The London School of Economics and Political Science

The Warrior-Politicians: Henry L. Stimson, the War Department, and the Politics of American Grand Strategy during World War II

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me, and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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Abstract

This thesis examines how the War Department operated as a bureaucratic, political, and policy actor within the politics of wartime Washington during World War II, focusing on the role of Henry Stimson as secretary of war. This project is centered around a puzzle: why did the Army – and the military more broadly – gain unprecedented levels of influence over U.S. national policy under a president renowned for centralizing authority and decision-making in his own hands?

This thesis concludes that the War Department emerged as pivotal policymaking nexus within the U.S. government because its senior civilian officials transformed it into a political actor which actively worked to influence the bureaucratic and foreign policy decision-making process. This thesis studies formal U.S. decision-making by incorporating bureaucratic politics and rivalries alongside other forms of domestic political wrangling to explain how the Army both shaped American grand strategy and grew into a key actor within the wartime political establishment. War Department leaders streamlined their own bureaucracy and improved civil-military relations with the Army to craft a coherent political and policy agenda. They cultivated relationships with key executive branch officials and legislators to build coalitions to support its policy initiatives. And they inserted the Army into political conversations and decision-making processes it previously was not involved in to entire its interests were met.

The result was that the Army gained important leverage over its bureaucratic rivals – namely the Navy and the State Departments – which helped it drive the political and policy conversations within the executive branch and in Washington. This meant national policy and strategy were substantially influenced by Army thinking, debated on Army terms, and often shifted as Army officials and planners adjusted their strategic outlook. By examining how the War Department labored to mold U.S. national security decision-making during World War II, this thesis expands our understanding of how different agencies compete to influence the U.S. foreign policy process and achieve their preferred policy outcomes

Acknowledgements

Writing and completing a Ph.D. is a difficult and often solitary exercise in the best of times; trying to do it while living through a global pandemic is an entirely different matter. The Covid-19 pandemic began toward the end of my first year as a doctoral student. Although it has waned by the time I write this in the spring of 2023, it is safe to say it dominated my Ph.D. experience. I know I would not have been able to complete this degree in the middle of this earth-shattering experience without the help and support of all those who guided me throughout the last few years.

I am incredibly grateful to the Department of International History at LSE for providing me with an intellectual home over the last several years. I first started in this department as a master's student in 2017 and it quickly changed my life in more ways than I can count. My doctoral supervisor Matthew Jones has been a constant presence in my life since I first took his nuclear history course during my master's degree. His course altered my intellectual, professional, and personal trajectory. At the very least, it is where I first encountered Henry Lewis Stimson, the man who has occupied my thoughts more than I care to admit for the last six years and counting. Matthew has been a brilliant supervisor and a cherished colleague who believed in this project from its inception and guided me from the very beginning. His sage wisdom and easygoing presence strengthened this project in countless ways and helped make this process, dare I say, enjoyable. Matthew is one of the most considerate people I have ever met, and I am incredibly grateful for his mentorship and support during this journey.

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List of Abbreviations

AAF – U.S. Army Air Forces

ABC – American-British Conversation Files, U.S. National Archives

ADM – Records of the Admiralty, U.K. National Archives

APP – American Presidency Project, University of California, Santa Barbara

ASW – Assistant Secretary of War

CAB – Records of the Cabinet Office, U.K. National Archives

CCS – Combined Chiefs of Staff

CDAAA – Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies

CFR – Council on Foreign Relations

COHP – Columbia University Oral History Project, Butler Library, Columbia University

CNO – Chief of Naval Operations, U.S. Navy

COS – British Chiefs of Staff Committee

CPS – Combined Planning Staff

CR – Congressional Record

CT – Chicago Tribune

Exec. – Executive File

FDRL – Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum, Hyde Park, NY

FO – British Foreign Office

FRUS – Foreign Relations of the United States, U.S. Department of State

GCMF – George C. Marshall Foundation, Lexington, VA

G-2 – Intelligence Division, U.S. Army General Staff

HIA – Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford, CA

HLSD – Henry L. Stimson Diary, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University

JCS – U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff

JIC – U.S. Joint Intelligence Committee

JPS – U.S. Joint Staff Planners

JSSC – U.S. Joint Strategic Survey Committee

JWPC – U.S. Joint War Plans Committee

LoC – Library of Congress, Washington, DC

MRP – Map Room Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

NARA – U.S. National Archives, College Park, MD

NHHC – Archives Branch, Naval History and Heritage Command, Washington, DC

NYHT – New York Herald Tribune

NYT – The New York Times

ONI – Office of Naval Intelligence, U.S. Navy

OPM – U.S. Office of Production Management

OPD – Operations Division, U.S. Army General Staff

OSS – Office of Strategic Services

PSF – President's Secretary's File

RG – Record Group Number, U.S. National Archives

SecState – U.S. Secretary of State

S&P – Strategy and Policy Group, Operations Division, U.S. Army General Staff

SPAB – U.S. Supply Priorities and Allocations Board

SS – Strategy Section, Strategy and Policy Group, Operations Division, U.S. Army General Staff

SW – Secretary of War

SWNCC – U.S. State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee

TNA – U.K. National Archives, Kew, London, U.K.

WDCSA – War Department Chief of Staff Army Files, U.S. National Archives

WPB – U.S. War Production Board

WPD – War Plans Division, U.S. Army General Staff

WP – The Washington Post

WSJ – The Wall Street Journal

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Introduction

In October 1947, just over two years after Japan officially surrendered to the Allies and the most destructive conflict in human history finally ended, the veteran American statesman Henry L. Stimson published an article in *Foreign Affairs*.[1] As the flagship journal of the elite Council on Foreign Relations, it was a natural forum for someone such as Stimson, a former secretary of state and secretary of war with over four decades of experience at the highest levels of American government, to share some of their most important ideas.[2] In his piece, entitled "The Challenge to Americans," Stimson outlined what he felt were the opportunities and trials the United States faced in the aftermath of World War II.[3] He opened with a declaration: Americans faced "a challenging opportunity, perhaps the greatest ever offered to a single nation. It is nothing less than a chance to use our full strength for the peace and freedom of the world."[4]

Yet this was a monumental undertaking, one that was not at all straightforward. Stimson admitted that the Allied victory in World War II had not brought peace to large parts of the globe. "Over large areas of the world we have nothing better than armed truce; in some places there is open fighting; everywhere men know that there is yet no stable settlement. Close on the heels of victory has loomed a new world crisis," he lamented.[5] For Americans, Stimson contended, these problems seemed extraordinary because they were occurring during their "first experience of constant, full-scale activity in world politics."[6] But for a great power, let alone a superpower,

[1] For the sake of clarity, this thesis uses the adjectives "U.S." and "American" interchangeably, but it recognizes that "American" does not always necessarily refer to the United States. Likewise, "Americans" in this thesis are citizens of the United States.
[2] Inderjeet Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy: A Comparative Study of the Role and Influence of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 108-32.
[3] Henry L. Stimson, "The Challenge to Americans," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1947, 5-14.
[4] Ibid, 5.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

Stimson felt these responsibilities came with the nation's status. "Our difficulties arise from unwillingness to face reality," but Americans possessed the ability "to meet and resolve all of these problems" if they "put away forever any thought that America can again be an island to herself."[7] In facing the new threats emanating from the Soviet Union, an erstwhile wartime ally now turned adversary, Stimson counseled, in echoes of his friend Henry Luce, that "the troubles of Europe and Asia are not other people's troubles; they are ours. The world is full of friends and enemies; it is full of warring ideas; but there are no mere 'foreigners,' no merely 'foreign' ideologies, no merely 'foreign' dangers, any more. Foreign affairs are now our most intimate domestic concern. All men, good and bad, are now our neighbors."[8]

Stimson was confident that if Americans internalized their international status and embraced their necessary role as global leaders, then "the American future" would be one of "confident hope." That future depended not on "the tattered forecasts of Karl Marx," but "on us."[9] In fact, Stimson insisted Americans should "think of our prosperity, our policy, and our first principles as indivisibly connected with the facts of life everywhere."[10] Ultimately, Stimson proclaimed, if Americans used their power "with vigor and understanding, with steadiness and without fear, we can peacefully safeguard our freedom," grapple with the Soviet danger, and achieve international peace.[11]

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[7] Ibid, 5-6.
[8] Ibid, 7. Henry Luce made similar observations in his famous 1941 "The American Century" essay. See Henry R. Luce, "The American Century," *Life*, February 17, 1941, 61-65. For a fresh treatment of Luce's essay and its wider connections to the post-1941 direction of U.S. foreign policy, especially in Asia, see Andrew Preston, "From Dong Dang to Da Nang: The Past, Present, and Future of America's Thirty Years War for Asia," *Diplomatic History* 46, no. 1 (January 2022): 1–34, https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dhab077.
[9] Stimson, "The Challenge to Americans," 12.
[10] Ibid, 12-13.
[11] Ibid, 14. This thesis uses the adjectives "Soviet" and "Russian" interchangeably as is common practice. It also uses the terms "Russia," "the Soviet Union," and "USSR" interchangeably since most Americans did at the time and during the Cold War given that Russia was the political, economic, and demographic core of the Soviet Union.

This thesis is about American power and grand strategy during World War II. The manifestations of that power examined over the course of this thesis include bureaucratic power, diplomatic power, economic power, and of course military power. It examines who wielded that power, to what strategic ends they used it for, and the methods they employed to both amass and deploy it in service of those strategic ends. Specifically, this thesis focuses on Henry Stimson and the War Department, the executive branch agency responsible for managing the U.S. Army from 1789 to 1947 after which time it was absorbed into the newly formed Department of Defense.[12] As the United States prepared for and eventually plunged into global war during the first half of the 1940s, the War Department naturally became more important to U.S. policymaking as the Army exploded in size and became by far the largest component of the U.S. military.[13] The War Department's management of the sheer number of men under arms and the Army's centrality to any serious attempt to defeat the Axis powers could have theoretically on their own given the War Department a considerable amount of influence over U.S. grand strategy and national policy during World War II. After all, this was the largest armed ground force ever assembled by the United States.[14]

These realities, however, do not guarantee a government agency in this position could leverage advantages such as these in their favor or would even be interested in doing so. Indeed as the historian Russell Weigley has noted, for most of American history the U.S. military has paid

[12] For the sake of style, this thesis uses the terms "War Department" and "Army" interchangeably. Unless otherwise stated, the "Army" refers to the U.S. Army.
[13] According to the U.S. National WWII Museum, the Army went from having nearly 270,000 personnel in 1940 to over 8 million by 1945. See "Research Starters: U.S. Military by the Numbers" at https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/student-resources/research-starters/research-starters-us-military-numbers (last accessed March 12, 2023).
[14] Mark A. Stoler, "The Second World War in U.S. History and Memory," *Diplomatic History* 25, no. 3 (July 2001): 383–92, https://doi.org/10.1111/0145-2096.00273.

little attention to the non-military aspects of policymaking.[15] When the military did take a broader view of U.S. foreign policy, State Department officials regarded those actions as an infringement on civilian prerogatives in the foreign policy decision-making process that threatened the principle of civilian control of the armed forces, at least before America entered the Second World War.[16] Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan concisely summarized this viewpoint when he claimed in 1913 the military "could not be trusted to say what we should or should not do" on foreign policy matters.[17] The hurdles then for a U.S. military department trying to shape the country's strategy and policy were significant and deeply rooted in the traditions of American government.

Over the course of the following pages, this thesis analyzes how the War Department, under Stimson's leadership, operated as a bureaucratic, political, and policy actor within the politics of wartime Washington during World War II. The project is centered around a puzzle: why did the Army – and the military more broadly – gain unprecedented levels of influence over national policy under a president renowned for centralizing authority and decision-making in his own hands? While it is true there was a global emergency in the form of world war, a similar one had previously occurred over two decades earlier without the Army becoming a major political player.[18] Some scholars, such as James Lacey, Eric Larrabee, Mark Stoler, and William T. Johnsen, have instead pointed to the Army's senior military officers as the source; yet before the war began, they were usually engaged in acute interservice rivalry which, combined with a strict separation in civil-military relations and policymaking, largely prevented them from becoming leading

[15] Russell Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Policy and Strategy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973), xviii.
[16] Louis Morton, "Interservice Co-operation and Political-Military Coordination" in Harry L. Coles, ed., *Total War and Cold War: Problems in Civilian Control of the Military* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1962), 131-60.
[17] Quoted in Louis Morton, "National Policy and Military Strategy," *The Virginia Quarterly Review* 36, no. 1 (Winter 1960): 1–17. The quotation is on page 2.
[18] See David R. Woodward, *The American Army and the First World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); J.P. Clark, *Preparing for War: The Emergence of the Modern U.S. Army, 1815-1917* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), esp. 231-68.

Washington power brokers.[19] After World War II's conclusion and subsequent U.S. military demobilization, renewed interservice infighting left Army leaders fragmented and in disarray as many resisted unification of the armed forces.[20] In other words, focusing on the wartime context or the Army's top uniformed officers alone are not sufficient explanations for solving this puzzle.

Therefore, this thesis argues that the War Department emerged as a pivotal policymaking nexus within the U.S. government during World War II because the senior civilian officials who managed the Department throughout the war, and above all Stimson, transformed it into a political actor which actively worked to influence the bureaucratic and foreign policy decision-making processes. War Department leaders streamlined their own bureaucracy and improved civil-military relations within the Army to craft a coherent political and policy agenda. They cultivated relationships with key executive branch officials and legislators to build coalitions to support their policy initiatives. Finally, top civilian War Department officials inserted the Army into political conversations and decision-making processes it previously was not involved in to ensure the War Department's interests were met. The result was that the Army gained important leverage over its bureaucratic rivals – namely the Navy and State Departments – which helped it drive the political and policy conversation within the executive branch during the war. This meant national policy

[19] See James Lacey, *The Washington War: FDR's Inner Circle and the Politics of Power That Won World War II* (New York: Bantam, 2019); Eric Larrabee, *Commander in Chief: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, His Lieutenants, and Their War* (New York: HarperCollins, 1987); Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000); William T. Johnsen, *The Origins of the Grand Alliance: Anglo-American Military Collaboration from the Panay Incident to Pearl Harbor* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2016).

[20] Useful accounts of the armed forces unification struggle can be found in Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977); Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); Douglas T. Stuart, *Creating the National Security State: A History of the Law That Transformed America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

and strategy were substantially influenced by Army thinking, usually debated on Army terms, and often shifted as Army officials and planners adjusted their strategic outlook.

None of this is to say the War Department solely directed the U.S. war effort or won every bureaucratic battle it waged to shape American policy during the war years. It achieved victories while also experiencing disappointments and setbacks. But civilian War Department leaders' endeavors to refashion their organization into an active political player made the Army a consequential bureaucratic operator where many of the disparate strands of wartime policymaking converged. This gave the War Department a weighty position in the foreign policy decision-making process and significant influence over the contours of U.S. grand strategy during World War II. It also helped lay the broader foundations for the checkered rise of military influence over U.S. foreign policy, a legacy policymakers continue to contend with in the present.[21] By reassessing the War Department from the perspective of domestic Washington insider, this thesis seeks to contribute to a burgeoning literature rethinking the history, underpinnings, and formation of American grand strategy.[22]

Methodology and Sources

[21] This is a topic that urgently needs detailed historical research. The classic theoretical text on this is Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957). This is also discussed to some extent in Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, albeit from the perspective of the newly created Joint Chiefs of Staff. For a more contemporary perspective on the related issue of the militarization of American foreign policy, see Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Andrew J. Bacevich, *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010).

[22] For example, see Elizabeth Borgwardt, Christopher McKnight Nichols, and Andrew Preston, eds., *Rethinking American Grand Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021). For similar works, see Beatrice Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). Also see David Gethin Morgan-Owen, "History and the Perils of Grand Strategy," *The Journal of Modern History* 92, no. 2 (June 2020): 351–85, https://doi.org/10.1086/708500.

In recent years, grand strategy has once again become a popular topic of scholarly inquiry amongst historians and political scientists alike.[23] Consequently, there are an abundance of definitions and conceptual frameworks for scholars studying and writing about grand strategy today.[24] For the purposes of this thesis, grand strategy is understood the way Hal Brands defined it in 2014.[25] Brands observed grand strategy represents an "intellectual architecture that gives structure and form to foreign policy" that "represents an integrated scheme of interests, threats, resources and policies."[26] Put another way, grand strategy is a "purposeful and coherent set of ideas about what a nation seeks to accomplish in the world, and how it should go about doing so."[27] Brands' definition is used here because this thesis examines how the War Department strove to define a clear set of ideas about what U.S. global interests were during World War II and which policies could be designed and implemented to meet those interests.

By examining grand strategy from this vantage point, this thesis highlights how the War Department, and American strategists more broadly, used a dynamic and shifting set of

[23] This is a point I also make in Grant Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion: Reassessing Anglo-American Strategic Planning and the Foundations of U.S. Grand Strategy for World War II," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, July 2022, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2022.2104837. During World War II and the immediate postwar period, grand strategy and strategic thought became increasingly fashionable areas of scholarship. Two books that greatly contributed to that are Edward Mead Earle, *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1943); B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (London: Faber & Faber, 1954). I discuss Earle and his connections to the War Department more in Chapter Six. Earle's *Makers of Modern Strategy* has been periodically updated over the decades since its initial publication. The latest edition is Hal Brands, ed., *The New Makers of Modern Strategy: From the Ancient World to the Digital Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023).

[24] There is no way to fit all of those definitions here, but for some of the most relevant ones for this thesis, see Paul Kennedy, "Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Toward a Broader Definition," in Paul Kennedy, ed. *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 5; Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 1; John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, Second Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), viii, 23; John Lewis Gaddis, *On Grand Strategy* (New York: Penguin Press, 2018), 21; Stephen M. Walt, "The Case for Finite Containment: Analyzing US Grand Strategy," *International Security* 14, no. 1 (Summer 1989), 6; Peter Feaver, "What is Grand Strategy and Why Do We Need It?," *Foreign Policy*, April 8, 2009, https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/04/08/what-is-grand-strategy-and-why-do-we-need-it/.

[25] Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?: Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

[26] Ibid, 3.

[27] Ibid.

frameworks to identify U.S. interests in a rapidly changing and consistently evolving international diplomatic, political, and military environment. As global conditions changed – sometimes dramatically – during World War II, U.S. strategists were compelled to modify their grand strategic thinking, including at the War Department. As I have noted elsewhere, "grand strategy is not a static exercise but must instead be consistently adapted to reflect a capricious international political and military context, especially during world war."[28] As this thesis demonstrates, War Department leaders understood this reality better than most.

Yet as Christopher McKnight Nichols and Andrew Preston have observed, grand strategy scholarship often omits "much else that could be considered political" because of scholars' tight focus on statecraft "as it has been conventionally understood." This leaves room for "a more capacious understanding of grand strategy, one that still includes the battlefield and the negotiating table but can also expand beyond them."[29] This thesis aims to contribute to this richer understanding of grand strategy by focusing on the War Department and the *politics* of American grand strategy during World War II. As U.S. officials observe the current state of international politics and the global security environment, they usually seek to reach consensus amongst themselves and the public over the best approach to their nation's grand strategy.[30] But this is often a messy and tangled bureaucratic and political process where various actors attempt to influence the shape and contours of Washington's grand strategic thinking, often based on their own ideas and interests. Many works on the creation of American grand strategy or national security policy,

[28] Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion," *Journal of Strategic Studies*.
[29] Christopher McKnight Nichols and Andrew Preston, "Introduction," in Borgwardt et al., *Rethinking American Grand Strategy*, 2. For more on this, see Nina Silove, "Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of 'Grand Strategy,'" *Security Studies* 27, no. 1 (2018): 27–57, https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2017.1360073; Rebecca Friedman Lissner, "What Is Grand Strategy? Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield," *Texas National Security Review* 2, no. 1 (November 2018): 52–73, http://dx.doi.org/10.26153/tsw/868.
[30] Michaela Hoenicke Moore, "Foreign Policy Begins at Home: Americans, Grand Strategy, and World War II," in Borgwardt et al. *Rethinking American Grand Strategy*, 218-37.

however, tend to ignore the bureaucratic infighting and internal politicking that underpin how U.S. grand strategy is crafted.[31] Within the U.S. domestic political context of World War II, this thesis seeks to help correct this omission by examining how the War Department operated as a political actor in Washington and sought to influence the creation of American grand strategy according to how Army leaders conceptualized U.S. wartime objectives and the means necessary for achieving them.

To accomplish this task, this thesis uses Stimson, the secretary of war and head of the War Department during nearly all of World War II, as a lens from which to assess how the War Department operated as a bureaucratic, political, and policy actor in Washington and worked to shape U.S. grand strategy during the war years. To be clear, this is not a biographical study of Stimson, although aspects of his career and outlook will be addressed. This thesis uses Stimson's perspective to assess the War Department for several reasons. Unlike most U.S. cabinet officials, Stimson was unusual compared to his colleagues in the sense he was a hands-on leader who played a significant role in all his department's core activities while possessing unrivalled government experience. With decades of service at the highest levels of U.S. government – over the course of his career, Stimson served as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York; secretary of war before World War I; President Calvin Coolidge's negotiator for ending the Nicaraguan Civil War; governor-general of the Philippines; secretary of state under President Herbert Hoover, and secretary of war again during World War II – Stimson was arguably the most experienced

[31] Some notable exceptions to this are Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Julian E. Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security - From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York: Basic Books, 2010); Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity*, Second Edition (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020).

Washington insider of the first half of the twentieth century.[32] When the man John J. McCloy, one of Stimson's top lieutenants at the War Department and later one of the "Wise Men" of the postwar U.S. foreign policy establishment, called "my hero statesman" weighed in on an issue, others took notice.[33] These advantages helped Stimson and his senior advisers at the War Department raise the Army's political stature during this turbulent and uncertain period and makes Stimson a valuable perch from which to assess how the War Department became a pivotal Washington policymaking nexus during World War II.

Combined with using the Stimson lens, this thesis also expands on Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall's "intermestic" (international-domestic) approach to studying formal U.S. foreign policy decision-making as part of its methodological foundations.[34] As the pair explain, the intermestic approach stresses how domestic politics and internal political sources shape America's foreign policy, grand strategy, and perspective on world affairs.[35] This thesis incorporates bureaucratic politics and rivalries alongside other traditional forms of domestic political wrangling to explain how the Army both shaped the politics of American grand strategy

[32] In an editorial, an Iowa newspaper remarked that with Stimson's retirement in September 1945, "one of the most distinguished public careers in the history of the nation" had ended. See "A Great American," *The Daily Times*, September 20, 1945.
[33] John J. McCloy is properly introduced in Chapter Three. McCloy is quoted in Alan Brinkley, "Minister without portfolio," *Harper's Magazine*, February 1983, 46.
[34] The "intermestic" approach is at the heart of Craig and Logevall's excellent *America's Cold War*. Also see Fredrik Logevall, "Politics and Foreign Relations," *The Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (March 2009): 1074-1078, https://doi.org/10.2307/27694561.
[35] Craig and Logevall, 6-12. Some notable examples of this type of history include Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999); Andrew Preston, *The War Council: McGeorge Bundy, the NSC, and Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); David Milne, *America's Rasputin: Walt Rostow and the Vietnam War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2008); Aurélie Basha I Novosejt, *"I Made Mistakes": Robert McNamara's Vietnam War Policy, 1960-1968* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Michael Brenes, *For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2020); Joseph Stieb, *The Regime Change Consensus: Iraq in American Politics, 1990-2003* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Melvyn P. Leffler, *Confronting Saddam Hussein: George W. Bush and the Invasion of Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023); Philip Zelikow, "Why Did America Cross the Pacific? Reconstructing the U.S. Decision to Take the Philippines, 1898-1899," *Texas National Security Review* 1, no. 1 (December 2017): 36–67, https://doi.org/10.15781/T2N29PQ17.

and grew into a key actor within the wartime political establishment. An intermestic approach for the research questions this thesis seeks to answer is appropriate because this thesis focuses on an American domestic political institution and its influence over military strategy and foreign policy. It is necessary therefore to ground a thesis such as this one in American archival sources to fully capture how the War Department battled at home to mold and shape U.S. foreign policy and grand strategy during World War II.

In exploring the War Department's domestic operations in Washington and its influence on U.S. foreign policy and grand strategy during the war years, this thesis uses primarily American archival sources from locations across the United States. Analysis informed by these sources will provide the bedrock of the thesis, allowing an examination of the War Department's functioning at this time and the political, diplomatic, and military motivations behind its behavior and choices. The most important starting point is the Henry Stimson Papers at Yale University, which provide an extremely detailed record of Stimson's activities, ideas, thoughts, and perceptions throughout his life, especially during World War II. The Stimson Diary is a key source for this thesis because it provides a daily account of Stimson's tenure as secretary of war; indeed, it is an invaluable source for any study of U.S. policy and strategy during World War II. The Stimson Papers are a core part of this thesis's archival base and are foundational for a study of the War Department in this period. From the U.S. National Archives, an abundance of archival sources from Record Group 107 (Records of the Office of the Secretary of War), Record Group 165 (Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs), and Record Group 218 (Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) furnished the official government documents necessary for studying any U.S. executive branch department. It is not possible to examine the questions this thesis seeks to answer without U.S. government documents. They help us understand how the War Department approached policy

questions across a range of issues and interacted with other parts of the bureaucracy during the strategy and policy formation process.

Yet as this thesis makes clear in greater detail below, government documents only produce part of the story.[36] An overreliance on them can distort as much as they illuminate, especially when it comes to exploring the political side of policy formation. Therefore this thesis has cast a wide net in gathering additional insights and material. In addition to the Stimson Papers and the U.S. National Archives, official and private documents from the U.K. National Archives, the George C. Marshall Foundation, the John J. McCloy Papers at Amherst College, the Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman presidential libraries, the Library of Congress, the Columbia University Oral History Project, the Council on Foreign Relations, numerous private collections housed at universities throughout Britain and the United States, and historical newspaper holdings from across America have all been incorporated to further enhance and strengthen the analysis of the War Department presented in this thesis. Press coverage, political memoirs, and congressional debates were also significant sources for determining the influence of public and political opinion on how the War Department and other U.S. government agencies approached vital wartime policy issues. All these sources combined have created a robust archival base that helps this thesis center a crucial branch of the U.S. state within the historiography on the United States and World War II, which is indispensable to any study of American domestic politics and its connections to the country's foreign policy and grand strategy.[37]

Literature Review

[36] See Chapter Three for more details on this.

[37] For more on the need to recenter the U.S. state in the historiography of American foreign relations, see Daniel Bessner and Fredrik Logevall, "Recentering the United States in the Historiography of American Foreign Relations," *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 2 (Spring 2020): 38–55, http://dx.doi.org/10.26153/tsw/8867.

