hull and Welles, December 22, 1939, FRUS, The Soviet Union, 1939, 868-869; Welles memorandum of conversation with Oumansky, July 27, 1940, FRUS, 1940, III, 327-331.

¹⁵ Welles, The Time For Decision, 169-171; Welles memorandum of conversation, June 18, 1940, FRUS, 1940, vol. III, 321-322.

subtle inducements to improve relations with the Russians and to explore the depths of the relationship between Moscow and Berlin. Welles expected no immediate shifts in Soviet policy, but may only have sought, as Thomas Maddux has argued, to keep Stalin "on the fence" by deterring Moscow from any alliance with Japan, while at the same time encouraging any possibility of friction between the Soviet Union and Germany.¹⁶ Welles may also have hoped that the establishment of high-level personal contacts would reassure Moscow of Washington's good faith. Furthermore, with France now out of the war and Britain isolated and cut off from the continent, Welles concluded that whatever Washington's true feelings about the regime in Moscow, the Soviet Union offered the only hope of defeating Germany on the continent.¹⁷

Welles would hold twenty-seven meetings with Oumansky in the year between the fall of France and the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union. Sometimes their discussions would drag on for many hours, covering issues as specific as Moscow's requests for machine tools, and addressing matters as large as the balance of power. The Welles-Oumansky contacts would have important consequences for later Soviet-American relations during the war, as their meetings would help lay the groundwork for the Grand Alliance. Welles also hoped such contacts might enable the United States to conduct detailed discussions with Soviet officials without the interference of London. Welles remained suspicious that the British would seek agreements with Moscow which would later prove embarrassing to the United States. He reasoned that contact with the Russians would make it more difficult for London to go behind Washington's back in any attempt to cut a deal with Moscow. He also sought to use the talks as a means to avoid a complete break in relations between Moscow and Washington. Welles urged caution when Roosevelt considered closing Soviet consulates in San Francisco and Los Angeles and imposing additional restrictions on Soviet diplomatic activity in Washington. Welles told the president that such actions

¹⁶ Thomas Maddux, Years of Estrangement, 128-129.

¹⁷ Welles memorandum, August 19, 1940, FRUS, 1940, vol. I, 424-425; Welles memorandum, December 10, 1940, FRUS, 1940, vol. I, 534-535.

"would render futile the efforts which we are making just now in a continuing series of negotiations that are going on with the Soviet Ambassador to remove some of the obstacles that might permit an improvement of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union." Welles also sought to pressure the Soviets to adhere to international standards. He thought he could achieve that aim by continuing the dialogue with Oumansky while maintaining recognition of the Baltic missions and consulates and keeping up the pressure of the "moral embargo."¹⁸

Initially, Welles and Oumansky discussed the Kremlin's desire to obtain export licenses for strategic items. Welles bluntly told Oumansky it would be difficult to fulfill any of his requests. Numerous points of contention existed such as U.S. outrage over the nonaggression pact with Berlin, the subsequent division of spoils in Poland, Russian absorption of the Baltic states and the Winter War against Finland. Welles told Oumansky that while their two nations might disagree over particular issues such as the treatment of the Baltic peoples, they should "agree to disagree but that they would endeavor, so far as possible, to eliminate other points of disagreement between them."¹⁹

Welles's discussions with Oumansky soon provoked opposition from the state department's Russian specialists, who feared that an "accommodationist" like Welles would concede too much to the Russians. "I do not need to labor the point with you that this is the wrong approach to these people," Loy Henderson wrote to Lawrence Steinhardt, the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow (1939-1941). "[The Russians] are realists, if ever there are any realists in this world ... I personally have some grave doubts that our policy of so-called appeasement will get us any place." Welles, sensing a desire on the part of Henderson and Kelley to sabotage the talks, sought to keep them in the dark about the substance of the negotiations.²⁰

Welles also emphasized to Oumansky the common interests of

¹⁸ Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Oumansky, August 1, 1940, *FRUS*, 1940, III, 340-348; Welles to Roosevelt, August 19, 1940, *FRUS*, I, 424-425.

¹⁹ Welles, *The Time For Decision*, 169-171; Welles memorandum of conversation with Oumansky, July 27, 1940, *FRUS*, 1940, III, 327-331; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Oumansky, August 7, 1940, *FRUS*, 1940, III, 358-361.

²⁰ Brands, *Inside the Cold War*, 96-97.

the United States and the Soviet Union in the Far East. He told Oumansky that Germany's pact with Japan posed a serious threat to the security of the USSR. He explicitly played the "Japan card" with the Russians, emphasizing that Japanese domination of China and the spread of Japanese hegemony in the region were contrary to the interests of both Washington and Moscow.²¹ The Welles-Oumansky talks succeeded in offering Soviet officials evidence of the administration's willingness to seek better relations, paving the way for the United States to one day grant Lend-Lease aid to Moscow. For the Russians, the talks proved fruitful when Welles informed Oumansky in January 1941 that the United States had decided to lift the year-long "moral embargo."²²

Around the same time, Welles obtained evidence from a confidential informant and other intelligence sources that proved "beyond the shadow of a doubt" that a German attack on Russia would be launched in the coming spring. He convinced Roosevelt and Hull that the information should be passed along to Oumansky.²³ In March, Welles received a memorandum from a Greek diplomat in Washington giving further evidence that Germany would soon attack Russia. The following day, he provided Oumansky with this new evidence. Oumansky looked visibly stricken. "I fully realize the gravity of the message you have given me," the ambassador replied. "My government will be very grateful for your confidence and I will inform it immediately of our conversation."²⁴ In subsequent meetings Welles continued to press his point that Washington and Moscow had a commonality of interests in seeing Hitler stopped, telling Oumansky that the Axis invasion of the Balkans in early April 1941 "must inevitably prove to be profoundly disquieting to the Soviet Government."²⁵

The Russians did little with these and other warnings

²¹ Welles memorandum of conversation with Oumansky, January 15, 1941, box 166, USSR files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles memorandum of conversation with Oumansky, March 20, 1941, box 166, USSR files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

²² Welles to Roosevelt, January 9, 1941, FRUS, 1941, I, 685-686; Brands, Inside the Cold War, 97; Welles to Oumansky, January 21, 1941, FRUS, I, 696.

²³ Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision, 170.

²⁴ Memorandum by Welles, March 20, 1941, FRUS, 1941, I, 723; Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision, 171.

²⁵ Memorandum by Welles, April 9, 1941, FRUS, 1941, I, 735-736.

about the impending German attack. Stalin may have thought that he could continue to finesse the diplomatic situation in Europe indefinitely, or perhaps the Russians thought that such warnings were merely a western attempt to trick Moscow into a war with Germany.²⁶ When the German attack finally occurred on June 22, 1941, Welles, serving as acting secretary of state, sensed an opportunity to underscore to the American people the radically changed nature of the war. He and Roosevelt sought to expand America's role as the German threat increased and wanted publicly to promise aid to the Soviet Union.²⁷ One day before the attack, the department's division of European affairs had prepared a memorandum outlining what American policy should be in the event of war between Russia and Germany. The division continued to take a cautious attitude toward Russia, warning that the United States should make no promise of aid. "We should steadfastly adhere to the line that the Soviet Union is fighting Germany does not mean that it is defending, struggling for, or adhering to, the principles in international relations which we are supporting."²⁸

Welles did not share the division's cautious views, despite the fact that many analysts gave Moscow little more than three weeks to three months of resistance. On the morning of June 23, he met with Roosevelt in the president's bedroom to show him a draft of his proposed statement on the U.S. reaction to the German attack. Roosevelt approved Welles's suggestions: the United States would release Soviet economic credits and promise American aid under its policy of giving assistance to any nation fighting Axis aggression. These decisions would prove significant to the outcome of the war and, in particular,

26 Lloyd C. Gardner, Spheres of Influence: The Great Powers Partition Europe, From Munich to Yalta (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1993), 87. Stalin's suspicions perhaps had some basis in fact. Only a few hours after the German invasion of Russia, Halifax told Welles that he felt optimistic that if Germany quickly defeated Russia "Hitler would then present a plausible peace proposal based upon the fact that he had defeated communism and established a new order in Europe and was no longer anxious to continue hostilities against Great Britain, or undertake them with the United States." See memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, June 22, 1941, box 163, Great Britain files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL. For the view that the German invasion did not catch Stalin completely by surprise, see, for example, Louis Rotundo, "Stalin and the Outbreak of War in 1941," Journal of Contemporary History, vol. 24, no. 2 (April 1989), 277-299.

27 Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision, 171-172.

28 "Policy with Regard to the Soviet Union in the Case of the Outbreak of War Between the Soviet Union and Germany," by the Division of European Affairs, June 21, 1941, FRUS, 1941, I, 766-767.

to wartime US-Soviet relations.²⁹

"If any further proof could conceivably be required of the real purposes and projects of the present leaders of Germany for world domination," Welles told a packed press conference later that day, "it is now furnished by Hitler's treacherous attack upon Soviet Russia."³⁰

In Washington, skepticism deepened over the prospects for the Soviet Union's survival. Within the state department, the Russianists remained doubtful of Moscow's chances and of Russia's suitability as a prospective recipient of U.S. aid. Throughout much of the nation Welles's remarks met with outright hostility. "The Reds," exclaimed an editorial in Hearst's New York Journal American, "are now a greater menace than ever to our well-being because of the virtual endorsement of Russia as a 'democratic' ally of the USA by the mouthpiece of the administration, Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles." Ohio's Robert Taft told the Senate: "The victory of Communism in the world would be far more dangerous to the United States than a victory of Fascism," and Senator Burton Wheeler of Montana added, "I don't think the American people will stand for us to tie up with the Communists. . . . Now we can just let Joe Stalin and the other dictators fight it out." John T. Flynn of the America First Committee declared, "If Germany wins, Russia will go Fascist. If Russia wins, Germany will go Communist. There is no chance for us at all. The question now is, are we going to fight to make Europe safe for Communism?"³¹

Welles nevertheless sought to assist the Russian war effort in every way he could, ensuring that Moscow's orders for war materials were expedited quickly and publicly proclaiming America's solidarity with the USSR. When Oumansky presented Welles with extensive shopping lists for war material, Welles

29 William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Undeclared War: 1940-1941 (New York: Harper, 1953), 336-343.

30 Welles to Steinhardt, June 23, 1941, FRUS, 1941, I, 767-768; original drafts of Welles's statement on German invasion of Russia, June 23, 1941, box 166, USSR files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

31 New York Journal American, August 4, 1941; Langer and Gleason, The Undeclared War, 542. Missouri Senator Harry S. Truman added: "If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that way let them kill as many as possible . . ." Vojtech Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare, and the Politics of Communism, 1941-1945 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 39, 22.

sped the requests to the appropriate departments and agencies.³² Welles became progressively more concerned about good relations with the Kremlin than about relations with Whitehall, primarily because the aims of the Soviet Union loomed more important to the cause of future world stability. Relations between Washington and Moscow remained relatively good during Welles's years at state partly because he and Roosevelt made an effort to treat the Russians as equals, but also because some of the difficulties that would come to strain the relationship, such as the Baltic states and Poland, had not yet come to a boil. Central to the strategy of making Moscow an equal partner was Welles's inclination to address Russian aims by showing that he understood and respected Moscow's interests. Welles also was particularly anxious to secure Stalin's approval of his postwar plans. To Welles's mind, Moscow had not yet taken actions that blatantly contradicted the spirit of the Atlantic Charter and he held out hope that he and the planners might come up with a means to redirect or moderate Moscow's aims.³³

* * *

Differences between Washington and London over how to respond to Russian territorial demands often set Welles at odds with British officials. Welles feared that any attempt by London to meet Russian demands in either Poland or the Baltic states would undermine the chances for the peace to be founded upon the principles embodied in the Atlantic Charter. But the British had their own ideas about how the Russians should be approached. Two months before Barbarossa, Foreign Secretary Eden had raised the possibility of recognizing Stalin's recent

32 "Why Help the Soviet Union?" by Sumner Welles, American Federation Clubwoman, November 1941; Acheson to Welles, July 8, 1941, box 166, USSR files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; Oumansky to Welles, July 29, 1941, FRUS, 1941, I, 798.

33 "Why Help the Soviet Union?" by Sumner Welles, American Federation Clubwoman, November 1941; Welles to Loy Henderson, July 16, 1941, box 166, USSR files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Litvinov, February 23, 1942, February 23, 1942, FRUS, III, 693-694; P document 34, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," August 12, 1942, box 56, Notter files; "Free Access to Raw Materials," by Sumner Welles, October 8, 1942, speech files, box 195, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL; Political Subcommittee Minutes, meeting 4 (P minutes 4), March 28, 1942, Notter files, National Archives; Welles, The Time For Decision, 306-335.

territorial acquisitions obtained between 1939-1940,³⁴ and for some months after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Stalin sought British recognition of his new territorial spoils.³⁵ Churchill, Attlee and many other British officials were strongly resistant to any concessions and for a time London refused to recognize the USSR's new boundaries.³⁶

At the end of 1941, Stalin showed his hand to the British. He made clear that he strongly desired recognition of Russia's pre-Barbarossa frontiers, which included the Baltic states, a large portion of Poland, part of Finland and portions of Rumania such as Bukovina and Bessarabia.³⁷ Eden and other foreign office officials worried that Stalin might try to obtain a separate peace with Hitler and they sought concessions to Stalin to keep him in the war.³⁸ Eden wanted to smooth relations with Moscow as much as possible, but he realized that any attempt to appease the Kremlin would be difficult to reconcile with the principles enunciated in the Atlantic Charter. Eden anticipated that the Americans would oppose any settlement contrary to the spirit of the charter.³⁹

Another major obstacle to London's desire to mollify Stalin came from those nations that would have to make the actual concessions to the Russians in Eastern Europe. The

34 FO 371/29464 Eden to Cripps, April 17, 1941, British Public Record Office (PRO).

35 These initial war aims seem to have been concluded in vague outline in Stalin's mind during the period prior to Barbarossa. See, for example, Jonathan Haslam, "Soviet War Aims," in The Rise and Fall of the Grand Alliance, 1941-1945, Ann Lane and Howard Temperley, eds. (London: Macmillan, 1995), 22-39.

36 FO 371/32875 "Policy Toward Russia," by Anthony Eden, January 28, 1942, PRO; Memorandum of Conversation between Welles and Halifax, February 18, 1942, FRUS, III, 512-514; FO 371/32877, Eden to Churchill, March 6, 1942, PRO; Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Vol.II, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1970), 236.

37 "First," Stalin cabled Churchill, "there is no definite understanding between our two countries concerning war aims and plans for the post-war organization of peace, secondly, there is no treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain on mutual military aid against Hitler. Until understanding is reached on these two main points, not only will there be no clarity in Anglo-Soviet relations, but, if we are to speak frankly, there will be no mutual trust." See Gardner, Spheres of Influence, 108; and Albert Resis, "Spheres of Influence in Soviet Wartime Diplomacy," Journal of Modern History, vol. 53, no. 3 (September 1981), 431.

38 Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy, 239, 244; Vojtech Mastny, "Stalin and the Prospects of a Separate Peace in World War II," American Historical Review, vol. 77, no. 5 (December 1972), 1367. "On balance," Mastny writes, "any Russian efforts to come to terms with Germany before Stalingrad may be dismissed as mere products of anxious imagination." [page 1369]. For the view that Washington was more concerned about a separate peace than London, see, for example, Keith Sainsbury, Churchill and Roosevelt at War: the War they Fought and the Peace they Hoped to Make (London: Macmillan Press, 1994), 142.

39 FO 371/32875 "Policy Toward Russia," by Anthony Eden, January 28, 1942, PRO; Winant to Hull, January 19, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 494-503.

Poles, for example, presented a significant problem for British aims. Welles had become more involved with the Polish government-in-exile. He understood that Polish suspicions of Moscow's ambitions ran deep and were often stronger than their hatred of Germany.⁴⁰ Welles feared London would not hesitate to violate the principles of the Atlantic Charter in pursuit of an accord with Moscow. Prior to the German attack on the Soviet Union, Welles warned Halifax of the dangers of recognizing Soviet gains. Halifax stunned Welles with his cynicism toward the Baltic states. The ambassador described the Baltic region as populated with people whom he did not think deserved "very much respect or consideration," and whose fate might easily be exchanged for Stalin's future good will. Halifax reminded Welles that the Baltic peoples had only been independent of Russia for two decades, thus it would not much matter if they once again lost their freedom. Welles angrily responded that recognizing Stalin's "loot" was hardly distinguishable from accepting what Hitler had already done to a number of small nations in Europe. He asked the British diplomat if such views extended to Finland, which had also achieved its independence from Russia at the end of World War I. Halifax merely replied that he "did not have the same respect and regard for the Baltic peoples that he did for the Finnish people."⁴¹

Polish officials, fearing an anticipated British effort to reach an accord with Moscow, appealed to Welles for help, warning that territorial concessions to Stalin would be contrary to American ideals. The Polish ambassador in Washington, Jan Ciechanowski, told Welles he hoped "if and when Russia turned to the United States for assistance, [Washington would] insist that Russia agree to restore to the Polish people that portion of Polish territory which had been occupied by

⁴⁰ For example, prior to the Nazi-Soviet Pact in August 1939, Polish officials told Welles that they opposed the possibility of an Anglo-Russian joint guarantee for fear of Russian domination of Poland. Memorandum of conversation between Welles and Polish Ambassador Potocki, "General European Situation," August 22, 1939, box 165, Poland, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL. Poland and the other nations of Eastern and Central Europe had good reason to fear Russia's territorial appetite. The 1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the subsequent peace had led to the independence of much of Russia's western empire, with the loss of many of the Czarist possessions which had been amassed during the previous two centuries. Stalin had shown his desire to regain these territories in his 1939 pact with Hitler. See Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War, 5-11; Gardner, Spheres of Influence, 58-59.

⁴¹ Welles memorandum of conversation with Halifax, June 15, 1941, box 163, Great Britain files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

Russia as a result of the partition agreement with Germany."⁴²

Through his extensive meetings with Oumansky, Welles had already experienced the depth of Russian paranoia over its western frontier,⁴³ and Welles continued to worry that any Anglo-Soviet accord would violate several tenets of the Atlantic Charter. He nonetheless reassured the Poles that their territorial integrity and their right to self-determination would be upheld under the charter.⁴⁴ During subsequent meetings with Prime Minister Wladyslaw Sikorski, Ambassador Ciechanowski and Foreign Minister Edward Raczynski, the Poles warned Welles that Eden's efforts to sign a treaty with Stalin would completely undermine their independence. Sikorski warned Welles that if the British appeased the Kremlin by confirming Russia's pre-1941 borders, the traditional Russian hunger for territory would soon extend to the Balkans, Iran and even the Dardanelles. Welles told the Poles that the Atlantic Charter's call for disarmament of the aggressor nations, particularly Germany, would provide Moscow with sufficient security to avoid Soviet meddling in Poland or outright territorial annexations. The pace of events seemed to dictate otherwise, while Welles clung to the naive belief that the Atlantic Charter could govern the behavior of Moscow. Welles continued to believe that the great power politics of the past would disappear in the new order, while regionalism would enable the great powers to eschew formal spheres of influence.⁴⁵

While British officials hoped Roosevelt would accept an

⁴² Welles memorandum of conversation with Ciechanowski, June 26, 1941, FRUS, 1941, I, 237-238. Loy Henderson, analyzing a Moscow meeting between the Polish Prime Minister General Wladyslaw Sikorski and Stalin in December 1941, further warned Welles that a "number of outstanding difficulties between Sikorski and Stalin were apparently found to be insoluble. Discussion of some of them was postponed to the indefinite future, others were left in an unclarified state and will undoubtedly give rise to considerable friction." Henderson to Welles, April 8, 1942, box 165, Poland files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁴³ When, in the spring of 1941, Welles broached the possibility of extending Red Cross relief to Soviet-occupied Eastern Poland, Oumansky flatly rejected such aid by charging that Moscow could not allow any "foreign agents" in Soviet-controlled territory. Welles indignantly replied that Oumansky's recalcitrance would hardly "promote a closer interchange" between Washington and Moscow. See Welles memorandum of conversation with Oumansky, April 9, 1941, box 166, USSR files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁴⁴ Welles to Roosevelt, February 19, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 107-108; memorandum of conversation by Welles, March 6, 1942, FRUS, III, 1942, 114-116.

⁴⁵ Memorandum of conversation, by Welles, March 6, 1942, FRUS, III, 114-115; memorandum of Welles conversation with Sikorski, March 25, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 123-133; Sumner Welles, "Political Cooperation During the War - A Lost Opportunity," (c.1950) in Warren Kimball, ed., Franklin D. Roosevelt and the World Crisis, 1937-1945 (London: D.C. Heath and Company, 1973), 127-128.

accord with Moscow, they feared that Welles would pose a serious obstacle. Welles worried that the British desire for a treaty with Moscow would destroy the principle of self-determination and his continued discussions with Halifax did nothing to allay his concerns. He thought the British were reverting back to the "worst phase of the spirit of Munich." "Could it be conceivable," he asked Halifax in February 1942, "that any healthy and lasting world order could be created on a foundation which implied the utter ignoring of all of the principles of independence, liberty, and self-determination which were set forth in the Atlantic Charter? If that was the kind of world we had to look forward to, I did not believe that the people of the United States would wish to be parties thereto."⁴⁶ Some attention must be paid, he argued, to the wishes of the people in the areas in question. He was specifically concerned that a territorial agreement between Moscow and London so early in the war would be reminiscent of the secret treaties of the First World War. Why not let such issues wait until a peace conference, where everything could be put on the table? Welles told Halifax he "saw no hope for a stable and peaceful world in the future unless the new world order were built upon principles which could be maintained and to which adherence would be consistent. What peace could be envisaged if at this early stage in the war the British Government and ourselves agreed upon selling out millions of people who looked to us as their one hope in the future and if that new world order were based upon the domination of unwilling, resentful, and potent minorities by a state to which they would never give willing allegiance?"⁴⁷

Welles warned Halifax that the president thought the British were acting "provincial." Welles said he believed any secret agreement with the Russians would violate the "sacred principles" of the Atlantic Charter in a "devious fashion" and might provoke "the most serious crisis" in the relations between the United States and Great Britain. "The American people," Welles added, "would regard such an agreement as a

⁴⁶ Welles memorandum of conversation with Halifax, February 18, 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, III, 520.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

shameful violation of one of the chief objectives for which they believed they were fighting." Welles thought Halifax desired another Munich agreement -- this time with Moscow. "The Baltic States had in fact been independent and self-governing republics," Welles lectured Halifax, "it was unquestionably true that the vast majority of the peoples of those three nations did not desire domination, direct or indirect, by the Soviet Union; and the basic principles enunciated in the Atlantic Charter would be violated if either Great Britain or the United States secretly agreed now to turn these peoples over to Russian domination." Halifax became alarmed when Welles hinted that Roosevelt desired direct discussions with Stalin over these matters. Halifax instead sought to have Roosevelt talk to Ambassador Litvinov.⁴⁸

Welles bristled when Halifax charged that he was not being "realistic." To mollify Welles, Halifax handed him foreign office memoranda explaining that Stalin should be appeased to ensure a postwar "balance of power" in Europe. One memorandum accused Roosevelt of being "unduly optimistic in supposing that some other form of security in lieu of the reoccupation of the Baltic States will prove acceptable to M. Stalin." Halifax argued that Moscow had obtained territory in Finland, the Baltic states, Bessarabia and Bukovina through legitimate treaties and plebiscites, thus meeting the requirements of the Atlantic Charter. Halifax's documentation also warned that the alternative to appeasing Stalin would be "the establishment of Communistic Governments in the majority of European countries." Halifax and Eden sought to convince Welles that the Russians might seek a separate peace and would refuse to cooperate in the Far East. Furthermore, foreign office officials suggested that sacrificing the Baltic states might serve as a useful tradeoff for future Russian cooperation on territorial matters more vital to the British in the Dardanelles and the Persian Gulf.⁴⁹

Halifax's comments, coupled with the foreign office's

⁴⁸ Memorandum of conversation with Halifax, "British-Soviet negotiations," February 20, 1942, box 166, USSR files, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁴⁹ "Aide-Memoire by the British Foreign Office," February 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 524-525; "Substance of telegram "B" from the Foreign Office to Lord Halifax," February 1942, box 166, USSR files, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL.

memoranda, did nothing to reassure Welles. He thought the British approach smacked of the worst excesses of "old diplomacy," where the great powers parceled out territory without ever considering the aspirations of the peoples affected. Welles saw no contradiction between his criticism of the old diplomacy and his discussions in the planning committees about reordering the world in accord with U.S. interests. When Moscow or London sought to reshape borders and nations, it was the same old division of the spoils, but Welles assumed that the United States played a different role in world affairs, one unencumbered by self-interest and the desire for territorial aggrandizement. He believed the United States acted from mostly altruistic impulses. Eden's Private Secretary, Oliver Harvey, complained that Welles was "full of difficulties and objection" on the issue of Eastern Europe. Whenever Halifax approached Welles with proposals for concessions to Stalin, the under secretary protested that the principles of the Atlantic Charter must be strictly upheld. Halifax warned him that the ideals of the charter would not stand a chance in Eastern Europe after the war unless Moscow felt secure with its postwar neighbors. Welles blandly responded that an Anglo-American pledge to contain Germany at the end of the war might be sufficient to satisfy the Kremlin's security concerns.⁵⁰

In a meeting in early March 1942 with Welles and Admiral William Standley, the new U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union (February 1942–September 1943), Roosevelt warned that any secret agreements on the Baltic states "would be in violation not only of the Atlantic Charter but of the basic principles for which we are fighting." Roosevelt told Welles that he should "undertake to keep the British in line" and that perhaps after the war plebiscites might be held in the disputed territories to determine the true desires of the population. Roosevelt repeated to Welles that such difficulties might magically disappear if only a personal meeting could be arranged between himself and Stalin.⁵¹

⁵⁰ FO 371/32876, Halifax to Foreign Office, February 20, 1942, PRO; Anthony Eden, *The Eden Memoirs: The Reckoning* (London: Cassell, 1965), 323–24.

⁵¹ Memorandum of conversation between Welles, Standley and Roosevelt, March 5, 1942, box 166, USSR files, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL.

Eden explained to Churchill that London should immediately embark upon full discussions with Stalin on territorial matters: ". . . for such exchanges to take place with any chance of success," Eden wrote, "it is indispensable that we should first clear this frontier question out of the way. Otherwise Stalin will neither talk nor listen." Eden hoped that an immediate agreement on frontiers might limit Russian territorial ambitions later.⁵² Churchill subsequently cabled Roosevelt, suggesting that "the principles of the Atlantic Charter ought not be construed so as to deny to Russia the frontiers which she occupied when Germany attacked her. . . . I hope therefore that you will be able to give us a free hand to sign the treaty which Stalin desires as soon as possible." Yet officials in London remained concerned that Welles would play the spoiler. Thus Eden told Halifax to explain carefully to Welles that the war cabinet felt it "very desirable to have early discussions with the Russians on the whole conduct of the war in order, if possible, to find out what is on their minds. We are convinced that this will be impossible until Stalin's demands are got out of the way."⁵³

In early April, Welles expressed to Halifax his disappointment that the rough outlines of the agreement between London and Moscow "contained nothing in the nature of any safeguard for the peoples of the Baltic republics." Welles proposed that measures be taken -- such as population adjustments -- to protect those who did not wish to be incorporated into the Soviet empire. Welles said that such safeguards would be "not only far more nearly in accord with the spirit of the Atlantic Charter, but would in my judgement, make it far easier for American public opinion to attempt to tolerate the transaction involved in the proposed treaty."⁵⁴

The British decided that the need for an accord with Moscow was so great that they should comply with most of Stalin's territorial demands in the Baltic, without regard to any of the stipulations Welles desired. He deplored the

52 FO 371/32877, Eden to Churchill, March 6, 1942, PRO.

53 FO 371/32877, Churchill to Roosevelt, March 7, 1942, PRO; FO 371/32877, Eden to Halifax, March 7, 1942, PRO.

54 Memorandum of conversation with Halifax, by Welles, April 1, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 538.

impending treaty between London and Moscow. "In my own judgement," Welles wrote to Berle, "the treaty violated the clear terms of the Atlantic Charter and is indefensible from every moral standpoint, and equally indefensible from the standpoint of the future peace and stability of Europe." He told Berle that he felt more strongly about the agreement than any other matter which had come before him in recent years. "The attitude of the British Government is, in my judgement, not only indefensible from every moral standpoint, but likewise extraordinarily stupid," he wrote. "I am confident that no sooner will this treaty have been signed than Great Britain will be confronted with new additional demands for the recognition of the right of the Soviet Union to occupy Bucovina, Bessarabia, and very likely eastern Poland and northern Norway."⁵⁵

The final version of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty stipulated that neither side would sign an armistice with the Axis powers without the consent of the other.

The two powers also agreed not to seek territory as the spoils of war and to avoid interfering in the internal affairs of other nations.⁵⁶ Yet for all this, the treaty also illustrated the limits of Anglo-American solidarity. Welles remained angry. He harbored serious doubts about the future territorial integrity of Poland and feared the British were too willing to give the Russians a free hand in Eastern Europe and the Baltic region, just so long as Moscow would respect Britain's more vital interests elsewhere. He worried that the British had only appeased Stalin's minimum aims and he declared he was in "full accord" with Adolf Berle's characterization of

⁵⁵ Welles to Berle, April 4, 1942, box 164, Great Britain files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL. Even Alexander Cadogan thought that Eden was too willing "to throw to the winds all principles." See Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War, 45.

⁵⁶ Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, 194-196.

the Anglo-Soviet Treaty as a "Baltic Munich."⁵⁷

One week after the signing of the treaty, the British Minister in Washington, Sir Ronald Campbell, sought to reassure Welles that it was in accord with the aims of the Atlantic Charter.⁵⁸ Despite British reassurances, Welles remained steadfastly opposed to the treaty, which he continued to fear had set a dangerous precedent for allied cooperation.

Nevertheless, the United States had some leverage over the British and could easily have put up a more vigorous protest, or pressured London in some other way. Perhaps Welles thought Washington could offer no viable alternative to the treaty. Perhaps he secretly feared it was the best outcome possible under the circumstances and that it was better to let the British take the lead in making concessions to Stalin.⁵⁹ Whatever the case, Welles soon became animated by a desire to have the United States make its own way in its relations with the Soviet Union. He thought that as a preliminary step the postwar planning committees should examine Soviet war aims in more detail. Thus due to the fears raised by the Anglo-Soviet Treaty, in the late spring of 1942 Welles led the postwar planning committees on a detailed examination of Soviet foreign policy aims.

* * *

Welles's leadership of the postwar planning committees significantly shaped his views about Soviet-American relations. The planning process also influenced the numerous members, many of whom would shape American opinion and policy in the years to

57 Welles to Berle, April 4, 1942, box 164, Great Britain files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; Berle Diary, March 28, 1942, box 213, Berle papers, FDRL. President Roosevelt told Welles that an American endorsement of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty "would mean that I tear up the Atlantic Charter before the ink is dry on it. I will not do that." Nevertheless, Roosevelt subsequently told Molotov that he had no serious objections to the Anglo-Soviet Treaty. See memorandum of conversation among Molotov, Roosevelt, and Hopkins, May 29, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 569.

58 Memorandum of conversation with Ronald Campbell, by Welles, containing text of foreign office telegram, June 1, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 583-585.

59 Other members of the administration may have felt similarly. When Welles told Berle that the Anglo-Soviet Treaty was presenting Washington with a fait accompli in Eastern Europe, Berle confided in his diary: "I am afraid this is true. I am also afraid that every British politician will get behind us and insist that we, in substance, did it." Berle Diary, April 4, 1942, box 213, Berle papers, FDRL

come.⁶⁰ Their discussions of Moscow's aims were based on a number of assumptions. First, they believed Moscow must be a full partner in building the postwar world and an active participant in the new world organization. They also assumed that after the war the U.S.S.R. would demand the recognition of its pre-1941 boundaries, thus posing a number of political problems for those who sought to have the USSR meet the requirements of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. The planners felt it had been difficult enough to urge London to apply the charter within the British Empire, whereas Moscow's aims would pose another problem altogether.⁶¹

The planners also had come to believe that despite the prospect of postwar economic aid, the U.S. might have little leverage to counter Soviet ambitions in Eastern Europe. Welles and his colleagues thus began their investigations with some understanding of the realities of the region. Welles believed some means must be found to subordinate particular differences with the Soviets, while emphasizing the larger cause of Grand Alliance harmony. Yet for all this, Welles understood that as Moscow's aims in Eastern Europe became clearer, the task of soothing U.S. public opinion would become more difficult.⁶²

Welles wanted the planners to come up with recommendations to resolve these problems. The divergence between Soviet and American war aims was uppermost in their minds and, as early as December 1941, the department's planning staff sought to find areas where the great powers agreed on various subjects treated in the Atlantic Charter.⁶³ With regard to the charter's article

60 It bears repeating that this impressive roster included Senators Tom Connally, Warren Austin, Walter George, Wallace White and Elbert Thomas; Representatives Charles Eaton, Sol Blum, Luther Johnson; administration figures such as Dean Acheson, Adolf Berle, and eventually Cordell Hull himself; and other shapers of public opinion such as Anne O'Hare McCormick, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, Isaiah Bowman, James T. Shotwell and Archibald MacLeish.