The literature on World War II is vast and only continues to grow, but there is still much to be written about on a conflict so large in scope. Within the existing historiography on the United States and World War II, there is a notable dearth of studies on key figures who played significant roles in the American war effort and how various executive branch agencies and departments attempted to shape U.S. wartime policy at home. Stimson and the War Department fall into this category despite Stimson's status as a leading U.S. statesman and the War Department's centrality to America's war with the Axis powers. Considering this, it is curious historians have largely overlooked or ignored Stimson and the War Department's considerable role in shaping U.S. policy and strategy during World War II. This neglect is without merit, for as a senior member of Roosevelt's cabinet leading one of the most pivotal government departments, Stimson and the War Department exerted a significant, but understudied, influence over how the United States waged war against the Axis.

After scrutinizing the existing relevant literature on the United States and the Second World War, three general categories of work have been identified that are relevant to this thesis. The first is the existing, but limited, scholarship on Stimson; the second looks at studies on other central characters and figures in the American war effort, and the third encompasses broader works on facets of American foreign policy during World War II. Throughout this literature review, the gap in the historiography this thesis aims to fill will becoming increasingly evident as this thesis addresses a considerable omission in our understanding of the American wartime domestic political scene and how it shaped U.S. policy overseas.

Biographies are one of the most common methods authors use when approaching how to study historical figures. This is because it allows them to use character studies as a lens to both illuminate performance and examine wider events and issues. Stimson is no exception to this, but

the scholarship thus far has been limited. Since Stimson's death in 1950, three substantive biographies have been written about him. Two others have been published that are joint biographies of Stimson with other figures, one with President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the other with General George C. Marshall, the U.S. Army chief of staff during World War II.

As helpful as these studies are for this thesis, none of them are definitive enough to close the book on Stimson or the War Department during World War II. Elting Morison's 1960 biography of Stimson, the first to appear in the genre, contains useful insights that cannot be found elsewhere due to Morison's ability to interview many of Stimson's contemporaries.[38] Morison's treatment of Stimson, however, is limited as he is largely uncritical of his subject and his work reads more like an encyclopedia than a scholarly analysis. Godfrey Hodgson released a lively biography of Stimson in 1990, but his work is spotty due to an overwhelming reliance on Stimson's diary and published writings. Hodgson's biography does not contain endnotes or a bibliography, so it is impossible to know what Hodgson consulted when he wrote this book beyond the very few citations found in it.[39] David Schmitz's 2001 biography of Stimson is the most helpful of these three biographies as a crisp introduction to Stimson's life and the issues of his time.[40] But as an introductory text, it often lacks in detail. Moreover, Schmitz used a slender source base to write his book and largely failed to place Stimson in conversation with other important figures.[41] There are some details on Stimson's interactions during World War II with Roosevelt, Marshall, and other presidential advisers, but the book is basically a singular focus on the secretary of war.

[38] Elting E. Morison, *Turmoil and Tradition: A Study of the Life and Times of Henry L. Stimson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960).
[39] Godfrey Hodgson, *The Colonel: The Life and Wars of Henry Stimson, 1867-1950* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990).
[40] David F. Schmitz, *Henry L. Stimson: The First Wise Man* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2001).
[41] Of the 102 citations in Schmitz's main chapter on Stimson during World War II, 87 of them are to Stimson's diaries or papers. His other citations are a few scattershot references to Stimson's memoirs, the occasional document found in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, and some secondary sources.

Edward Farley Aldrich's dual biography of Stimson and Marshall and Peter Shinkle's joint study of Stimson and Roosevelt are welcomed correctives that put Stimson into conversation with other top U.S. politicians and officials.[42] Yet they also suffer though from inadequate archival bases and mostly repeat the findings of other scholars.

The best book on Stimson and his time as secretary of war is Sean Malloy's *Atomic Tragedy: Henry L. Stimson and the Decision to Use the Bomb against Japan*. As the title suggests, Malloy's monograph examines Stimson's role in the creation of the world's first nuclear weapons.[43] Malloy's work is the first to analyze Stimson's role in the atomic bombings of Japan in depth, and he argues that in order to comprehend why the United States unleashed atomic devastation upon Japan, it is important to understand Stimson's influence in shaping the complex set of political, diplomatic, military and moral choices American policymakers confronted over the course of the Manhattan Project.[44] Malloy's work is a significant contribution to the extensive literature on the atomic bombings of Japan and this dissertation does not seek to replicate Malloy's book. Instead, this thesis will discuss Stimson's work on atomic weapons within the wider scope of his time at the War Department during World War II. Given Malloy's rather narrow focus, his work left an important gap this thesis seeks to fill on Stimson and the War Department's broader operations during the war years.

Literature on other leading figures in the Roosevelt administration who closely worked with Stimson and the Army provide helpful details on the War Department's role in U.S. policymaking during World War II. At the War Department, General Marshall and Stimson's top

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[42] Edward Farley Aldrich, *The Partnership: George Marshall, Henry Stimson, and the Extraordinary Collaboration That Won World War II* (Guilford, CT: Stackpole Books, 2022); Peter Shinkle, *Uniting America: How FDR and Henry Stimson Brought Democrats and Republicans Together to Win World War II* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2022).
[43] Sean L. Malloy, *Atomic Tragedy: Henry L. Stimson and the Decision to Use the Bomb against Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010).
[44] Ibid, 1-11.

aides were his closest confidantes and helped him plan and execute the organization's political priorities.[45] This group included Robert Patterson, Robert Lovett, John J. McCloy, and Harvey Bundy. Patterson's recently published war memoirs and Keith Eiler's biography of Patterson are invaluable for learning about the War Department's management of U.S. mobilization, but they surprisingly do not discuss Stimson or the broader organization in much detail and instead focus primarily on Patterson and his work.[46] Kai Bird's biography on McCloy contains helpful insights and reveals a close working and personal relationship between Stimson and McCloy.[47] It also yields some details on Stimson and the inner workings of the War Department, which were valuable for this thesis. For Lovett, who Stimson hired as his air assistant, *The Wise Men* by Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas remains the best account of his service in the War Department under Stimson.[48] Stimson and Lovett were not as close as Stimson and McCloy were, but he was an important member of Stimson's inner circle, and *The Wise Men* contains fruitful information on Stimson's War Department management.[49] There is no specific work on Harvey Bundy, but Bird's joint biography of Bundy's sons, McGeorge and William, contains some good details on Bundy's service under Stimson.[50]

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[45] This group and their relationships with Stimson are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.
[46] Robert P. Patterson, *Arming the Nation for War: Mobilization, Supply, and the American War Effort in World War II*, ed. Brian Waddell (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2014); Keith E. Eiler, *Mobilizing America: Robert P. Patterson and the War Effort, 1940–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).
[47] Kai Bird, *The Chairman: John J. McCloy & The Making of the American Establishment* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).
[48] Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986).
[49] Isaacson and Thomas, 191-210.
[50] See Kai Bird, *The Color of Truth: McGeorge Bundy and William Bundy, Brothers in Arms* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998). McGeorge and William Bundy both had prestigious U.S. government careers and were leading architects of American strategy during the Vietnam War. McGeorge Bundy served as national security advisor under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. William Bundy was a top U.S. official in the State and Defense Departments. Stimson became a crucial mentor to McGeorge, who wrote Stimson's memoirs and collaborated with him on several important articles after the war. For more on Stimson's influence on McGeorge Bundy, see Preston, *The War Council*, 11-35. Also see Barton J. Bernstein, "Seizing the Contested Terrain of Early Nuclear History: Stimson, Conant, and Their Allies Explain the Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," *Diplomatic History* 17, no. 1 (January 1993): 35–72, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1993.tb00158.x.

As discussed later in this thesis, Stimson forged a partnership with Marshall, which strengthened Stimson's ability to project his views and influence within the War Department and the wider executive branch. They worked together to bring the civilian and military perspectives within the War Department into harmony and almost always presented a united front in debates with the president and his other advisers.[51] As a result, the literature on Marshall is a rich source for exploring Stimson and his second stint at the War Department. There are also several useful biographies on Marshall that will support this thesis and illuminate how the War Department worked to influence U.S. policy and strategy.[52] For example, the first three volumes of Forrest Pogue's massive four-volume official biography on Marshall are immensely important for this research. Pogue argues Stimson and Marshall successfully collaborated throughout the war, built their partnership on a similar set of ideas and values, and established themselves as Roosevelt's chief Army advisers.[53] As such, Stimson appears often throughout Pogue's work. Another important biography on Marshall written by Mark Stoler argues that Stimson and Marshall's partnership was "one of the closest and most important in Washington during the war."[54] Unfortunately, too many works on Stimson have neglected Marshall sources, which help elucidate Stimson's position and influence within the Roosevelt and Truman administrations; instead, this thesis will properly utilize them to ascertain Stimson and the War Department's impact on American grand strategy.

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[51] Morison, 498-500; Schmitz, *Stimson*, 135.
[52] Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Education of a Soldier, 1880-1939* (New York: Viking, 1963); Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope, 1939-1942* (New York: Viking, 1966); Forrest C. Pogue, *George C, Marshall: Organizer of Victory, 1943-1945* (New York: Viking, 1973); Mark A. Stoler, *George C. Marshall: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989); Debi Unger, Irwin Unger, and Stanley Hirshson, *George Marshall: A Biography* (Harper, 2014); David L. Roll, *George Marshall: Defender of the Republic* (New York: Dutton Caliber, 2019).
[53] Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope,* 40-42.
[54] Stoler, *Marshall*, 73.

President Roosevelt sat at the top of the executive branch as Stimson's boss and the commander-in-chief of the American armed forces for most of World War II. Roosevelt was one of the most influential and transformative presidents in American history. Accordingly, dozens of books have been written about him. On the biography side, a few stand out. The first is James MacGregor Burns' two-volume work on Roosevelt.[55] Burns' second volume, which focuses on the war years, is very useful for this thesis in looking at domestic U.S. politics during World War II. Burns frequently includes Stimson and the War Department in his biography, and interestingly, Burns sets Stimson up as a foil to Roosevelt, contending Stimson acted on the basis of moral clarity and "righteousness" while Roosevelt and others relied upon cynical political maneuvering.[56] Burns also argues that while Stimson was "no intimate" of the president, he exerted an influence over Roosevelt through his moral stature and strong and clear opinions.[57] Stimson's recurring appearances throughout Burns' story is rare for a Roosevelt biography or other works on major Allied figures, making Burns' volume of considerable value to this dissertation. Other Roosevelt biographies include Stimson to varying degrees, but they provide valuable sketches of Roosevelt and his advisers along with overarching narratives on the war. [58] More recent scholarship on Roosevelt shows Stimson engaging with FDR across a range of issues, and portrays Stimson as closely involved in the grand strategic debates, even if Roosevelt did not always heed Stimson's

[55] James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox (1882-1940)* (New York: Harcourt, 1956); James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom (1940-1945)* (New York: Harcourt, 1970).
[56] Burns, *The Soldier of Freedom,* 272.
[57] Ibid, 23.
[58] Ted Morgan, *FDR: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985); Jean Edward Smith, *FDR* (New York: Random House, 2008); Conrad Black, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2003); H.W. Brands, *Traitor to His Class: The Privileged Life and Radical Presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009); Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt: A Political Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 2017); Nigel Hamilton, *The Mantle of Command: FDR at War, 1941–1942* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2015); Nigel Hamilton, *Commander in Chief: FDR's Battle with Churchill, 1943* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2017); Nigel Hamilton, *War and Peace: FDR's Final Odyssey: D-Day to Yalta, 1943–1945* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2019).

advice.[59] For any scholarly work on World War II, these biographies are essential, and they will aid this dissertation in properly placing Stimson within Roosevelt's orbit to determine the War Department's impact on U.S. wartime policy and grand strategy. Other Roosevelt-focused studies are equally crucial for this thesis.[60]

The final category of this literature review examines broader studies of U.S. foreign policy and domestic politics during World War II. As a veteran political insider, Stimson understood the War Department needed to effectively fight "the Washington War" to ensure the United States defeated the Axis powers as quickly as possible, preferably on his and the War Department's terms. In *The Washington War: FDR's Inner Circle and the Politics of Power That Won World War II,* James Lacey argues Stimson is one of the primary Washington warriors struggling to ensure the country is ready for war. Once the United States enters the conflict, according to Lacey, Stimson and the War Department are some of the players working to influence the grand strategic debates and the overall U.S. approach to the war even though Lacey pays more attention to Marshall, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and senior military officers. William Langer and Everett Gleason make a similar argument to Lacey's in their two-volume series on the United States in the opening years of World War II, showing Stimson as one of the main U.S. government officials desperately trying to make preparations for an eventual American war effort.[61] They contend that upon his return to

[59] For example, see Hamilton, *The Mantle of Command*, 355, 359, 381-83, 405-06.
[60] For example, see Larrabee, *Commander in Chief*; Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War Against Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Jonathan W. Jordan, *American Warlords: How Roosevelt's High Command Led America to Victory in World War II* (New York: NAL Caliber, 2015); Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994); Warren F. Kimball, *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).
[61] Lacey, *The Washington War;* William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation, 1937-1940* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952); William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Undeclared War, 1940-1941* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953). Also see Robert A. Divine, *The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II* (New York: Wiley, 1979); Justus D. Doenecke, *Storm on the Horizon: The Challenge to American Intervention, 1939-1941* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000); Waldo Heinrichs, *Threshold of War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Entry into World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988);

the War Department, Stimson primarily assumed responsibility for coordinating American foreign policy by establishing weekly meetings with the State and Navy Departments to exchange information and homogenize the national defense effort.[62] However, they do not explore how these weekly meetings worked or how else Stimson and the War Department coordinated U.S. foreign policy throughout the Roosevelt administration.

Allied diplomacy, military strategy and Anglo-American relations are three interconnected and overlapping areas where Stimson sat at the intersection and focused much of his attention. To swiftly win the war, Stimson and the War Department mostly believed Germany must be defeated first. Stimson, his advisers, and Army planners spent nearly two years attempting to overcome heated opposition to opening a second front in Western Europe. The British were the main obstacles; they favored a strategy that called for defeating Germany through a series of peripheral engagements in North Africa, Italy, Greece, and the Balkans, encircling Hitler's *Festung Europa* before invading Germany.[63] Two of the most important studies on the battles over military strategy during World War II are Mark Stoler's *The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943* and *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II.*[64] While Stoler's first book focuses on military planning for opening a second front in Western Europe, *Allies and Adversaries* examines the broader role the JCS played in formulating American grand strategy throughout the war.

David Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor: Roosevelt's America and the Origins of the Second World War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002).

[62] Langer and Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation*, 10. This is discussed more in Chapter Three.

[63] Schmitz, 156-57.

[64] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*; Mark A. Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977).

In both works, Stoler makes clear Stimson was a primary opponent of British strategic military designs in the debate over how to defeat Germany. In *The Politics of the Second Front,* Stoler shows Stimson mostly working closely with Marshall and the JCS to stymie British attempts at further military action in the Mediterranean after the invasion of North Africa.[65] Stimson and many Army planners argued Britain's Mediterranean approach was plainly designed to weaken both Germany and the Soviet Union through a war of attrition to in order to maintain the European balance of power and protect the British Empire.[66] Stimson viewed the British as cynically attempting to guarantee their influence in the postwar world by controlling as much of their overseas territory as possible during the war; he thought they were more concerned with this goal than defeating Germany as quickly as possible. In *Allies and Adversaries,* Stoler takes his argument one step further, contending Stimson was the most active in his attempts to persuade Roosevelt of the folly of the British strategy.[67] Yet since Stoler's works were focused primarily on the JCS and military officers, there is room to explore how the War Department as a bureaucratic unit under Stimson's leadership approached these issues. There are many other critical studies on military strategy during World War II, and this dissertation will utilize them to orient Stimson and the War Department further within the Allied grand strategic debates to examine how they worked the politics of U.S. strategy formation to enact their preferred strategic designs.[68]

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[65] Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front,* 65, 80-81, 99, 109-11, 133-34.
[66] See Chapter Six.
[67] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 120.
[68] The "U.S. Army in World War II" is a 78-book series. On military strategy, see Mark S. Watson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Planning and Preparations* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1950); Ray S. Cline, *Washington Command Post: The Operations Division* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2003); Maurice Matloff and Edwin Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1941-1942* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1953); Maurice Matloff, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1943-1944* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History United States Army, 1959); Louis Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1962); Kent Roberts Greenfield, ed., *Command Decisions* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1960). Other vital studies include Richard W. Steele, *The First Offensive, 1942: Roosevelt, Marshall and the Making of American Strategy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973); Kent Roberts Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II: A Reconsideration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,

Allied diplomacy and Anglo-American relations went together with devising a successful military strategy. Although Stimson himself was not a major diplomatic player at the wartime conferences abroad, his and the War Department's influence on important issues, especially military strategy, the postwar treatment of Germany, and relations with the Soviet Union, were felt. Stimson was always an energetic supporter of the British despite his differences with them over military strategy. Before America entered the war, he believed the United States had to utilize its full resources to aid Britain and prevent its collapse.[69] He was one of the leading administration supporters of the "Destroyers-for-Bases" deal in September 1940, and he and the War Department assisted the president in securing the passage of Lend-Lease in March 1941.[70] When postwar planning began in earnest, Stimson called for a continuation of the Anglo-American alliance and friendship as a precondition for creating a new world peace.[71] As for the Soviets, Stimson felt cooperation with them must be an essential component of postwar U.S. grand strategy, and that the only suitable basis for permanent peace was a continuation of the "Grand Alliance" between the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union. As a result, Stimson fully supported Roosevelt's conciliatory Soviet policies for most of the war and worked with the president to ensure the postwar world was built upon "Big Three" collaboration.[72]

1963); Matthew Jones, *Britain, the United States, and the Mediterranean War, 1942-44* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), Andrew Buchanan, *American Grand Strategy in the Mediterranean during World War II* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Waldo Heinrichs and Marc Gallicchio, *Implacable Foes: War in the Pacific, 1944-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). The official history of British grand strategy during World War II can be found in J.R.M. Butler, ed., *History of the Second World War: Grand Strategy*, 6 vols. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956-1976).

[69] David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-1941: A Study in Competitive Co-Operation* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 110-11. This is discussed in more detail throughout Chapters Two-Four.

[70] This is discussed in Chapter Four.

[71] Schmitz, 166-67.

[72] Ibid, 176. For overviews of the historiography of U.S. diplomacy during World War II, see: Mark A. Stoler, "A Half Century of Conflict: Interpretations of U.S. World War II Diplomacy," *Diplomatic History* 18, no. 3 (July 1994): 375–403, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1994.tb00219.x; Mark A. Stoler, "Still Contested and Colonized Ground: Post-Cold War Interpretations of U.S. Foreign Relations during World War II," in Frank Costigliola and Michael J. Hogans, eds., *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations*

Historiographical Contribution and Thesis Structure

Taking the above literature into account, a significant gap becomes evident in our understanding of the politics of the American war effort due to the relative lack of scholarship on Stimson and the War Department. While there have been a few works written on Stimson that have contributed to our knowledge, no comprehensive study has been written on him and the War Department during the Second World War. Historians have largely overlooked significant players in their research on American grand strategy and World War II. This thesis endeavors to fill that omission, and in doing so, seeks to elucidate our understanding of how the War Department operated and performed as a Washington bureaucratic, political, and policy actor during World War II. As the historiography on the United States and World War II shifts to the domestic politics of the war, this dissertation attempts to fill a gap by focusing on how a major executive branch department shaped grand strategy in Washington's halls of power. This research into how the War Department evolved into an important bureaucratic and political operator during World War II can help shed further light on how executive branch departments influence and shape U.S. foreign and national security policy, a topic that has been mostly confined to the theoretical international relations

since 1941, Second Edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 57-82 . The best overviews of Roosevelt's foreign policy can be found in Kimball, *The Juggler*; Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); David F. Schmitz, *The Sailor: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Transformation of American Foreign Policy* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2021). For some of the major interpretations of American World War II diplomacy, see Herbert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957); Robert A. Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969); Gaddis Smith, *American Diplomacy during the Second World War, 1941-1945*, Second Edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985); John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947*, Revised Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Lloyd C. Gardner, *Spheres of Influence: The Great Powers Partition Europe, From Munich to Yalta* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1994); David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). The best works on Anglo-American wartime relations are Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War;* Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance*; Warren F. Kimball, *Forged in War: Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Second World War* (New York: Morrow, 1997); Mark A. Stoler, *Allies in War: Britain and America against the Axis Powers, 1940-1945*, Modern Wars (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007); Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

literature but urgently needs historical illumination. It uses Stimson as a prism to show how the War Department's domestic political battles to mold and shape American strategy and policy helped increase its leverage over the war's direction. As the War Department's bureaucratic power and influence increased, it steadily transformed into a significant force in Washington during World War II.

By focusing on Stimson and his time leading the War Department, this thesis aims to generate new insights into the most important issues the United States faced during the war years, the political debates surrounding them, and how policymakers worked to address them. These issues include pushing the United States away from neutrality and noninterventionism in world affairs toward internationalism; wartime mobilization; the changing nature of civil-military relations; Allied diplomacy and military strategy; Anglo-American relations and the Grand Alliance; shifting domestic politics and concerns on the home front; postwar reconstruction, and the future of the Soviet-American relationship. In doing so, this thesis contributes to and expands upon the existing literature to illuminate our understanding of how different Washington entities attempted to influence and mold the American war effort and shape U.S. foreign policy and grand strategy during World War II. Moreover, this perspective will allow us to acquire further insights into how World War II impacted a whole class of Americans such as Stimson, how they came to understand the war and America's global responsibilities, and the influence Stimson left behind on the next generation of U.S. foreign policy elders.[73]

In breaking down how Stimson and the War Department operated during World War II, the chapters in this thesis follow both a thematic and chronological structure. The first four chapters are mostly thematic while the final three are chronological. Each chapter starts with an overview

[73] Warren F. Kimball, "The Incredible Shrinking War: The Second World War, Not (Just) the Origins of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 25, no. 3 (July 2001): 347–65.

of its arguments to help frame each chapter's content and to highlight the historiographical contributions this thesis makes to the literature on American domestic politics in World War II.

The first chapter explores Stimson's life and political career up to his resignation as secretary of state in 1933. It is a foundational chapter that outlines the development of Stimson's foreign policy views and the bureaucratic and political skills he learned and acquired throughout most of his career. From there, Chapter Two examines Stimson's years out of high office between 1933-40 when he was a private citizen warning his fellow Americans about the dangers the rise of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan posed to U.S. national security. It closely follows the development of Stimson's views toward these countries and how he worked to influence the domestic political debate on American foreign policy as a former secretary of state. He served as one of America's top spokespeople for a type of U.S. internationalism that accepted a strong American role in global affairs and actively worked with other countries to check overseas threats. It is another foundational chapter that is important for explaining Stimson's domestic political role in Washington and the development of his foreign policy perspective as the world moved closer to global war.

The third chapter investigates the War Department's role in U.S. foreign policymaking during the 1930s and how Stimson and his advisers shifted the Army from the periphery to the center of American government power and decision-making during their first months managing the War Department in 1940-41. It analyzes the reforms Stimson introduced to make this happen and the team he created at the War Department to help him enact these changes. It also looks at these adjustments in action through examining the War Department's role in the passage of the 1940 Selective Service Act and U.S. military mobilization. Chapter Four covers how the War Department influenced U.S. policy toward the European war in 1940-41 and the growing crisis

with Japan in the Pacific. In the European conflict, the War Department played a vital part in pushing Roosevelt and top U.S. policymakers to adopt increasingly interventionist policies. The War Department provided the crucial policymaking nexus between the Roosevelt administration, Congress, and external pressure groups as the U.S. inched closer to war. In the Pacific, the War Department pressed for a firm stand against Japanese expansionism but helped muddle U.S. Far Eastern policy by undermining the State Department's more cautious stance. This bureaucratic wrangling made it hard to create consensus around U.S. deterrence in the Pacific and contributed to the deteriorating state of relations between Washington and Tokyo, setting the stage for the outbreak of the Pacific War.

Chapter Five covers the Allied grand strategic debates of 1942 and examines the War Department's role in them. Stimson and the War Department were vital players in shaping the politics of U.S. strategy and pushing it toward launching a second front in Western Europe. Contrary to popular belief, the JCS were often internally divided over how to win the war and struggled to influence policy accordingly. This lack of political coordination between the War Department and the JCS made it difficult to convince Roosevelt to launch a cross-Channel invasion from the British Isles, opening the door to following London's Mediterranean strategy for vanquishing Germany. The sixth chapter continues this story by examining how Army planners utilized their advantageous place in the U.S. strategic planning process to convince their superiors of the fallibility of British strategic thinking by attacking it as designed to safeguard the British Empire and little more. Army dominance over U.S. strategic planning helped persuade large parts of the American defense bureaucracy that London's strategic designs could potentially lose the war and helped stiffen their bosses' resistance to the Mediterranean strategy.

The seventh and final chapter of this thesis analyzes the War Department's approach to postwar Soviet-American relations and its planning for the defeat of the Axis powers. The War Department was internally split between Stimson, his senior advisers, and Marshall on the one hand who initially favored building friendly relations with Moscow and Army planners and mid-level War Department officials on the other who feared the growth of Soviet power and expressed concerns over Russian behavior in Eastern Europe. Army planners' opposition to conciliating the Kremlin eventually helped undermine the War Department's support for future Washington-Moscow collaboration, scrambled America's broader Russia policy, and helped lay the foundations for the rivalrous atmosphere between the two emerging superpowers that would become a cardinal feature of the Cold War.

Chapter One

The Making of Henry Lewis Stimson

When Henry Lewis Stimson resigned as secretary of state in March 1933 at the age of 65, he was exhausted. His four years at the helm of the State Department had been mired in an extremely difficult period for the United States: serious international crises, the worst economic depression in American history, and a president who seemed unwilling and unable to effectively respond to any of it. Four months earlier, when Stimson's boss, President Herbert Hoover, was decisively defeated in the 1932 presidential election by New York Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, Stimson was relieved. On the day after the election, he confided to his diary that he felt "a greater sense of freedom than I have [had] for four years." His future was a blank slate, now "all up in the air."[74] Now, as Stimson watched Roosevelt take the oath of office on that cold March day in 1933 and become the 32nd President of the United States amidst the Great Depression, he was happy to be leaving Washington and retiring from public service. Eventually, he wanted to resume practicing law part time and go on the lecture circuit, where his analysis and views on international affairs would fetch hefty fees.

However, as Stimson enjoyed his semi-retirement during the 1930s, the world plunged into crisis after crisis. As the Great Depression continued to ravage the globe, right-wing fascist, militarist, and ultranationalist regimes took power in Germany and Japan and began to embark upon expansionist foreign policies in Europe and East Asia that brought the world closer to another destructive war. Throughout the decade, Stimson watched these events develop with an increasing sense of horror and dread. Although he was out of power, Stimson tried to use the considerable

[74] Henry L. Stimson Diary, November 9, 1932, Henry L. Stimson Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University (hereafter HLSD).

influence he held as a former secretary of state and high-ranking U.S. government official to push his nation to respond to these crises. But it was clear most of his fellow citizens did not view world affairs with a comparable level of urgency. As the 1930s ended, a level of helplessness washed over Stimson while the world descended into chaos. With the eventual outbreak of war on September 1, 1939, Stimson redoubled his efforts to press the United States to forcefully respond to dictatorial aggression, but he recognized the limits of his influence as a private citizen. Then, as France was falling and Nazi Germany was conquering the European continent in June 1940, an unexpected telephone caller offered him the opportunity he never thought he would have again.