61 "Memorandum on Official Statements of Post-War Policy," by Leo Pasvolsky, January 3, 1942, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, box 190, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; P document 23, "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," June 10, 1942, box 56, Notter files; P document 121, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," (March 7-October 10, 1942), October 22, 1942, box 56, Notter files; P minutes 11, May 16, 1942; "The Atlantic Charter and National Independence," November 13, 1942, Atlantic Charter File, box 13, Notter files.

62 P minutes 2, March 14, 1942; P minutes 11, May 16, 1942; P document 137, "Background Information on the Soviet Union," November 13, 1942, box 56; P document 121, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," (March 7-October 10, 1942), October 22, 1942, box 56.

63 "Official Statements of Postwar Policy," by Notter and Rothwell, January 2, 1942, box 190, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; P minutes 2, March 14, 1942, Notter Files.

pledging the allied powers to an avoidance of territorial aggrandizement during the war, the planners noted that the Soviets had not yet expressed any dissent over this pledge, but they also recognized that it would be difficult to influence Soviet actions in places like the Baltic states or the rest of Eastern Europe without the presence of U.S. troops in the region, a prospect they knew the Russians would never allow.⁶⁴

Welles initiated discussions about the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe by emphasizing the root of the problem which would plague American policymakers throughout the war: while Moscow's statements regarding its future intentions in Eastern Europe were highly suspect, Washington must continue to emphasize the need for good relations. Welles believed Moscow's lack of confidence in Washington to be one reason why the USSR sought its own security through territorial acquisition. He assumed relations with Moscow might be strengthened if the American government reassured the Kremlin that it would cooperate in maintaining the peace of the world after the war.⁶⁵ Smooth relations with Moscow would be necessary to ensure a stable postwar order, but Welles also acknowledged that the pursuit of better relations with Moscow would inevitably contradict numerous Wilsonian and Atlantic Charter principles such as self-determination and free trade. While he remained uncomfortable with an Anglo-Soviet Treaty which he thought was nothing more than a spheres of influence deal, he began to realize that a lack of Anglo-American troops in Eastern Europe at the end of the war would mean that Moscow would have a free hand there anyway. "If we recognize settlements," Welles told the planners in March 1942, "by which certain people are to remain under a sovereignty or system they do not desire, would we not in effect be approving conditions which would eventually undermine the peace?"⁶⁶ Welles called this the most serious dilemma facing the planning committees. Yet he also recognized that even if the United States could reach an agreement with

⁶⁴ P minutes 2, March 14, 1942; P minutes 44, February 6, 1943.

⁶⁵ P minutes 2, March 14, 1942; Memorandum of conversation between Notter and Rothwell, "The Possibilities of Revolution During and Immediately Following the Present War," August 30, 1941, box 8, Notter Files; P minutes 5, April 4, 1942.

⁶⁶ P minutes 2, March 14, 1942.

the Soviet Union, there was no guarantee that Moscow would honor its pledges. When Adolf Berle reminded Welles that the Soviet Union had already informally agreed to much of the Atlantic Charter, Welles retorted that had been the easy part, "but the tragedy is that while we can get acceptance, it will not mean that the principles will be carried out."⁶⁷

Welles and the planners, with their abhorrence of secret treaties, initially believed Washington should avoid premature agreements with the other members of the Grand Alliance. In the course of their discussions they soon changed direction. Some matters might have to be decided prior to the end of the war, before all chance for an equitable settlement was lost forever. Within weeks of relaunching the postwar planning process, Welles had come around to the position that many agreements with the other members of the Grand Alliance must be reached during, and not after, the war. He no longer feared that agreements between Moscow and the Western Allies would be reminiscent of the secret treaties of the First World War. He now worried that if agreements securing the interests of Moscow's neighbors on its western frontier were not reached during the war it "would be of no avail to them to appeal in a few years to some international authority for a change, because it would probably not be possible to help them or alter the action."⁶⁸

Welles and his fellow planners gradually moved toward accepting a Soviet-controlled sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. They still sought to apply universal principles to other parts of the world, but the realities of power politics in Eastern Europe undermined their efforts. Nearing the end of a planning meeting in March 1942, Welles told the committee their discussions had "raised a fundamental problem of whether it was conceivable that the 'Four Freedoms' could be placed in effect all over the world -- actually."⁶⁹ He expressed his concern that the United States might eventually have to endorse a restoration of the "old unsteady balance of power" in Europe. He acknowledged that this would be an admission of failure

67 P minutes 2, March 14, 1942; P minutes 5, April 4, 1942.

68 Welles, "Political Cooperation During the War: A Lost Opportunity," 127-129.

69 P minutes 2, March 14, 1942.

because it would abandon the fate of millions to subjugation by Moscow. He feared that if the United States went ahead with plans to disarm Germany and France, and failed to erect an East European Union or come up with some other solution for the region, the void at the center of Europe would inevitably be filled by the Soviet Union. He hoped the police powers of a new world organization might partially contain Russian ambitions and he continued to seek the creation of a postwar Germany that could serve as a check on future Russian aggression. Nonetheless, the planners acknowledged that there appeared to be no easy way to shield Eastern Europe from Soviet domination.⁷⁰

Welles also feared that the Soviet Union might have larger territorial demands than merely a restoration of its pre-1941 frontiers. He and the other planners were particularly concerned with the postwar borders of Poland. Stalin's enthusiastic partition of Poland in October 1939, and the subsequent incorporation of eastern Poland into the Soviet Union, led many to believe that the Kremlin once again favored the permanent disappearance of Poland as an independent state.⁷¹ Welles and the planners assumed the Russians would most likely take a portion of eastern Poland and that there was very little the United States could do to change Moscow's mind. They accepted the fact that the Red Army would probably control most of Eastern Europe at the end of the war and that unless the United States was willing to fight the Soviet Union in a "Third World War" some concessions to Soviet demands would have to be made. They believed many of these questions would best be settled during the war while the United States still had some means of bringing pressure on the Soviet Union.⁷²

In the spring of 1942 Welles received further warning about Soviet aims. Former Ambassador to Moscow Laurence Steinhardt warned Welles that the Russians had extensive territorial ambitions. Steinhardt, now posted in Turkey, warned

⁷⁰ P minutes 19, July 18, 1942; P minutes 7, April 18, 1942; P minutes 8, April 25, 1942; P minutes 9, May 2, 1942.

⁷¹ T document 2, "Polish Population," April 1, 1942, box 60, Notter files; T document 13 "A Note of the Eastern Provinces of Poland," June 26, 1942, box 60, Notter files; T document 16 and P document 190, "Boundary Problems of the East European Region," June 1942, box 60, Notter files.

⁷² P minutes 11, May 16, 1942; P minutes 12, May 23, 1942; P minutes 13, May 30, 1942.

Welles that Moscow also had territorial designs to the southwest, and that Turkish mistrust and hatred of the Soviet Union "is unmistakably stronger than their fear of Germany." Steinhardt predicted that Moscow would emphasize its military contribution to the war to obtain territorial concessions. "In my opinion," he wrote to Welles, "they will leave no stone unturned to obtain possession of the Straits and the mouth of the Danube. I believe they are already laying their plans in that direction."⁷³

Throughout the summer and fall of 1942, Welles and the planners discussed specific problems in Eastern Europe. With regard to Finland, a consensus emerged that an attempt should be made to persuade Moscow to accept the 1940 boundary established in the wake of the Winter War. Welles suggested that the best way to preserve Finland's postwar survival would be for the committee to call for an international "neutral zone" separating Finland and Russia, but he feared that regardless of whatever measures might be taken, the Soviet Union would do as it pleased with Finland.⁷⁴

The planners also recognized that while the Baltic states wished to be independent, the Kremlin would probably be unwilling to discuss any future for them except as part of the Soviet Union. But Welles continued to seek a solution to the Baltic problem without so openly violating the principles of the Atlantic Charter. He suggested that plebiscite privileges might be granted to the peoples of the region, with those who did not wish to live under Russian rule free to emigrate.⁷⁵ Anne O'Hare McCormick replied that most of the people of the Baltic region, given the choice, would most likely prefer to live under the Germans.⁷⁶

While it appeared the Soviet Union wished to absorb the three Baltic states, the committee members, in a desperate effort to find a solution, hoped a quasi-independent Baltic

⁷³ Steinhardt to Welles, April 24, 1942, box 83, folder 15, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁷⁴ P minutes 35, November 28, 1942; P document 134, "Official Russian Statements, July 1941-November 1942," November 28, 1942, Notter files.

⁷⁵ Welles did not specify the nations to which they would emigrate. P document 193, "The Baltic States," February 4, 1943, box 57; "The Atlantic Charter and National Independence," November 13, 1942, Atlantic Charter File, Notter files, box 13; P minutes 2, March 14, 1942.

⁷⁶ P minutes 2, March 14, 1942.

Federation (under Russian influence) might be acceptable to Moscow. They hoped that if the Kremlin allowed cultural and religious freedoms within such a federation the peoples of the Baltic states would be more amenable to Russian overlordship. Yet this assumed a level of Russian tolerance for the cultural and political diversity of its neighbors that had no basis in recent history.⁷⁷

The more the planners discussed the intricate problems of Eastern Europe, the more they began to move away from their earlier rigid adherence to Wilsonian principles. Compromise would have to be made with principle. As early as the fall of 1942, the subcommittee began to conclude that the Soviet Union's claims to the Baltic states could not be put off indefinitely and would eventually have to be acknowledged. This only further underscored the problem of how to reconcile the principles of the Atlantic Charter with the political and military realities of Eastern Europe. Only six months before, Welles had warned Halifax that the Anglo-Soviet Treaty would violate the "sacred principles" of the Atlantic Charter. Now, Welles and the other planners were confronted with Soviet power politics in Eastern Europe. They might not approve of Moscow's desire to swallow the Baltic states, but there was very little they could do to prevent it. The U.S.S.R. continued to do most of the fighting -- roughly 50 Red Army soldiers were being killed in combat for each American -- and it began to dawn on Welles and the planners that Moscow held most of the leverage in the relationship and that considerations like Lend-Lease and the promise of postwar reconstruction assistance might have little influence on the Kremlin.⁷⁸

It became ever clearer to the planners that the peoples of the Baltic states, as well as others in the region, would never revert willingly back to Russia. The planners understood that the fate of the peoples of Eastern Europe was every bit as threatened by Moscow as by Berlin. They learned that the U.S.S.R. had "killed off or dispersed" most of the

⁷⁷ P minutes 13, May 30, 1942.

⁷⁸ P minutes 35, November 28, 1942; P document 121, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," (March 7-October 10, 1942), October 22, 1942, box 56, Notter files; P document 151, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," (March 7-December 5, 1942), December 7, 1942, box 57, Notter files.

intelligentsia and the upper classes in the Baltic states,⁷⁹ and Loy Henderson had already warned Welles that Stalin displayed a "vindictive spirit" toward the peoples of Eastern Europe, particularly the Ukrainians of eastern Poland. Stalin, Henderson reminded Welles, had already threatened that these Ukrainians "would be exterminated and the Ukrainian problem permanently liquidated." According to documents in Welles's possession, as many as 4.5 million Ukrainians lived in eastern Poland.⁸⁰

Welles and the other planners remained gravely concerned about Russian intentions. During a meeting in late November 1942 Welles thus delivered a "top secret" presentation about the aims of Soviet foreign policy. He based this briefing on what he had learned from the previous nine months of postwar committee meetings, but also from discussions with other diplomats in Washington and his understanding of Moscow's demands derived from his contacts with the various exile governments. Welles warned the committee that the Kremlin's ambitions went well beyond the Baltic states and that Stalin had taken a "hectoring, insulting attitude" toward several nations. Stalin threatened Sweden, for example, because of her interest in a political union with Finland. Welles said Russia would probably demand Petsamo from Finland at the end of the war and he warned he "never yet found the Soviet Government willing to discuss having something less than it once had." He feared that Stalin might demand more, such as the incorporation of all of Finland into the Soviet Union "through some phony plebiscite." Welles proclaimed that an independent Finland was "of vital importance to the future world order." In the rest of the Baltic region, Welles warned that the Russians would seek to give their conquests legitimacy by once again holding "some phony kind of plebiscite [that] would be rigged to indicate the desire of the people to return to Soviet rule."⁸¹

79 P minutes 35, November 28, 1942.

80 Henderson to Welles, April 8, 1942, box 165, Poland files, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; Poland: Map II, May 21, 1942, box 191, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, Eastern Europe: Postwar, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

81 P minutes 35, November 28, 1942. At one point in the discussion, Isaiah Bowman warned that territorial problems in the region might have repercussions at home, pointing out that a substantial number of Finns inhabited Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

On the question of Poland, Welles predicted the Russians would promise part of East Prussia to the Poles in exchange for other territory which would be taken from the Poles in their east and incorporated into the Soviet Union. Welles added that the Polish and Czech governments-in-exile had discussed the possibility of a postwar Polish-Czech union and that President Benes thought the Soviet Union was "not adverse to the setting up of regional federations in principle." But Welles feared the Russians might look upon such an arrangement with suspicion.⁸²

Welles feared the Kremlin might set up its own governments-in-exile which would be responsive to Stalin's aims. He also warned the planners that Russia's chief territorial aspirations appeared to be largely concentrated in the north: the Baltic states, eastern Poland, Bessarabia, possibly Finland and perhaps parts of northern Norway. As for other areas of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Welles told the planners that the Soviets might aim for "a political and economic preponderance rather than territorial acquisition." Welles warned that once the Red Army crossed national borders it would be impossible to ensure freedom in those areas.⁸³

At the beginning of 1943 James Shotwell warned Welles that "it is true that Russia has officially followed a policy, in its dealings with Western Europe, which has grown less menacing, but this cannot be counted upon, especially with reference to [its western frontiers]."⁸⁴ Shortly thereafter, Isaiah Bowman reinforced these concerns when he delivered his own analysis of Russia and the prospects for postwar planning. Bowman told Welles and the rest of the planners that secrecy and bad faith had marked Soviet actions. He added that the planners should not expect "frank dealing and good faith" to characterize future relations with the Kremlin. "We are waiting

⁸² Ibid. Isaiah Bowman later told Welles that Benes thought a middle way might be found for the future of Eastern Europe through the promotion of a socialistic "guided revolution." The Czech leader would reassure Welles that "Czechoslovakia would never become communistic." See Memorandum of conversation between Bowman and Benes, May 19, 1943, box 87, folder 2, Welles papers; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Benes, May 17, 1943, box 161, Czechoslovakia file, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁸³ P minutes 35, November 28, 1942; memorandum to Welles, "Note on Alternative Soviet Policies in Europe," by Hamilton Fish Armstrong, box 191, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, Eastern Europe: Postwar, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁸⁴ Shotwell to Welles, January 15, 1943, with enclosure, box 192, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, folder 8, Welles papers, FDRL.

in vain if we suppose that a great wave of appreciation for our help will suddenly sweeten the Soviet temper if we but help enough," he said, adding, "will Russia stop permanently on the Danube because we have proclaimed the wickedness of territorial aggression?" Bowman thought steps should be taken to forestall serious conflict. "We will not fight Russia for an abstract principle. We will not fight to stop her on the Riga line in the interest of Poland. We will not fight her to give Finland the port of Petsamo . . . Our meanings must be clear when we proclaim high principles . . . Will we promptly negotiate the agreements that will reverse the present trends of power or will we wait until it is too late to control the mechanical monster that our enemies have forced us to create?"⁸⁵

Thus far, the planners had held two, multi-week, examinations of the impending clash between the Soviet Union and its neighbors to the west. The first series of meetings in the spring of 1942 had awakened the members to the need to apply Wilsonian principles to Moscow's foreign policy aims. Welles had expressed his outrage to the committee about London's willingness to legitimize Soviet territorial gains which he thought flew in the face of the "sacred principles" of the Atlantic Charter. He and the other planners concluded that some agreements with the other members of the Grand Alliance needed to be reached before the end of the war, but they held out hope that peace could still somehow be reconciled with the spirit of the Atlantic Charter.

The second series of meetings, held in the late fall of 1942, had further confirmed the worst fears of the planners, particularly when Welles departed from his usual duties as chairman to deliver his detailed presentation about Soviet foreign policy aims. Perhaps more importantly, these autumn discussions initiated a move away from the rigid Wilsonianism of the previous spring. Welles's aim of implementing an American-led democratic internationalism thus became more problematical. Welles and his colleagues began to fear that the Kremlin's territorial appetites might be larger than even the planners anticipated. They began to conclude that some Soviet

⁸⁵ "Memorandum on Russia," by Isaiah Bowman, March 6, 1943, box 87, folder 2, Welles papers, FDRL; P minutes 46, March 6, 1943, Notter files.

territorial gains might have to be recognized as a matter of practical realism.⁸⁶ A premium should be placed on good relations between Washington and Moscow for the sake of creating a new world order. Thus, "lesser" issues such as the fate of the Baltic states and eastern Poland should not be allowed to interfere. In any event, an early confrontation with Moscow over Eastern Europe would do nothing to advance self-determination for the region. The members of the postwar planning committees, which included a bipartisan group of at least eight senior members of the house and senate committees dealing with foreign affairs, had concluded that the location of the Red Army would most likely determine the postwar status of Eastern Europe, thus undermining later claims that Stalin's control of the region came about due to naivete, presidential illness, or a treasonous conspiracy to "sell out" or "enslave" Eastern Europe.⁸⁷ Nonetheless, Welles's private comments about the realities of power in Eastern Europe (and America's inability to do much to change those realities) contradicted his public Wilsonian rhetoric, which continued to hint at a dawning "new order" for the region. And as Welles and the other planners made exceptions to their plans for a new order in Eastern Europe, it gradually became more difficult to envision the extensive social, economic and political changes that they desired for the region. This would be particularly true for the fate of Poland, which was rapidly becoming the most explosive issue facing the planners.

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86 Some scholars have argued that in 1943 American and British officials tolerated Moscow's aims in Eastern Europe because they remained concerned about the prospects of a negotiated peace between Moscow and Berlin. See, for example, Vojtech Mastny, "Stalin and the Prospects of a Separate Peace in World War II," 1388. Welles and the planners, however, never expressed any concern about a negotiated peace between Berlin and Moscow, and instead sought to appease Stalin's aims because they sought the friendship and cooperation of Moscow, but also because they believed they had no other alternative.

87 For accounts arguing that U.S. policy blunders or duplicity led to Stalin's control of Eastern Europe see, for example, William C. Bullitt, "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," *Life* 25 (August 30, 1948), 82-97; Robert Nisbet, *Roosevelt and Stalin: The Failed Courtship* (Washington: Regnery Publishing, 1988); Frederick Marks, *Wind Over Sand: The Diplomacy of Franklin Roosevelt* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988); Amos Perlmutter, *FDR and Stalin: A Not So Grand Alliance, 1943-1945* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993). As early as March 1943, after briefings from Welles, Roosevelt told Eden that he would not force the USSR to give up the Baltic states and he would not oppose Moscow's demands on Finland. Nor did the president oppose the Curzon Line as the starting point for discussions on the future Polish-Soviet border. See FO 371/35365, Eden to Churchill, March 17, 1943, PRO.

The Polish-Soviet frontier continued to represent a source of considerable acrimony between the Russians and the Poles. Sikorski and the other Polish officials in London were also anxious to learn of the whereabouts of the thousands of Polish prisoners of war who had fallen into Soviet hands, about whom nothing had been heard since early 1940.⁸⁸ Welles's many meetings with the Polish exiles confirmed his worst fears about Soviet intentions. In late 1942 Sikorski warned Welles that he thought Stalin would first take back the Baltic states and then attempt to incorporate Finland into the Soviet Union, demand Bessarabia and seek "hegemony" over other states in the region. "It does not follow at all that the 'leadership' in that part of Europe should be left to Russia," Sikorski told Welles. "Such a solution would be as harmful as acquiescence to German ambitions."⁸⁹

At the beginning of 1943, Welles conducted a series of detailed discussions with the leadership of the Polish government-in-exile. He reaffirmed America's desire to see Poland reconstituted under Article Three of the Atlantic Charter: the restoration of independence and sovereignty.⁹⁰ Yet for all this, it was becoming increasingly clear to Welles that the Polish-Soviet problem would simply not go away and that it would grow more dangerous as the war continued. In early 1943 it had become apparent that the Soviet Union would seek substantial territory from Poland. Welles thought Poland deserved to be truly independent after the war but he acknowledged that the future looked bleak in the region and that the committee could probably hope for nothing more than "the best of a series of bad bargains."⁹¹

Welles sought to subordinate the problems of Eastern Europe to the larger aim of U.S.-Soviet postwar cooperation. He

⁸⁸ Richard C. Lukas, The Strange Allies: The United States and Poland, 1941-1945 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1978), 8.

⁸⁹ Sikorski memorandum to Welles: "The Problems of Central and Southeastern Europe," December 7, 1942, box 165, Poland files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

⁹⁰ Memorandum of conversation with Sikorski, by Welles, January 4, 1943, FRUS, III, 314-318; Welles to Roosevelt, January 5, 1943, and enclosure: Welles's draft of Roosevelt to Sikorski, FRUS, III, 1943, 319-320; T document 228, "Soviet Rule in Eastern Poland, 1939-1941," January 23, 1943, box 62, Notter files.

⁹¹ P minutes 41, January 16, 1943.

wanted to be careful to avoid anything that might resemble a "cordon sanitaire" directed against the Soviet Union.⁹² Welles continued to tell the Poles he would work for the restoration of Poland "as a powerful European state" but he told the Polish Ambassador that President Roosevelt wanted Poland "to keep its shirt on" and be patient, and reminded him that Washington retained the right to be "the only judge" of what could be done to resolve the Polish-Soviet impasse.⁹³ Welles feared that a serious break loomed between the Polish government-in-exile and the Kremlin. Ciechanowski had earlier warned Welles that Moscow demanded Polish recognition of Russia's future sovereignty in "White Russia and the western Ukraine." Ciechanowski thus pressed Welles to publicly proclaim his pledge that the Atlantic Charter would safeguard Poland's future.⁹⁴

Shortly thereafter, in February 1943, Welles reported to the planners that relations between the Soviet Union and the Polish government-in-exile had reached a breaking point. In what Welles described as "a serious and disquieting development" he told the committee that the Russians now considered any Poles in Ruthenia and the Ukraine to be Soviet nationals. He told the planners that when the Russians entered these areas in 1939 a large number of Poles had been "liquidated" and many others deported.⁹⁵ The larger crisis Welles feared erupted in April 1943 when the Germans discovered numerous mass graves in the Katyn forest near Smolensk which they claimed to be those of Polish officers murdered by Stalin's secret police.⁹⁶ Hitler proposed an international investigation of the site, a call immediately seconded by the

92 Memorandum of conversation with Sikorski, by Welles, January 4, 1943, FRUS, III, 314-318.

93 Memorandum of conversation by Welles, January 30, 1943, FRUS, 1943, III, 325-326; "Annex: Memorandum on Polish-Soviet Relations," January 30, 1943, FRUS, III, 326-327; Memorandum of conversation by Welles, February 5, 1943, FRUS, III, 328-329; P document 192, "Poland," February 4, 1943, box 57, Notter files.

94 Welles memorandum of conversation with Ciechanowski, January 30, 1943, box 165, Poland files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, February 18, 1943 with Ciechanowski memorandum, box 152, folder 3, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles memorandum of conversation with Ciechanowski, March 1, 1943, box 165, Poland files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

95 P minutes 45, February 20, 1943.

96 The massacre, which included the execution of more than 4,000 Poles, had been carried out under the direct orders of Stalin and the Soviet Politburo and had virtually eliminated the cream of the Polish officer corps. See Allen Paul, Katyn: The Untold Story of Stalin's Polish Massacre (New York: Scribner's, 1991); and Vladimir Abarinov, The Murderers of Katyn (New York: Hippocrene, 1993).

London Poles. The Kremlin, calling the Poles fascist and reactionary, broke off diplomatic relations. Stalin moved immediately to promote his Russian-backed Union of Polish Patriots, a group of communist Poles in Moscow (later based in Lublin) who sought to organize a postwar Poland along Stalin's desired lines.⁹⁷

The massacre of the Polish officers might have come as no surprise to the planners in Washington. They had for some time been discussing Moscow's aims in the region and had heard a number of intelligence reports about various atrocities carried out by the Russians.⁹⁸ Welles told Anthony Biddle, the U.S. Ambassador to the Polish government-in-exile, that he would seek to reestablish relations between the London Poles and the Russians, but he warned that any attempt to change the composition of the Polish government-in-exile in London to suit Stalin would be ill-advised. "While some changes might prove advantageous after the restoration of relations," Welles wrote to Biddle, "we do not feel that it would be proper for us to bring pressure on Sikorski to change the composition of the Polish Government in order to satisfy the Soviet Government. In our opinion it would be unfortunate for a precedent to be established under which the government of one United Nation could successfully force changes in the composition of another government of the United Nations."⁹⁹ At the same time, Welles wanted to be careful not to antagonize Stalin over Eastern European issues not vital to American interests. In Welles's estimation, Poland was not a vital interest and was quickly becoming an impediment to America's quest for better relations with Moscow. Welles believed that postwar cooperation with Russia should be the primary consideration and he resolved to avert anything that might derail Washington's evolving

⁹⁷ CAB 66/36 WP(43) 175, "Russo-Polish Relations" by Churchill, April 26, 1943, including Churchill to Stalin, April 24, 1943, PRO.

⁹⁸ P minutes 45, February 20, 1943; T document 228, "Soviet Rule in Eastern Poland, 1939-1941," January 23, 1943, box 62, Notter files.

⁹⁹ Welles to Biddle, June 16, 1943, FRUS, 1943, III, 431. Welles had apparently forgotten his many attempts during the past year to depose de Gaulle as leader of the Free French.

relationship with the Kremlin.¹⁰⁰

Poland would remain a thorny and intractable problem and Welles may have reasoned that since the United States had not participated in the prewar guarantees to Poland, Washington was therefore not officially bound by them. To Welles, the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations Declaration sought to grant sovereign rights to the peoples of the world. Certainly this pledge also applied to Poland, but Welles seems to have convinced himself that it did not commit the United States to any specific course in Eastern Europe.¹⁰¹ "The principles for postwar policy laid down by the Atlantic Charter provided an altogether desirable pattern," Welles wrote after the war. "Yet they constituted a pattern, and nothing more. They gave no slightest indication, for example, of the justice or injustice of a given settlement covering eastern Poland." Welles believed that Moscow might plausibly claim that its aspirations in Poland did not violate the Atlantic Charter, but instead were fully consistent with the charter's provisions about territorial changes being in accord with the desires of the peoples concerned. "Agreement upon the broad principles of the Atlantic Charter," Welles wrote, "would never in itself prevent future bitter controversies over frontiers and zones of influence."¹⁰²

Welles and the planners had once again looked the other way when Moscow evaded their professed principles, and they may have rationalized that maintaining good relations with Moscow was paramount to defending the welfare of Russia's western neighbors. While it began to dawn that their claims to

¹⁰⁰ Welles memorandum of conversation with Gromyko, June 15, 1943, box 166, USSR files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL. In July 1943 an immediate showdown with Stalin over Poland was further delayed when Sikorski's Liberator aircraft was mysteriously blown up after taking off from British Gibraltar. This was a heavy blow to the cause of the London Poles. Sikorski had stature and commanded the respect of the allies. After his death the London Poles became more dispirited and divided than ever before, playing directly into the hands of Stalin and his Moscow-based Union of Polish Patriots. For the impact of Sikorski's death on Anglo-Polish relations see Anita J. Przemska, Britain and Poland, 1939-1943: the Betrayed Ally (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 180-185. For an account that Sikorski's death was convenient to the British, see Piotr S. Wandycz, The United States and Poland (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 269.

¹⁰¹ "Try as they might," Lloyd Gardner has written, "Roosevelt and his advisers could neither escape the ideas of the charter nor the reality of Great Power politics." See Lloyd C. Gardner, "The Atlantic Charter: Idea and Reality, 1942-1945," in Douglas Brinkley and David Facey-Crowther, eds., The Atlantic Charter (London: Macmillan, 1994), 53.

¹⁰² Sumner Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History (New York: Harper, 1950), 127.

defending high principles were rapidly slipping away, Welles and the planners still hoped that the creation of an "East European Federation" might help extricate them from this moral dilemma.

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In response to the moral and political problems presented by Russian objectives in Eastern Europe, as early as March 1942 the planners had begun discussing the possibility of creating a political federation for the region.¹⁰³ The idea fit nicely into Welles's belief that institutions and careful planning could help contain the potential for upheaval in Eastern Europe. The nations of the region were precariously situated between Germany and the Soviet Union and had achieved their independence at a time when both powers had been weakened by the Great War. With Germany and Russia now recovered, the fate of these small states looked precarious. The planners believed a union or federation might furnish those nations with the strength of numbers. The idea had first been presented to Welles by Polish Ambassador Jan Ciechanowski (a fact Welles tactfully concealed for fear of arousing Russian suspicions) and Welles's first advisory committee had discussed it in the spring of 1940.¹⁰⁴

Welles hoped that a number of problems might be resolved if the United Nations could construct and impose its own

103 The most thorough account of U.S. interest in an East European federation can be found in Geir Lundestad, The American Non-Policy Towards Eastern Europe, 1943-1947 (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1978), 347-393.

104 Minutes for the Advisory Committee on Problems of Foreign Relations, May 7, 1940, box 191, Postwar Foreign Policy Files, Postwar: 1940-41, folder 7, Welles papers, FDRL. Starting in the fall of 1939 the British Foreign Office had held vague internal discussions about a regional federation of some sort for Eastern Europe. But dating back to the end of World War I, the Poles had been the leading proponents of a supranational federation in Eastern Europe. In November 1940 the exiled Poles reached a preliminary agreement with Benes and his Czech government-in-exile over a postwar confederation for the region. Eden even went to Moscow in December 1941 with a proposal for a similar scheme. The British foreign office feared that unless some solution was found for the future of Eastern Europe the Russians would dominate the region after the war. At the time, Stalin seemed receptive to plans for a regional federation and he did not rule out the possibility of some sort of supranational organization. In January 1942, Poland and Czechoslovakia repeated their desire to unite in some form of federation and Greece and Yugoslavia followed with similar declarations. See, for example, Piotr S. Wandycz, Czechoslovak-Polish Confederation and the Great Powers, 1940-1943 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979); as well as Gardner, Spheres of Influence, 111-112; Mastny, Russia's Road to the Cold War, 56; and P document 205, "Interlocking Confederations in East-Central Europe," February 19, 1943, box 57, Notter files.

version of an East European Federation. Hitler had already set a precedent for just such a scheme with the Reich's attempt to erect a new economic order in Eastern Europe. Berlin wanted the entire Danube basin to serve as a provider of labor and raw materials to the German economy. Prior to 1919, the Austro-Hungarian Empire had partially filled the void in the region. Despite its many weaknesses and periodic instability, Welles thought the Empire had given the region a degree of unity and coherence while at the same time providing a much-needed buffer between Germany and Russia. Welles hoped the Russians might see U.S. relations with its Latin American neighbors as a model for future Russian relations in Eastern Europe and that a federal solution in Eastern Europe might help avoid potentially destructive clashes among the allies over territorial and ethnic matters in the region. After all, he pointed out, the Russians had the troops to enforce their will in Eastern Europe and would most likely do what they pleased regardless of British and American protests.¹⁰⁵

From the earliest discussions of planning for a federation Welles had emphasized that one of its chief functions would be to serve as "a counterpoise to both Russia and Germany."¹⁰⁶ Many of the nations of the region also had historic hatreds toward one another and the planners feared it would be difficult to contain the competing antagonisms under one roof. Welles reasoned that their mutual hatred of Russia might serve as a common bond. He surmised that while the Russians might dominate the nations of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, Russian hegemony in those nations would be balanced within a federation by including "anti-Russian" nations such as Poland, Hungary, Austria and Romania. He assumed the nations of the region could not be expected to establish such an arrangement by themselves but would have to "be told how to do it."¹⁰⁷

Welles and the planners hoped a federation would promote economic and political stability in the region. The

¹⁰⁵ P minutes 10, May 9, 1942; P minutes 11, May 16, 1942; P document 24, "An East European Union," February 18, 1942, box 56; P document 16, "Plan For Central European Union," May 27, 1942, box 56.

¹⁰⁶ P minutes 10, May 9, 1942.

¹⁰⁷ P minutes 17, June 27, 1942; P document 46, "Proposals for the Political Reorganization of Eastern Europe," August 19, 1942, box 56.

subcommittee recommended that an economic union should first be pursued and later extended to political integration. Welles feared that if the Russians forcibly removed the Baltic region and Eastern Europe from postwar plans for a worldwide liberal economic system, European reconstruction would be much more difficult and efforts at creating a new order would be dealt a serious setback. He also hoped the creation of a federation would prove advantageous to the economic and security interests of the United States, not only through the promotion of free trade, but also by checking the territorial, political and economic aspirations of Germany, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain. A federation might even help facilitate the rebirth of the Baltic states as fully-functioning, independent republics.¹⁰⁸

The erection of a East European Union as a mega-buffer against Soviet expansion seemed to run contrary to some aspects of Welles's Wilsonian ideals. After all, Welles claimed an international organization should be sufficient to assuage Moscow's security concerns. But his attempts to create a federation seemed calculated to avoid the appearance of the cynical recognition of what all the planners assumed was likely to become a political *fait accompli* in the region: namely, a Soviet sphere of influence.