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Henry Stimson came of age in a time of monumental American growth and enormous opportunity. In the decades after the American Civil War, the United States' explosive and rapid expansion vaulted the country into the top tier of the world's nations. According to one assessment, the U.S. economy grew at an average rate of 5 percent per year between 1873 and 1913.[75] Between 1870 and 1900, 430 million acres of American land were settled, 23 million acres more than in the previous three centuries combined. During the same decades, agricultural production increased dramatically. Wheat and corn output soared by 250 percent, sugar by 460 percent, and there was double the amount of cattle, pigs, and sheep on American farms. Industrial sector growth was even larger. Between 1865 and 1898, coal production surged 800 percent, and steels rails and railway track mileage by over 500 percent; crude petroleum output swelled from approximately three million barrels to over 55 million barrels per year. Soon enough, the United States surpassed the European great powers. In 1850, Great Britain and France both produced one and a half times as much as the United States. 20 years later, the U.S. overtook both, and by 1890, it was producing

[75] Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 45.

nearly as much as the two nations put together. In the middle of the 1880s, the United States eclipsed Britain as the world's leading manufacturer and steel producer. America's prosperity and seemingly limitless economic advancement attracted and was fostered by tens of millions of immigrants, enticed by the nation's reputation as a land of boundless possibilities. Due to steady immigration and high domestic birthrates, the American population more than doubled between 1865 and 1900. All of this, combined with the country's large abundance of natural resources, makes it easy to see how "the United States seemed to have *all* the economic advantages which *some* of the other powers possessed *in part*, but *none* of their disadvantages."[76]

And if all that was not enough, Stimson started life with immense advantage. He came from a prosperous upper crust New York family, whose ancestors arrived in Massachusetts during the seventeenth century. Stimson's great-great grandfather, George Stimson, served in the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War and was one of the first settlers of the town of Windham, New York. Stimson's paternal grandfather, Henry C. Stimson, moved to New York City in the years before the Civil War to try to make his fortune on Wall Street. By the year Stimson was born, his grandfather had established himself as a leading New York financier who did business with industrial titans such as Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Henry Keep, and Leonard Jerome, the maternal grandfather of Winston Churchill.[77]

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[76] Zakaria, 45-46; David M. Pletcher, "Economic Growth and Diplomatic Adjustment," in *Economics and World Power: An Assessment of American Diplomacy since 1789*, eds. William H. Becker, Jr. and Samuel F. Wells, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 119-20; Robert E. Gallman, "Economic Growth and Structural Change in the Long Nineteenth Century," in *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, eds. Stanley L. Engerman and Robert E. Gallman (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), II: 2-7, 23; Paul Bairoch, "International Industrialization Levels from 1750 to 1980," *Journal of European Economic History* 11, no. 2 (Fall 1982): 269–310; John A. Thompson, *A Sense of Power: The Roots of America's Global Role* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 25-26; Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500-2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 243.

[77] Elting E. Morison, *Turmoil and Tradition: A Study of the Life and Times of Henry L. Stimson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), 12-13.

Stimson's father, Lewis, joined his father's Wall Street firm and flourished after serving in the Union Army during the Civil War, marrying in 1866. Henry was born on September 21, 1867, in New York City. A daughter named Candace followed two years after. Stimson's mother later developed a serious illness and prematurely died in 1875. Lewis did not believe he had the ability to be a single father, so he shipped them off to live with his parents at their East 34th Street brownstone in Manhattan. Stimson was raised by his grandparents, who imbued him with their stringent Victorian moral code and values – decency, honesty, thrift, personal responsibility, strong individual work ethic, and a sense of duty, service, and sacrifice.[78] It was this sense of duty and obligation that encouraged Stimson to eventually pursue public service. Later in life, Stimson was often said by his contemporaries to be a nineteenth century man in personality and style, greatly concerned about the morality of far-reaching decisions (for example, over the decision to drop the atomic bombs on Japan at the end of World War II); it appears he obtained these attributes as a young boy and never let them go.

By the time Stimson was 13, his father decided to send him to Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, one of the most elite all-male boarding schools in the United States. In many ways, the value set Andover imparted on its students coincided with the Victorian one Stimson's grandparents taught him when he lived in their home. [79] He graduated in 1883 as the class salutatorian, and like many Andover alumni, enrolled at Yale University the following fall, where his father also attended. Stimson was also tapped for Skull and Bones, one of Yale's highly selective and secretive societies, which since its inception has produced some of America's most powerful figures.

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[78] Ibid, 13-14, 22-24; David F. Schmitz, *Henry L. Stimson: The First Wise Man* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2001), 4.
[79] Godfrey Hodgson, *The Colonel: The Life and Wars of Henry Stimson, 1867-1950* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 26-34.

Upon his graduation in 1888, Stimson continued the quintessential progression of the American elite and began studying at Harvard Law School for the next two years. Although Stimson went on to enjoy a distinguished legal career, he was initially hesitant to become a lawyer. Even 20 years after his law school graduation, Stimson remained ambivalent about private legal practice, telling a group of friends that "the profession of law was never thoroughly satisfactory to me, simply because the life of the ordinary New York lawyer is primarily and essentially devoted to the making of money."[80] Despite this reluctance, Stimson was following a well-trodden path in American policymaking circles that he would come to share with many of his later peers in government. They were white males endowed with the right families, breeding, schooling, and contacts. They were descended from English immigrants and belonged to the mainline Protestant denominations of Episcopalianism or Presbyterianism. They were usually either Northerners or Easterners and increasingly hailed from America's bustling Northeastern cities. They were formally educated in elite boarding schools and Ivy League universities and law schools. They were unofficially tutored in world affairs and international politics through trips to England and the European continent. They practiced corporate law until running for or being appointed to high public office. Their confidence and skill were derived from their participation in elite social circles, schools, universities, and clubs and organizations such as the Council on Foreign Relations and the Century Association.[81] Stimson was on a path to power long familiar to the American elite. His background, education, and network meant he could eventually chase whichever future he desired.

[80] Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 17.
[81] Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 137.

Stimson returned to New York in 1890 to establish his legal career. He joined the prestigious Wall Street law firm of Root & Clarke as a clerk and was admitted to the New York Bar the following year. On New Year's Day in 1893, at only 25 years old, Stimson was made a partner in the firm. With his financial position secured, he married Mabel Wellington White, a great-great granddaughter of Roger Sherman, one of the Founders of the United States, that summer; the two had first met when Stimson was at Yale. As both his personal and professional futures shined bright, Stimson plunged headfirst into building his career. In that, his new law partner Elihu Root played a decisive role.

Root was the archetypal American conservative, a man who devoted his intellectual energies to preserving societal order and protecting U.S. capital. He was one of the most respected corporate lawyers in late-nineteenth-century New York and possessed a client list filled with the city's business titans and power brokers. Root's legal and political philosophy was simple: precedent should guide all, and only in rare circumstances should things change. If changes were to be made at any level of society – local, state, national, or international – they should be incremental and be supported by gradual legal development. Root's stress on precedent had a profound impact on Stimson and became central to his approach to law, politics, policymaking, and society.[82] Like other conservatives, Root also believed in the power of American-style democratic capitalism to solve the problems of the United States and the world. His intimate connections with the country's top businessmen and corporate heavyweights earned Root the nickname "the attorney for capitalism."[83] Stimson came to see Root as a "second father," whose

[82] Sean L. Malloy, *Atomic Tragedy: Henry L. Stimson and the Decision to Use the Bomb against Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), 18.
[83] Richard Leopold, *Elihu Root and the Conservative Tradition* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1954), 197. Leopold's work is the best biographical overview of Root. Philip C. Jessup, a prominent twentieth century U.S. diplomat and scholar, also wrote a two-volume biography of Root, published shortly after Root's death. See Philip C. Jessup, *Elihu Root* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1938).

views greatly shaped Stimson's own and led him to eventually embrace the Republican Party.[84] To Stimson, Root was a beacon, an "exemplar of what a high-minded counselor should be," a role model whose "rectitude, wisdom, and constructive sagacity" were a consistent guide and source for encouragement.[85]

Root's influence was not the only one that molded Stimson's political thinking. His exposure to corrupt Tammany Hall-dominated New York City politics pushed him toward the progressive wing of the Republican Party in the 1890s.[86] As a result, Stimson was inspired to join the growing national political and economic reform movement. At the same time, Root began preparing Stimson for public service. Fortunately for Stimson, not only did he have an influential patron in Root, but he also had close personal relations with the young and audacious president who entered the White House in September 1901: Theodore Roosevelt. Stimson had first met Roosevelt in 1894 as members of the Boone and Crockett Club, a conservationist and sporting club in New York founded by Roosevelt. Both men had elite upbringings: They were born into upper class New York families and graduated from Ivy League universities. The pair shared a strong interest in Progressive-era reform stemming from the anti-corruption campaigns in New York City. And perhaps most importantly, Roosevelt and Stimson both loved the outdoors, especially the American West. Stimson's privileged background bequeathed him wealth and connections. Now, those connections were going to catapult him to the national stage.

In December 1905, Roosevelt offered Stimson the position of U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, the federal government's top prosecutor in Manhattan. Root, who was serving as Roosevelt's secretary of state, pushed for Stimson's appointment. With that in

[84] Leopold, 189.
[85] Stimson and Bundy, xviii.
[86] Ibid, xix; Interview between McGeorge Bundy and Henry Stimson, May 27, 1946, Henry L. Stimson Papers, reel 136, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University (hereafter Stimson Papers with reel number).

mind, Stimson immediately accepted the offer and was officially sworn in the following month. With his first public office, Stimson soared to the top echelons of the rising Progressive Movement, led by the president himself. At 38, Stimson was taking his first step toward a new career.[87]

The Dawn of a New Era and the Rise of Empire

As Stimson was building his legal practice and becoming a wealthy man, the United States was in the midst of a larger debate over its future role in the world. To a growing number of American elites and policymakers, it was clear their nation possessed a new level of power and the corresponding international prestige that came with it. They believed this elevated status carried broader responsibilities and entitled the United States to greater prerogatives.[88] Over the course of the 1890s, this maxim was put to the test as the U.S. heavily expanded its naval power and adopted increasingly belligerent stances toward diplomatic disputes.

These shifts came to the forefront with the Spanish-American War in 1898 and America's subsequent acquisition of an overseas colonial empire. At the same time America's "splendid little war" was both a symbolic and material representation of the U.S. arrival on the world stage as a great power, it also marked the beginning of Stimson's long and complex relationship with the concept of American empire.[89] It was a relationship that would skew his thinking on foreign affairs

[87] "Memorandum of interesting (to me) occasions and events in my life during the past few years," January 17, 1909, HLSD; Morison, 94-95.
[88] Thompson, *A Sense of Power*, 26.
[89] For the quotation, see John Hay to Theodore Roosevelt, July 27, 1898 in William Roscoe Thayer, *The Life and Letters of John Hay*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915), II: 337. The Spanish-American War needs an updated treatment that incorporates the new literature on U.S. colonialism and empire, but there are still key interpretations. One work that brilliantly attempts to do so is Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide An Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (Picador: New York, 2020), 59-88. For the Cuban War of Independence and the origins of the Spanish-American conflict in Cuba, see John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006). For the U.S. domestic political context and the war itself, see Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1963), 285-300, 327-52; Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 69-159; Lloyd C. Gardner, *Imperial America: American Foreign Policy since 1898* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 23-33; Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 110-121; Christopher McKnight Nichols, *Promise and Peril: America at the Dawn of a Global*

and non-white peoples for decades to come. At first, while the conflict provided an opportunity for upper class nationalism, Stimson was ambivalent about the war with Spain. In fact, he later admitted the war had "caught me napping" and that "the thought of preparing oneself for possible military service hardly entered my head."[90] Although Stimson's peers, such as his friend Roosevelt or his law partner Bronson Winthrop, enthusiastically enlisted to fight, Stimson was worried military service might impact his professional life. On the one hand, he felt obligated to answer the call if necessary, but on the other, he did not want to hurt his law practice.[91] Stimson considered joining the Navy because he thought it would involve the least amount of disruption to his work, but eventually enlisted in the New York National Guard instead, which allowed him to serve part-time without having to leave the country.[92]

But while Stimson was largely disinterested with the conflict itself, he discreetly objected to the U.S. imperial project that followed the war's end. Writing to a confidant after the American victory, he lamented "a loose tendency on the part of the press…to talk of 'imperialism' in a glib way which indicates that a good many people think we can permanently bring such places as the Philippines under the United States Government and still maintain that Government in the form of a single Republic." Stimson repudiated the mere hint of it, declaring "I cannot see how we can

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Age (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 41-67; Jeffrey W. Meiser, *Power and Restraint: The Rise of the United States, 1898-1941* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015), Chapter 1; A.G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), Chapter 8; Charles A. Kupchan, *Isolationism: A History of America's Efforts to Shield Itself from the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 167-205; Richard W. Maass, *The Picky Eagle: How Democracy and Xenophobia Limited U.S. Territorial Expansion* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2020), 172-81. For historical narratives of the war and the conflict in American memory, see Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *The War of 1898: The United States & Cuba in History & Historiography* (Raleigh, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998). On the intersection between class, gender, masculinity, race and the war, see Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), Chapters 3-4.

[90] Stimson and Bundy, xx.

[91] Stimson to Alden Sampson, August 8, 1898, Stimson Papers, reel 1.

[92] Stimson to Gifford Pinchot, July 1, 1898, Stimson Papers, reel 1; Stimson and Bundy, xx-xxi.

permanently govern any piece of territory, no matter how remote or how inferior its population, by any other system of government than a representative one."[93] In other words, Stimson opposed the annexation of overseas territories not because he was necessarily an anti-imperialist, but because he did not want to taint the American republic with peoples he deemed racially inferior. Otherwise, he thought it would be too difficult to establish American political legitimacy in its new colonial holdings; even those he believed inferior still possessed a right to democratic self-government. Interestingly, Stimson never openly shared his views on the Philippines issue or the other annexed territories. As a corporate lawyer, he probably felt it was not his place to publicly comment on foreign affairs and was unlikely interested in distracting himself from his career. But it is plausible he also sought to avoid embarrassing Root and Roosevelt, who were both squarely in and distinctly identified with the pro-imperialist bloc. Men such as Stimson knew where their loyalties lied and whom they owed their personal and professional success. His views on the Philippines and the other new U.S. overseas territories expressed above were the launching point for Stimson's long and complex relationship with American empire and the non-white populations the U.S. brutally governed. Like many of his contemporaries, Stimson's beliefs on these issues were viewed through a racial prism that made it easy for him to dismiss indigenous peoples' concerns and hopes in favor of American "benevolent rule."

Over a decade later, Stimson was given the unenviable task of managing these problems himself. After losing his only bid for elected office in a race for New York Governor in 1910, President William Howard Taft asked Stimson in the spring of 1911 to join his cabinet as secretary of war. After the Spanish-American War, the secretary of war also functioned as a *de facto* colonial secretary since U.S. imperial possessions were classified as "insular areas" under the jurisdiction

[93] Stimson to George Wharton Pepper, July 14, 1898, Stimson Papers, reel 1; see also Stimson to Lloyd McKim Garrison, May 4, 1900, Stimson Papers, reel 2.

of the War Department. Although Stimson had been against annexation in the war's aftermath, serving in the Taft administration transformed him into a full-throated advocate of American empire.

It is not precisely clear why Stimson radically changed his views. But what appears to have caused this shift was an official trip Stimson took to Panama, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic in July 1911.[94] During this tour, Stimson's racism and belief in the "white man's burden" overshadowed his previous misgivings about U.S. imperialism. Throughout his life, Stimson strongly believed in white racial superiority (particularly those descended from Anglo-Saxons) over those he deemed "lesser breeds."[95] Upon arriving in Panama to witness the construction of the Panama Canal, Stimson wrote to his father that the American-led project was "a wonderful work and we are very enthusiastic – it is a sight to inspire patriotism."[96] After his stop in the Dominican Republic, he concluded "a little benevolent despotism" was necessary for governing that country.[97] After seeing "that spot of darkness," Stimson revealed to his father, "I have rarely been more impressed with the 'white man's burden' than when I saw what that little force of revenue men were standing against…in the most damnable hole of loneliness and misrule that I have yet run up against."[98]

Stimson's new pro-imperialism views also extended to the Philippines, where his opposition to annexation had previously been strongest. Now at the War Department, Stimson believed the islands should remain under American rule. In 1912, he called a congressional proposal to grant the Philippines autonomy, and eventually independence, "perfectly

[94] Malloy, 25.
[95] Stimson interview with McGeorge Bundy, July 8, 1946, Stimson Papers, reel 136.
[96] Henry Stimson to Lewis Stimson, July 18, 1911, Stimson Papers, reel 25.
[97] Ibid, Henry Stimson to Lewis Stimson, August 3, 1911.
[98] Ibid.

preposterous."[99] "If we do our duty in the Philippine Island," Stimson told a subordinate, "It will be necessary for us to stay there for a long time yet."[100] And in response to a 1913 editorial blasting U.S. attempts to crush the Filipino independence movement, Stimson formally upbraided its author. "As against this comparatively small percentage of life lost in the work of restoring law and order, you should consider the far greater amount of life that has been actually saved by the measures of civilization which have been made possible by this law and order," he wrote.[101] Perhaps it was seeing the American empire up close that ultimately caused Stimson's transformation. After the War of 1898, the idea of overseas U.S. imperialism was abstract enough to Stimson that he was mainly concerned with how the absorption of new territories populated mostly by non-white peoples would affect American democratic governance. But now having traveled to America's colonial possessions and being the senior official responsible for them, Stimson personally encountered what he viewed as the positives of U.S. attempts to impose order on an unruly world.

By the time Stimson became secretary of state in 1929 though, his attitudes on imperialism shifted again. After serving as President Calvin Coolidge's envoy to Nicaragua to help end the civil war there in 1927 and then as governor-general of the Philippines from 1927-29, Stimson recognized the limits of American influence in developing nations.[102] In both situations, he attempted to find success through direct negotiations with indigenous power brokers instead of relying upon U.S. military power. As governor-general, Stimson believed "the old methods of force were obsolete and also the idea of intelligent persuasion could not be used."[103] To govern

[99] Stimson to Herbert Parsons, April 5, 1912, Stimson Papers, reel 6.
[100] Stimson to Cameron Forbes, September 1, 1911, Stimson Papers, reel 9.
[101] Stimson to Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst, February 21, 1913, Stimson Papers, reel 31.
[102] Malloy, 25; Schmitz, *Stimson*, 47-48.
[103] Stimson Diary, March 18, 1928, HLSD.

effectively, it was vital to cooperate with local elites and leaders, but it must be under American "benevolent control."[104] This was a clear recognition that total U.S. imperial domination was no longer an effective strategy, and that colonial administration must become subtler if it were to remain viable. After Stimson became America's chief diplomat, he grew disillusioned with the "white man's burden" and the oppressive U.S. Marine interventions which supported it. In an attempt to foster better relations with Latin American countries, Stimson and President Herbert Hoover worked to recalibrate and soften American involvement in the region.[105]

In evaluating Stimson's tortuous relationship with American imperialism, two significant threads become evident for understanding his approach to world affairs. The first is his overriding conviction that the white race and Western civilization were superior to all others, notions which led him to support abhorrent policies during his career, such as the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. The other is his ambivalence and uncertainty surrounding the use of U.S. military force as an instrument of American foreign policy. While Stimson was not opposed to employing it if necessary, he often felt other tools, such as diplomatic, economic, or legal ones, were better suited for advancing U.S. national interests. It was a conception that would shape his approach to foreign relations from the outbreak of one world war to another.

Mr. Stimson Goes to Washington

When Stimson and his wife arrived in Washington in the spring of 1911, the city was still the sleepy Southern town it had been throughout the nineteenth century, not yet the bustling metropolis it would become during World War II. At the time, the war secretary post was considered an

[104] Schmitz, *Stimson*, 65.

[105] For more on Stimson's assignments in Nicaragua and the Philippines, see Schmitz, *Stimson*, 47-72; Hodgson, 87-140; Morison, 270-98; Paul H. Boeker, ed., *Henry L. Stimson's American Policy in Nicaragua: The Lasting Legacy* (New York: Markus Wiener, 1991). On Hoover's Latin American policy, see Alan McPherson, "Herbert Hoover, Occupation Withdrawal, and the Good Neighbor Policy," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (December 2014): 623–39, https://doi.org/10.1111/psq.12153.

inconsequential one, which is not surprising when you consider that the U.S. Army at the time, which the War Department oversaw, had fewer than 100,000 men in its ranks.[106] That was probably helpful for Stimson because much like his predecessor and mentor Root, who served as secretary of war from 1899-1904, he had zero military expertise or experience running a large government bureaucracy. Running a peacetime War Department allowed Stimson to focus on learning how the Department functioned and the ways of Washington; this was crucial knowledge he would need for later in his career, especially when he returned to the War Department on the eve of the Second World War.

As Stimson settled into his new offices at the State, War, and Navy Building near the White House, two major issues sat on his desk: departmental bureaucratic reform and management of America's overseas colonial holdings. But it was the tedious business of reorganizing the War Department that consumed most of Stimson's tenure in the Taft administration. Under Root, the War Department had initiated a series of far-reaching changes designed to centralize executive authority in the secretary's office. During most of the nineteenth century, powerful bureau chiefs, each responsible for a core administrative function within the Department, operated with nearly total autonomy. Since they had independent congressionally appropriated budgets and their control over their operations was codified by statute, war secretaries relied upon the bureau chiefs for access, information, and influence.[107] During the Spanish-American War, it became clear this system, which discouraged coordination and cooperation between the bureau chiefs, was not befitting for a modern army. The old structure needed to be replaced.

[106] Stimson and Bundy, 31.
[107] James E. Hewes, Jr., *From Root to McNamara: Army Organization and Administration, 1900-1963* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1975), 3-5.

To build a more effective organization, Root implemented several modifications. The first was abolishing the post of Commanding General of the United States Army, a job once held by George Washington, which technically did not have congressional authorization prescribing its duties and had murky relations with the rest of the Department.[108] To supplant it, Root asked Congress to create an Office of the Chief of Staff, a new Army officer position reporting directly to the secretary who would serve as both the general manager of the Department and as the principal military adviser to the secretary and the president as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. A new general staff would support the chief of staff in their duties and would also be responsible for planning future military operations and executing current ones. All other Army officers, including the bureau chiefs, would be subordinate to the chief of staff.[109] Additionally, Root expanded the size of the Army; enlarged the U.S. Military Academy at West Point to broaden the officer corps; established the U.S. Army War College to train officers for general staff duties; consolidated the bureaus to cut down on bureaucracy; created new procedures to routinely rotate officers between staff jobs and field roles, and overhauled the outdated militia system.[110]

However, Root left the War Department before he could finish his reorganization program. Under Taft, his successor, the reforms atrophied. But Stimson believed in Root's changes and worked to revitalize them. In his first annual report to the president as secretary of war, Stimson argued a large, professional standing army was obsolete in the era of modern warfare; instead, the Army should consist of a small class of experienced professionals capable of quickly expanding its ranks by enlisting and training citizen soldiers.[111] The general staff would serve as that core,

[108] Ibid, 4, 8-9.
[109] Ibid, 8-9; Leopold, 42.
[110] Hewes, 9-12; Leopold, 38-46.
[111] Henry Stimson, "Report of the Secretary of War," December 4, 1911, *War Department Annual Reports, 1911* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1912), 20; Stimson and Bundy, 39-40.

whereas the old traditions of promotion based on seniority had left "deadwood" in the Army.[112] The existing Army base system, a relic of the U.S. government's battles against the Native Americans, did not meet national defense needs and created "groups of local constabulary instead of a national organization. The result is an Army which is extraordinarily expensive to maintain, and one whose…main purpose of its existence has been nullified."[113] In sum, "for the remote contingency by which a national army must always be judged, namely, the contingency of war with a first class power, the Army is practically unprepared."[114]

Traditionalists at the War Department and in Congress attempted to stymie Stimson's plans in any manner they could, leading to months of bureaucratic and legislative battles over the proposed reorganization. Nevertheless by August 1912, with the assistance of Taft and Root, now a U.S. senator, Stimson mostly prevailed. He succeeded in confirming the general staff's supremacy by consolidating many of the old bureaus and protecting the president's right to select the chief of staff. Congress also took nascent steps toward creating an Army reserve. Stimson was unable to persuade Congress though to close useless Army forts and streamline the geographical dispersal of continental Army forces. To get around that, Stimson proceeded to restructure the Army through executive action. He devised a divisional framework to merge scattered Army units into four divisions, which allowed their commanding officers to coordinate equipment and training. Although the Army would remain distributed throughout the country, Stimson's configuration sowed the seeds of a modern fighting force.[115]

But perhaps Stimson's most valuable takeaway from this struggle is that he began to learn how the federal government operated. The Washington neophyte discovered how to harness the

[112] Stimson, "Report of the Secretary of War," 9.
[113] Ibid, 14.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Hewes, 14-19; Schmitz, *Stimson*, 27-28.

bureaucracy to achieve his goals and that without forming critical relationships with key stakeholders in Congress, the executive branch, and the White House, success would be difficult to attain. In addition to having indispensable backers in Root and Taft, Stimson also formed a significant partnership with General Leonard Wood, the Army chief of staff. In fighting to change the War Department, the two closely worked together to make the Army a more efficient and effective fighting force. Stimson quickly understood that without cultivating Wood, he would not be an impactful secretary of war.[116] It was a lesson Stimson would remember when he returned to the War Department in 1940 and formed a close-knit collaboration with one of Wood's successors, George Marshall.

Colonel Stimson and the Great War

The First World War and its aftermath marked a turning point in Stimson's career, one that transformed him from a relatively obscure figure into a top American foreign policymaker. While Stimson was not a pacifist, he was not as quick to resort to the use of armed force as some of his contemporaries were. But the devastation and trauma unleashed by World War I convinced Stimson of two things: that this new era of industrialized warfare would tear humanity apart if efforts were not made to control it, and that the United States must become an "active world power."[117]

Initially, Stimson, like many Americans, supported the Allied cause but advocated for strict U.S. neutrality if the nation's rights as a neutral were respected. This brought Stimson in line with official U.S. policy.[118] In the Allies, Stimson saw them as "fighting the battle of civilization to which we are committed. Germany is seeking to overthrow the fundamental postulates of that

[116] Stimson and Bundy, 33-34.
[117] Ibid, 83-85.
[118] Thompson, *A Sense of Power*, 59-61.

civilization."[119] Yet in the early days of the war, he did not see this as a compelling reason to enter the conflict. In fact, Stimson saw American neutrality as the first step toward achieving international peace. When a German submarine attacked and sank the passenger ship *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915, Stimson viewed it as an opportunity to revise and broaden the traditional concept of neutrality in global politics. In a speech at Carnegie Hall in June 1915, Stimson told his listeners that neutrality rights were the first, precarious step toward abolishing war. While he admitted that "we have not succeeded in abolishing war in the name of its inhumanity and in substituting for it a rule of peace and reason," Stimson asserted "by far the great advance which has been thus slowly made in putting brakes upon the savagery of war has been in the development of the rights of the neutral." The process of "gradually narrowing and restricting the area of war as we have grown less and less willing to endure its ravages" was worthwhile because neutral states were "buffers of civilization against the shocks of war – ever-widening areas of peace which are full of promise for the ages of the future." And if the United States must use force to defend these rights, that risk must be accepted.[120] In the past, U.S. neutrality was more of a rhetorical exercise aimed at avoiding European power politics; now, Stimson aimed to reshape it into an active policy backed up by growing American economic and military strength. To make that a reality, the former secretary of war knew the U.S. required a massive military buildup.