Welles first offered the political subcommittee a detailed outline of what he had in mind for an East European Federation in the spring of 1942. His belief that the ideas of Wilsonian universalism and the Atlantic Charter could be transplanted everywhere led him to seek to impose on the region the concepts of free markets and free trade, and, where suitable, democracy and individual rights. Welles explained that the nations of the region might be bound together by "Articles of Confederation" which would include guarantees of individual rights. The political structure of the federation would feature an American-style judicial system, a federal diet, customs union and an intra-regional military force.¹⁰⁹

As Welles explained it, the federation would consist of

108 P minutes 11, May 16, 1942; P minutes 14, June 6, 1942.

109 P minutes 12, May 23, 1942.

the entire Eastern European region, comprising the twelve states situated between Germany and the Soviet Union, including Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, and with some optimism, the Baltic states of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. The planners hoped to promote a federation by emphasizing its economic advantages, as well as its potential for fostering collective security. That failing, the planners thought that union might have to be forcibly imposed on Eastern Europe.¹¹⁰ Adolf Berle warned that the Russians had previously opposed similar efforts at regional union. But Welles thought that the plan might be successfully sold to Moscow as a "buffer" to defend Russia against Germany, or even as a vast market for Russian manufactured goods and trade opportunities in the postwar era.¹¹¹

At Welles's direction, the state department's special research staff crafted a number of detailed outlines of a possible union. Their drafts demonstrated the degree to which they accepted the belief that New Deal-style planning on a global scale -- coupled with the careful application of the principles of free trade and free markets -- would greatly reduce the potential for crisis in the region. They drew up plans for the modernization of the region's agriculture, the expansion of Eastern European industries, the coordination of national export policies and monetary union. The planners also drew up schemes for a regional development agency, an agricultural administration, and a transportation department to oversee and coordinate shipping, railroads and highways.¹¹² But by early 1943, after a revival of Russia's prospects following

¹¹⁰ Ibid; P document 191, "Eastern Europe: Regional Factors," box 57; P document 16, "Plan For Central European Union," May 27, 1942, box 56; P document 46, "Proposals for the Political Reorganization of Eastern Europe," August 19, 1942, box 56; P minutes 23, August 22, 1942; memorandum of Welles conversation with Sikorski, December 4, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 199-202.

¹¹¹ P minutes 14, June 6, 1942; P minutes 13, May 30, 1942.

¹¹² P document 204, "The Feasibility of an East European Union," February 10, 1943, box 57. During an August 1942 meeting between Welles and Richard Law of the British Foreign Office to discuss postwar planning, Law enthusiastically endorsed creating a federation, calling it a "Tennessee Valley Authority" for the Danube River basin. Welles warned Law that while such a scheme represented a small step in the right direction, a TVA for the Danube would not nearly go far enough to resolve the region's ills, which, he added, had been exacerbated by centuries of local hatreds and great power politics. See memorandum of conversation between Welles and Richard Law, "Postwar Problems," August 25, 1942, box 164, Great Britain files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

the Red Army's success at Stalingrad, it became apparent to the political subcommittee that the Soviet Union might oppose all efforts to construct a federation. Stalingrad proved to be an important turning point in the Moscow's political relations with other nations. It emboldened the Russians to take a harder line in their relations with the Poles and other exile governments and stiffened the Kremlin's opposition to any attempts to create a federation. Welles had recently received a warning from exiled Czech officials in Washington that an East European Federation could not, under any circumstances, succeed if it was seen as an anti-Soviet endeavor. The Soviets apparently feared that a federation would be directed against them.¹¹³

Welles was not deterred. Furthermore, Churchill's and Eden's continued enthusiasm for a regional solution in Eastern Europe encouraged Welles to continue with the committee's work. He believed Moscow's tentative opposition to federations reemphasized the importance of reaching agreements with the Kremlin on such matters at the earliest date possible. He hoped that Moscow might be approached with a formal proposal for a federation sometime in 1943. Welles's naivete about Soviet willingness to support an American-designed federation may have stemmed from his underestimation of the deep and abiding suspicion the Russians had toward the west. He hoped that even if the plans for a federation were stillborn, Washington would have sufficient time to improve its relationship with Moscow, perhaps by convincing the Russians that the containment of Germany, coupled with the power of an effective international organization, would be sufficient to protect Soviet interests in Eastern Europe. He also worked under the delusion, widely shared in Washington, that the Kremlin might be heavily dependent on American assistance for its reconstruction after the war, and that Moscow, not wanting to jeopardize postwar aid, would seek to avoid a breach over a federation. Welles

¹¹³ P document 202, "Secret Official Commitments Regarding the East European Countries," February 5, 1943, box 57; P minutes 44, February 6, 1943; P minutes 45, February 20, 1943; P document 206, "Soviet and British Attitudes," February 18, 1943, box 57; P document 135, "Official Russian Views on Postwar Settlements," November 11, 1942, box 56; Welles memorandum of conversation with Czech Minister Hurban, "Proposed Federation between Poland and Czechoslovakia," December 2, 1942, box 161, Czechoslovakia file, Welles papers, FDRL; T document 200a, "Soviet War Aims as Presented by Soviet Sources," September 14, 1943, box 61, Notter files.

thought that Lend-Lease had established a useful precedent for using American economic largess to promote its political and military aims.¹¹⁴

Welles and the political subcommittee further investigated the question of federations in February 1943. Welles repeated his warnings that the Kremlin still appeared opposed to the scheme. He had an attentive audience, including five senators and three members of the House of Representatives. Welles delivered a lengthy presentation on the proposed federation and underscored its importance for the security of the postwar world. He claimed a federation would fill the void in the region left by the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian empire. He also expressed fear that Moscow would only accept a federation in exchange for support for their territorial aims in the Baltic and Eastern Poland.¹¹⁵

Responding to Welles's presentation, Representative Charles Eaton said he was alarmed by the high degree of mutual suspicion between Moscow and Washington. Eaton said Welles had outlined one of the most difficult challenges confronting the committee. "Russia has a distinct and well-thought-out line of policy," Eaton said. "What resources have the rest of the United Nations to meet that claim? Will we fight Russia, and will Russia back down? . . . Will we sprinkle rose water on her, or will we show our teeth?" Norman Davis suggested they might grant Russian claims to Bessarabia in exchange for Moscow's acceptance of a federation. Welles feared that, much like the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942, Davis's suggestion would

114 P document 191, "East Europe: Regional Factors," February 4, 1943, box 57; P document 202, "Secret Official Commitments Regarding the Eastern European Countries," February 5, 1943, box 57; P minutes 44, February 6, 1943, box 57.

115 P minutes 45, February 20, 1943. The Poles, too, had enthusiastically backed plans for a federation, which they hoped might succeed in containing both a postwar Germany and the Soviet Union. "Poland would be the anchor in the north and Turkey the anchor in the south," Sikorski told Welles. (Memorandum of conversation with Sikorski, by Welles, January 4, 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, III, 317). Welles told the planners that Turkey would also play a crucial role in the security of the region and he read a recent message from Turkish officials which explained that they would enthusiastically support a truly independent federation but would vigorously oppose one controlled by Moscow. According to Welles, the Turks were particularly nervous about the future of the Black Sea straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, which, along with Constantinople, the allies had promised to the Czar in 1915. Welles warned the planners that the Soviets had once again begun to show greater interest in the straits. "Every move which Turkey is making has, of course, the position of Soviet Russia in mind," Welles explained. He further added that Turkey desired a reaffirmation of the 1936 Straits Convention signed at Montreux, desiring a new treaty that would be backed by the United States and Great Britain. See P minutes 45, February 20, 1943.

merely serve to appease Stalin's *minimum* aims.

Isaiah Bowman thought the Russians might be more flexible in a few months, after the Germans reestablished their lines on the eastern front. Welles disagreed. He thought the German lines in the east might never be stabilized and that the Red Army would methodically creep westward. The promise of a disarmed Eastern Europe, Welles suggested, might gain Moscow's acceptance of a federation. Anne O'Hare McCormick observed that although the disarmed countries in Eastern Europe would not present a threat to the Russians, the prospect of a defenseless swath of states from the Baltic to the Balkans would be too tempting for Moscow's territorial appetites and might induce the smaller nations of the region to band together in an armed coalition directed against the USSR. Welles agreed, describing the situation as an insoluble vicious circle.¹¹⁶

Welles's plans for a federation received an important boost when Churchill seemingly endorsed them during the May 1943 luncheon he hosted at the British Embassy for senior American officials interested in postwar planning. Churchill, too, felt something had to take the place of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the region. Eden also continued to support the idea, but by June he began to privately express his concern that the Russians would never accept a fully-integrated and capitalistic federation along the lines advocated by Welles.¹¹⁷

Welles feared the planners needed a fallback plan in the event of the failure to erect a federation. He and Roosevelt subsequently returned to their favorite Wilsonian cure-all for the complex problems of the region: plebiscites.¹¹⁸ At a meeting of the political subcommittee in February 1943, it was suggested that plebiscites, despite their unsatisfactory application after the First World War, might effectively carry out the principles of the Atlantic Charter in Eastern Europe. For any chance of success they would have to be held under the supervision of the United Nations. At the very least, plebiscites would provide the United States with a "cover" that

116 P minutes 45, February 20, 1943.

117 Winston Churchill, The Second World War, vol. IV (London: Cassell, 1948-1954), 717; FO 371/35435, Eden to Churchill, June 16, 1943, PRO.

118 Welles to E.R. Graves, April 13, 1948, box 133, folder 1, Welles papers, FDRL.

the principles of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter were being upheld.¹¹⁹ Roosevelt discussed with Welles at some length his enthusiasm for plebiscites, claiming they might settle once and for all the enmities among many Eastern European and Balkan peoples, particularly the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.¹²⁰

Nonetheless, Welles ultimately failed in his efforts to construct a federated solution for Eastern Europe. While he understood that the Soviet Union would control the region at the end of the war, he underestimated the degree of domination they would insist upon. Welles had hoped the Russians might erect a kind of Good Neighbor Policy¹²¹ for Eastern Europe, where Moscow would achieve regional hegemony without meddling too much in the internal affairs of its neighbors.¹²² In any event, the Kremlin opposed the federative approach and complained that the American enthusiasm for federations and multi-national unions in Eastern Europe was reminiscent of the policy of the *cordon sanitaire* which was directed against the Soviet Union in the years before the war. Anthony Eden proposed a federal scheme at the Moscow Foreign Ministers' Conference in October 1943, but it met with a chilly response from Cordell Hull, who generally opposed all regional solutions.¹²³ Welles, who had been the leading advocate of regionalism, did not accept Roosevelt's request to represent the United States at the conference. Had he attended, Eden might have found more

119 P minutes 44, February 6, 1943, box 57; P document 206, "Soviet and British Attitudes," February 18, 1943, box 57; "The Atlantic Charter and National Independence," November 13, 1942, Atlantic Charter File, box 13, Notter files; see also Sumner Welles, "Political Cooperation During the War: A Lost Opportunity," in Kimball, *Roosevelt and the World Crisis*, 131.

120 Welles himself would later admit that "Roosevelt was occasionally apt to rely too greatly upon a few favorite panaceas for problems that were actually too basic and far-reaching in their origins and nature to admit of any easy solutions" and that the President "was even more wedded to the idea that plebiscites are a universal remedy than Woodrow Wilson had been." See Sumner Welles, *Seven Decisions*, 136.

121 Welles, *Time for Decision*, 332-334. For the contrary view that Washington did not consider the Good Neighbor Policy as a model for Moscow's relations with its neighbors, see, for example, Lynn E. Davis, *The Cold War Begins: Soviet-American Conflict over Eastern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 143.

122 For an account of how Washington sought to make distinctions between Moscow's potential influence on the foreign policies of its neighbors and its influence on their internal policies, see, for example, John Vloyantes, "The Significance of Pre-Yalta Policies Regarding Liberated Countries in Europe," *Western Political Quarterly*, vol. 11 (June 1958), 215, 226-28.

123 Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945* (New York: Pantheon, 1990), 102-103; Gardner, *Spheres of Influence*, 196.

support for his initiative.

* * *

To Welles, the Kremlin's tentative opposition to federations further emphasized the need for Big Three consultation. He thought it urgent that the Anglo-American allies begin conferring with Moscow on postwar plans. The first half of 1943 saw a number of preliminary exchanges between British and American officials over the future shape of the postwar world, but the Anglo-American allies had not yet approached the Russians with their proposals for an international organization and other specific postwar matters. Welles thought the United States should immediately learn Russia's attitudes and then seek to induce Moscow to cooperate with Washington's aims.¹²⁴ Roosevelt had held a brief meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov in the spring of 1942, but discussions about the postwar world were cursory. The British took another step in this direction in April 1943, when the war cabinet instructed British Ambassador to Moscow Sir Archibald Clark Kerr to discuss postwar matters with senior Soviet officials. The Russians, like the British, had been largely preoccupied with the military prosecution of the war and had devoted far less time to postwar matters than U.S. officials. But during his talks with Molotov, Kerr referred to Welles's recent speeches, explaining that the under secretary's pronouncements demonstrated a genuine desire on the part of the west to settle, prior to an armistice, the outlines of the postwar settlement.¹²⁵

In the spring of 1943, as Roosevelt and Welles traveled to Mexico City to meet with Mexican President Avila Camacho, they discussed their hopes and fears about the prospects of creating a new postwar order. Welles was struck by Roosevelt's concern and uncertainty about how Stalin would react to their aims and the president lamented that much of their work on the postwar

124 P minutes 38, December 19, 1942.

125 P document 34, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," August 12, 1942, box 56; Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, vol. II, 550; P document 206, "Soviet and British Attitudes," February 18, 1943, box 57.

world might come to nothing if the Russians remained intractable. Roosevelt still thought Washington could remove many of the obstacles to full cooperation, perhaps by demonstrating a commitment to better relations with Moscow, as well as promising U.S. participation in the new international organization.¹²⁶

In this vein, Welles sought to maintain smooth relations, as was indicated by his response in the spring of 1943 to Ambassador Standley's public charge that the Russian people had been kept ignorant of the many services the United States had rendered the Soviet Union, such as Lend-Lease and Red Cross relief. Welles held a press conference countering Standley's comments, instead claiming that a large degree of mutual trust and understanding existed between Washington and Moscow. But Welles knew otherwise from his discussions on the postwar planning committees. He had also recently been confidentially warned by Soviet Ambassador Litvinov that Stalin's postwar aims remained dangerously vague and that the Soviet leader had no understanding of, or regard for, U.S. public opinion.¹²⁷

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In the months leading up to his resignation, Welles had begun to devote more attention to Soviet-American relations. He understood that if Washington desired any kind of postwar relationship with the Soviet Union, the problems of Eastern Europe would have to be subordinated to the larger goal of better relations with Moscow. Like President Roosevelt, Welles seems to have reluctantly conceded that the United States could do little to prevent Stalin from dominating Eastern Europe and, as the Red Army continued to move west, the plight of the peoples of the region was becoming a *fait accompli*. Thus the Red Army, rather than duplicity, treason or ineptitude in Washington, had given Stalin control of Eastern Europe, and U.S. policymakers began to understand this as early as 1942.

Welles wanted the peace to be arranged along Wilsonian

126 Welles, Seven Decisions, 189; FO 371/35435, Halifax to Foreign Office, June 29, 1943, PRO.

127 Keith Eubank, Summit at Teheran (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1985), 66-67; Welles memorandum of conversation with Litvinov, May 7, 1943, box 166, USSR files, folder 4, Welles papers, FDRL.

lines, but his realization that Washington remained impotent to do anything to halt Soviet aims in Eastern Europe, and his willingness to look the other way in the face of Moscow's territorial aspirations, made it less and less likely that the peace would develop along lines other than spheres of influence and power politics.¹²⁸ Whereas much of Welles's wartime rhetoric emphasized new, more universal, approaches to the practice of world politics, his approach to the Soviet Union more closely resembled realpolitik, for instance, by pledging aid to the Soviet Union as soon as it was attacked by Germany. Furthermore, Welles had placed a higher priority on relations between Moscow and Washington and was willing to accept an Eastern Europe under Soviet domination if it meant holding the wartime alliance together after the war. He hoped his regional approach to the postwar organization might allow a certain degree of great power autonomy within their spheres of interest, but he failed to understand that federations would do absolutely nothing to extend the ideology of the Atlantic Charter to the peoples of Eastern Europe.¹²⁹

Welles understood that good relations between Moscow and Washington were absolutely essential to the success of his concept of a postwar order and he optimistically hoped that the two countries could use the new world organization to work out any political or economic differences between them. While he had maintained cordial relations with Russian diplomatic representatives throughout the war, Welles realized that the alliance was little more than a coalition held together by mutual opposition to Germany and he felt strongly that the United States would best be able to secure good relations with the Soviet Union through the aegis of the new world organization. This view was shared by the president, who at times suggested that many of the wartime political problems would mysteriously work themselves out after the war through the channels of the new world organization.

¹²⁸ Gardner, Spheres of Influence, xii.