The best vehicle to accomplish this was the burgeoning national preparedness movement. Emerging after the outbreak of the war, the preparedness movement, led by influential Republicans such as Roosevelt, Root, and General Wood, called on the United States to augment its military

[119] Stimson to Winfred T. Denison, November 4, 1914, Stimson Papers, reel 37.
[120] Henry Stimson, "Address to the National Security League, Carnegie Hall, June 14, 1915," Stimson Papers, reel 130; Stimson and Bundy, 85.

power for both defensive purposes and in case it became a belligerent.[121] Few policymakers intimately knew the dismal state of the U.S. Army as well as Stimson did. Despite his reform efforts, the Army was poorly equipped and totally unprepared for war, especially against a major European power. Accordingly, Stimson became an outspoken spokesman for military upgrades and a leader in the preparedness movement. Stimson supported Wood's program to train civilian leaders as potential Army officers at camps in Plattsburgh, New York, even enrolling himself in the program in 1916.[122] He also called for universal military training in line with his previous vision for a citizen-solider army.[123] Unlike other leading preparedness boosters though, Stimson was not overly concerned about an attack on the continental United States.[124] Rather, he considered preparedness as a conduit for reinvigorating domestic institutions, revamping American foreign policy, and preparing the nation for international competition as a great power.[125] At first glance, this might read like a quasi-form of militarism, but for Stimson, it was the exact opposite. Like he wrote at the beginning of the war, Stimson regarded the conflict as a battle for civilization between the Western democracies and autocratic states such as Germany. Stimson sought to prove a

[121] On the preparedness movement, see John Patrick Finnegan, *Against the Specter of a Dragon: The Campaign for American Military Preparedness, 1914-1917* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975); Michael Pearlman, *To Make Democracy Safe for America: Patricians and Preparedness in the Progressive Era* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1984); John Garry Clifford, *The Citizen Soldiers: The Plattsburg Training Camp Movement, 1913-1920*, Second Edition (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2015); John A. Thompson, "The Exaggeration of American Vulnerability: The Anatomy of a Tradition," *Diplomatic History* 16, no. 1 (January 1992): 23–43, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1992.tb00482.x; Manuel Franz, "Preparedness Revisited: Civilian Societies and the Campaign for American Defense, 1914-1920," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 17, no. 4 (October 2018): 663–76, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537781418000300.
[122] Stimson and Bundy, 86-87.
[123] For a summary of Stimson's thinking on universal military training, see Henry Stimson, "The Basis for National Military Training," *Scribner's Magazine*, April 1917, 408-412. Perhaps prophetically, Stimson's article stood alongside a parallel one by Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt, who similarly called for an expansion of U.S. military power.
[124] The standard speech text he used for addresses calling for military preparedness contained only a single reference to the threat of a German invasion of the United States. See "The Issues of the War," Stimson Papers, reel 130.
[125] Stimson to Philip J. Roosevelt, December 17, 1915, Stimson Papers, reel 42; Stimson to Elihu Root, May 9, 1916; Stimson Papers, reel 44.

democratic nation such as the United States could vigorously compete with militaristic ones and provide a better societal model than the dictatorial alternatives.

By 1917, Stimson reversed course and judged U.S. intervention necessary for defeating Germany and the Central Powers. When President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war that April, Stimson seized the chance to serve his country in uniform, the opportunity he had spurned nearly two decades earlier during the war with Spain.[126] Like Wilson, Stimson had come to believe that "the world must be made a safe place for democracy" against the forces of German militarism; he was determined to fight in order to provide an example to his fellow Americans of what he meant by "citizen soldiers."[127] After utilizing his War Department connections, Stimson secured an officer commission as a major in the U.S. Army on May 31, 1917, only months shy of his fiftieth birthday. A year later, Stimson was given command of a field artillery battalion and shipped to a quiet portion of the Western Front in the Lorraine region of France. After three weeks there without experiencing combat, Stimson was promoted to colonel and sent back to the United States to lead a new artillery unit.

Although the war ended before he could return to France and see action, Colonel Stimson (a title he went by and embraced for the rest of his life) drew two important lessons from his military service. The first was the substantive difference he felt the U.S. Army made in defeating the Germans on European battlefields. In Stimson's eyes, American war-making material and manpower strength had helped the Allies overwhelm Germany and deliver the decisive blow on the Western Front. This critical observation deeply impacted Stimson and shaped both his strategic thinking and his approach to military affairs for the rest of his career, especially when he returned to the War Department during World War II. The other was how gruesome war actually was.

[126] Stimson and Bundy, 92.
[127] Stimson to Woodrow Wilson, April 17, 1917, Stimson Papers, reel 48.

Notwithstanding his lack of personal combat exposure, Stimson grasped the brutality of modern warfare and the destruction it wrought upon the European continent. The devastation left him convinced all efforts should be made to avoid future calamities by eliminating war as a potential possibility.[128] A month after the war ended, Stimson told one of his law partners he was in favor of "trying almost anything which may offer any chance to diminish the likelihood of another such catastrophe to civilization as this war."[129] He would spend the next 20 years trying to make this a reality.

Building a Better World

However, how to revolutionize international relations through a daringly radical course like extinguishing the flames of war was anyone's guess. After all, war was as human as anything could get.[130] But in the first decades of the twentieth century, a growing international legal movement was attempting to do just that through building a cadre of institutions dedicated to enforcing the burgeoning field of international law. Known as legalists, their vision was that by building a codified system of legal procedure aimed at solving global conflicts and disputes, they could create a structure and accompanying mentality for preventing wars in the future.[131] And Root, Stimson's mentor, stood at the heart of this legalist guild and exemplified its aims better than anyone.

Root's conservatism was grounded in his attachments to order, precedent, and tradition. Accordingly, he detested the bedlam and chaos triggered by war. Conflict stimulated insecurity, radicalism, and volatility, all anathema to Root. After Theodore Roosevelt appointed Root as his

[128] Stimson and Bundy, 91-100.
[129] Stimson to Samuel B. Clarke, December 20, 1918, Stimson Papers, reel 51.
[130] Margaret MacMillan, *War: How Conflict Shaped Us* (New York: Random House, 2020).
[131] Benjamin Allen Coates, *Legalist Empire: International Law and American Foreign Relations in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3; Francis Anthony Boyle, *Foundations of World Order: The Legalist Approach to International Relations, 1898-1922* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 61-66; Jonathan Zasloff, "Law and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy: From the Gilded Age to the New Era," *New York University Law Review* 78, no. 1 (April 2003): 240–373.

secretary of state in 1905, Root worked to displace war in favor of law as the instrument for resolving international disputes. He believed war should be branded as "criminal conduct" and not considered a permissible tool of national policy. But unlike some peace advocates, Root spurned appeals for the formation of a world government as perilously naïve because it would take "generations and centuries in the life of nations" to shift human behavior away from war.[132]

Alternatively, Root emphasized the developing movement for international judicial arbitration. He championed the creation of a permanent international court and the cautious expansion of international law for widening the sphere of questions open to legal resolutions.[133] For these efforts, Root was awarded the 1912 Nobel Peace Prize. Appalled by the grisly mayhem fomented by World War I, Root strengthened his attempts to codify legal obstacles and substitutes to war in a formal, structured configuration. Joining other legalists, Root was now prepared to furnish a new global organization with the ability to levy economic and military sanctions against national lawbreakers. Once countries started to breach their international legal commitments, the challenge became, Root noted, "not so much to make treaties which define rights as to prevent the treaties from being violated."[134] In this vein, Root helped draft the charter for the World Court in the aftermath of World War I, aiming to bolster judicial mechanisms for settling quarrels between states.

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[132] Robert Bacon and James Brown Scott, eds., *Addresses on International Subjects by Elihu Root* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), 156-57. See also Coates, Ch. 4; Warren Kuehl, *Seeking World Order: The United States and International Organization to 1920* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), Chapter 4; Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012), Chapters 4-5.
[133] Leopold, 53-59; Malloy, 19.
[134] Quoted in Stephen Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World: The Birth of U.S. Global Supremacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020), 23. For more on this proposed body, see Coates, Chapter 7; Stephen Wertheim, "The League That Wasn't: American Designs for a Legalist-Sanctionist League of Nations and the Intellectual Origins of International Organization, 1914-1920," *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 5 (November 2011): 797–836, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.2011.00986.x.

His mentor's international legalist mindset greatly influenced Stimson's approach to constructing an alternative to war. Similarly to Root, Stimson thought any realistic chances for enduring peace must be built on the foundations of international law. As he commented in February 1919, "The time is surely coming when in international law an act of aggression by one nation upon another will be regarded as an offensive against the community of nations."[135] It was this belief that produced Stimson's skepticism toward the League of Nations charter that President Wilson brought back from the Paris Peace Conference in mid-1919. While Stimson, Root, and their allies generally supported the idea of a League and favored "regular institutions which will work toward peace," they feared Wilson's conception did not sit squarely enough within international law.[136] Similarly to many other Republican politicians, Stimson also had strong reservations about Article X of the League Covenant, which committed League members to collectively securing the political and territorial integrity of any signatory state facing aggression or invasion. While Stimson embraced the notion of collective security, he loathed the lack of legal substitutes to war in the League charter as vehicles for reorienting international politics and worried Article X would "artificially freeze the status quo and commit the United States to defend it by force."[137]

As opposed to relying on Wilson's unprecedented covenant, Stimson thought a safer course was to gradually expand the current realm of international law, amplifying its reach through treaties and reciprocal agreements. A more general League would allow it to naturally grow and take on additional responsibilities as the international community deemed it necessary.[138] Although he was initially skeptical this would occur in the wake of the U.S. Senate's rejection of

[135] Stimson and Bundy, 103.
[136] Handwritten notes on the League Covenant, March 21, 1919, Stimson Papers, reel 130.
[137] Stimson to William Howard Taft, March 6, 1919, Stimson Papers, reel 51.
[138] Schmitz, *Stimson*, 42-43; Stimson and Bundy, 103.

the League and the Treaty of Versailles, he was later encouraged during the 1920s by the successful naval arms control conference in Washington from 1921-22 combined with the establishment of the World Court and a series of international accords reached independently by European countries.[139] These developments appeared to point to a rising consensus on the dangers of armed conflict. With the consummation of the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928, it seemed a new age in international affairs had arrived.

Stimson considered the Kellogg-Briand Pact a logical diplomatic agreement rooted in centuries of international legal development. Formulated in Paris, the treaty banned war as a legitimate national policy option. It stipulated that changes in inter-state relations should happen through peaceful means and that war should be renounced for solving international predicaments.[140] In retrospect, it is easy to dismiss the pact as an exercise in hopeless idealism. The fact that there were no enforcement mechanisms for punishing transgressors highlights this point. Nevertheless, Stimson judged curbing war in the modern industrial age as the only way to protect the intricate web of relationships that comprised modern society. If war was outlawed,

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[139] Malloy, 31. On the battles over the League of Nations and the Treaty of Versailles, see Ralph Stone, *The Irreconcilables: The Fight against the League of Nations* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1970); William C. Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge and the Search for an American Foreign Policy* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980); Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Diplomatic Tradition: The Treaty Fight in Perspective* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Thomas J. Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); John Milton Cooper Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War, America and the Remaking of Global Order, 1916-1931* (New York: Penguin Books, 2015); Lloyd E. Ambrosius, "Wilson, the Republicans and French Security after World War I," *The Journal of American History* 59, no. 2 (September 1972): 341–52, https://doi.org/10.2307/1890194.

[140] "Treaty Between the United States and Other Powers, Signed at Paris, August 27, 1928," *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter *FRUS*), 1928, Volume I, ed. Joseph Fuller (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942), Document 133. A complete list of *FRUS* volumes cited in this dissertation with their appropriate subtitles can be found in the bibliography. See also Robert H. Ferrell, *Peace in Their Time: The Origins of the Kellogg-Briand Pact* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1952); Daniel Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Chapters 8-9; Oona Hathaway and Scott Shapiro, *The Internationalists: How a Radical Plan to Outlaw War Remade the World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017); Harold Josephson, "Outlawing War: Internationalism and the Pact of Paris," *Diplomatic History* 3, no. 4 (October 1979): 377–90.

Stimson later wrote, it "could no longer be the source and subject of rights. When two nations get into conflict, either one or both are wrongdoers – violators of the law of nations. We no longer draw a circle about them and treat them with the punctilios of the duelist's code. Instead we denounce them as ruffians and call the police."[141] By the early 1930s, Stimson triumphantly declared "the time had arrived when that dream [of abolishing war] had a reasonable chance of becoming reality."[142] To protect the Kellogg-Briand Pact, Stimson urged developing the World Court as a "judicial means…to settle the inevitable controversies between nations…and clarify the standards and rules of international conduct by which such controversies can be prevented or minimized."[143]

When President Hoover asked Stimson to serve as secretary of state in 1929, it marked the zenith of his ability to restructure world politics around peace. His approach to international relations as America's chief diplomat was rooted in a fusion of promoting arms control, international legal processes, free trade, and informal cultivation of other world leaders.[144] The twin challenges of global economic depression and the rise of militaristic nationalism reinforced Stimson's belief that Western society was too fragile to sustain another global war on terms with the previous one and that it must be avoided at all costs.[145] Therefore, the Kellogg-Briand principles needed converting into a feasible U.S. foreign policy.

Right from the start, Stimson encountered immense difficulties in accomplishing these goals. When Stimson took over the State Department, the first issue he moved to tackle was arms control. For Stimson, arms control and the abolition of entire weapons classes were a plausible

[141] Stimson, "Outline Analysis of the Kellogg Pact," n.d., Stimson Papers, reel 131.
[142] Henry L. Stimson, "Bases of American Foreign Policy During the Past Four Years," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1933, 383-96.
[143] Stimson to Herbert Hoover, November 18, 1929, HLSD.
[144] For an overview of American diplomacy during this time, see Robert H. Ferrell, *American Diplomacy in the Great Depression: Hoover-Stimson Foreign Policy, 1929-1933* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1957).
[145] Stimson Diary, February 27, 1933, HLSD.

launching point for his campaign to enact perpetual peace. Stimson's first international trip as secretary of state was to the London Naval Conference in 1930 as head of the U.S. delegation. Once there, he pitched a bold plan to abolish submarines, but the envoys from the other great powers balked at his contention that "the enactment of the Kellogg Pact created a new starting point for international negotiations for the preservation of peace."[146] Simultaneously, Hoover refused to allow the U.S. to join the types of diplomatic alliances Stimson felt were necessary for building trust with foreign leaders to achieve further disarmament.[147] Consequently, Stimson was not able to secure the muscular agreement he desired, but instead a modest treaty with Britain and Japan which actually authorized an increase in naval arms without substantively reducing submarine assets, let alone outlawing them.

At the same time, the secretary of state sought to reduce international tensions by promoting free trade and stronger economic ties between the United States and other nations. As Charles Evans Hughes, one of Stimson's predecessors, aptly described in 1921, "The prosperity of the United States largely depends upon the economic settlements which may be made in Europe…they are world problems and we cannot escape the injurious consequences of a failure to settle them."[148] Stimson agreed, contending that increasing levels of economic globalization not only increased national wealth but also created "a better mutual understanding" amongst industrialized nations (notwithstanding the traumas of the Great Depression).[149] However, the shock of the Great Depression left most policymakers panicking. To protect their economies, they resorted to enacting tariffs, closing their borders to international trade, and swelling levels of

[146] Memorandum by the Secretary of State (hereafter SecState), October 7, 1929, *FRUS*, 1929 Volume III, Document 4; Stimson to the Acting SecState, February 28, 1930, *FRUS*, 1930, Volume I, Document 32; Ibid, Stimson to the Acting SecState, March 22, 1930, Document 69.
[147] Stimson and Bundy, 170-72; Malloy 33.
[148] Quoted in David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 10.
[149] Henry L. Stimson, *Democracy and Nationalism in Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1934), 28.

economic nationalism. Yet, Stimson drew the opposite conclusion. He regarded nationalist economic policies as harmful to the global economy to which the United States was inextricably linked. "The outstanding lessons of the present world situation," he maintained in the Depression's first year, "is that the prosperity of each is dependent on the prosperity of all and that in the long run no nation can develop its own national well-being at the expense of its neighbors."[150] Stimson's overriding concern was that a worldwide economic collapse would lead to renewed nationalism and a closed world, increasing distrust between world leaders and raising the possibility of another war. If another conflict broke out, all the progress that had been made since World War I would be shattered. It was a future Stimson desperately wished to avoid.

In a vain attempt to keep trust between foreign leaders from irretrievably evaporating during the global economic crisis, Stimson labored to cultivate them through personal contacts and informal diplomacy. He felt that if he could establish a private rapport with like-minded leaders, then he could help everyone overcome any aggravated public national fervor. This outlook stemmed inherently from both Stimson's imbued Victorian ideals and his disdain for the masses developed during his early days as a domestic reformer. It was also buttressed by his experiences in Nicaragua and the Philippines, where Stimson felt his successes in both countries flowed from his personal diplomacy with local elites. To establish those relationships, Stimson made several high-profile visits to European capitals as secretary of state, hoping to keep American relations on a sound footing with leaders spanning from British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald to Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and German President Paul von Hindenburg.[151]

[150] "Address to the Permanent International Association of Road Congresses," October 6, 1930, Stimson Papers, reel 131.
[151] See *FRUS*, 1931, Volume I, Documents 402-17.

Ultimately, none of Stimson's endeavors at the State Department staved off the economic depression or the bitter feelings lingering from World War I. Those resentments gave rise to dangerous fascist ideologies and soaring levels of right-wing militarism. Democratic capitalism's spectacular failures at home and overseas destroyed the aspirations that free trade and globalization would irrevocably minimize international frictions and advance the cause of peace. Even Stimson seems to have realized this to some extent when he complained at the 1932 Geneva Conference to German Chancellor Heinrich Bruning that "the situation in the world seemed to me like the unfolding of a great Greek tragedy, where we could see the march of events and know what ought to be done, but to be powerless to prevent its marching to its grim conclusion."[152] Nowhere were Stimson's frustrations and failures more evident than in the Manchurian Crisis (discussed in Chapter 4). But it is worth mentioning now that this colossal act of aggression in East Asia, and Stimson's inability to effectively respond to any of it, clearly demonstrated the shortcomings of his approach to international relations as secretary of state. Although tangible progress was made, all those energies Stimson had exerted trying to devise an alternative to war had flatlined. Perhaps his biggest takeaway was that without robust American leadership abroad, world peace could not be realized. When he left the State Department in 1933 after Hoover's electoral defeat, Stimson was dejected and exhausted. At 65, it seemed like his public career was coming to an un-ceremonial end. Had that happened, Stimson would probably be remembered as a well-meaning but tragic figure in the annals of American diplomacy. But the 1930s were a transformative decade, both for Stimson and the world. More than anything for Stimson, it was proof any sustainable global order could not exist without American power underwriting it. By the end of the decade,

[152] Stimson Diary, April 17, 1932, HLSD.

both he and the United States would be in a place neither could have imagined on that cold day in March 1933.

Chapter Two

Into the Dark

This chapter examines the crucial seven-year period between Stimson's resignation as secretary of state in March 1933 and his return to the War Department in June 1940. Although Stimson did not anticipate he would ever return to Washington to serve in the federal government, some of his most important public service occurred when he was a private citizen in this period. Particularly, this chapter advances two critical arguments.

The first is that Stimson had both a much wider definition of national security than most of his contemporaries did and came to those conclusions before nearly any other American leader or opinion maker. Indeed, what makes tracing Stimson's intellectual and political views during the 1930s so instructive is how quickly his cautious optimism faded in favor of increasing alarm and consistent consternation. As a former Republican secretary of state and a leading authority on foreign policy – *Time* magazine called him the "one real Elder Statesman" in America at the time – Stimson provides a useful lens for understanding how the United States would eventually come to comprehend the threats emanating from the Axis powers.[1] Earlier than almost anyone else, Stimson was publicly and forcefully warning his fellow Americans about the dangers of neutrality and their reluctance to check potentially hostile nations, especially Germany and Japan. Stimson's activism is also notable given most Republicans espoused strict neutrality and later non-interventionism in global affairs. In that way, although Stimson was ahead of most Americans on these issues, his policy shifts and public influence operations in this period are also helpful for gaining a better sense of the origins of both the Republican Party and the wider American foreign

[1] *Time* magazine, April 17, 1939, 18.

policy establishment's transition toward adopting the major facets of Stimson's internationalist worldview, especially after 1945.

Crucially, Stimson's fears did not necessarily stem from concerns over direct threats to the physical security of the United States, a potential vulnerability scholars such as John Thompson have written about in detail.[2] Sure, Stimson did cite potential attacks on the American homeland in his broadsides against U.S. neutrality in world affairs during this decade, but they were not his primary focus. Instead, he went to considerable lengths to portray the right-wing authoritarian ultranationalism gaining steam in Europe and Japan as growing perils to American values and the American way of life.[3] His denunciations of Germany, Italy, and Japan, the main "group of [right-wing authoritarian] aggressive nations", as having "reverted to aggression and force as the only rule of international practice…instead, they have developed a skillful technique of terrorism and force" in October 1939 sound a lot like Roosevelt's rebukes eight months later of those who believed the United States could "become a lone island in a world dominated by the philosophy of force."[4] Maybe the United States could eventually be susceptible to some form of incursion, but more importantly, it could not survive in a world governed by forces opposed to liberal democracy

[2] See Thompson, *A Sense of Power*, 151-66; Thompson, "The Exaggeration of American Vulnerability," 23-43; John A. Thompson, "Another Look at the Downfall of 'Fortress America,'" *Journal of American Studies* 26, no. 3 (December 1992): 393–408; John A. Thompson, "Conceptions of National Security and American Entry into World War II," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 16, no. 4 (2005): 671–97, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592290500331006.

[3] Stimson arrived at this broader definition of national security as early as 1935-36, long before the Munich Crisis or the Fall of France. That would put him at least two-three years ahead of FDR's private thinking on the issue and even longer before Roosevelt began publicly warning about the consequences of an Axis victory in Europe. For a concise treatment of expanding national security definitions, see Thompson, "Conceptions of National Security," 671-97. For a civilizational perspective on these issues focusing on U.S. presidents, but one that easily applies to Stimson, see Benjamin A. Coates, "American Presidents and the Ideology of Civilization," in Christopher McKnight Nichols and David Milne, eds., *Ideology in U.S. Foreign Relations: New Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2022), 53-73.

[4] Stimson radio address, "Preserve American Security by Repealing the Embargo," October 5, 1939, Stimson Papers, reel 132; FDR, "Address at University of Virginia," June 10, 1940, The American Presidency Project (hereafter APP) (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-university-virginia, accessed August 30, 2021).

and American-style free market capitalism. This is the vision Stimson sought to rally his fellow citizens around as America's potential enemies accumulated power.

The second argument in this chapter is that attempting to neatly define Stimson's internationalism is difficult. While Stimson is often identified with what George Kennan called the "legalistic-moralistic" approach to international relations, his worldview was more complex and subtle than that.[5] It's true he borrowed from and contributed to both legalistic and moralistic ideas, but as historian Elizabeth Borgwardt has observed, these categories are less valuable for analyzing the personal concepts of complicated figures such as Stimson. Indeed, Borgwardt notes, Stimson was "conversant" in legalistic, moralistic, and New Deal-style forms of internationalism, and would "pick and choose his rhetoric from each, depending on his particular purpose."[6] Like many of his era, Stimson's internationalism was heavily impacted by the horrors of the Great War and the fervent desire to avoid another clash of that magnitude.[7] As we saw in the last chapter, Stimson subscribed to legalism's core tenets of building an international legal system that could be employed to arbitrate global problems, and he was cautiously hopeful that the expansion of this system could eventually lead to preventing wars of aggression altogether, the core aim of moralism. But unlike how Kennan pilloried these ideas as overly formal and rigid, Stimson saw them as dynamic, ever-changing, and piecemeal. It's not that war would magically disappear, but if there were viable alternatives to settling inter-state disputes, then perhaps nations would be less inclined to resort to armed conflict to resolve contentious issues. To achieve this though would

[5] George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy, 1900-1950* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 95. For example, in his study of the NSC and the Vietnam War, Andrew Preston endorses Kennan's characterization in describing Stimson's foreign policy views. See Andrew Preston, *The War Council: McGeorge Bundy, the NSC, and Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 13.
[6] Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World,* 76.
[7] For more on this, see Christopher McKnight Nichols, "Woodrow Wilson, W.E.B. DuBois, and Beyond: American Internationalists and the Crucible of World War I" in Elizabeth Borgwardt, Christopher McKnight Nichols, and Andrew Preston, eds., *Rethinking American Grand Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

require the main elements of what Borgwardt calls "New Deal-inspired" internationalism: collective security, economic stability, and rule of law institutions.[8] And there is ample evidence Stimson passionately championed each: for example, through his general support for the League of Nations and the World Court, even after the U.S. failed to join them, as both collective security and rule of law organizations; his promotion of free trade and globalization to create economic stability, and his future advocacy for and defense of the Nuremburg and Tokyo war crimes tribunals as vehicles for upholding the rule of law and punishing international transgressors. Put another way, New Deal-style multilateralism was vital for broadening international law and reducing the likelihood of future wars. Stimson's internationalism built on all three of these overarching idioms, but the crux of it all for Stimson is that none of this would work without vigorous American action and leadership. Therefore, Americans needed to shun the false prophet of noninterventionism and embrace their world position as the most powerful nation on Earth. It was a choice Stimson and his fellow Americans would have to confront as the world descended deeper into darkness.

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During the immediate years after Hitler's rise to power in Germany, most Americans were not concerned his Nazi regime posed much of a threat to U.S. security. Yes, many found the Nazi Party's ideology and tactics to be appalling, grotesque, and brutally violent. Yes, many decried the Nazis' efforts to crush dissent and establish a one-party state. Yes, many warily viewed Hitler's efforts to isolate Germany from the international economic system, undermine the Versailles Treaty, and sabotage Europe's fragile political stability. And yes, many bemoaned Nazi

[8] Ibid, Elizabeth Borgwardt, "Franklin Roosevelt, the New Deal, and Grand Strategy: Constructing the Postwar Order."

persecution of German Jews. But at the same time, numerous Americans initially felt the Nazis were too weak to constitute a danger outside the Third Reich, let alone to the United States.

In the spring of 1933, less than three months after Hitler became the German chancellor, Clarence Streit of *The New York Times* observed early Nazi actions, such as the boycotting of Jewish businesses, were isolating Germany internationally and would weaken Hitler's fledgling government.[9] A few months later, his colleague Edwin James argued that Hitler's regime was uniting Germany's neighbors against it to prevent the spread of Nazism beyond German borders.[10] *The Wall Street Journal* piled on by asserting that Hitlerism would quickly "run its course" and eventually the German leader would have to become a more mainstream politician.[11] Gustav Stolper, an Austrian-German economist, reassured a Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) audience that in the long-run, Hitler could not rearm Germany's way out of its structural economic difficulties; sooner or later, the government would run out of money.[12] Even President Roosevelt appeared to agree when he later remembered, "when this man Hitler came into control of the German Government, Germany [was] busted…a complete and utter failure, a nation that owes everybody, disorganized, not worth considering as a force in the world."[13] Secretary of State Cordell Hull seemed to summarize American opinion toward the Third Reich at the time when he commented there was "a wide resentment against the Hitler Government (as distinguished from

[9] Clarence Streit, "Geneva Watching Events in Reich," *The New York Times* (hereafter *NYT*), April 9, 1933.
[10] Edwin James, "Hitler's Regime Unites Europe Against Berlin," *NYT*, August 27, 1933.
[11] "The Fruits of Hitlerism," *The Wall Street Journal* (hereafter *WSJ*), July 19, 1933.
[12] "The Rise of Dictator States in Europe," Study Group Report, January 6, 1937, Council on Foreign Relations Records: Studies Department Series, Box 130, MC104-3, Public Policy Papers, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University (hereafter CFR Papers).
[13] Conference with the Senate Military Affairs Committee, January 31, 1939, President's Personal File (PPF) 1P – Special Conferences: President with Senate Military Affairs Committee, November 14, 1938; January 31, 1939, Box 118, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum, Hyde Park, NY (hereafter FDRL).

the German people) together with a unanimous opinion that we must not allow ourselves to become involved in European political developments."[14]

Initially, Stimson mostly agreed and was reasonably sanguine about international politics. Just after his departure from the State Department in March 1933, Stimson told Roosevelt he "did not think the situation was nearly as dangerous" in Germany as many newspapers reported and that no national leader, including Hitler, wanted war.[15] Echoing the impressions of other American observers, Stimson believed the Nazis were weak and could not afford to follow a policy that radically upended the status quo. Germany badly required additional foreign trade and financial credits to deliver prosperity; potential rearmament alone would not solve its vast economic problems. Therefore, Stimson explained to one of his former State Department deputies, German fascism and Hitler's early nationalist economic policies, including tariffs and trade barriers, would eventually recede as the world banded together to overcome the Great Depression and achieve economic recovery.[16]

Stimson expanded on his fragile confidence in a series of lectures he delivered at Princeton University in April 1934. As his first formal opportunity to share his views on international relations since becoming a private citizen again, he spent months preparing for it. In the CFR library in New York, Stimson read and took detailed notes on works by mostly Anglo-American intellectuals such as Hamilton Fish Armstrong, John Maynard Keynes, Ramsay Muir, and Arnold Toynbee.[17] He consulted with a wide group of advisers, colleagues, friends, and scholars to discuss European political and economic developments since the end of World War I and the Paris Peace

[14] Cordell Hull to Norman Davis, October 21, 1933, *FRUS*, 1933, Volume I, Document 226. For more on the wider American debate over Nazism, see Michaela Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy: The American Debate on Nazism, 1933-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[15] "Memorandum of Conversation Between Mr. Stimson and the President," March 28, 1933, HLSD.
[16] Stimson to James Grafton Rogers, December 4, 1933, Stimson Papers, reel 86.
[17] "Memorandum of Books Seen at the Council on Foreign Relations," November 14, 1933, Stimson Papers, reel 132.

Conference.[18] As a result of his research, Stimson zeroed in on the question of whether democracies or autocracies were the better suited to create continued prosperity for the peoples of the twentieth century.[19]

At the outset of his lectures, Stimson conceded the democratic hopes of the Paris peace conferees have "crumbled into ashes in our hands." He lamented, "The miseries of an unparalleled economic depression have enveloped the earth. Instead of peace we see violence all around us. Instead of stability, revolution and change have swept over most of the nations. Instead of the spread of democracy, we are confronted by a reversion from democracy to arbitrary forms of government by several of the most powerful nations of the earth."[20] Yet despite all that, Stimson did not believe this meant authoritarianism, especially in Central Europe, had to triumph. He insisted Hitler and the other rising autocrats had only gained power "under the pressure of economic hardship."[21] Thus, the West had an opportunity to help Central Europe economically rebound and potentially roll back the authoritarian forces now gaining strength. Like he told Roosevelt a year earlier, Stimson reminded his audience that Germany needed outside powers to facilitate its recovery. Policies such as expanding foreign trade and extending interest-free loans would help support interdependence, accelerate economic renewal, and revive political and diplomatic stability. All this, Stimson concluded, "offers a fairly safe guarantee against unrestrained violence against her neighbors on the part of Germany."[22]

Although Stimson painted a fairly optimistic portrait of global events, especially in Central Europe, the seeds of his eventual distress were already present. At the end of his Princeton lectures,

[18] Stimson's notes on these conversations can be found in the Stimson Papers, reel 132.
[19] "Analysis of H.L.S. Thesis," March 21, 1934, Stimson Papers, reel 132.
[20] Stimson, *Democracy and Nationalism*, 2.
[21] Ibid, 41-42.
[22] Ibid, 42.

he warned his listeners that external developments and other nations' instability directly impacted the United States. "The United States is in its ultimate resources the most powerful nation today" and it must play a leading role in guiding "the world in its struggle to protect our common civilization against war." If Americans shirked their responsibilities and retreated "into isolation," the budding international "peace machinery," which Stimson had been promoting for decades, "will be infinitely weakened" and the world will face wars "which may be as disastrous to us and to our own civilization as to that of the rest of the world."[23] In other words, the United States must alter one of its hallowed diplomatic traditions dating back to George Washington, repudiating entangling alliances, and work "in harmony with other democracies of the same kind [to] curb their quarrels so that the combined civilizations which they have formed may be saved from suicide by war."[24] The only solution was for the United States to embrace unbridled internationalism and exert the global leadership only it possessed.

Despite his concerns his fellow Americans would continue to avoid what he perceived to be their international obligations, Stimson continued to downplay events in Central Europe and East Asia as potentially dangerous to U.S. security. Following Hitler's internal purge in mid-1934, known as the "Night of the Long Knives," he boasted that Hitler's actions "rather exploded the bogy of Hitler's power and relieved the former apprehension that Germany was going to walk over the rest of Europe."[25] In East Asia, while Stimson was convinced Japan would continue to be a menacing problem for the world community, he also felt it could be adequately contained through a combination of political and military deterrence. If Japan believed there would be repercussions for any further territorial expansion, then any designs it had on the rest of China would not be

[23] Ibid, 86.
[24] Draft of Fourth Princeton Lecture, n.d., Stimson Papers, reel 132.
[25] Stimson Diary, July 26, 1934, HLSD.

implemented.[26] To facilitate this deterrence, Stimson called for a permanent policy of "mutual consultation and cooperation between the English speaking nations" of the British Commonwealth and the United States. Deep cooperation would provide for the "peace and safety of the entire world."[27] Overall, despite ongoing international turmoil, Stimson believed that with events such as the political rapprochement between Greece and Turkey; the failure of Germany's attempts to form a political union with Austria; the demonstration of domestic Nazi fragility; the backlash against Sir Oswald Mosley and his British Union of Fascists following their Olympia rally in June 1934, and the view that there was greater faith in Western democracy than there had been a year ago, there was general grounds for encouragement that global stability would regain its footing.[28]

Stimson's judgements at this time coincided with what most Americans also believed about events unfolding beyond their shores. Absorbed with domestic economic recovery from the Great Depression, disenchanted with U.S. participation in the First World War, and concerned about how involvement in another foreign conflict might impact their society, the average American was ambivalent at best about the rise of autocratic forces abroad, assumed those forces were insignificant to their security, and feared getting dragged into another disastrous war.[29] And these attitudes rested upon a core set of convictions that led a majority of Americans to embrace neutrality in world affairs: a sense of strategic invulnerability due to nearly impenetrable geographical barriers; the idea that peaceful nations such as the United States fought the Great War due to the machinations of greedy bankers and munitions manufacturers, and the impression that because all other countries were unprincipled, warmongering, or defenseless, it was vital the

[26] "Notes for a Talk at Saybrook College, New Haven," November 19, 1934, Stimson Papers, reel 132.
[27] Ibid, "Address at Council on Foreign Relations," November 26, 1934.
[28] Ibid, "Notes for Talk at Andover – 'Peace Problems of Europe Today,'" December 3, 1934.
[29] David F. Schmitz, *The Sailor: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Transformation of American Foreign Policy* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2021), 52-53.

United States avoid external political entanglements and maintain a unilateralist foreign policy.[30] An internationalist such as Stimson would have abhorred these conclusions, but ironically, Stimson's statements telling the American public it should not be overly concerned with European fascists or Japanese militarists probably inadvertently reinforced these inward-looking positions. As the international environment grew increasingly perilous starting in the mid-1930s, these previous pronouncements would come to haunt Stimson and his fellow internationalists as they attempted to maneuver the United States into a more active global role.

Rising Threats

Starting in 1935, a series of crises exploded Stimson's delicate optimism about the trajectory of international relations. Hitler's public announcement of German rearmament and his later remilitarization of the Rhineland, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, and Japan's full-scale invasion of China, all occurring in the span of roughly two years, rattled the former secretary of state and convinced him to mount an increasingly fiery public campaign warning his fellow Americans about the dangerous consequences these developments would have for them. If the United States did not embrace global leadership and work to prevent another war, then it was more likely the nation would get sucked into more destructive conflict. And as one of the highest-ranking former government officials active in the public sphere and commenting on international affairs, Stimson's words made a difference. That does not mean his advice was always heeded; the evidence indicates the opposite, at least at first. Instead, his activism helped create the intellectual framework and needed space to allow for a type of internationalist

[30] Manfred Jonas, *Isolationism in America, 1935-1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), 273. For more on the ideas of neutrality undergirding American political culture in this period, see Brooke Blower, "From Isolationism to Neutrality: A New Framework for Understanding American Political Culture, 1919-1941," *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 2 (April 2014): 345–76, https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dht091.

counterweight to emerge against the current prevailing mindset fixated on U.S. neutrality.[31] Stimson's public influence operations gave ideological and political cover to those who wished to nudge the United States toward shouldering a larger global burden, including the Roosevelt administration. By the Fall of France in June 1940, internationalists and their pressure groups could reasonably claim to be on the political offensive in shifting public opinion toward taking more active steps to forestall Axis domination. As a leading American internationalist for nearly three decades, Stimson's public statements, speeches, and writings during the second half of the 1930s carried the weight needed for other like-minded individuals and groups to emerge and help shift the United States toward more dynamically exercising its immense global power. In other words, Stimson's experience, contacts, and ideational coherence helped lay the groundwork for an internationalist American grand strategy that would increasingly take hold in the United States as it gradually inched toward global war.

Stimson's crusade started with trying to undermine the rising foundations of U.S. neutrality. As Germany, Italy, and Japan took a series of destabilizing steps in the early 1930s that convinced many Americans a future war was on the horizon, Congress was barraged by letters and editorials demanding it prevent unsavory elements from pushing the nation into another conflict.[32] "**KEEP AMERICA OUT OF FOREIGN WARS; KEEP AMERICA OUT OF THE ENTANGLEMENTS THAT WOULD LEAD US INTO THEM, AND KEEP FOREIGN WARS OUT OF AMERICA**," read one typical editorial from this group in the *San Francisco Examiner*, the flagship newspaper of media tycoon William Randolph Hearst's publishing

[31] In *The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II*, Robert Divine called Stimson the internationalists' "most eloquent spokesman" during this period and argued he continued to have an influence over American policy even while out of office. Robert A. Divine, *The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II* (New York: Wiley, 1979), 16.
[32] Jonas, 24; Schmitz, *The Sailor*, 53.

empire.[33] At the same time, sensational publications such as *The Merchants of Death* by Helmuth Carol Engelbrecht and Frank Cleary Hanighen and George Seldes's *Iron, Blood and Profits*, both released in 1934, fueled these noninterventionist sentiments by claiming the United States was tricked into intervening in World War I by a conspiracy of bankers and arms dealers, who respectively wanted to protect their European investments and profit off government purchases of their products.[34] In response, the Senate created the Special Committee Investigating the Munitions Industry, chaired by Senator Gerald Nye, Republican of North Dakota, which quickly became known as "the Nye Committee." After extensive hearings and investigative probing, the Nye Committee arrived at the same verdict as the hair-raising publications that helped originally lead to its inception: that financiers and munitions merchants were liable for America's intervention in the Great War.[35] Accordingly, Congress began considering neutrality legislation that would supposedly prevent this from reoccurring in the future.

To Stimson and other internationalists, potential laws like this were naïve at best and catastrophic at worst. As someone who had previously advocated expanding the concept of neutrality as a method for steadily eliminating war as a feature of the international system, Stimson now believed it had taken on a hazardous new meaning. During the First World War, he had emphasized that neutrality was an active policy, backed by economic and military strength, where the United States must be prepared to use force to defend its rights. This meant the U.S. should be ready for war if necessary. Yet now, advocates of American neutrality assumed standing aloof

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[33] "Shores of History Are Strewn With Wrecks of Unprepared Nations," *San Francisco Examiner*, February 1, 1934. Emphasis in original. At his peak in the mid-1930s, Hearst controlled 13 percent of all American daily newspapers, giving his views substantial influence and unparalleled reach. See Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War against Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 16.

[34] Robert A. Divine, *The Illusion of Neutrality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), 65.

[35] Wayne S. Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932-1945* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 159-60. Also see Wayne S. Cole, *Senator Gerald P. Nye and American Foreign Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962).

from conflict would keep the country out of war, a notion Stimson found reckless. If Americans wished to avoid war, they must energetically use their power to prevent it in the first place.

In April 1935, the aging statesman fired his opening salvo at this burgeoning understanding of neutrality. In a speech before the American Society of International Law, Stimson bemoaned the confusion over the term "neutrality." What most Americans reasonably wanted was to sidestep war, but the neutrality legislation under review in Congress was incompatible with that goal. The issue, Stimson maintained, was that neutrality was being conflated with impartiality. According to this thinking, if the U.S. isolated itself from potential belligerents once war began, then the nation would be protected from conflict. Stimson reminded his listeners the United States tried that strategy once before under President Thomas Jefferson with the Embargo Act of 1807 during the Napoleonic Wars, and that it miserably failed. Therefore, "the real problem is to prevent war from arising – not how to act after it has arisen." Repeating his warning issued a year earlier at Princeton, he argued war could only be avoided through collective security and international cooperation, and those efforts would only work if the U.S. was actively involved in them. If "the world knew beforehand that in case of an emergency the United States could be counted upon to act according to such principles" it would be "a powerful reassurance to the cause of peace." Stimson concluded that these new ideas of neutrality offered "no certain road for keeping out of war." He insisted "the only certain way to keep out of a great war is to prevent that war from taking place, and that only hope of preventing war or even successfully restricting it is by the earnest, intelligence and unselfish cooperation of the nations of the world towards that end."[36] If Americans desired peace and safety, then international engagement and leadership were the keys to upholding them.

[36] Stimson address, "Neutrality and War Prevention," Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law, Washington, DC, April 25-27, 1935, Stimson Papers, reel 132.

Congressional noninterventionists dismissed collective security though as a sham, disregarded Stimson's admonishments over their rationales, and proceeded with the neutrality bill. In late August, the legislation unanimously passed the House of Representatives and cleared the Senate with only two dissenting votes.[37] The Neutrality Act of 1935, signed by Roosevelt on August 31 and set to expire after six months, mandated that if the president found a state of war existed between any group of nations, then an impartial embargo on arms and war materials must be rigidly imposed on the belligerents. While Roosevelt privately disagreed with the law and publicly criticized it as possibly having "exactly the opposite effect from that which was intended," he felt any potential opposition could hurt his domestic program and his re-election chances in 1936.[38] In denouncing the bill by using language that could have been Stimson's, Senator Tom Connally, Democrat of Texas, declared, "I cannot subscribe to the doctrine that no matter where the contest, no matter what the issue, America in advance promises that she will exert no influence, will do no act either to bring about peace or to prevent the outrage of the weak and the defenseless by the powerful and the aggressor."[39] The passage of the Neutrality Act was a major defeat for the internationalist camp, but impending world events would hand it additional opportunities to convince the nation why neutrality would leave the U.S. vulnerable or without diplomatic and economic leverage to influence global politics.

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, and Japan's all-out assault on China provided those opportunities. These three staggering events, combined with German rearmament and remilitarization of the Rhineland, were an ominous watershed for Stimson. While each individual event was troubling, it was their compounded impact that

[37] "Spurts and Lulls Mark Senate Day," *NYT*, August 24, 1935.
[38] Schmitz, *The Sailor*, 54; FDR, "Statement on Neutrality Legislation," August 31, 1935, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/statement-neutrality-legislation, accessed September 7, 2021).
[39] *Congressional Record* (hereafter *CR*), 74th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 79, Part 13, August 24, 1935, 14433.

convinced him a revisionist "coalition of…Fascist governments," which included the right-wing militarists in Japan, was mounting a full-scale attack on the shared political, economic, legal, diplomatic, and cultural bases of international society and aiming to remake the world in its authoritarian image.[40] It was all the deadly evidence Stimson needed to confirm his thesis that when the United States does not accept the burden of global leadership, international anarchy reigns supreme. Practically speaking, it showed why the 1935 Neutrality Act, and its successors, was bad policy that was making Americans less safe, less free, and less secure.

In a letter to *The New York Times* shortly after Italian forces attacked Ethiopia in October 1935, the twin pillars of Stimson's internationalist strategy for the remainder of the decade and beyond began to crystallize. The first was to stress the significance of collective action and security in thwarting what would become the Axis powers. In his letter, he contended "it is not so easy as some people think to keep out of war in the modern world." In a globalized and interdependent world, wars far away from a country's shores could still have repercussions. This required collective security and international cooperation to squash potential dangers before they could metastasize. So when the other European powers, particularly Britain and France, were reluctant to punish Italy for its actions and as a result, the League of Nations' efforts to properly sanction it collapsed, it was validation for Stimson that collective security amounted to little without full American support.[41]

This leads to the other pillar: Immediate and energetic U.S. action and leadership to deter the Axis, even at the risk of conflict, was a better policy than waiting until the United States was without allies and surrounded by hostile forces. Invoking his speech from a few months earlier, he assured his readers that "the only sure way of keeping America out of war is for the world to

[40] Stimson Diary, November 7, 1937, HLSD.
[41] Stimson to Viscount Astor, May 6, 1936, Stimson Papers, reel 91.

prevent war from coming." This required collective security and international cooperation, but if the U.S. stayed out, then those efforts would fail.[42] He implored Roosevelt to rally public opinion against aggression by calling on him to issue a "moral embargo" on Italy that would halt trade in raw materials and to announce U.S support for collective security.[43] By probably more than coincidence, Roosevelt indicated he supported a moral embargo one week after Stimson's address.[44] Yet what concerned Stimson was that if the Europeans could not prevent one of their own from launching a naked war of aggression against a sovereign state far from the European continent, then it was disturbing to think what might occur closer to home or to nations of greater consequence.

The transformation of the civil war in Spain into a proxy battle between Germany and Italy on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other, and Japan's complete invasion of China, pushed Stimson to intensify his campaign for stronger U.S. action. In effect, he began urging dual containment of both Japan and the fascist powers in Europe. "Japan's present attempt on China," Stimson for instance told Hull, "cannot be taken as less serious or fundamental than the attacks of the Mongol invaders upon the Civilization of Europe fifteen centuries ago."[45] Yet the anti-internationalists in Congress reacted to these escalations by passing two additional neutrality acts in 1936-37, which broadened the arms embargo to include civil wars and prohibited Americans from extending loans to belligerent nations.

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[42] Stimson letter, "The Dangers of Neutrality," *NYT,* October 11, 1935.
[43] Stimson radio address, "Neutrality and Moral Leadership," October 23, 1935, Stimson Papers, reel 132.
[44] FDR, "Statement Against Profiteering in Italian-Ethiopian War," October 30, 1935, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/statement-against-profiteering-italian-ethiopian-war, accessed September 8, 2021); Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 114. Hull also called it a moral embargo, but not until he published his memoirs in 1948. See Cordell Hull, *Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1948), I: 429-31.
[45] Stimson to Hull, August 30, 1937, Stimson Papers, reel 94.

However, Roosevelt took a step toward the internationalists when he delivered his famous "Quarantine Speech" on October 5, 1937, in response to Japan's aggression in China. FDR denounced the "reign of terror" now engulfing the world and called on "peace-loving nations" to "quarantine" countries trying to upend the status quo.[46] He was ambiguously backing collective action against aggressors without tying himself to any specific policies. In a sense, it was an endorsement of Stimson's previous doctrine of nonrecognition toward territorial aggression and his current efforts to build support for containing Germany, Italy, and Japan. But in keeping with his role as the chief internationalist promoter in this period, Stimson pressed Roosevelt to take more decisive action.

In two letters, one published in *The New York Times* two days after Roosevelt's speech and another privately sent to the president directly, Stimson began building on his twin pillars by recommending specific polices Washington should follow to reverse Japan's aggression. While they were targeted for East Asia, he would soon also broaden them out to Europe. In *The New York Times*, Stimson argued Japan's belligerency in the Manchurian Crisis ultimately faltered because it finally grasped world opinion was against its flagrant violations of Chinese sovereignty and brutal use of force. The Japanese resumed their offensive now because they were encouraged by Western policies of appeasement elsewhere. "The Fascist dictators of Italy and Germany have boldly and successfully carried through coups involving in Ethiopia, the Rhineland, and Spain acts of treaty violation and indefensible aggression." Instead of foolishly placating autocrats to avoid war, the United States should abandon the neutrality laws, which he argued would make "entanglement more certain" in foreign wars, begin sending non-lethal aid to China, and impose a trade embargo of vital raw materials on Japan. If this was carried out in cooperation with the British

[46] FDR, "Address at Chicago," October 5, 1937, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-chicago, accessed on September 8, 2021).

Empire, the Japanese war machine could be starved enough to convince Tokyo to end the invasion.[47] As he summarized later, the best way to help China was to ensure that "outside nations should stop helping her enemy."[48]

With Roosevelt, Stimson was even more forceful. He declared that if Japan conquered all of China, it would be "a serious blow to the future interests of the United States." He reminded Roosevelt that as the leader of the most powerful country in the world, he held unparalleled abilities to influence international politics and the futures of millions of people around the globe. The "world crisis of freedom" was hanging in the balance across the fields of China, and if the U.S. wished to maintain its sway in the region, then it needed to deter Japan politically and militarily. This included the steps outlined above but also using the presidential bully pulpit to make it clear to the "dictator nations" that aggression does not pay and was not worth incurring the wrath of the United States.[49] America didn't prevent the original acts of Japanese aggression, but "we can at least try to alleviate the suffering which has followed that wrong."[50]

Developments over approximately the next year show how others, both at home and abroad, viewed Stimson and his capacity to influence the direction of American foreign policy. After Stimson's public calls for a trade embargo on Japan, *Newsweek*, a leading weekly news magazine, hailed his prescience on both Japanese and European fascist aggression over the last several years. The periodical also noted Stimson's advice on foreign policy matters carried significant weight with Hull and Roosevelt.[51] After receiving Stimson's letter, FDR privately told Hull he fully agreed with Stimson, but he did not know how to fashion a proper policy that would

[47] Stimson letter, "Text of Secretary Henry L. Stimson's Letter on the Crisis in the Far East," *NYT*, October 7, 1937.
[48] Stimson quoted in "What Japan Is Doing in China – And How," n.d., folder: Misc. – Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression – Beginning, Box 13, American Committee for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.
[49] Stimson to FDR, November 15, 1937, PPF 20, "Henry L. Stimson," FDRL.
[50] Stimson radio address, "Appeal of Red Cross for Aid to China," February 4, 1938, Stimson Papers, reel 132.
[51] "History Shows Stimson Backed the Right Horse," *Newsweek*, October 18, 1937 issue.

equally deter Japan and mollify both the overwhelmingly noninterventionist Congress and American public.[52] During the first half of 1938, spurred by Stimson's appeals to constrain Japan, one of the first U.S. internationalist pressure groups formed: the American Committee for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression. Seeking to raise its profile and garner influence, the committee quickly selected Stimson to serve as its honorary chairman, recognizing his previous activism, prominence, and deep experience and connections.[53] Drew Pearson and Robert Allen, two of the most famous American syndicated columnists of the era, noted Stimson was the "American who played the most important role" at the time in trying to stave off world war and build international peace.[54] *The New York Times* called Stimson the "formidable protagonist" in trying to nurture U.S. internationalism during the 1930s and observed that to Japanese government officials, he was the "most unpopular of all Americans" for trying to hamper their efforts in East Asia.[55] It is not difficult to see then how Stimson was the primary leader in the fledgling U.S. internationalist camp as storm clouds darkened the world's skies. Even Stimson's contemporaries, including enemies, recognized his extraordinary capacity to help build support for a greater American role in the world. To have Stimson on your side meant to have his political analytical skills, wide-ranging network, and his tireless focus on the vital issues of the day at your disposal. It was no wonder then his fellow internationalists sought his assistance and looked to him to provide political and ideological guidance and protection in their battles with the noninterventionists.

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[52] FDR to Hull, November 22, 1937, and FDR to Stimson, November 24, 1937, PPF 20, FDRL.
[53] Andrew Johnstone, *Against Immediate Evil: American Internationalists and the Four Freedoms on the Eve of World War II* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 22-23.
[54] Drew Pearson and Robert Allen, "Years 1929-1938 Represent World's Vain Bid for Lasting Peace," "The Washington Merry-Go-Round," October 1, 1938, Drew Pearson Collection, American University Digital Research Archive (accessed September 11, 2021).
[55] William MacDonald, "The Prelude to War," *NYT,* April 24, 1938; Ernest Hauser, "Japan Still Looks to America for Guidance," *NYT*, July 3, 1938.