¹²⁹ A few years after Welles's departure from the administration, his admirers claimed that his presence in Washington might have helped to produce an outcome other than the Cold War. The case was made, by the columnist Drew Pearson among others, that Welles's resignation in September 1943 may well have been a significant moment for Eastern Europe, as well as for the prospects for postwar entente between Washington and Moscow.

Welles's greatest failure may have been his contribution to raising unrealistic expectations about the potential of the war to reform the world and bring about a new system of relations among nations which would abandon the balance of power. Welles left the administration in September 1943 and thus never had to confront the realities of postwar Eastern Europe. During the war he sought to use his influence with the leading members of the House and Senate to alert them to the problems that might emerge in Eastern Europe. He did an effective job of heightening public expectations about the new world order and America's responsibilities therein, but he did little to prepare the public for the day of disillusionment that he secretly feared might follow the war. He continued to believe, well into 1945, that the new world organization might create some magic formula to ameliorate tensions with Moscow. Furthermore, even if he assumed, as he seemed to have concluded during the planning committee's investigations, that Stalin's domination of Eastern Europe was the price to be paid for Russian postwar cooperation, he never explained this view in his extensive writings in the years after 1943.

In the wake of repeated briefings from Welles and other members of the planning committees, Roosevelt, too, accepted the fate of Eastern Europe in the hands of the Kremlin at the end of the war. But he hoped that the Russians would not create a situation in Eastern Europe which might antagonize domestic opinion in the United States. By the time Roosevelt arrived at the Teheran Conference in November-December 1943, he seemed prepared to concede the future of Eastern Europe, just so long as Stalin would give him some "cover" on the question of self-determination by accepting vague plebiscite privileges for the area.¹³⁰ This was precisely the conclusion Welles and the planners had reached in the summer of 1943. Even earlier, one of Welles's chief objections to the April 1942 Anglo-Soviet Treaty stemmed from his fear that the treaty offered no rhetorical protection against the charges that the agreement

¹³⁰ Welles, Seven Decisions, 189; Charles Bohlen Notes on Roosevelt-Stalin Conversation, December 1, 1943, FRUS, Moscow and Teheran, 594-595.

was little more than a "Baltic Munich."¹³¹

As Welles and the planners had once predicted, Stalin put forward extensive claims to Polish territory at Teheran.¹³² Churchill was receptive to moving Poland's borders westwards after the war, while the Americans

had in fact long ago given tacit approval to most of Stalin's claims. In July 1943, for example, Welles's political subcommittee had reported to the president that they had "accepted the fact that Soviet military forces would probably be in control of the contested areas at the close of the war and that unless the United States were willing to fight against the Soviet Union, some concessions to Soviet demands would have to be made." Welles and the planners had further suggested that "many of these problems might best be settled during the war period, while this Government had some means of bringing pressure on the Soviet Union . . ."¹³³

In the case of the Baltic states, for example, Welles and the committee had abandoned their "no compromise" position taken during the winter-spring 1942 negotiations over the Anglo-Soviet Treaty. In May 1942 the committee had initially concluded that the Baltic states should have the right to determine their own futures.¹³⁴ But by July 1943 there had been a startling reversal of opinion. Welles's committee now "recognized that while these states wished to establish their right to independence, they themselves realized that they were not viable as states, due to their economic position."¹³⁵ By the summer of 1943, Welles and the planners recommended that the "historic ties between Russia and the Baltic States" be taken into account and therefore "the Soviet Union's claims to the

¹³¹ P document 34, "Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems," August 12, 1942, box 56; P document 236, "Political Subcommittee Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," box 57; memorandum of conversation between Welles and Halifax, April 1, 1942, FRUS, 1942, III, 538.

¹³² Nonetheless, Stalin's wartime territorial aims turned out to be relatively modest when compared to what Welles and the planners assumed he might seek.

¹³³ P document 236, "Political Subcommittee Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," box 57.

¹³⁴ P minutes 13, May 30, 1942.

¹³⁵ Ibid; P document 236, "Political Subcommittee Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," box 57. The statement that the Baltic states "themselves realized that they were not viable as states" was untrue. Armed resistance to Soviet rule continued until 1952. See, for example, Aleksandras Shtromas, "The Baltic States as Soviet Republics: Tensions and Contradictions," in The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), Graham Smith, ed., 87-92.

Baltic States should be recognized." Additionally, in Bessarabia and Bukovina, Welles and the planners decided to concede most of the Kremlin's demands.¹³⁶ Maintaining good relations with Moscow would take precedence over the Atlantic Charter.¹³⁷

As for Poland, the committee initially reaffirmed its desire to uphold the principles of the Atlantic Charter such as self-determination, as well as its desire to see Poland's prewar boundaries restored, but the planners ultimately suggested that "Eastern Poland might constitute an area where departure from this principle was justified." Welles and the members conceded that Eastern Poland "was of less significance" than other areas of Europe. The planners recommended that while a perfunctory attempt might be made to induce the USSR to return to its prewar boundaries, a compromise based on the appeasement of almost all of Moscow's aims would not necessarily jeopardize U.S. interests or the prospects for creating a new world order elsewhere.¹³⁸

By the time of the February 1945 Yalta Conference the Red Army had already made the fate of Poland and much of Eastern Europe a *de facto* reality. The conference's "Declaration on Liberated Europe" rhetorically reaffirmed the principles of the Atlantic Charter for Eastern Europe, but it lacked any enforcement machinery, thus implying that no one expected compliance with its terms. This was perfectly consistent with Welles's recommendations in the summer of 1943. By July 1945, recognition of the London-based Polish government-in-exile was cynically withdrawn by the United States and Great Britain, further confirming that the great powers accepted the fate of Poland and much of the rest of Eastern Europe.¹³⁹

Welles had long sought to minimize differences between

136 P document 236, "Political Subcommittee Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," box 57.

137 The argument has been made that London should have adhered to Washington's stance against an Anglo-Soviet Treaty confirming Stalin's territorial aims. See, for example, Steven Merritt Miner, *Between Churchill and Stalin: The Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the Origins of the Grand Alliance* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988). This assessment overlooks the fact that in the wake of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty U.S. officials quickly abandoned their rigid stance against wartime territorial settlements.

138 P document 236, "Political Subcommittee Summary of Views: March 1942 to July 1943," box 57.

139 "Suggested United States Policy Regarding Poland," *FRUS*, Malta and Yalta, 230-234; Yalta Conference Communiqué, February 12, 1945, *FRUS*, Malta and Yalta, 977-978.

Moscow and Washington over Poland, the Baltic states and Rumania for the sake of alliance harmony. He thought such harmony not only important during the war, but particularly crucial during the transitional peace period immediately following the cessation of hostilities. When the war ended there appeared to be less reason for the allies to cooperate, and President Truman and his advisers assumed they could wring concessions out of Stalin by threatening to cut off postwar economic aid. They were off the mark by a wide margin, and it is difficult to see, particularly in light of what Welles and his fellow planners knew as early as the fall of 1942, how events in Eastern Europe could have turned out other than they did.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

Resignation

By the summer of 1943, Welles concluded that the stories circulating in Washington about his personal life could no longer be contained and in early August he offered his resignation to the president.¹ Although the real reasons behind his resignation were hushed up, many officials knew the truth. "There is a lot of talk," Breckinridge Long confided in his diary in late August, "about Welles's departure being on account of differences in opinion about policy. That is not the case. The trouble was purely and simply that Welles was accused of a highly immoral bit of conduct, that Bullitt became advised of it, and spread the story. There was an investigation. The office of District Attorney had some part in it I am informed. Hull told me repeatedly about the F.B.I. reports -- the file which was sent to the White House and disappeared for the time. The story was whispered around Washington."²

For three years Bullitt had worked relentlessly with Hull to bring the incident to the attention of the president and members of the Senate's wartime watchdog committee headed by Missouri Senator Harry Truman. But FBI director J. Edgar Hoover had lent his quiet assistance to Roosevelt on the matter and actually helped the president conceal the scandal for three years. Roosevelt told Hoover that he suspected Welles's drinking had precipitated the incidents and he accepted Hoover's suggestion that "someone should be assigned to travel with Mr. Welles to see either that he did not indulge in the use of liquor or that, if he did, that he then did not endeavor

¹ The official announcement of his departure came in late September, but he had effectively left the administration weeks before and word of his resignation leaked to the Washington press corps.

² Breckinridge Long diary, August 29, 1943, box 5, the Papers of Breckinridge Long, Library of Congress. "The problem of Mr. Hull and Mr. Welles seems to be settled," noted Margaret Suckley, Roosevelt's intimate friend. "Mr. Welles is out for good, as the Senate would not confirm him if the P. were to give him an appointment. This is because on a certain occasion, years ago, when drunk, he behaved 'in a manner unbecoming a gentleman.' Bullitt, who wanted his position in the State Dept. dug up the story, told it to 'Cissy' Patterson The P. told me the whole story, which is unsavory. The only excuse is that Sumner Welles was drunk, and didn't know what he was doing, and was completely unconscious of any of it when sober again. It is the kind of thing to ruin his career, however. . . . The P. never wants to speak to Bullitt again." Geoffrey C. Ward, ed., Closest Companion (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995), 244.

to make propositions for such immoral relations."³

When Bullitt confronted Roosevelt over Welles shortly thereafter the president sought to halt the effort to have Welles removed by telling Bullitt that he was aware of the charges and that he had already remedied the situation by providing Welles with a bodyguard to look after him. Bullitt was unbowed. How could the president think of "asking Americans to die in a crusade for all that was decent in human life," Bullitt asked, when he had "among the leaders of a crusade a criminal like Welles"? Bullitt told the president that Hull believed Welles "worse than a murderer." Roosevelt was so disturbed by Bullitt's comments that he canceled his appointments for the rest of the day.⁴

Stymied at the White House, Hull and Bullitt next sought to tighten the noose on Welles by using the Washington press corps, delivering evidence of the incident to James Reston of the New York Times and Cissy Patterson, publisher of the Washington Times Herald. But no newspaper dared use the explosive charges. "I wrote a column at the time regretting the loss of this talented diplomat," Reston recalled, "and Mr. Hull called me the following day to his office. He said that perhaps I was not well enough informed about 'the facts' and offered to remove 'this deficiency.' He then reached into a drawer of his desk and handed me a thick FBI report alleging homosexual charges against Welles. I asked him if he was prepared to take responsibility as the source of this information, but he said he was not, he was just doing me a favor. I turned the report over to Arthur Krock, but the Times didn't print a word of it. I began to understand, however, the depth of competition and personal hostility that existed even at the top of the

³ Athan Theoharis, J. Edgar Hoover, Sex, and Crime: An Historical Antidote (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1995), 32.

⁴ Orville H. Bullitt, ed., For the President: Personal and Secret: Correspondence Between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 511-518; Adolf A. Berle Diary, September 1, 1943, box 215, Adolf A. Berle Papers, FDRL. "Welles first spoke to me about the story," Breckinridge Long recalled in his diary. "That was in the spring of 1942. He said Bullitt had started it and that it was a malicious lie. I assumed it was. Bullitt is a person without honor, in my eyes. I have known him a long, long time and know him well but I have never had any confidence in him. And -- he wanted Welles's position. So I accepted Welles's statement at face value. Even without Bullitt's instigation of the story I would still have accepted Welles's statement." Breckinridge Long diary, August 29, 1943, box 5, the Papers of Breckinridge Long, Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

government."⁵

Hull and Bullitt then leaked their evidence to some of the administration's congressional critics, such as Democratic Senator Burton Wheeler of Montana and Republican Senator Owen Brewster of Maine, further complicating the president's efforts to contain the scandal.⁶ "The lurid story had been circulating for months," Breckinridge Long wrote. "A number of people outside the department had asked me about it. I always passed it off in a light vein and stated my belief that the story was false. It persisted. Finally it got to some Republican members of the Senate. None of them spoke to me about it but the fact that they knew it was dangerous."⁷ Several officials warned the president that with his campaign for a fourth term just around the corner, the Republicans would take a keen interest in the Welles matter. The president had successfully protected Welles from the charges for three years and he may not have believed the accusations. After all, he himself had been the target of false slanders in the past and he was well aware of Bullitt's temperament and tactics. But when confronted by the threat of Hull's resignation in the summer of 1943, it became clear to the president that Welles had to go. Hull later recalled that Welles confronted him at the state department and accused him of turning the president against him. Hull denied the charge and claimed that Roosevelt, too, thought Welles should resign. The president assumed that Hull's presence in the administration would be needed in the coming presidential campaign, as well as in the battle in the senate over the new international organization and future peace treaties. Welles understood this, and in a note to the president on August 16 he explained his decision to resign. "Since talking with you," Welles wrote, "it has seemed very clear to me that the present

⁵ Orville H. Bullitt, ed., For the President, 511-518; Will Brownell and Richard Billings, So Close to Greatness: A Biography of William C. Bullitt (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 297; James Reston, Deadline: A Memoir (New York: Random House, 1991), 103. That Krock did not use the material is somewhat surprising, as he had devoted much of his career to using the pages of the New York Times to promote friends such as Hull and Joseph P. Kennedy. Lord Halifax noted that "Krock, who veers between the extremes of vindictive spite and sycophantic flattery, has for some months held up Mr. Hull as a paragon of virtue gratuitously frustrated by the greatly inferior persons among whom it is his bad fortune to be compelled to function." See FO 371/34160 minute by Halifax, August 7, 1943, PRO.

⁶ Brownell and Billings, So Close to Greatness, 297; Reston, Deadline, 103.

⁷ Breckinridge Long diary, August 29, 1943, box 5, the Papers of Breckinridge Long, Library of Congress.

hue and cry in the press, and elsewhere, will continue unless this step is taken immediately."⁸

The outcry over Welles's resignation was considerable, not only in the press, where he was seen as a valued source to newsmen like Pearson, Lippmann and Reston, but also with the public. Hundreds of letters poured into the White House demanding the president immediately reappoint Welles to another senior position.⁹ "There is no doubt that the strength and wide extent of the popular reaction over Welles's dismissal was a complete surprise both to the State Department and the White House," noted Sir Ronald Campbell at the British Embassy.¹⁰ The circumstances and timing of Welles's resignation also turned him into something of an icon in the liberal press, which claimed him as the latest victim of Hull's "reactionary" machinations. "I never dreamed that Hull would some day force us to make a hero of Sumner Welles," lamented Nation columnist I.F. Stone, who claimed that the president and Hull were "startled by the reaction of the country to the Under Secretary's forced resignation."¹¹

Across the nation, sympathetic newspapers called for his retention. "Keep Welles, Mr. President," blared the headline editorial in PM, New York's progressive afternoon daily. "We have come to think of him as a kind of Wallace of the State Department, a man who has learned to think in world terms not only in respect to the war, but in respect to the peace to come. Now you understand what we mean, Mr. President, when we say that Sumner Welles has become a kind of symbol of yourself and the things you believe in. Isn't this the place to make your stand, Mr. President? There is no satiating the howling wolves."¹² A St. Louis Post-Dispatch headline asked "Why Was

⁸ Morgan, 337; Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York: Macmillan, 1948), vol. II, 1229-1231; Welles to Hull, September 21, 1943, PSF 77, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, August 16, 1943, PSF 77, FDRL.

⁹ See "Resignation of Sumner Welles," Official File 20, Department of State, box 16, FDR Papers, FDRL.

¹⁰ FO 371/34161, Campbell to Foreign Office, September 18, 1943, PRO; "FDR and the Conservative Trend," The New Republic, August 23, 1943; FO 371/34161, "Situation in the United States," by Campbell, September 5, 1943, PRO.

¹¹ Nation, September 13, 1943.

¹² Welles to Roosevelt, August 16, 1943, PSF 77, FDRL; New York Times, August 25, 1943; "Resignation of Sumner Welles and appointment of Edward R. Stettinius to Under Secretary of State," White House Press Release, September 25, 1943, DAFR, vol. VI, 55; Department of State Bulletin, IV, 208; "Resignation of Sumner Welles," OF 20, Department of State, box 16, FDRL; Nation, September 13, 1943.