An American Internationalism

The 18-month period between the fascist capture of Barcelona in January 1939 and the Fall of France in June 1940 once again broadened Stimson's thinking about the policies stemming from his internationalist grand strategy. The Munich agreement may have temporarily eased tensions, but it had also allowed the fascists to augment their strength, making them an "overwhelming threat to Western Civilization."[56] Hitler's invasion of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 only enhanced this perception. The twin pillars of collective security/international cooperation on one side and robust U.S. action and leadership on the other remained the same, but how to operationalize those progressively expanded. By the end of this period, Stimson was essentially calling for unrestricted economic warfare against the Axis through maximum aid to the Allies and a substantial tightening of the trade embargo on Japan. He even raised the possibility of direct U.S. military intervention if it became necessary for safeguarding American security.[57] It was a dramatic escalation of his public campaign to convince Americans a global war would imperil their way of life.

During the first several months of 1939, Stimson continued his vociferous condemnations of U.S. neutrality laws. As the fascist rebels came to the brink of victory in Spain, the ex-secretary of state urged his successor to convince Roosevelt to lift the trade embargo on Spain. Stimson believed "we should take decisive action and that by so doing this country may well be able to ward off serious consequences to the whole world which neither Great Britain nor France is apparently now in a position to do."[58] In a corresponding public letter in *The New York Times*,

[56] Stimson and Bundy, 314.
[57] There is a large literature on the cataclysmic events of this period, but for the best concise account, see David Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor: Roosevelt's America and the Origins of the Second World War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002).
[58] Stimson to Hull, January 18, 1939, President's Secretary's File (PSF) Confidential File: Spain, 1939, FDRL.

Stimson contended that if the Republican government had been able to purchase American arms and supplies to ward off the Nationalist insurrection, then it could have prevailed. More importantly, the lack of American resolve to aid the Republicans had emboldened Hitler and Mussolini to support the Spanish fascists and continue their bid to destabilize Europe.[59] Roosevelt eventually lifted the embargo on Spain two months later, but by then, the Nationalists had nearly won the war. Although Stimson's push to avert fascist control of Spain failed, he felt Roosevelt was starting to join the campaign to persuade the American people that they needed to fight aggression by methods "short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words."[60]

Stimson finally sensed the internationalists were beginning to take the offensive in the battle for public opinion as war drew closer, and he sought to press the advantage. According to the polls in the spring of 1939, 58 percent of respondents believed the United States would be drawn into a European war if one occurred; 65 percent agreed that if Germany and Italy got into a war with Britain and France then the U.S. should do everything possible, short of direct military intervention, to assist their British and French counterparts.[61] In Stimson's mind, this provided enough of an opening to hammer the anti-internationalists for continuing to back neutrality. In March, he wrote another public letter excoriating the idea that Americans could continue to live safely in the Western Hemisphere if the rest of the world was conquered by hostile powers. He wrote, "I think that if we should stand idly by without protest or action until Britain, France, and China are either conquered or forced to make terms with militaristic aggressors, our own hemisphere might become economically so affected and militarily so endangered that it would be neither a safe nor happy place to live in, for a people with American ideals of life."[62] It was not

[59] Stimson letter, "The Embargo on Arms to Spain," *NYT*, January 23, 1939.
[60] Stimson and Bundy, 314.
[61] Hadley Cantril, *Public Opinion, 1935-1946* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), 966-67.
[62] Stimson letter, "Ex-Secretary Stimson's Letter on Foreign Relations," *NYT*, March 7, 1939.

necessarily about potential invasion or the "downfall of Fortress America" as John Thompson has called it, which nearly everyone agreed was remote.[63] Alternatively, this argument, pushed by Stimson and eventually other internationalists, stressed the United States could not exist in a closed world surrounded by enemies. If America stood as the world's lone democracy, it would be vulnerable to economic coercion, sabotage, political subversion, and possibly internal revolution. Even Roosevelt himself drew this conclusion by a year later as evidenced by his famous speech at the University of Virginia when he said such a future would lead to "the nightmare of a people lodged in prison, handcuffed, hungry, and fed through the bars from day to day by the contemptuous, unpitying masters of other continents."[64] This evocative imagery was a dramatic restatement of Stimson's words in March 1939. Or as Stimson wrote himself in the same editorial: This reasoning "strongly suggests that in our modern interdependent world Lincoln's saying holds true, that a house so divided against itself cannot permanently stand."[65]

To prevent such a hellish fate, Stimson advised forming clear military arrangements with Britain and France to create a union of democracies ready to resist fascist aggression. If war commenced in Europe, they would serve as the first line of defense. If Americans didn't want to return to European battlefields, they needed to fully assist their allies in the fight against the Axis. This meant modifying the neutrality laws to allow the president greater flexibility to discriminate between wartime assailants and victims. Victims could receive maximum aid and aggressors would be subjected to severe economic sanctions. Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in April, Stimson exhorted his listeners to think of neutrality not as an issue of foreign policy, but rather as one of national defense. U.S. neutrality policies were emboldening aggressors

[63] "Defense of the Western Hemisphere, 1939-1940," Study Group Report, February 14, 1940, Box 132, CFR Papers.
[64] FDR, "Address at University of Virginia," June 10, 1940, APP.
[65] Stimson letter, *NYT*, March 7, 1939.

to continue pursuing hostile territorial expansion. Moreover, America was assisting them by continuing to supply them with a significant portion of its raw materials and economic output. Simply put, it made no sense why the United States was aiding its would-be enemies. If the country wished to properly protect itself, then it was time to use "economic weapons" to deny Germany, Italy, and Japan access to U.S. resources while providing them to their opposition. This was the best way to defend the United States short of direct military intervention.[66]

As the world drew closer to another European war, Stimson's policy shifts grew bolder, his language more vehement. America was facing a national emergency unlike any it had witnessed since the Civil War, and as it appeared more hazardous, Stimson's internationalist program correspondingly expanded. So when war finally came to Europe with Germany's invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, Stimson blasted the arms embargo as the "surest way" to embroil the United States in another foreign conflict. It was vital to recognize that "a group of nations has arisen in the world by whom the practice of military aggression upon their neighbors has become a well developed art."[67] Looking to boost Roosevelt's renewed efforts to revise the neutrality laws and scrap the arms embargo, Stimson savaged neutrality in an October radio address, arguing it was endangering the nation by not allowing it to support other friendly countries. Now that war had arrived, the question was not "how to keep the United States away from war?" but was instead "how to protect the safety and security of the American people?" Stemming from that logic, repealing the arms embargo was the best method to aid Britain and France, who were America's front line against fascism in Europe.[68]

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[66] Ibid, "Text of Mr. Stimson's Statement to Senators on Neutrality," April 6, 1939.
[67] Ibid, Stimson letter, "Plea by Stimson: Former Secretary Assails Neutrality of Borah," September 16, 1939.
[68] Stimson radio address, "Preserve American Security by Repealing the Embargo," October 5, 1939, Stimson Papers, reel 132.

At the same time, Stimson added a new element to his argument: potential direct U.S. military action. If measures short of war proved not to be enough, "a time might well come when the only way to promote the security of the people of the United States would be to fight for that security." He continued, "If a time should come when it was clear beyond peradventure that the only way to preserve the security of the United States and its institutions was to fight for them, I believe that the great majority of our people would choose war rather than the greater evil of submission to an enemy on our shores."[69] This was a striking statement to make on national radio. Not only was it the newest frontier for his U.S. internationalist policy prescriptions, but it was an active bet the American public would come around to Stimson's point of view and embrace war to defend their society, culture, and values. While Americans were not there yet in the fall of 1939, there was abundant evidence to suggest they were moving toward Stimson's outlook and embracing a moderate form of internationalism. According to Gallup polling conducted after Stimson's speech, 62 percent believed the United States should do "everything possible" to support Britain and France in the war, and 60 percent favored revising the neutrality laws so they could purchase military supplies from the United States. Overwhelming majorities also backed increasing the size of the army and navy to provide for the defense of the United States.[70] While it is nearly impossible to assign direct causation in circumstances like this, it is difficult to deny Stimson was influencing the national debate. Former senior cabinet officials are granted wide public platforms to share their views on all aspects of public policy. When a recently retired secretary of state uses his prominent perch to inject his convictions so actively and consistently into the public sphere, it is not hard to see how that would have an effect, especially over time and

[69] Ibid.
[70] George H. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971* (New York: Random House, 1972), 186-89.

when he was recognized by other elites as a respected figure. In the spring of 1940, everyday Americans would appreciate this too.

The successful repeal of the arms embargo and the simultaneous modifications to the neutrality laws, combined with the Phony War atmosphere that lasted through the winter of 1939 and into the spring of 1940, convinced many the Allies would defeat Germany. When fighting resumed though, it became a nightmare. After attacking Denmark and Norway in April, Germany launched a massive invasion on May 10 of Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and France. Hitler's rapid assault greatly shocked Stimson and changed the entire nature of the war. During this period, ordinary Americans acknowledged Stimson's clout and pleaded with him to do something – anything – that could turn the tide in Western Europe. Right before the German invasion, a Chicago lawyer wrote to Stimson convinced that if Hitler defeated the Allies, every democratic country will be in "deadly peril" and there would be a "Nazi party in every large city of the United States." Echoing Stimson's arguments, he declared "a world in which the Nazis are triumphant will be an intolerable world for all free people."[71] As the Nazis gained the upper hand in France, a New Jersey doctor begged Stimson to use his standing to convince Roosevelt to send material assistance to the beleaguered British and French forces. As "representing the best in this country," he pressed Stimson to make an immediate appeal to the nation to rise above partisanship and "unite as one to take a stand against the totalitarian nations."[72] Americans from all walks of life recognized Stimson's abilities to shape the contours of public debate and use them to help convince the nation to take firm and decisive action as Hitler's armies were overrunning Western Europe. It is striking that people who had never met Stimson in their lives took the time to

[71] Edward Lewis to Stimson, May 3, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 101.
[72] Ibid, Marshall Davis Hogan to Stimson, June 1, 1940. The Stimson Papers are filled with similar letters encouraging Stimson to pressure Washington to support the Allies more during the Fall of France.

personally write him and solicit his leadership. It is tough to imagine this is unconnected to his name recognition and his consistent public appearances arguing for U.S. internationalism.

In mid-June, as France was on the verge of collapse, Stimson heeded his fellow citizens' calls and gave a dramatic radio address highlighting how the world was now facing an entirely new, and much more dangerous, war.[73] "The United States today faces probably the gravest crisis in its history," he somberly opened. Again invoking Abraham Lincoln, Stimson told his listeners that the world cannot "endure permanently half slave and half free." Now that Hitler bestrode Europe, the British Navy was the only fighting force that stood between the Germans and the United States. If Americans wanted to preserve their freedoms and their experiment in democratic self-government, they must ensure Britain's survival. Put differently, American security was directly tied to the survival of the British Empire, a line of reasoning that would gain currency in U.S. government circles later that year when Admiral Harold Stark, the Chief of Naval Operations, penned his famous "Plan Dog" memorandum.[74] Yet months before Stark wrote that top-secret document, Stimson was publicly making that argument on national radio to the American people.

Saving Britain meant fully repealing the neutrality laws; providing safe harbor for British and French naval assets in American ports; sending arms, munitions, and planes to the British to bolster their depleted army and air force, and adopting a system of universal compulsory military

[73] The Fall of France is one of the most important events of the twentieth century. On the Fall itself, see Ernest R. May, *Strange Victory: Hitler's Conquest of France* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000); Julian Jackson, *The Fall of France: The Nazi Invasion of 1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). For a new argument that emphasizes contingency in the Battle of France, see Alan Allport, *Britain at Bay: The Epic Story of the Second World War, 1938-1941* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020), 191-260. On how the Fall of France changed the course of the twentieth century, see David Reynolds, "1940: Fulcrum of the Twentieth Century?," *International Affairs* 66, no. 2 (April 1990): 325–50, https://doi.org/10.2307/2621337. For how it later impacted Anglo-American relations, see Michael S. Neiberg, *When France Fell: The Vichy Crisis and the Fate of the Anglo-American Alliance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021).

[74] On Stark's memorandum, see Louis Morton, "Germany First: The Basic Concept of Allied Strategy in World War II," in Kent Roberts Greenfield (ed.), *Command Decisions* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1960).

training to build up the U.S. military and demonstrate American resolve. If the U.K. was also vanquished, it was uncertain the United States could continue to exist in its current form, or could possibly, albeit improbably, face attacks on the homeland. Now that the war had taken a treacherous turn, Stimson believed the American people were "ready to take their proper part in this threatened world and to carry through to victory, freedom, and reconstruction."[75]

A Different Kind of War

Stimson's pronouncements placed him well ahead of the president's public remarks, formal Roosevelt administration policy, and even other internationalists' stances in the spring of 1940. Yet as previously illustrated, this was a place Stimson found himself in throughout the 1930s, and he was comfortable occupying it. Stimson was usually an outlier in his internationalist outlook, but due to his eloquence, connections, decades of experience, and enormous public platform, he was in a distinctive position to try to move the American people closer to his views. He relished that task and mounted his campaign with gusto, never wavering from making the case for his brand of American internationalism even as his opponents appeared to have triumphed. By the spring and summer of 1940 though, international politics had monumentally shifted with Hitler dominating Europe and the Japanese soon to seize the initiative in the western Pacific by exploiting the Nazis' smashing victories to expand their sphere of influence. U.S. internationalists condemned their domestic adversaries by alleging the neutrality laws had helped create this dangerous moment, and public opinion seemed to lend credence to those charges. During the Fall of France, 65 percent of respondents believed Germany would declare war on the United States if it defeated France and the United Kingdom; 85 percent agreed U.S. military forces were not strong enough to withstand attacks on the homeland, and 67 percent thought Germany was currently winning the

[75] Stimson radio address, "America's Interest in the British Navy," June 18, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 132.

war.[76] After France's capitulation, 80 percent agreed with Roosevelt selling U.S. military planes to fortify Britain's defenses.[77] The earth-shattering events in Europe during this period helped galvanize public opinion toward more interventionist views.

Nevertheless, those events by themselves might not have had the effects they had on the American public consciousness if Stimson and other internationalists had not been performing their public education and influence operations during the previous several years. Not only that, but shifting public opinion often necessitates a sophisticated campaign to undermine prevailing sentiments and reorient them toward new ideas. This is where Stimson's significance truly lies as the world descended into chaos. His unrivaled advantages in executing a campaign like this provided an example to those who held similar internationalist views and wished to follow in his footsteps. The proof for this can be seen in the emergence of an organized internationalist counterweight in American politics during the late 1930s and early 1940s. There was the American Committee for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression, but there was also the Non-Partisan Committee for Peace through Revision of the Neutrality Law, the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (of which Stimson was a leading member), the Century Group, and Fight for Freedom.[78] All these groups were part of the internationalist camp and broadly within the same elite networks where Stimson was a fixture. Directly or indirectly, they latched onto either the twin pillars of Stimson's internationalism or his specific policy proposals and lobbied for them in Washington and across the nation. For example, after Stimson stressed the importance of the Royal Navy in safeguarding the United States in his June 18 radio address, CDAAA publications began to do the same, emphasizing how the U.S. would become vulnerable without it and outlining the

[76] Gallup, 224, 226.
[77] Ibid, 230.
[78] For more on these internationalist groups, see Johnstone, *Against Immediate Evil*.

ways in which America could protect it. Unsurprisingly, they closely mirrored Stimson's suggestions.[79]

While internationalist pressure groups and lobbying organizations would have probably formed at one point or another anyway, they benefitted tremendously from an elder statesman such as Stimson consistently leading the way. Stimson's public agitating as a respected former high-ranking government official helped generate the much-needed space for groups like this to materialize and provided them with the political and ideological cover needed to push back on the deep-rooted set of attitudes that gave rise to U.S. neutrality. With Stimson taking the public bashing from the noninterventionists, these groups quietly organized and took shape in the background, readying themselves for the right opportunity to strike against their opponents. Roosevelt could also use Stimson's efforts to build both elite and public support as he carefully tried to maneuver the United States toward greater support for the Allies. No wonder then that as France was falling Stimson received a telephone call from the White House: it was Roosevelt, and he wanted Stimson to return to Washington and his old post of secretary of war. Maybe Stimson was not as much of an outlier after all.

[79] Examples can be found in Pamphlets, General, June 1940-December 1940, Publications File, Committee to Defend America By Aiding the Allies Records, MC011, Public Policy Papers, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University.

Chapter Three

The Wars of Washington

This chapter examines Stimson's first months back at the War Department following the Fall of France in June 1940 and how its position within Washington shifted from the margins to the center of policymaking. It examines the dysfunction and turbulence at the War Department in the years prior to Stimson's arrival and the specific reforms Stimson made to mitigate this upheaval and ensure the Army was in the rooms where policymaking occurred. By focusing on these changes and their application during those initial months, this chapter argues the War Department turned into a crucial bureaucratic, political, and policy operator because Stimson and his inner circle overhauled its organizational structure, fashioned concrete policy objectives, and deliberately worked to influence domestic politics and policymaking. By consciously performing as a political actor, the War Department gained leverage over its bureaucratic rivals at the Navy and State Departments and became a consequential policymaking nexus inside the Roosevelt administration and within the U.S. government.

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Three days after Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden received a telegram from Lord Halifax, London's ambassador in Washington. In his letter, Halifax recounted a conversation he had the previous day with Stimson about how the Nazi attack might impact Britain's position in the war. According to Halifax, Stimson stressed the vital importance of basing U.S. forces in the British Isles for the morale of both the American and British peoples. He insisted this was an opportunity to move American forces "of all kinds" into the fighting area, which held "great political advantages" for London and Washington. Halifax concluded his cable to Eden by observing "Stimson's views appear to me to have very great

weight" in the Roosevelt administration and that the War Department possessed significant levels of political influence in Washington.[1] It was a sea change from where the Department had been only 12 months before.

By the spring of 1940, Roosevelt had grown tired of the civilian leadership at the War Department.[2] Since the dual appointments of Harry Woodring as secretary of war and Louis Johnson as his deputy in 1936-37, dysfunction and turmoil inside the organization had left it paralyzed and crippled its ability to shape national policy. The roots of the chaos lay within a personal and political feud between Woodring and Johnson.[3]

Ideologically and temperamentally, the two men could not have been more different. A cautious and affable Midwesterner, Woodring was a former Democratic Kansas governor who had been selected as assistant secretary of war in 1933 when Roosevelt became president.[4] He was elevated to the top post three years later during a period when domestic economic problems preoccupied Washington far more than international politics.[5] Woodring was also a strict noninterventionist in world affairs who opposed sending scarce U.S. defense resources overseas or moves that could embroil the country in foreign conflicts.[6] While he was an ardent advocate of U.S. military preparedness to protect the Western Hemisphere from external penetration,

[1] The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA), Records of the Cabinet Office, CAB 122/4, Viscount Halifax to Anthony Eden, June 25, 1941. Also see Stimson Diary, June 24, 1941, HLSD.
[2] James Lacey, *The Washington War: FDR's Inner Circle and the Politics of Power That Won World War II* (New York: Bantam, 2019), 80.
[3] Keith D. McFarland, *Harry H. Woodring: A Political Biography of FDR's Controversial Secretary of War* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1975), 143-59.
[4] McFarland, 110-15; Keith D. McFarland and David L. Roll, *Louis Johnson and the Arming of America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 32.
[5] Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 23.
[6] McFarland, 157-59, 175-94, 209-34.

Woodring's fiscal conservatism dictated those expenditures should be limited to avoid unnecessary deficit spending.[7]

Meanwhile, the ambitious and brash Johnson was a devoted internationalist who was concerned about the threats he believed Germany and Japan posed to U.S. national security. A former national commander of the American Legion, one of the country's largest veterans organizations, Johnson was equally committed to strengthening the Army, but had little regard for the costs.[8] Before Woodring's appointment as secretary of war, Johnson had openly campaigned for the position and was disappointed when he was not named; he agreed to accept the number two spot only because he believed Roosevelt would soon nominate him for Woodring's job.[9] To hasten Woodring's downfall, Johnson openly undermined him and challenged his authority.[10] The internecine warfare between Woodring and Johnson fractured the War Department and curtailed its capacity to impact U.S. defense policy, but with this arrangement, Roosevelt ensured "no single influence, no single man could achieve undue significance or influence."[11] Constant internal War Department bickering nearly guaranteed Roosevelt would make the major decisions himself – a situation he purposefully designed.[12]

The circumstances on the uniformed side of the War Department throughout the interwar period were not much better. After meaningful progress continued to be made on the Root-Stimson reforms of the Army's organization during the World War I era, Congress reversed course and rejected tighter executive control and unity of command through the secretary of war and Army chief of staff. The Army returned to its prewar fragmented state where the real authority rested

[7] McFarland and Roll, 35.
[8] Ibid; Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Education of a Soldier, 1880-1939* (New York: Viking, 1963), 318.
[9] McFarland and Roll, 33-34.
[10] Goodwin, 24; Lacey, *The Washington War*, 80; McFarland, 143-59; McFarland and Roll, 34-35.
[11] Morison, 488.
[12] Goodwin, 24; James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox (1882-1940)* (New York: Harcourt, 1956), 372-73.

with the bureau chiefs; the general staff remained intact, but it had little power over the Army's other components.[13] Consequently, the chief of staff was forced to share control with the bureau heads who possessed their own fiscal appropriations and relationships with lawmakers. This dynamic allowed the bureaus to routinely undercut their superiors' standing within the military and on Capitol Hill.[14]

At the same time, the Army was consumed by internal strife, besieged by acute interservice rivalry with the Navy, and suffered from lack of substantive politico-military coordination with the State Department on the contours of U.S. foreign policy: senior Army air officers consistently attempted to establish an independent air force separate from the ground forces' command structures while the Army and Navy bitterly competed over contrasting conceptions of national priorities, strategic planning, and dwindling defense resources.[15] State Department officials were routinely suspicious of the military's efforts to coordinate or seek guidance on American foreign policy, viewing it as an infringement on civilian prerogatives in the policymaking process and therefore civilian control over the armed forces.[16] Thus, they usually ignored or rejected their uniformed colleagues when formulating policy.[17] This persistent infighting within the Army and the armed forces, and between them and the State Department, left the military distracted and

[13] Hewes, 50. See also Mark S. Watson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Planning and Preparations* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1950), 15-23.
[14] Hewes, 53.
[15] Ibid, 55-56; Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 1-22.
[16] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 2-3, 15; Louis Morton, "Interservice Co-operation and Political-Military Coordination" in Harry L. Coles, ed., *Total War and Cold War: Problems in Civilian Control of the Military* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1962), 131-60; Fred Greene, "The Military View of American National Policy, 1904-1940," *The American Historical Review* 66, no. 2 (January 1961): 354–77, https://doi-org.gate3.library.lse.ac.uk/1844031.
[17] The State Department did agree to some limited coordination when it began participating in military planning discussions on Far Eastern issues starting in 1935 and acquiesced to the creation of the high-level State-War-Navy Liaison Committee in 1938, but even then, those consultations remained minimal. See Morton, "Interservice Co-operation," 142-56; Mark M. Lowenthal, *Leadership and Indecision: American War Planning and Policy Process, 1937-1942*, 2 vols. (New York: Garland, 1988), I: 62-66.

largely unable to impact their civilian overseers or U.S. strategy and policy between the world wars.

None of this particularly bothered Roosevelt initially, but by the outbreak of the European war in 1939, the War Department's sharp disarray began posing political problems. Shortly after the Munich crisis, Roosevelt privately recognized protecting the Western Hemisphere alone would not guarantee U.S. security. In the event of war, he told colleagues in January 1939, "the first line of defense of the United States" would be Britain and France.[18] As Hitler's forces marched into Poland, Roosevelt's top priority became sending aid to the Allies.[19] He believed this was so vital that he was prepared to temporarily divert war supplies to them originally allotted to the Army.[20] The president's determination to provide the Allies with assistance reflected his conclusion that the era of American "free security" – the notion that the United States could protect itself by virtue of its geographical position, domination of the Western Hemisphere, and the European balance of power – was coming to an end due to the Axis powers' growing ability to overturn the international status quo and rapid advancements in military technology.[21] However, Woodring favored U.S. military rearmament first and fiercely opposed shipping crucial war-making materials abroad while they were in short supply.[22] He was especially concerned U.S. military strength would be

[18] Conference with the Senate Military Affairs Committee, January 31, 1939, PPF 1P, Box 118, FDRL. Also see William C. Bullitt to FDR, March 12, 1939, PSF Safe File: William C. Bullitt, FDRL; Harold L. Ickes, *The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes: The Inside Struggle, 1936-1939*, vol. 2 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1954) (hereafter *Secret Diary*), II: 568, 609.
[19] Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 199; Schmitz, *The Sailor*, 92.
[20] McFarland, 209-10; McFarland and Roll, 85-90; Watson, 138; John Morton Blum, ed., *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938-1941*, vol. 2 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), II: 110-15; Samuel I. Rosenman, *Working with Roosevelt* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), 195; FDR, "Message to Congress on Appropriations for National Defense," May 16, 1940, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/message-congress-appropriations-for-national-defense-1, accessed February 18, 2022).
[21] Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity*, Second Edition (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020), 7, 17-20, 22, 57; Marvin R. Zahniser, "Rethinking the Significance of Disaster: The United States and the Fall of France in 1940," *The International History Review* 14, no. 2 (May 1992): 252–76.
[22] *Army and Navy Journal*, July 13, 1940, 1123; Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox*, 420; Lacey, *The Washington War*, 80; McFarland, 210; McFarland and Roll, 85.

irreparably harmed if the Allies were prioritized over domestic requirements and then those nations were defeated by Germany. Johnson and General George C. Marshall, who had been appointed Army chief of staff the same day Germany invaded Poland, agreed U.S. needs took precedence, but the Woodring-Johnson feud hampered the Army's preparedness endeavors, especially Marshall's.[23]

A White House meeting with Roosevelt three days after the Nazis invaded France exemplified the War Department's dysfunction. After Marshall presented Roosevelt with his rearmament program, Woodring and Johnson began openly sparring over its contents and costs. Conscious the secretary of war was his direct superior, Marshall hesitated to intervene. Roosevelt was exasperated the three top Army leaders had failed to coordinate before the discussion and moved to end it. Only after Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau interceded did the president agree to reconvene with Marshall and hear his requests.[24] With the German invasion of Western Europe opening a harrowing new phase of the war, the Woodring-Johnson quarrelling that Roosevelt had previously tolerated now outlived its political usefulness.

Entering the Maelstrom

While recognizing the War Department required fresh leadership was one thing, acting on it was another. Roosevelt had told associates throughout 1939 and early 1940 he was close to firing Woodring, but consistently failed to follow through.[25] There were several reasons for this:

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[23] For Johnson and Marshall's views, see "Woodring Called in Planes Inquiry," *NYT,* March 13, 1940; Blum, *Morgenthau Diaries*, II: 138-39; Lacey, *The Washington, War*, 62-64; McFarland and Roll, 85-87; Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope, 1939-1942* (New York: Viking, 1966), 23-32.

[24] Henry Morgenthau, Jr. Presidential Diary, May 13, 1940, Henry Morgenthau, Jr. Diaries, FDRL; Larry I. Bland, ed., *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall: "We Cannot Delay," July 1, 1939 - December 6, 1941*, vol. 2 (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) (hereafter *Marshall Papers*), II: 209-11; Lacey, *The Washington War*, 63-64.

[25] For example, see Frank Knox to FDR, December 15, 1939, PSF Departmental Correspondence: Navy – Frank Knox, 1939-41, FDRL; Ibid, FDR to Knox, December 29, 1939; Ibid, Knox to FDR, January 17, 1940; Harold L. Ickes, "My Twelve Years with FDR," *Saturday Evening Post,* June 5, 1948, 90; Ickes, *Secret Diary*, III: 64-65.

Roosevelt's aversion to interpersonal confrontation; concerns over antagonizing congressional noninterventionists and Woodring attacking him on the campaign trail ahead of the upcoming presidential election, and his desire to ensure the Kansas delegation's support at the 1940 Democratic Convention.[26] But Woodring's increasing obstructionism and opposition to Roosevelt's policies, combined with the War Department's general upheaval, eventually overrode these other factors. When Woodring twice refused presidential orders to transfer B-17 bombers to Britain as France was collapsing in June 1940, Roosevelt demanded his resignation.[27]

The issue then became locating a suitable replacement. Johnson was theoretically a contender, but his starring role in the War Department's tumult made his selection unlikely.[28] Woodring's removal, along with a simultaneous vacancy at the Navy Department, created an opportunity for Roosevelt to pursue an idea he had been contemplating since 1939: appointing leading internationalist Republicans to his cabinet to help unite the country around his foreign policy during this world crisis.[29] The president wanted Frank Knox, the publisher of the *Chicago Daily News* and the 1936 Republican vice presidential nominee, to be his navy secretary, but the War Department post was wide open.[30] Roosevelt considered several Republicans, but after intense lobbying from Grenville Clark and Justice Felix Frankfurter, two of Stimson's longtime friends and protégés, he selected Stimson to be his next secretary of war.[31]

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[26] Goodwin, 23-24; Lacey, *The Washington War*, 85, McFarland, 225; Ted Morgan, *FDR: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985), 508.
[27] FDR to Woodring, June 19, 1940, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War – Harry Woodring, 1936-40, FDRL; McFarland, 228-29.
[28] McFarland and Roll, 107-09.
[29] Knox to FDR, December 15, 1939, FDRL; Ibid, FDR to Knox, December 29, 1939; Ickes, *Secret Diary*, II: 718; Schmitz, *Stimson*, 132.
[30] Knox to FDR, December 15, 1939, FDRL; Ibid, FDR to Knox, December 29, 1939; Stimson to Knox, May 20, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 101; Ickes, *Secret Diary*, II: 718-19, III: 180-81.
[31] Lacey, *The Washington War*, 80-85; Schmitz, *Stimson,* 132-33. For a new work that foregrounds the Stimson-Roosevelt relationship's significance for winning World War II, see Peter Shinkle, *Uniting America: How FDR and Henry Stimson Brought Democrats and Republicans Together to Win World War II* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2022). It is a useful journalistic account but is based on a thin archival record.

The immediate origins of Stimson's appointment lie in Clark's efforts to boost the new preparedness movement by passing the first peacetime military draft in American history in May-June 1940. As Clark, who had known Stimson for decades and worked closely with him in coordinating the Plattsburgh movement during World War I, was helping organize a political coalition in support of conscription, he realized how disorganized the War Department was under Woodring and Johnson. Clark approached Frankfurter, a close friend and adviser to Roosevelt who was also an old Stimson acolyte dating back to his early legal career, to assist him in convincing FDR to oust Woodring and replace him with someone amenable to a draft and expanded aid to the Allies (although Frankfurter seemed to be already doing this when he brought Stimson to lunch with Roosevelt weeks earlier to discuss the European war). The duo quickly settled on Stimson as the best choice despite his advanced age of 72. To make Stimson's appointment more palatable to Roosevelt, they paired him with the selection of Robert Patterson, a 49-year-old federal appellate judge, as Stimson's deputy. Frankfurter informally suggested the Stimson-Patterson nominations to Roosevelt during a visit to the White House on June 3 and followed up with formal appeals over the next two days. Roosevelt expressed interest in the idea but was noncommittal. Clark then gained Stimson and Patterson's assent to the proposal, which was relayed to Roosevelt via Frankfurter. Woodring's refusal to transfer the bombers at the same time Stimson gave his address calling on America to ensure Britain's survival apparently clinched Stimson's appointment for Roosevelt fired Woodring one day after Stimson's speech. Johnson was still in his post, but Stimson's designation indicated Johnson's days were numbered since Roosevelt passed him over for a promotion he coveted.[32]

[32] For more details, see Stimson Diary, June 25, 1940, HLSD; Morgenthau Diary, July 17, 1940, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL; Lacey, *The Washington War*, 80-85; Morison, 479-82; Schmitz, *Stimson*, 132-33; J. Garry Clifford and Samuel R. Spencer, Jr., *The First Peacetime Draft* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 63-69, 88-90; Keith E. Eiler, *Mobilizing America: Robert P. Patterson and the War Effort, 1940–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell

Although Stimson's older age made his appointment seem improbable at first glance, several important factors made him a politically logical choice. The most unmistakable was that Roosevelt was able to replace an incompetent and obstructionist cabinet member with one of the most experienced government insiders around. Stimson understood how Washington operated and better yet had direct experience leading the War Department. During an election year, appointing two prominent Republicans to the cabinet could help defuse the president's foreign policy as a campaign issue when he was running for an unprecedented third term and potentially wreak havoc on his political opponents by further fragmenting a Republican Party sorely divided between anti-interventionists such as Senator Robert Taft of Ohio and internationalists such as Stimson and Knox.[33] Indeed, Roosevelt could use the Stimson-Knox selections to burnish his self-styled image as an international statesman who was attempting to tame domestic partisan divisions by tapping senior GOP figures for pivotal administration posts and only reluctantly running for a third term because the United States faced grave overseas threats.[34]

Yet these two considerations were intertwined with an arguably larger and more overarching one: Stimson's stature as the *de facto* leader of the Republican internationalist camp. Above the administratively practical and somewhat politically cynical motives behind the

University Press, 1997), 34-38. Stimson probably inadvertently bolstered his chances when sent a private note to Roosevelt supporting his foreign policy and encouraging Roosevelt to unite the country against the Nazis. See Stimson to FDR, June 1, 1940, and FDR to Stimson, June 4, 1940, PPF 20, FDRL. For Frankfurter's entreaties with Roosevelt about Stimson, see Max Freedman, ed., *Roosevelt and Frankfurter: Their Correspondence, 1928-1945* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), 521, 524-30. For Clark's remembrances of these events, see Clark to McGeorge Bundy, July 18, 1947, Box 44, Felix Frankfurter Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter LoC); Grenville Clark Oral History, Columbia University Oral History Project, Butler Library, Columbia University (hereafter COHP). Michael Neiberg claims Roosevelt's top choice to succeed Woodring was New York City Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, but that his advisers convinced him La Guardia should stay in New York. He also maintains Stimson was Roosevelt's second or third choice but provides no evidence for either of these assertions. See Neiberg, 55.

[33] Susan Dunn, *1940: FDR, Willkie, Lindbergh, Hitler - the Election amid the Storm* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 98-100.

[34] Richard Moe, *Roosevelt's Second Act: The Election of 1940 and the Politics of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 170-97.

president's decision, Roosevelt was gaining the most recognizable Republican proponent of intervention for his administration and could now directly employ Stimson and his War Department perch to spur the electorate toward backing an expanded American role in world affairs. Bringing Stimson into the administration was a clear public sign Roosevelt held similar views and a visible signal of the future internationalist direction of U.S. foreign policy. Combined with Stimson's extensive government experience and his status as a celebrated Republican, Roosevelt was indicating this period of crisis must move beyond the realm of partisan politics and that he was serious about shifting Washington's position toward greater assistance to the Allies within the bureaucracy and as a national policy. All these reasons made Stimson's nomination an advantageous choice. For Stimson, it was an opportunity to translate the twin pillars of his internationalist grand strategy – collective security and robust U.S. leadership – into concrete policy actions. With Stimson at the helm, the War Department's direction would be shifting course.

The response to the Stimson-Knox appointments was foreseeable, but it reflected how both sides of the domestic political debate perceived them as an important turning point. Stimson's internationalist allies hailed his nomination and bombarded him with praise; one newspaper, describing him in ways any internationalist would have, extolled Stimson as a "statesman and a patriot" who was well-suited to bring "new vitality" to the "languishing" War Department.[35] William Allen White, a major Republican newspaper editor and the CDAAA chairman, commended Roosevelt for picking two men "of experience, of courage, and of absolute honesty" for his cabinet.[36] The prominent New York GOP lawyer Colonel William Donovan (who would

[35] For these supportive messages, see Stimson Papers, June 20-22, 1940, reel 101; "Knox and Stimson in the Cabinet," *The Montgomery Advertiser*, June 21, 1940.
[36] "White Hails Choice of Knox, Stimson," *NYT*, June 22, 1940. On White, see Johnstone, *Against Immediate Evil;* Walter Johnson, *William Allen White's America* (New York: Henry Holt, 1947); Mark Lincoln Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II* (Raleigh, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1968); Charles Delgadillo, *Crusader for Democracy: The Political Life of William Allen White* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2018); William M. Tuttle, Jr., "Aid-to-the-Allies Short-of-War versus American Intervention, 1940: A Reappraisal of William Allen

later lead the newly-formed Office of Strategic Services) urged the Republican National Convention, which was meeting in Philadelphia to pick its 1940 presidential nominee, to formally endorse the president's move.[37] Pro-Roosevelt Senate Democrats demanded that "these excellent appointments be immediately confirmed."[38] Lord Lothian, Halifax's predecessor as the U.K. ambassador in Washington, perhaps summarized it best when he reported to London that "the president has now strengthened his national position…by securing two outstanding Republican personalities to fill two key defence positions…[that] notoriously needed strengthening," a sentiment reinforced by British newspapers' coverage of the selections with headlines such as "Mr. Roosevelt Moves for a More Pro-Ally Ministry" and "Key Jobs Given to Friends of the Allies."[39]

Anti-interventionists simultaneously lambasted the nominations from all angles.[40] Amidst the chaos unleased in Philadelphia by the announcement, Republican National Chairman John Hamilton proclaimed Stimson and Knox were "no longer qualified to speak as Republicans" and "read" them out of the party while others denounced them as "fifth column" renegades who had perpetrated "an act of party treachery."[41] Taft, who was running for the Republican presidential nomination, alleged the appointments showed Roosevelt favored military intervention, and

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White's Leadership," *The Journal of American History* 56, no. 4 (March 1970): 840–58, https://doi.org/10.2307/1917521.

[37] "Bids Convention Back Cabinet Appointees," *NYT*, June 22, 1940. On Donovan, see Douglas Waller, *Wild Bill Donovan: The Spymaster Who Created the OSS and Modern American Espionage* (New York: Free Press, 2011).

[38] "Cabinet Changes Stun Senate; Republicans Appraise the Effect," *NYT*, June 21, 1940.

[39] TNA, Records of the Foreign Office, FO 371/24240, Lothian to FO, June 21, 1940; "Roosevelt Move Pleases British," *NYT*, June 21, 1940. On Lothian's time as British ambassador, see David Reynolds, "Lord Lothian and Anglo-American Relations, 1939-1940," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 73, no. 2 (1983): 1–65, https://doi.org/10.2307/1006337.

[40] On the broader U.S. anti-intervention movement, see Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists*; Cole, *Nye*; Jonas, *Isolationism*; Wayne S. Cole, *America First: The Battle Against Intervention, 1940-1941* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1953); Wayne S. Cole, *Charles A. Lindbergh and the Battle Against American Intervention in World War II* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974); Justus D. Doenecke, *Storm on the Horizon: The Challenge to American Intervention, 1939-1941* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000); Justus D. Doenecke, ed., *In Danger Undaunted: The Anti-Interventionist Movement of 1940-1941 as Revealed in the Papers of the America First Committee* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1990).

[41] "Knox and Stimson Quit G.O.P. for Roosevelt War Cabinet," *Chicago Tribune* (hereafter *CT)*, June 21, 1940; "Stimson and Knox Disowned by Party," *NYT*, June 21, 1940.

Thomas Dewey, another GOP presidential candidate, charged they were "a direct step toward war."[42] *The Wall Street Journal* implored the Senate to reject Stimson's nomination, arguing "it would be a calamity to put Mr. Stimson in the position where he could open this country to the danger of participation in the war which the American people oppose;" the *Chicago Tribune* insinuated it was a political trick to burden Republicans with America's substandard defense posture.[43] In Congress, Senator Burton K. Wheeler, Democrat of Montana, fumed Roosevelt's decision would be "particularly pleasing to the war mongers" and claimed the two men would endeavor to spark an incident that would drag the U.S. into war.[44] Senator Nye insisted Roosevelt's choices were a disaster and that he should resign.[45] This intense political opposition to their nominations suggests the anti-interventionists comprehended Stimson and Knox could markedly bolster Roosevelt's emerging internationalist foreign policy; accordingly the president's opponents desired to halt their appointments at any cost.

According to Clark's recollections of the Stimson appointment, one of Stimson's conditions for accepting the War Department post was that he would not support Roosevelt or his political agenda beyond the Army's requirements.[46] This has been construed by some historians to mean Stimson would not participate in domestic politics, i.e. advancing Roosevelt's New Deal.[47] However, Stimson never mentions this in his diary despite his memoirs later indicating politics was not "relevant" to his remit.[48] It also ignores his extensive efforts during the 1930s to influence

[42] "Coalition Move Predicted If Willkie's Bid Gains," *The Cincinnati Post*, June 21, 1940; "Action on Cabinet Attacked by Dewey," *NYT*, June 21, 1940.
[43] "Mr. Stimson Should Not Be Secretary of War," *WSJ*, June 21, 1940; "Changes in the Cabinet," *CT*, June 21, 1940.
[44] *CR*, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, Part 8, June 21, 1940, 8694-97.
[45] Ibid, 8798.
[46] GC Oral History, COHP.
[47] For example, see Morison, 481; Hodgson, 222-23; Schmitz, *Stimson*, 132-33; Edward Farley Aldrich, *The Partnership: George Marshall, Henry Stimson, and the Extraordinary Collaboration That Won World War II* (Guilford, CT: Stackpole Books, 2022), 153.
[48] Stimson Diary, June 25, 1940, HLSD; Stimson and Bundy, 324.

the domestic politics of American foreign policy in favor of his brand of internationalism. Even more problematically, this interpretation assumes a narrow definition of political involvement that fails to take other forms of politicking, such as bureaucratic or executive-legislative competition, into account. Yet as we will see, Stimson's actions right from the beginning indicate he viewed his activities and role in part through a political lens. This is crucial to grasp because it provides the foundation for understanding how Stimson's War Department became a political and policymaking nexus in Washington during the war.

Even before Stimson returned to the War Department, he determined he would have to play politics just to have his nomination pass the Senate. His internal preparations for his hearings emphasize his muscular internationalist views were those of a "private citizen" and that he never expected to return to government. He further downplayed them by more tightly stressing the British navy's survival was paramount for ensuring the war did not reach American soil because the U.S. was dangerously unprepared to fight. Stimson would focus on apolitically outfitting the Army while other areas of the administration concentrated on policy.[49] While it is true Stimson had been a private citizen for years, the glaring rejoinder to all this would be that one could not simply discard their longstanding beliefs and they would evidently impact his duties. Despite this obvious point, Stimson's drafts of his testimony insisted his views were grounded in national defense and nothing more, a political calculation designed to help him secure Senate approval that disguised his real thinking.[50]

Stimson belabored these themes at his confirmation hearings before the Senate Military Affairs Committee on July 2. After expounding on the ideas underpinning his public career – disarmament, the development of international legal mechanisms and multilateral institutions, and

[49] Memorandum for Senate Military Affairs Committee, June 24, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 135.
[50] Ibid, Drafts of Testimony before Senate Military Affairs Committee, June 27-29, 1940.

the gradual dissolution of war as an instrument of state policy – Stimson warned the assembled senators that the "cherished traditions and principles for which we in America have labored – moral, legal, and economic" were under threat by the Axis powers while deftly minimizing the contentious policy prescriptions he recently championed.[51] The panel's anti-interventionists, led by Taft and Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Republican of Michigan, persistently challenged Stimson on his international outlook and the concrete policies he had forcefully backed as a recipe for embroiling the United States in the European war.[52] But Stimson repeatedly avoided being goaded into directly answering their questions by providing responses at times attached with so many qualifiers they became virtually meaningless. He continuously insisted his personal attitudes on U.S. national security policy were inconsequential because he would not have sway on those issues. "The Secretary of War," Stimson said, "has nothing to do with policy. Policy is determined by other branches of the Government."[53] "That question of whether or not we should go to war – is a question which is not under consideration nor would not be within my jurisdiction if I were confirmed."[54]

Stimson's confirmation hearings highlighted his political skills and his understanding of how Washington functioned. A political operator such as Stimson could anticipate his opponents' lines of attack and prepare for them accordingly. Given the fervency of his policy beliefs and the reasons Roosevelt selected him for the job, it is likely Stimson was practicing the well-honed Washington maneuver of obfuscating one's own views to win Senate confirmation. Indeed, his performance crippled the anti-interventionists' attempts to amplify his nomination into a larger

[51] *Hearing Before the Committee on Military Affairs on the Nomination of Henry L. Stimson to be Secretary of War*, U.S. Senate, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, July 2, 1940 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), 3.
[52] Ibid, 6-29; "Vote for Stimson," *NYT*, July 3, 1940.
[53] *Hearings*, 7. See also 9, 20-1.
[54] Ibid, 17.

debate over the question of U.S. intervention in Europe. Although he never held elected office, Stimson was a polished politician who appreciated how to achieve his objectives, abilities he was bringing with him to the War Department which would help him revamp it into a critical node within the Washington policymaking apparatus. His appearance before the Senate Military Affairs Committee succeeded for it approved his nomination by a vote of 14-3, which was followed by a full Senate vote in his favor 56-28 on July 10.[55] As *The New York Times* put it, one of the "two key positions in our whole defense organization" was now occupied by a talented insider who is "primarily concerned with the defense of our own American democracy in an hour of great danger."[56]

Retooling the War Department

There is a lot of paper that circulates around a government agency every day. These document flows adopt a life of their own as they travel throughout the bureaucracy and help historians piece together key decisions and how these organizations operate.[57] The War Department is no exception. Yet despite their immense scholarly utility, government documents do not provide the whole story. An excessive reliance on them in fact can obscure as much as illuminate. While they can tell us a large amount about an agency's policymaking, they must be supplemented with other items of documentary evidence to supply the fullest picture of its actions and functioning. This is especially crucial for determining how an organization such as the War Department transformed itself into a wide-ranging political actor in this period of world crisis. Through combing the full archival record, it becomes clearer that other scholars' emphasis on the Army's military officials has partly concealed how their civilian superiors, led by Stimson, inserted the War Department

[55] "Stimson Confirmed by Vote of 56-28 Despite Attacks," *NYT*, July 10, 1940.
[56] Ibid, "Mr. Stimson and Mr. Knox," July 3, 1940.
[57] Matthew S. Hull, *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012).

into the fierce wartime political battles in Washington and made it into a significant component of the domestic political establishment.[58]

Stimson confronted a raft of policy issues when he re-entered government just after France fell, but arguably his most important immediate task was overhauling a defective War Department that had little influence over U.S. national policy. To accomplish that, Stimson recognized he would need a core team of competent officials surrounding him on both the civilian and military sides of the Army who could help refashion its role in Washington. Judge Patterson was meant to come in as Stimson's deputy, but Stimson quickly realized Johnson would not voluntarily resign as assistant secretary. Stimson knew Treasury Secretary Morgenthau was a Roosevelt confidant and despised Johnson, so he recruited Morgenthau's support in ousting Johnson because his presence "kept a much disorganized Department in a continued state of disorganization" and prevented Stimson from pursuing his policy agenda.[59] The pair waged a multi-front pressure campaign to secure Johnson's dismissal until finally Roosevelt relented and assigned his military aide to fire him; upon hearing the news, Johnson apparently "broke down and cried like a baby."[60] The Patterson announcement came shortly thereafter.[61]

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[58] For example, see Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*; Mark A. Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941-1943* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977); Mark A. Stoler, *George C. Marshall: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989); Russell Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Policy and Strategy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973); Richard W. Steele, *The First Offensive, 1942: Roosevelt, Marshall and the Making of American Strategy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973); Eric Larrabee, *Commander in Chief: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, His Lieutenants, and Their War* (New York: HarperCollins, 1987); William T. Johnsen, *The Origins of the Grand Alliance: Anglo-American Military Collaboration from the Panay Incident to Pearl Harbor* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2016).

[59] Morgenthau Diary, July 17, 1940, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL; Stimson Diary, July 19, 1940, HLSD. The quotation is from Stimson to Charles Burlingham, July 28, 1940, Box 17, Folder 12, Charles Burlingham Papers, Harvard Law School Library, Harvard University.

[60] Stimson Diary, July 22-23, 1940, HLSD; Stimson to FDR, July 19, 1940, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War – Henry L. Stimson, 1940-1941, FDRL; Ibid, Morgenthau Presidential Diary, July 24, 1940, Morgenthau Diaries; Ibid, Johnson to FDR, July 24, 1940, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War – Louis Johnson, 1937-40.

[61] "Johnson Resigns as Stimson Aide; Patterson Named," *NYT*, July 26, 1940.

Stimson also devised a legislative solution to mitigate the disarray triggered by the Woodring-Johnson rivalry. Under the 1920 National Defense Act, the assistant secretary of war wielded enormous independent powers over industrial mobilization, Army procurement, and military supply.[62] This sovereign authority partly fueled the tensions between Woodring and Johnson. Keen to avoid this dynamic, Stimson convinced Roosevelt to sanction his idea to persuade Congress to amend the 1920 law and transfer all the assistant secretary's statutory powers to his office.[63] A new undersecretary of war position would be created which would answer directly to the secretary of war and would carry out responsibilities as delegated by the secretary. This would unify the Department's civilian chain of command and cement the war secretary's dominance within the agency.[64] After working with Army lawyers to draft the amendment, Stimson leveraged his legislative connections to have the bill introduced on Capitol Hill and induced the Democratic chairmen of the House and Senate Military Affairs Committees to shepherd it through Congress by framing the measure as an instrument for increasing the War Department's efficiencies and reducing bureaucratic inertia.[65] Due to the challenges of rapidly trying to stimulate U.S. military preparedness after the Fall of France, the legislators found Stimson's proposal eminently attractive. It was introduced in Congress in September and became law by mid-December.[66] Patterson was duly appointed to the position and Stimson delegated his new procurement and mobilization powers back to Patterson, where he oversaw the Army's efforts throughout the war.[67] Besides having new leaders who shared a common political and ideological

[62] Hewes, 51.
[63] Stimson Diary, August 21, 1940, HLSD.
[64] Ibid, September 10, 1940.
[65] Ibid, September 20, 1940.
[66] *CR,* 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, Part 11, September 7-30, 1940, 12386, 12632, 12832; Ibid, Part 12, October 1, 1940-January 3, 1941, 13839, 13913.
[67] R. Elberton Smith, *The Army and Economic Mobilization* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1991), 108. For more on Patterson, see Eiler, *Mobilizing America* and Robert P. Patterson, *Arming the Nation for War: Mobilization, Supply, and the American War Effort in World War II*, ed. Brian Waddell (Knoxville,

outlook, Stimson's legal panacea smoothed out relations at the top of the War Department and laid the foundations for it to effectively contribute to the Washington policymaking process.

Over the course of his first nine months in office, Stimson recruited other talented assistants to fill the Department's senior positions. Stemming from his own experience with the Washington revolving door, Stimson relied upon his elite connections to find aides who shared his professional and social background. John J. McCloy, a fellow Wall Street lawyer Stimson knew from the Ausable Club who had been recommended by Stimson's law partner, was named to Patterson's old position and possessed a wide-ranging portfolio from congressional relations and lend-lease to postwar planning; he essentially became Stimson's troubleshooter who "handled everything that no one else happened to be handling."[68] Robert Lovett, a Wall Street banker who met Stimson through Lovett's neighbor, Under Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, was appointed assistant secretary for air and handled all matters connected to the Army's air forces.[69] Harvey Bundy was the final key appointment, who had been one of Stimson's senior advisers when he was secretary of state; Bundy became Stimson's chief counsel, personal adviser, and *de facto* chief of staff.[70] These three men, along with Patterson, formed the core of Stimson's inner circle and helped move the War Department into the center of Washington's policymaking conversations.

TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2014), a recently published memoir written by Patterson about his service during World War II that was discovered by his son in 2006 when going through his father's files.

[68] George Roberts to Stimson, July 12, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 102; for the quotation, see Stimson and Bundy, 342. An updated treatment on McCloy is warranted, but for more see Thomas A. Schwartz, *America's Germany: John J. McCloy and the Federal Republic of Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); Kai Bird, *The Chairman: John J. McCloy & The Making of the American Establishment* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992); Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986).

[69] Isaacson and Thomas, 185. There remains a book to be written on Lovett, which is surprising given his leading role in the U.S. foreign policy establishment during the early part of the Cold War. The best scholarship on him is currently Isaacson and Thomas's work.

[70] Harvey Bundy Oral History, COHP; Schmitz, *Stimson*, 135. For more on Bundy, see Kai Bird, *The Color of Truth: McGeorge Bundy and William Bundy, Brothers in Arms* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998).

Although Stimson was a hands-on cabinet secretary who was quite involved in the daily running of his department and one of the most experienced government insiders of the era, his senior staff compounded their boss's influence, and therefore the War Department's, by allowing him to extend his reach deep inside the bureaucracy. Stimson set the direction, policy, and tone for the Department and then gave his senior aides the authority to carry out their responsibilities as they deemed necessary.[71] This was possible because he shared a common purpose with them, established a level of intimacy that facilitated smoother coordination and organization within the group, and trusted their experience and administrative skills. When political issues arose from their work, Stimson stepped in and worked with his assistants to craft solutions and keep the policymaking process moving, especially when it involved Congress or other government departments.[72] This new operation quickly made the Woodring-Johnson years seem like a distant memory. In the words of a secret unpublished War Department history authorized by Stimson during the latter stages of the war that has been generally overlooked by other scholars: "Through the secretary's own influence and through his selection of competent advisers the War Department became more effectively organized than it had been at any other time of crisis."[73]

But assembling a group of adroit senior civilian aides would mean little if Stimson could not repair civil-military relations inside the War Department. Based upon his earlier stint as

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[71] HB Oral History, COHP.
[72] Ibid; John J. McCloy Oral History, COHP; Bird, *The Chairman*, 119-26.
[73] "The Office of Secretary of War Under Henry L. Stimson – Part I: The National Emergency, July 1940-December 1941," Section A: 17, Stimson Papers, reel 169. In 1944, Stimson asked Rudolph Winnacker, a Harvard-trained historian and OSS officer who later became the Defense Department's first chief historian, to study the War Department during World War II. By April 1945, Winnacker began submitting draft chapters to Stimson, but for unclear reasons, never finished the confidential history. The incomplete work covers the Department through 1943 and can be found only in the Stimson Papers. A few of the Army's official World War II histories contain a handful of references to it, but the major scholarship on Stimson or the War Department in this period has largely seemed to neglect this manuscript, which includes detailed footnotes and copies of War Department documents Stimson gave Winnacker for his research. For the official history citations, see Watson, *Chief of Staff*; Richard Leighton and Robert Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy: 1940-1943* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1955); Byron Fairchild and Jonathan Grossman, *The Army and Industrial Manpower* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1959).

secretary of war and his collaboration with General Wood, Stimson recognized he could not reform the Department or pursue his agenda if he did not have a close working relationship with the Army chief of staff. Thankfully, General Marshall was a more-than-willing partner in that undertaking.[74] Marshall was relieved when Woodring and Johnson resigned; he viewed their constant quarrelling as deeply damaging to the Army.[75] Although Stimson and Marshall did not know each other very well in mid-1940, it was clear they had much in common: a mutual affection for the Army; complementary worldviews, and long careers in public service.[76] After their first meeting following Stimson's appointment, Marshall informed his wife he felt reassured the pair would work well together.[77] It is not surprising why: unlike his predecessor, Stimson comprehended the importance of building durable relationships with key officials and that the War Department needed to be unified across its top leadership for it to have a meaningful political and policymaking voice.