Sumner Welles Fired?" reminding its readers that it was Welles "who gave greatest meaning to our fight, who crystallized it for the downtrodden everywhere with the strong words, 'This is in very truth a people's war.'"¹³

Drew Pearson claimed Welles was the victim of a conservative conspiracy, led by Hull, that desired a harder line with Moscow. Pearson claimed Welles was sacrificed because he was "liberal in his attitude toward Russia," charging that Hull wanted "to bleed Russia white." Hull reacted furiously, calling Pearson's accusation a "monstrous and diabolical falsehood," and an uncharacteristically enraged Roosevelt told a startled White House press corps that Pearson was a "chronic liar."¹⁴ Pearson also warned that other officials of a progressive bent would soon be stripped of influence, a charge seemingly supported by the subsequent abolition of Henry Wallace's Board of Economic Warfare, which was seen as yet another victory for Hull. According to New York Times Washington Bureau Chief Arthur Krock, a close ally of the Secretary, "Hull told the President that if he was not vigilant, the Wallace-Welles combination would 'ruin him as Woodrow Wilson was ruined' by idealistic and reckless promises that could not be fulfilled and that the American people would not redeem."¹⁵

Conspiracy theories about Welles resignation gained much currency. Brain Truster Rex Tugwell later suggested that a subterranean campaign existed to undermine and destroy New Dealers. "Washington was awash just now with derogatory gossip, malicious rumor, and fantastic allegation," Tugwell wrote. "The game was to pick off all those who were really loyal to Franklin. The conservatives who were now gathering about Hull succeeded with Welles who was too proud and too reserved to fight back."¹⁶ Others thought Welles's resignation part of a

13 St Louis Post-Dispatch, August 30, 1943; New York Post, August 25, 1943

14 Drew Pearson: An Unauthorized Biography, 175-176.

15 Ibid, 206; Arthur Krock, Memoirs: Sixty Years on the Firing Line (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), 206; Drew Pearson: An Unauthorized Biography, 175-176; "Cordell Hull," by Donald F. Drummond, in Graebner, ed. An Uncertain Tradition, 615-617.

16 New York Post, August 25, 1943; PM, August 27, 1943; St. Louis Post-Dispatch, August 30, 1943; "Cordell Hull," by Donald F. Drummond, in Graebner, ed. An Uncertain Tradition, 615-617; Tugwell, The Democratic Roosevelt, 622-623.

"conservative coup" engineered by Hull with the acquiescence of the president.¹⁷

While the scandal ended Welles's career, it also destroyed Bullitt's. Roosevelt told press secretary Steve Early that "Welles may be a poisoned man, but Bullitt is a poisoner."¹⁸ When Hull subsequently proposed Bullitt for a senior position in the department, the president wrote on the bottom of the request: "Why not Minister to Saudi Arabia?" -- a proposal he knew Bullitt would refuse. When Bullitt later asked the president for support in his race for mayor of Philadelphia, Roosevelt told him: "If I were the Angel Gabriel and you and Sumner Welles should come before me seeking admission into the Gates of Heaven, do you know what I'd say? I would say: 'Bill Bullitt, you have defamed the name of a man who toiled for his fellow men, and you can go to hell.' And that's what I tell you to do now."¹⁹

While the train incident was the spark that led to Welles's downfall, a number of other factors also contributed to his resignation and might have led to his departure had the scandal never occurred. The president had muddied the working environment at the state department by promoting competing lines of authority between "Welles men" and "Hull men." Roosevelt preferred working with Welles in matters that clearly should have been the domain of Hull. "By frequently bypassing Hull and permitting Welles to enunciate foreign policy from its very source, the President added to the feud," a September 1943 Newsweek story concluded.²⁰ Welles's resignation had a damaging effect on morale in the state department,²¹ and Sir Ronald

17 "FDR and the Conservative Trend," The New Republic, August 23, 1943; FO 371 34161, "Situation in the United States," by Campbell, September 5, 1943. Writing to his friend Jefferson Caffery, the U.S. Ambassador to Brazil, Welles placed the blame for his resignation on Hull's angry response to Welles's actions at the January 1942 Rio Conference. "To you," Welles wrote to Caffery, "I do not have to give any explanation, particularly in view of our association a year and a half ago. I need merely add that the past few months have been a very bitter time for me." Welles to Caffery, August 22, 1943, Welles papers, box 91, resignation letters, FDRL.

18 Eden noted that "Bullitt is poisonous and his record in France in 1940 discreditable." FO 371 34161, Campbell to F.O. August 30, 1943.

19 Berle Diary, September 1, 1943, box 215, Adolf A. Berle Papers, FDRL; Morgan, FDR, 677-685.

20 Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), 12; Newsweek, September 6, 1943.

21 Berle Diary, September 1, 1943, box 215, FDRL; Drew Pearson to Welles, November 29, 1943, Welles papers, box 147, FDRL.

Campbell at the British Embassy wrote that there was "profound distress" over Welles's resignation among foreign diplomatic representatives in Washington.²²

The president, always seeking the path of least resistance, offered as a consolation to appoint Welles to head the delegation to the upcoming Moscow conference.²³ Welles gave careful consideration to the Moscow assignment because he believed the alliance stood at a crucial juncture in its effort to coordinate postwar policies, and he remained greatly concerned about the slow deterioration of the Washington-Moscow relationship. "If the situation runs much longer it will be insoluble," Welles said, and he warned senior officials that Hull was "intensely prejudiced against Russia."²⁴ But to the surprise of many, Welles rejected Roosevelt's offer, writing to the president that he did not believe it possible to work with Hull in any capacity.²⁵

Reporting the details of Welles's resignation to the foreign office, Campbell wrote that the imbroglio could not have occurred at a worse time. Public concern about Washington's relations with Moscow had been heightening, and the resignation fueled speculation that there was a sinister connection between Welles's departure and deteriorating relations with Moscow. Campbell reported that "the turmoil within the State Department adds to the disturbed feeling" in the country and that the episode would now "serve to exaggerate the Russian issue, and provide a cue for the left-wing press, in whose eyes Welles is now a Liberal martyr sacrificed to a 'reactionary clique' in the State Department." Campbell observed a "nation-wide feeling of discomfort and suspicion about the 'inside story' of Welles's removal . . . [and] general dismay at his retirement cut far deeper than the

22 ; FO 371/34161, Campbell to Foreign Office, September 5, 1943.

23 Roosevelt to Stalin, September 4, 1943, FRUS, I, 518-519; Welles to Roosevelt, September 21, 1943, PSF 77, FDRL.

24 Berle Diary, September 1, 1943, Berle Papers, box 215, FDRL.

25 "Resignation of Sumner Welles," Official File 20, Department of State, box 16, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, September 21, 1943, PSF 77, FDRL; Henry Wallace, The Price of Vision: The Diary of Henry A. Wallace, 1942-1946, ed. John Morton Blum (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), 240; Eden's private secretary, Oliver Harvey, noted: "Sumner Welles is on such bad terms with Hull (everywhere we now come across Hull's deadening influence) that he won't in all probability be allowed to undertake such a mission. There is no other American who has the clear head or the experience to do it so well." Oliver Harvey, August 24.

indignation of Liberals at the depreciation of Wallace."²⁶ Welles continued to fear that Hull's domination of the department would mean that Washington would find it more difficult to carve out a relationship with Moscow independent of the British and that Hull's approach would cede the leadership of postwar planning to London and Moscow.²⁷

* * *

Even after his resignation, Welles's continued to be one of the more influential voices in the debate over America's role in the postwar world. In a constant stream of books, articles and lectures, he promoted his views on how the peace should best be arranged. He began a weekly column syndicated by the New York Herald Tribune, the country's leading moderate Republican paper and a hotbed of Willkie advocacy. Appearing in seventy papers throughout the United States, Latin America and Europe, Welles used the column to promote his views, particularly urging a regional approach to international organization, international trusteeships, closer cooperation with Moscow and improved relations with Latin America.²⁸ Furthermore, his resignation did not end his association with the president. Roosevelt asked Welles to continue his advocacy of the new world order, suggesting Welles write a book popularizing the Four Freedoms. Within only a few weeks of his resignation, Welles would meet privately with Roosevelt at Hyde Park, where they held detailed discussions about the administration's postwar designs. At one point, Roosevelt asked Welles to use his newspaper column to counter any attacks on his foreign policy, particularly from the organs of Henry

26 FO 371/34161 "Situation in the U.S." by Campbell, September 5, 1943, PRO.

27 Henry Wallace, The Price of Vision: The Diary of Henry A. Wallace, 1942-1946, ed. John Morton Blum (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), 237-241; FO 371/34161, minute by Campbell, August 24, 1943. Hull may have been in sole control of the department, but he did not succeed in putting forward his personal choice for Under Secretary: Breckinridge Long. Instead he submitted to the President's wishes and accepted the appointment of Edward J. Stettinius, the 43-year-old son of a partner in the influential J.P. Morgan banking concern. Walter Johnson, "Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.," in Norman Graebner, ed., An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century (New York: McGraw Hill, 1961, paper), 210-222.

28 "Columnist Welles," Newsweek, December 13, 1943; speech by Welles, "Safeguarding Our Interests," Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Foreign Policy Association, Vital Speeches, November 1, 1943.

Luce's publishing empire, which now employed William Bullitt.²⁹ A few days before Roosevelt departed for Teheran to attend the first meeting of the Big Three, Welles spent several hours with the president, confidentially surveying preparations for the conference and discussing postwar plans. Soon after Roosevelt's return from the conference, he wrote to Welles: "It would be good to see you as soon as you come North. I want to tell you all about Cairo and Teheran. I think that as a roving ambassador for the first time I did not pull any boners."³⁰

Welles soon became the highest-paid lecturer in the country and the arrival of his best-selling book, The Time for Decision, in the summer of 1944, coincided with the peak of the debate over the nature of the postwar world. Walter Lippmann's book about his views on the postwar order, U.S. War Aims, came out at the same time and recent speeches by Wallace and Willkie had alerted Americans to the possibilities of the postwar era. Welles concluded his book by outlining his plans for an international organization and issuing a call to action.³¹ He also used the book to call for a world body where the Axis powers would one day be allowed to attain full and equal partnership with other nations. He reiterated his appeal for a regional approach to the postwar settlement and stressed the importance of international police power and collective security. He also advocated international trusteeship and eventual independence for colonies in Asia and the Middle East.³² One of the most widely-read and discussed sections of his book was his chapter on Soviet-American relations, titled

29 Roosevelt to Welles, October 15, 1943, PSF 77, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, not dated, 1943, PPF 2961, FDRL; Welles, Where Are We Heading?, 27-30; W.A. Swanberg, Luce and His Empire, (New York: Scribners, 1972), 218-219.

30 Roosevelt to Welles, October 15, 1943, PSF 77, FDRL; Roosevelt to Welles, not dated, 1943, PPF 2961, FDRL; Welles, Where Are We Heading?, 27-30; Roosevelt to Welles, January 4, 1944, PPF 2961, FDRL.

31 Walter Lippmann, U.S. War Aims (Boston: Little, Brown, 1944); Robert Divine, Second Chance: The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II (New York: Atheneum, 1971, paper), 178-181; Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 414. His publishers sought to boost sales of the book by proclaiming that he possessed inside information about the administration's postwar plans. "Only a handful of men in the world have had access to the information on which this book is based," the book's jacket proclaimed.

32 Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 55, 374-378, 413-14. In this detailed 400-page account of American foreign policy over the course of the last decade, only once did Welles mention Cordell Hull by name.

"The Constructive Power of the U.S.S.R."³³ Welles expressed his view that in its quest for security, Moscow had a legitimate need to create a system in Eastern Europe comparable to America's sphere of influence in Latin America. He lamented the fact that the security council of the United Nations had not yet been erected, for he thought that many of the particular issues facing the great powers would be better dealt with through international cooperation under the guidance of a new organization. "The maintenance of world peace and the progress of humanity is going to depend upon the desires and the capacity of the peoples of the [the United States and the USSR] to work together," Welles wrote. "It will depend upon their ability to replace their relationship of the past quarter century, which has not only been negative but marked by fanatical suspicion and deep-rooted hostility on both sides, with one that is positive and constructive."³⁴

Reviewing the book in The New Republic, critic Max Lerner added: "Like Cicero retiring to his villa and his books when the great ones of Rome had no place for him in their councils, or a Machiavelli mulling over in bitter seclusion the meaning of his diplomatic experience, Welles has written a rich, crowded, reflective book about the commonwealths and the princes for our time." The reading public received the book with equal enthusiasm. It soon became the surprise publishing success of the summer of 1944, displacing Bob Hope's I Never Left Home as the number-one best seller on the New York Times list and remaining there until 1945. The Book-of-the-Month Club made The Time for Decision its August selection, and nearly half a million copies sold nationwide. In a year-end poll of book critics, it ranked as one of the ten outstanding books of the year.³⁵

* * *

Throughout 1944 and into 1945 Welles continued his public campaign in support of a world organization, and in speeches he

³³ "What Russia Wants," by Sumner Welles, Reader's Digest, November 1944.

³⁴ Sumner Welles, The Time For Decision (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 306, 334-335.

³⁵ The New Republic, July 31, 1944; Welles to Roosevelt, June 2, 1944, PSF 77, FDRL.

called on the great powers to immediately inaugurate a new league. The United Nations Monetary and Financial conference held at Bretton Woods in July 1944 affirmed many of the principles Welles had fought for and underscored the extent to which the United States would dominate postwar economic arrangements. Delegates agreed to form an International Monetary Fund and an International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The subsequent August-October Dumbarton Oaks Conference met to discuss the framework for a new global security organization. The conferees issued a set of guidelines for the formation of a United Nations Organization, thus further building on the foundation that Welles had erected over the proceeding years.³⁶

When an ailing and exhausted Cordell Hull submitted his resignation in the fall of 1944 numerous telegrams reached the White House calling for the appointment of Welles.³⁷ After Roosevelt's fourth term victory in November, the president announced that Under Secretary of State Edward Stettinius would replace Hull.³⁸ Undeterred, Welles continued to campaign for the creation of a new international organization along the lines he desired. The United Nations Conference in San Francisco in the spring of 1945, which gathered to inaugurate the new world body, in many ways represented the crowning achievement of Welles's professional life. Scores of telegrams once again reached the White House calling on the president to appoint Welles secretary general of the conference. That honor instead went to Alger Hiss. Welles did attend the conference in San Francisco, but as a radio commentator, delivering nightly interpretive reports. In one commentary, he warned that U.S.-Soviet relations were in jeopardy and he charged Truman and Stettinius with fumbling relations with Moscow. "In five short weeks since the death of President Roosevelt," Welles

36 "The Outlook for a Democratic World Order," by Sumner Welles, Newton D. Baker Lecture, November 20, 1944, The Council on World Affairs publication.

37 For letters and telegrams to White House regarding Sumner Welles, see Official File 470, FDRL.

38 Henry Wallace, The Price of Vision: The Diary of Henry A. Wallace, 1942-1946, ed. John Morton Blum (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), 397-400; Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 1716-1719. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote plaintively to her husband: "I can hardly see that the set-up will be very much different from what it might have been under Dewey." (Lash, Eleanor and Franklin, 713-715).

announced, "the policy which he had so painstakingly carried on has been changed. Our Government now appears to the Russians as a spearhead of an apparent bloc of the western nations opposed to the Soviet Union."³⁹

In the years immediately after the war William Bullitt continued to haunt Welles. Bullitt had turned against Roosevelt's policies, and had joined Whittaker Chambers at Henry Luce's publishing empire, taking up what colleagues called the "Red-wrecking" beat. He became one of the most popular conservative critics of the Roosevelt and Truman foreign policies. Bullitt tirelessly charged in both articles and a book that an ailing Roosevelt had been duped by Stalin at the Big Three conferences into "selling out" Eastern Europe. His charges created a sensation and he argued that the nations of Eastern Europe would be free today had it not been for the president's feeble-mindedness and the pro-communist duplicity of his advisers.⁴⁰

Welles wrote two of his next books, his 1946 Where Are We Heading and his 1950 Seven Decisions That Shaped History, in part as attempts to answer Bullitt's lurid charges. "It is ... in the field of foreign policy that I fear lasting harm may be done by some of the recent efforts to falsify the record made by President Roosevelt," Welles wrote in Seven Decisions That Shaped History. "The danger is that, by their attempt to blacken the character of the man whose memory they would assassinate, the Roosevelt-haters may also kill the ideas with which his name is associated."⁴¹ Welles also reacted angrily to the 1948 publication of Hull's memoirs. "I had naturally anticipated Mr. Hull's diatribe against myself in the book he published last year," Welles wrote to Roosevelt's former speechwriter Sam Rosenman. "In any event this is not of any material importance. What to my mind, however, is important, what I deeply resent, and what I will never forgive is his consistent effort in his book to make it appear that in his

³⁹ See Official File 470, "Sumner Welles," FDRL; President's Personal File 2961, FDRL; "Herald Tribune Broadcasts, 1945," box 199, folder 10, Welles papers, FDRL; Broadcast speech by Sumner Welles, May 22, 1945, Appendix to the Congressional Record, 1945, A2507-A2508, May 25, 1945.

⁴⁰ W.A. Swanberg, Luce and His Empire, (New York: Scribners, 1972), 215-219.

⁴¹ Welles, Seven Decisions That Shaped History, xi.

conduct of foreign affairs President Roosevelt always failed when Mr. Hull was not in agreement with him and that the President's only successes were those instigated by or approved by Mr. Hull."⁴²

Welles's name returned to the headlines during the height of the Whittaker Chambers-Alger Hiss controversy. Called upon to assist the House committee investigating Hiss, his former subordinate, Welles identified the famous "Pumpkin Papers" -- which had been dramatically concealed on Chambers's Maryland farm in a hollowed-out pumpkin -- as authentic state department documents. And only five days after the indictment of Hiss by a grand jury, Welles's former assistant Lawrence Duggan jumped to his death from a building in midtown Manhattan. In Washington, the House Un-American Activities Committee Chairman Karl Mundt and his colleague, Representative Richard M. Nixon, told a press conference that Duggan was under investigation as part of a vast communist network which had operated in the state department during Welles's tenure. When a reporter asked the Congressmen about the identity of the others, Mundt promised to name them "as they jump out of windows." Welles responded by publicly praising Duggan as one of the finest public servants in wartime Washington, describing him as "one of the most brilliant, most devoted, and most patriotic public servants" whom he had ever known.⁴³ Writing to a friend, Welles expressed doubts that Duggan had killed himself. "There was not the slightest motive for suicide in his case," Welles wrote. "On the contrary, there is, I think, unmistakable proof that he had no such idea in his mind and knowing him as you and I do he is certainly the last man on earth whom one could think to have wished to take his own life."⁴⁴

Only three days after Welles returned from Duggan's funeral, he fell unconscious and nearly froze to death beside a stream on his Oxon Hill property. With his clothing frozen to his body and his face cut, Welles was rushed to a nearby

⁴² Welles to Rosenman, June 17, 1949, Welles papers, box 140, FDRL.

⁴³ A.M. Sperber, Murrow: His Life and Times (New York: Freundlich Books, 1986), 317-318; David Caute, The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 567.

⁴⁴ Welles to Guachalla, January 13, 1949, box 138, Welles papers, FDRL.

hospital. He eventually regained consciousness, but said he remembered nothing. Investigators surmised that he had fallen into the nearby stream, dragged himself out, and collapsed a short distance away. He remained there, unconscious, the entire December night and had suffered life-threatening exposure and frostbite.⁴⁵ Conflicting accounts emerged as to what had taken place. Investigators soon began to speculate that perhaps Welles had passed-out and fallen into the stream. He had been drinking heavily since his resignation and had a history of alcohol-induced blackouts. Still, this did not seem to explain all of the details of the incident.⁴⁶

Many in the press also began to speculate. "By one of those curious coincidences that make you wonder," wrote Jay Franklin in his syndicated column, "the death of Larry Duggan was followed shortly by the discovery of his friend and sponsor, Sumner Welles, lying half-frozen in a Maryland field." Franklin speculated that there was a sinister connection between Duggan's death and Welles's accident. "It requires a heroic degree of self-control not to speculate as to whether -- just as with Larry Duggan -- there is not more to the tragic incident than the outward appearances."⁴⁷ Drew Pearson referred to Welles's accident as "Hull's Revenge," claiming the former secretary of state continued to seek Welles's destruction. "Hull's vengeance never relaxed," Pearson charged.⁴⁸ Others blamed the House Un-American Activities Committee for Welles's mishap. "It is hard to avoid the impression," stated an editorial in the Nation, "that the near-tragedy that overtook Sumner Welles had its origin in the reckless conduct of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Mr. Welles, who had been in an extremely agitated state for many hours before he was found lying unconscious and nearly frozen in a field near his house, was known to have been deeply affected by the death of Laurence Duggan and the scandalous efforts of Representative Mundt to link Duggan with the Chambers spy ring."⁴⁹ Others

⁴⁵ Philadelphia Inquirer, January 30, 1949.

⁴⁶ Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 365-366.

⁴⁷ Jay Franklin column, January 4, 1949, Welles papers, box 259, scrapbook January 1949- November 1950.

⁴⁸ Washington Post, January 1, 1949.

⁴⁹ The Nation, January 8, 1949.

charged that Welles's collapse had more lurid origins, such as a homosexual tryst gone awry.⁵⁰

Welles's recovery was slow, and for more than a year he ceased all activities such as lecturing and writing. He soon gave up his syndicated column, and due to his extensive physical therapy he was unable to travel or lecture. He eventually had several toes amputated due to severe nerve and tissue damage. As he became restless and frustrated with his slow recovery he drank more heavily than before. By the summer of 1949 he was at last able to travel and he and Mathilde departed in July for further rehabilitation in Switzerland. In Lausanne, misfortune struck again when Mathilde developed peritonitis and died suddenly. Mathilde's death devastated Welles and he descended into what he described to friends as a complete "physical and mental breakdown."⁵¹ "Sumner Welles is in terrible shape," Drew Pearson confided in his diary, "his wife is dead, his big toes gone, some of his fingers off. He has no interest in life, won't see his friends, can't sleep at night. I'm afraid he wants to die."⁵²

Out of the public eye, depressed and drinking heavily, Welles began to lose his appeal as a commentator. According to the head of the booking agency for Welles's lectures, they "had to drop Sumner Welles from the list of its lecturers; the reason -- Welles's drunkenness and homosexuality. Welles is said to have started drinking like a fish. Combined with the homosexuality, the other vice often makes Welles entirely unfit for lecturing."⁵³

His remaining years were mostly filled with despair. While many of his contemporaries and former colleagues received appointments in the Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, he was never again considered for any official position. He spent the remainder of his years dividing his time between Bar Harbor and Palm Beach, for the most part living in

50 Gellman, Secret Affairs, 392.

51 Welles to Welch, November 17, 1949, box 140, Welles papers, FDRL; Welles to Weisbach, October 14, 1949, box 140, Welles papers, FDRL.

52 Drew Pearson Diaries, 1949-1959, edited by Tyler Abell, 76.

53 Ted Morgan, FDR: A Biography (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), 685.

isolation and drinking himself into nightly stupors.⁵⁴ Without his column, and making no public appearances, he gradually faded from public memory. He slipped into a long state of depressive brooding, where his heavy drinking became so uncontrollable that close friends and family feared for his life and sanity. He attempted suicide. A few years after Mathilde's death he remarried,⁵⁵ but he lived in seclusion throughout most of the 1950s. When he died of pancreatic cancer (an apparent result of his years of alcoholism) on September 24, 1961 in Bernardsville, New Jersey, at the age of 68, his many eulogists perfunctorily listed his many posts and assignments, but failed to note that he had never attained the promise of his early career.⁵⁶

54 Benjamin Welles, Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist, 373.

55 Harriette Post, a childhood friend who was the daughter of a founder of the New York Stock Exchange.

56 New York Times, September 25, 1961; John F. Kennedy to Harriette Welles, September 25, 1961, box 22, Welles papers, FDRL; Winston S. Churchill to Harriette Welles, September 26, 1961, box 22, Welles papers, FDRL.

CONCLUSION

The life and career of Sumner Welles paralleled a period of increasing American involvement in the world, as U.S. foreign policy evolved from mostly regional concerns to the preoccupations of an American-guided world order. He was a transitional figure in American foreign policy, born at a time when the United States, confronted by the challenges of the closing frontier and a rapidly industrializing economy, began to seek overseas outlets for increased commercial expansion. His initiation into the diplomatic corps coincided with Wilson's effort to reorder world politics. Welles found inspiration in the Wilsonian vision of the United States as the political, economic and moral engine of a new international order, one that would eschew both imperialism and revolution and lead the world forward under the banner of liberal, capitalistic internationalism.

During the early 1920s Welles worked to reorder relations with Latin America, seeking to consolidate and integrate the hemisphere politically and economically behind U.S. leadership. He continued these efforts in the 1930s while implementing the Good Neighbor Policy. Welles was also behind two of the most important events in American diplomacy during the years before the war: the Welles plan of 1937 sought to reorient U.S. foreign policy by calling for a conference of neutrals which would agree to an assortment of Wilsonian principles; and his 1940 mission to Europe attempted, like Wilson before him, to achieve a peace without victory, while laying a claim for significant U.S. involvement in any postwar settlement.

Welles played a leading role in determining U.S. war aims. He helped draft the Atlantic Charter, seeking to expand the charter's meaning to cover the entire globe. The Atlantic Charter heightened expectations that the United States had pledged to the peoples of the world that it would help to achieve a better postwar future. Welles sought to globalize the charter by giving notice that those liberated by the war would achieve self-determination. But as the political and military

realities of the war intruded, Welles often assented to arrangements that seemed to contradict his professed aims. He believed grand pronouncements such as the Atlantic Charter were often necessary to express broader goals important for public support in wartime. But, while he would later argue that the charter was merely a statement of war aims and not a guarantee of specific action, expectations raised by the charter were not fully met at the conclusion of the war. As the war progressed and Welles was confronted with the hard realities of alliance relations, he would find that he could not always pursue the ideals of the Atlantic Charter, which had in many ways become a liability.

Central to Welles's vision of a new order was U.S. participation in a world organization. In this area Welles achieved his greatest success. He spearheaded the effort to create a new league. His inclusion of numerous members of Congress in drafting a charter for a new world organization helped secure bipartisan support for the draft plan. Furthermore, many of the members of Welles's committees would play significant roles in postwar planning during the years 1943-1945, thus ensuring that Welles's influence would continue to be felt at future wartime conferences.

Nevertheless, his failures in the area of world organization were equally significant. Welles's efforts to create a number of smaller, regional world organizations met with little success. He failed to anticipate the ways in which the climate of heightened nationalism would create a stumbling block to his schemes for regional federations, as nations were becoming less inclined to cede sovereignty to any international body. National consciousness had been heightened in almost all regions and the very attempts at repression of national aspirations during the war made nationalism more desirable. As for his efforts to endow the future world organization with an effective means of collective security, he wanted to avoid the danger of the United States becoming the world's policeman, and thus sought to create a fully integrated international police force able to intervene at the request of the new world organization. This, too, met with little success.

Throughout the Second World War Welles sought nothing less than a complete restructuring of international relations. In numerous speeches he expressed his view of the war's potential to bring about a new world order, pursuing his vision through his leadership of the postwar planning committees. Welles anticipated a huge expansion of American interests and commitments around the world. This brought about a significant alteration of Washington's *weltanschauung*, where events in previously strategically insignificant areas were now believed to have ostensible consequences for the United States due to the impact they might have on other areas that suddenly seemed vital. This led to a reflexive impulse to project American interests broadly, no matter the consequences, and fueled the belief that the smallest shifts or changes in the global balance of power would be destabilizing to American security.

Welles also desired a restructuring of the world economy. He saw the goals of the inter-American economic system -- such as greater economic interdependence and integration -- as exportable globally. He anticipated that at the end of the war America would be positioned to expand its economic interests all over the world. He understood that while much of the rest of the world would struggle to rebuild after the war the United States would dominate a huge share of the global market. He thus anticipated and proposed an American effort to reconstruct not only the economies of the weakened allied and neutral nations, but also those of the defeated Axis powers. As Welles had outlined, such American generosity would not be bestowed for mere altruistic reasons, but rather as a matter of hard-headed self interest. Welles's desire to create a framework of international economic institutions would not only serve American economic interests, but also national security. After all, the reconstruction of the world would benefit the United States by providing Americans with new markets, raw materials and potential allies, and would also enable Washington to take the lead in creating a new postwar economic order dominated by the United States.

Welles also led the American effort to guide the postwar course of the other great powers. As early as the spring of

1942 he argued that the Axis powers should not be so crippled that they could not return to the community of nations after the war. They would instead be reconstructed in a way that would lend support to U.S. interests in the postwar era. While democracy and liberal capitalism would be the ultimate goal for postwar Germany, Italy, Japan and France, democracy would perhaps not be suitable everywhere. In China, for example, as in much of Latin America, a mere adherence to U.S. aims would suffice. Welles initially sought to insure that the peace be reconciled with America's war aims, but he soon went beyond that initial goal, embarking upon more specific investigations of the postwar status of particular powers. By the time the planning committees were disbanded in the summer of 1943 they had succeeded in conducting the first thorough examination of Washington's postwar aims toward the other powers. But it proved difficult to implement a long-range program to achieve Welles's aims, and his assumptions often demonstrated that it was unwise to do such planning in Washington, independently of the countries concerned. Furthermore, such discussions were not always conducted by people who understood the unique features of the different societies and cultures in question.

Welles's wartime vision also included the weakening and eventual destruction of imperial systems abroad and the ultimate granting of independence and self-rule. During the war, American interests underwent a vast expansion, where numerous colonial areas previously ignored were suddenly seen as vital to the nation's postwar strategic and economic concerns. Welles opposed European-style colonialism not only because he thought the trend toward independence irreversible, but because he also thought America should seek to lead the forces of change in the colonial world rather than challenging chaotic revolutions and upheaval. He thus sought to ally the United States with the emerging nationalisms of the colonial world. Seeking a safe middle ground between the colonialism of the past and the possibility of future revolution, independence would be allowed in some areas, international trusteeships in others.

During the war Welles would promote the destruction of the

colonial status quo without regard to the consequences. After all, with the notable exception of the Western Hemisphere (where the United States already was the dominant power and thus had a vested interest in promoting the status quo) America stood to gain much from an alteration of the old global order. Welles foresaw that the United States would have expanded interests not only in the future markets of Europe, but also in raw materials, trade, market potential and strategic importance of the Far East, Africa, the Pacific and the Near East.

Welles sought to stretch the meaning of the Atlantic Charter to ensure that the colonial masters would not seek a return to the status quo at the end of the war. But Cold War considerations would eventually begin to take precedence over support for the national aspirations of colonial peoples. And, in any event, Welles's ideas for trusteeships never anticipated what would happen in the postwar colonial world, where the rapid pace of decolonization would overwhelm careful planning for the future. Welles failed to give adequate consideration to the problems of underdevelopment and political instability that would plague much of the post-colonial world and he gave little thought that the void created by decolonization might not necessarily be filled by the United States. During the war, Welles spoke with great moral fervor about self-determination, independence and liberation in the colonial world. But decolonization often led to destabilization in the years that followed and the paramount concern for order became the basis upon which policy toward nationalist movements would be designed. Thus, conditional support for self-determination and nationalism would take a back seat to strategic concerns in the context of the Cold War struggle. No longer would there be talk of promoting change and upheaval throughout the world. As America became a superpower and hegemon it increasingly became the chief defender of the global status quo.

Early in the war Welles saw cooperation with the Soviet Union as essential to his designs for the postwar world and he sought to construct a world body that might use regionalism to subordinate many of Moscow's territorial aims to the larger goal of continued entente. Perhaps Moscow would merely erect

its own "Good Neighbor Policy" for the region, which might avoid blatant political and military intervention and instead concentrate on economic influence. At the very least, regionalism might help contain the Soviet Union from fully extending its influence into the heart of Europe. Welles hoped his regional approach to the postwar organization might allow a certain degree of great power autonomy within their spheres of interest, but he failed to accept that federations would do absolutely nothing to extend the principles of the Atlantic Charter to Eastern Europe. Furthermore, Welles discovered he could not completely escape the ideals of the charter when the realities of Grand Alliance politics demanded concessions to Soviet aims. How to reconcile the principles of the charter with Soviet demands became one of the issues which most concerned Welles shortly before his resignation. He underestimated the Russian desire for security in Eastern Europe and he naively thought that schemes such as federations or national plebiscites would reduce the political problems of the region. If these approaches did not work, he reasoned, economic aid might be used to influence Russian aims. But Welles had come to realize by mid-1942 that the question of Eastern Europe presented the United States with an almost impossible dilemma: the political shape of the postwar world would be decisively shaped by the position of the Red Army when the war ended and not by idealistic pronouncements made in Washington.

Welles remained publicly silent about such private concerns. He used Wilsonian rhetoric to protect the administration against domestic criticism. But he concealed his more candid fears about America's inability to influence outcomes in Eastern Europe because he placed a premium on relations between Moscow and Washington. He was willing to acquiesce in Soviet control of the region if it meant holding the wartime alliance together after the war. He wanted the peace to be different from what had come before, but the simple fact that Washington remained impotent to do anything about Soviet aims for the region made it less and less likely that the peace would develop along lines other than spheres of

influence and balance of power considerations.

In any event, the outcome in Eastern Europe was far less important to Welles than the larger goal of creating and safeguarding an American-led new world order. Welles anticipated the coming of this "Pax Americana" and helped facilitate America's transformation from great power during the Second World War to a seeker of global hegemony during the Cold War. But his vision of a coming American Century was not always tempered by an understanding of the limits of American power and in the decades that followed Americans would repeatedly learn the difficult lesson that despite their vast new power, they must endure great sacrifice in any effort to create the kind of world order they desired. America's quest for hegemony would prove to be messier and more complicated than Welles had ever anticipated.

Welles sought to create a new liberal-internationalist world order led by the United States, which thus opened the way to a crusading internationalism that, with decidedly mixed results, animated American policy through the next forty years of the Cold War. Granted, Welles was not alone in this effort. He was a contemporary of Wendell Willkie, Walter Lippmann, John Foster Dulles, Dean Acheson, Averell Harriman, Henry Wallace and George F. Kennan and, with the passage of more than a half century since his resignation, it is at last time to place him among those other architects of the "American Century." For, without Welles, the story of America's rise to globalism is not complete.

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