Marshall's optimism was understated. Over the next five years, Stimson and Marshall would forge a close and productive partnership based on a level of meticulous coordination rare in Washington.[78] They were able to achieve this because in addition to their similar dispositions, they concurred on most issues affecting the Army and consistently shared information between

[74] The Marshall literature is enormous, but the most comprehensive scholarship is Pogue's four volume biography of him. See Pogue, *Education of a Soldier*; Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*; Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Organizer of Victory, 1943-1945* (New York: Viking, 1973); Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Statesman, 1945-1959* (New York: Viking, 1987). Also see Stoler, *Marshall*; Ed Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990); Debi Unger, Irwin Unger, and Stanley Hirshson, *George Marshall: A Biography* (Harper, 2014); David L. Roll, *George Marshall: Defender of the Republic* (New York: Dutton Caliber, 2019). Aldrich's *The Partnership* is the first joint biography of Stimson and Marshall, a useful and much-needed addition to the literature, but it is mostly based on secondary sources and does not include any fresh archival material.
[75] Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 39-40; Aldrich, 153.
[76] The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 9, Stimson Papers, reel 169; Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 40; Stoler, *Marshall*, 73. When Stimson was governor-general of the Philippines, he asked Marshall, on colleagues' suggestions, to be his aide-de-camp and later recommended Marshall to be constabulary chief to his successor, positions Marshall declined. See Bland, *Marshall Papers*, I: 322, 343.
[77] Bland, *Marshall Papers*, II: 252.
[78] Pogue, *Ordeal and* Hope, 45; Aldrich, 155.

themselves and their staffs.[79] The duo was famous for having adjoining offices with a "door that was always open" where the two were "always walking back and forth to each other" to hold countless unrecorded conversations, exchanges, and meetings.[80] Stimson began a typical workday by seeing Marshall immediately to review business, which was followed by several more chats throughout the day.[81] Marshall placed great weight on these talks because he felt "very keenly and continuously the need for civilian advice on all kinds of problems confronting the military."[82] These informal conferences were vital for mending civil-military relations within the War Department because it demonstrated both the civilian and professional Army chiefs were closely cooperating and set an example for the rest of the agency.

Moreover, Stimson institutionalized these civil-military contacts by instituting a weekly "War Council" meeting beginning in May 1941 between himself, Marshall, and their principal aides to ensure both sides of the Department were working in tandem to fulfill the Army's needs.[83] Marshall ensured Stimson received copies of Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) – the military body comprising the service chiefs established in 1942 to synchronize the armed forces and guide the war effort – meeting minutes, cables, memoranda, and reports, and Stimson briefed Marshall on cabinet meetings and his discussions with other administration officials.[84] So when Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9082 in February 1942 reorganizing the Army and granting himself the authority to operate as commander-in-chief directly through the chief of staff, it was not as

[79] Stimson Diary, July 22, 1940, HLSD; The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 7, Stimson Papers, reel 169.
[80] Morison, 499.
[81] "A Typical Day in the Life of the Secretary of War," n.d., Stimson Papers, reel 127.
[82] Morison, 498.
[83] Stimson Diary, May 19, 1941, HLSD; The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 18, Stimson Papers, reel 169.
[84] Some of these copies can be found in "Security-Classified Reports and Minutes of Meetings of the Combined Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1942-1943," Entry 104, Boxes 276-77, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, U.S. National Archives, College Park, MD (hereafter NARA).

consequential as it might seem.[85] The Stimson-Marshall partnership helped the War Department present a united front throughout Washington and gave Stimson leverage over his bureaucratic counterparts at the Navy and State Departments, who did not enjoy similar relations with their subordinates and accordingly came to Stimson and his assistants for knowledge on what was occurring in other areas of the Roosevelt administration.[86]

To maximize this bureaucratic advantage, Stimson and his team implemented two additional reforms to help place the War Department in the center of policymaking. Beginning in the fall of 1940, Stimson arranged weekly meetings with the secretaries of state and the navy to better coordinate foreign and military policy matters.[87] The State-War-Navy Liaison Committee, consisting of the undersecretary of state, the Army chief of staff, and the chief of naval operations, had been established in 1938 for this purpose, but Stimson discovered it reported directly to Roosevelt and was inconsistently handling weighty policy issues he felt should be managed at the cabinet level.[88] These new cabinet secretary meetings – known as the Cabinet Defense Council and informally the "Committee of Three" – therefore generated the space for Stimson, Knox, and Hull (and their successors) to examine major U.S. security issues and devise recommendations so that the three chief departments responsible for American foreign policy were communicating complementary proposals to the president.[89] The Council, at Stimson's urging, also stripped the

[85] FDR, Executive Order 9082: Reorganizing the Army and War Department, February 28, 1942, APP (available at presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-9082-reorganizing-the-army-and-the-war-department, accessed September 4, 2022). Also see FDR to Stimson, February 26, 1942, PSF Confidential File: War Department, January-August 1942, FDRL. As Iwan Morgan notes, Roosevelt was less interested in Army than in Navy affairs due to his experience as assistant secretary of the navy in the Wilson administration, handing the War Department greater latitude to pursue its policy objectives. Iwan Morgan, *FDR: Transforming the Presidency and Renewing America* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), 206.
[86] The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 10, Stimson Papers, reel 169; Morison, 499; Aldrich, 167.
[87] Stimson Diary, September 23, October 14, 1940, HLSD; The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 10, Stimson Papers, reel 169.
[88] Stimson Diary, October 14, 1940, HLSD; Note 17.
[89] The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 10, Stimson Papers, reel 169; William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation, 1937-1940* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), 10.

Liaison Committee of its independence by ordering their subordinates to forward their proposals to the Council, which reviewed their ideas and then relayed them to Roosevelt instead.[90] This decision strengthened all three secretaries, but particularly Stimson due to his relationship with Marshall, who comprehensively briefed him on the Liaison Committee gatherings, which gave Stimson and his lieutenants greater knowledge on policy development within the administration and consequently allowed them to better drive the Council agenda and its presidential advice. The Council ultimately helped streamline foreign policy decision-making by restricting the president's information flow and reasserting the supremacy of his chief civilian foreign and defense policy advisers over the policymaking process. Of course Roosevelt still retained the ability to solicit opinions from other confidants such as Morgenthau and Harry Hopkins, his top foreign policy adviser in the White House, but for a president famous for his unwieldy policy process, the Cabinet Defense Council helped focus decision-making and push Roosevelt to act on important issues. As a key consultative and managerial forum, the Cabinet Defense Council became an important tool to Stimson and his aides for maneuvering the War Department into a prominent policy role.

The other alteration Stimson made was in the public relations realm. The Army – and the military – long stood removed from the daily currents of American politics and culture. Except during the American Civil War and the brief period of U.S. involvement in World War I, the Army had been a relatively small organization that focused on battling Native Americans; it barely registered in the national consciousness. Yet Stimson recognized the army needing to be raised in 1940-41 would be a "people's army" tethered to the heart of American society.[91] Since the Army would be subjected to unprecedented levels of scrutiny, Stimson determined it was vital the War Department shaped its own public narrative and cultivated cozy relations with the press.

[90] Stimson Diary, November 25, 1940, HLSD.
[91] The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 12, Stimson Papers, reel 169.

Disquieted with the Department's low public profile, Stimson introduced weekly press conferences beginning in September 1940 and hired an experienced journalist to oversee them.[92] At these news briefings, Stimson updated reporters on departmental business and fielded their questions about the Army's myriad activities and later the war effort. The news conferences helped raise both the Department's profile and Stimson's personal political standing, with leading newspapers usually dedicating column inches to covering them.[93] To capitalize on this press interest, Stimson took the further step of forming the Bureau of Public Relations in early 1941 with a major general as its director and a former Associated Press editor handling publicity.[94] The Bureau essentially acted as the Army's press office and worked to forge deep ties between soldiers and their communities through promotional and propaganda campaigns highlighting the Army's exploits and overseas campaigns. Stimson's theory behind this was that if he and his advisers were to be successful in accomplishing their political and policy goals, then the Army needed to become a key pillar in the domestic political establishment.[95] And without widespread public notability and support, Stimson calculated, this would be difficult to achieve in wartime Washington. Positive press coverage was one critical ingredient in the formula.

For the politically savvy, very little about Stimson's adaptations seem surprising. Politics is about influence and politicians – elected or otherwise – constantly seek to augment theirs. Yet outfitting your department with a sophisticated political operation so soon after it was considered one of the most dysfunctional agencies in Washington is striking, let alone under a powerful president renowned for centralizing authority and decision-making in his own hands. Unlike most

[92] Stimson Diary, September 17, 1940, HLSD.
[93] For example, the *NYT* and *Washington Post* (hereafter *WP*) regularly covered Stimson's briefings. Transcripts of Stimson's press conferences can be found in the Stimson Papers, reel 135.
[94] Stimson Diary, January 8, 23, February 17, 1941, HLSD.
[95] The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 12, Stimson Papers, reel 169.

cabinet departments, Stimson's War Department was not reliant on the White House for access or authority; Stimson, Marshall, and their advisers possessed enough independent political capital to pursue their policy objectives. As we will see, this new senior leadership, combined with Stimson's bureaucratic reforms, proved to be effective at transforming the War Department from an irrelevant organization into a consequential policymaking nexus in wartime Washington. It should not be shocking then that Lord Halifax, the British ambassador, concluded Stimson held considerable influence inside the Roosevelt administration; indeed, British Foreign Office officials later deduced the State Department was engulfed in such administrative chaos and the White House so disorganized that it was advantageous to work with the War and Navy Departments on policy questions.[96] All these factors merged to make Stimson's influence on "foreign affairs probably greater than that of any other secretary of war" in decades.[97]

The Inside Struggle

To best understand how these changes shifted the War Department's position within the policy process, it is sensible to focus on two of its interwoven political targets: rapidly expanding the Army and prodding the U.S. toward military intervention. Stimson and his team were consumed by these efforts in 1940-41 as they sought to prepare their fellow citizens for a potential war. Although naturally the War Department would adopt a more front-facing role as conflict crept closer to American shores, the *method* and *style* in which that occurred were very different from how it would have likely developed under Stimson's predecessors. Put another way, there was nothing inevitable about the War Department acquiring a key space within Washington politics and policymaking.

[96] TNA, FO 954/29B/513, USA: Foreign Office Minutes, August 12, 1942.
[97] The Office of Secretary of War Under Stimson – Part I, Section A: 7, Stimson Papers, reel 169.

After the Fall of France, American military rearmament became an urgent priority. The Army possessed 245,000 full-time personnel in 1940, placing it at twentieth in the world. That was one spot behind the Netherlands, which Germany conquered weeks before France capitulated.[98] Arms and ammunition were scarce, and the little equipment available was old and dated back to World War I.[99] Less than 3,000 aircraft stocked Army inventories and only 300 were combat effective.[100] Moreover, the public demanded increased preparedness: 94 percent of Americans said the government should spend "whatever is necessary" to expand the military; 67 percent supported universal military training, and if Germany defeated Britain, 88 percent of respondents wanted the U.S. to "arm to the teeth."[101] Congress approved massive defense appropriations bills in mid-1940 to plug these shortfalls, but as Patterson observed, the Army had previously been "almost legislated out of existence."[102]

During his first months in office, Stimson's top policy concerns were securing passage of a conscription bill to swiftly increase the Army's manpower and ramping up production of desperately needed munitions. Despite fierce lobbying by Grenville Clark's coalition in favor of selective service legislation, the bill, also known as the Burke-Wadsworth Act, remained stuck in Congress in large part due to a dearth of executive branch leadership.[103] Concerned about how conscription would impact his reelection chances, Roosevelt dithered publicly and initially declined to forthrightly support it.[104] Once Stimson joined the cabinet, he filled the void left by

[98] Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*, 78.
[99] Eiler, 43-44.
[100] "Weapons and War," unpublished manuscript, n.d., Box 93, Robert P. Patterson Papers, LoC.
[101] Cantril, 981; Gallup, 234; *Fortune* (August 1940), President's Official File (OF) 3618 – Fortune Magazine, FDRL.
[102] "U.S. Acts on Ships," *NYT*, June 28, 1940; Ibid, "5 Billion Defense Voted By Senate," August 30, 1940; Patterson address to the American Legion, November 18, 1940, Box 91, Patterson Papers, LoC.
[103] Clifford and Spencer, 5. Their work remains the definitive account on the passage of the 1940 Selective Service Act.
[104] Dunn, 167-71.

Roosevelt by maneuvering the War Department into becoming the administration's coordinator on selective service. Right before his confirmation, Stimson hosted a large gathering at Woodley, his Washington mansion, consisting of Clark, Marshall, Patterson, and the Army officers secretly working with Clark on the legislation, to harmonize their lobbying operation. If both sides of the campaign were not united, Stimson cautioned, the anti-interventionists would have an easier time defeating the measure.[105] On his first day as secretary of war, Stimson immediately began pressuring Roosevelt to openly support conscription in his latest message to Congress on national defense since he was reluctant to mention it.[106] After some haggling over the language, the president indicated compulsory service would develop the manpower required to operate the armaments he was requesting from Congress.[107] It was not the unequivocal backing Stimson and his allies wanted, but it was a start.

Over the next several weeks, the War Department's lobbying intensified. Whereas before the Clark coalition did not have a significant figure in the administration championing selective service, now they had one of its staunchest advocates running the War Department and leveraging his bureaucratic skills and vast political network to shepherd the legislation through Congress. Stimson and Clark closely coordinated their politicking: they shared talking points, updated each other on their meetings with legislators, and identified wavering lawmakers to persuade them to back Burke-Wadsworth.[108] Stimson and Marshall also decided to split responsibility for testifying to Congress on the measure's behalf. Speaking to members of the House Military Affairs Committee, Stimson reminded his listeners of his labors to achieve international peace and framed

[105] Stimson Diary, July 8-9, 1940, HLSD
[106] Ibid, Stimson Diary, July 10, 1940.
[107] FDR, Message to Congress on Appropriations for National Defense, July 10, 1940, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/message-congress-appropriations-for-national-defense-0, accessed September 17, 2022)
[108] Clark to Stimson, June 28, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 102; Ibid, Stimson to Morris Sheppard, July 6, 1940; Ibid, Clark to Stimson, July 11, 1940; Ibid, Clark to Stimson, July 25, 1940; Stimson Diary, July 8-9, 23, 29 1940, HLSD.

conscription as a defensive response to the dangers festering outside the United States. "I have seen the reign of violence and force gather strength, like a prairie fire, approaching nearer and nearer to this country."[109] Unlike those who believed a draft would lead to war, Stimson thought "the opposite. I think it will make others hesitate to attack us."[110] Living "in a world more dangerous to us than ever before," which Congress appreciated considering it was approving vast sums for national defense, "it would be well to recognize also that it takes a long time to secure and train the men to use such arms."[111] Likewise, Marshall told the Senate Military Affairs Committee that in "a time of peril" the Army "must have more men" and that only a draft could quickly recruit them.[112]

Simultaneously, Stimson continued to press Roosevelt to endorse selective service because he reckoned presidential support would clinch Burke-Wadsworth. Although Roosevelt privately killed an anti-conscription plank for his party's platform at the 1940 Democratic Convention after Stimson warned him it could derail Burke-Wadsworth, the president remained publicly tepid toward conscription.[113] Yet after steady War Department pressure, Roosevelt declared himself "distinctly in favor of a selective service bill."[114] This caused anti-interventionist outcry and left Roosevelt averse to saying more until Stimson used his GOP connections to convince Wendell Willkie, the 1940 Republican presidential nominee, to openly back compulsory service.[115] With bipartisan political cover coming from his election opponent of all people, Roosevelt went back

[109] *Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs on H.R. 10132*, U.S. House of Representatives, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, July 31, 1940 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), 393.
[110] Ibid, 407; "Grave Peril Seen," *NYT*, August 1, 1940.
[111] *Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs on H.R. 10132*, 387-92.
[112] Bland, *Marshall Papers*, II: 262-64.
[113] Stimson Diary, July 16, 1940, HLSD; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 248.
[114] Stimson Diary, August 1-2, 1940, HLSD; Memorandum for Cabinet Meeting, August 2, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 127; FDR press conference, August 2, 1940, Press Conference Transcripts, FDRL.
[115] Clark to Willkie, August 6, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 102; Jay Pierrepoint Moffat Diary, August 18, 1940, Vol. 46: June 10, 1940-June 11, 1941, Jay Pierrepoint Moffat Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 248-49.

on the offensive. During the congressional debate on Burke-Wadsworth, Democratic Senator Francis Maloney introduced an amendment that would have effectively delayed the draft's implementation until January 1941.[116] Using War Department notes Stimson provided, Roosevelt attacked the Maloney amendment as an unacceptable delay and demanded "action now" on the draft.[117] Stimson's wager paid off: Roosevelt's intervention cleared the congressional bottleneck and helped defeat Maloney's amendment and a series of others that would have neutered Burke-Wadsworth. Presidential leadership moved the needle, but without War Department initiative and organizing, it is likely conscription's opponents would have passed these amendments to weaken the legislation or even completely defeat it.

Roosevelt signed the Selective Training and Service Act into law on September 16, 1940, with Stimson and Marshall standing beside him. With a presidential signature, 16 million men between the ages of 21-36 became eligible for the Army draft.[118] The passage of the first peacetime draft in American history was a significant accomplishment for the War Department on multiple levels. On the preparedness front, the Army was now able to fill its ranks with the men it needed to train to protect the Western Hemisphere from potential external incursions and who could eventually fight overseas if the U.S. entered the war. When the equipment Congress was approving vast appropriations for finally arrived, the soldiers would be available to operate and use it for national defense. From a political standpoint, the War Department's tireless advocacy for Burke-Wadsworth signaled a new power center was emerging inside the Roosevelt administration. As Garry Clifford and Samuel Spencer note, FDR's allusive posturing on the issue made it difficult

[116] Clifford and Spencer, 183.
[117] FDR explicitly said "the secretary of war gave me some points" on the legislation. FDR press conference, August 23, 1940, Press Conference Transcripts, FDRL; Stimson to FDR, "Reasons why the Maloney Amendment should be Defeated," August 23, 1940, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War – Draft, 1940, FDRL; Stimson Diary, August 23, 1940, HLSD.
[118] Aldrich, 210.

to forge a coherent public narrative about the draft's necessity and to coordinate policy amongst its proponents.[119] Absent presidential direction, Stimson and the War Department stepped in to provide it, a dizzying shift considering the chaos engulfing the agency a few months prior. Clark's coalition supplied crucial outside pressure, but senior administration officials were needed for advancing the legislation by exploiting their governmental relationships and inside knowledge of the congressional process. Stimson's War Department served that pivotal function in the draft fight and demonstrated it had the capability to operate as a key political and policy operator.

Although Stimson insisted he would not be drawn into domestic politics as secretary of war during his confirmation hearings, the selective service battle indicated that was untrue. Another manpower issue proved it was false: the treatment of Black Americans in the military. During the 1940 presidential campaign, Willkie courted Black voters with a policy of ending racial discrimination in government and the armed forces.[120] To counter Willkie's overtures, Roosevelt asked the War Department to announce it would allow Black men to work in all parts of the Army.[121] The War Department complied, but Stimson and Marshall were wary of using the Army to achieve "complete social equality."[122] As Marshall explained, "the settlement of vexing racial problems cannot be permitted to complicate the tremendous task of the War Department and thereby jeopardize discipline and morale."[123] They agreed with internal Army assessments that Black troops lacked the combat abilities of their white peers due to "lower average intelligence,"

[119] Clifford and Spencer, 229.
[120] Dunn, 195.
[121] Morris J. MacGregor, Jr., *Integration of the Armed Forces, 1940-1965* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1981), 18. See also Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1963).
[122] Stimson to Alfred Stearns, January 30, 1942, Top Secret Correspondence, 1940-1945 (Safe File), Entry 99, Box 10: "Negros," RG 107, NARA.
[123] Ibid, Marshall to Stimson, December 1, 1941.

"lack of educational background," and the alleged need for increased supervision and training.[124] Therefore, Stimson believed, "leadership is not embedded in the Negro race" and there would be "disaster and confusion" if Black soldiers were not led by white officers.[125] Although the War Department took incremental steps to limit discrimination and promote some form of racial fairness, such as the creation of Black combat units, it would only go so far in acting as a vehicle for racial justice. As we explored in Chapter One, Stimson's long history of prejudice toward non-white peoples, his complex relationship with U.S. empire, and his belief in the superiority of white individuals precluded him for prioritizing the needs of minority groups or recognizing the importance of racial equality. Stimson and Marshall may have desired to avoid the political debates on race relations, but ironically their opposition to Army racial integration embroiled them in one of the thorniest domestic disputes of the war. Their prioritization of national defense above all else blinded them from realizing that racial segregation was hurting the mobilization effort because it prevented Black Americans from fully contributing to the Army compared to their white colleagues. It was a political decision stemming from inner racial animus that further confirmed how entangled the War Department had become in domestic politics.

Arms production was also a policy area where many of the resulting bureaucratic and political problems converged inside the War Department. Patterson, McCloy, Lovett, and their uniformed colleagues handled many of the logistical and technical issues, but Stimson oversaw the high-level bureaucratic and political complications.[126] To help manage the increasingly complex questions arising from military rearmament, Roosevelt formed several new agencies such

[124] "The Colored Troop Problem," April 2, 1942, General Security Classified Correspondence, Memoranda, and Reports, 1942-1945, Box 78, RG 160: Records of Headquarters Army Service Forces, NARA. This memorandum has a chart attached to it, created by the War Department Statistics Branch, attempting to "quantitatively" show Black soldiers scored lower across the board on IQ tests than white soldiers.
[125] Stimson Diary, September 27, 1940, HLSD.
[126] The best work on the War Department's mobilization efforts remains Eiler's *Mobilizing America*.

as the Office of Production Management (OPM), the Supply Priorities and Allocations Board (SPAB), and the War Production Board (WPB). Since these organizations held many overlapping responsibilities, the resulting bureaucratic nightmares compounded many difficulties.[127] But the War Department mediated many of these squabbles by placing itself at their center and coordinating amongst the various agencies charged with handling munitions production. Throughout 1940-41, Stimson hosted frequent meetings with other senior officials such as Morgenthau, OPM Director William Knudsen, SPAB Director and WPB Chairman Donald Nelson, Lend-Lease Administrator Edward Stettinius, and Commerce Secretary Jesse Jones to synchronize defense procurement and overcome bureaucratic and political hurdles.[128] The War Department was not necessarily dictating action to these other institutions, but by fashioning itself into a bureaucratic hub for rearmament concerns and managing policy amongst these various agencies, the War Department evolved into a key nerve center for wartime production.

Outside the government, the War Department worked with private enterprise to convert to military manufacturing. Businesses were hesitant to comply since in 1940-41 the United States was not officially at war and they feared being left with expensive new facilities of little peacetime value.[129] To create incentives to switch to wartime production, Stimson and Patterson devised several legislative and regulatory fixes: contracts were structured that gave both corporations and the government flexibility in capital ownership, reducing businesses' exposure to potential losses; the government guaranteed it would reimburse expenses incurred by companies drawing up procurement bids, and new laws were passed allowing the War Department to directly negotiate contracts with their suppliers, which quickened the process and permitted officials to consider

[127] Lacey, *The Washington War*, 96-111, 158-170.
[128] Reels 127-28 of the Stimson Papers are filled with Stimson's detailed memoranda and notes on the countless meetings he held with these officials to unsnarl supply bottlenecks and meet production targets.
[129] Schmitz, *Stimson*, 137.

other factors beyond fiscal savings.[130] Stimson felt "if you are going to try to go to war…in a capitalist country, you have got to let business make money out of the process or business won't work, and there are a great many people in Congress who think that they can tax business out of all proportion and still have businessmen work diligently and quickly. That is not human nature."[131] To ensure the Army was meeting its production targets, Stimson also quietly negotiated with labor leaders who felt emboldened to use the shifting economic environment to empower their members and demand improved working conditions. With his roots in the Progressive movement, Stimson was sympathetic to organized labor, but also believed strikes could not impede wartime mobilization. For example in June 1941, after talks between the War Department and union leaders broke down at one of the country's leading aircraft manufacturing companies and their workers went on strike, Stimson and his advisers convinced Roosevelt to seize the plant using National Guard troops.[132] Similarly to its role inside the administration, the War Department was also acting as the government's political troubleshooter on ensuring military rearmament proceeded as rapidly as possible.

New management had clearly delivered new vistas. Under the consummate government insider in Stimson, the War Department transformed from a bureaucratic afterthought into a political mainspring. Part of that has to do with competence: Stimson was one of the most experienced policymakers of the day, and he surrounded himself with capable and likeminded advisers who he trusted to execute his policy priorities. But as this chapter argued, the core reason

[130] For example, see Stimson Diary, August 21, 23, 26, September 18, 20, October 4, 9, December 3 1940, January 10, 23, 30, February 14, April 3, 1941, HLSD; "Memorandum re: talk with Mr. Knudsen," September 5, 1940; "Memorandum," September 10, 1940; "Memorandum made by Secretary Stimson after Cabinet meeting," September 13, 1940; "Memorandum of conference with Judge Patterson, Benedict Crowell, and Arthur Palmer on the present situation on priorities," October 18, 1940; Notes after Cabinet Meeting, April 4, 1941, all in Stimson Papers, reel 127; Aldrich, 201; Eiler, 112-131, 192-209.
[131] Stimson Diary, August 26, 1940, HLSD.
[132] Ibid, June 6, 1941.

why the War Department moved into the center of government decision-making was because Stimson, Marshall, and their inner circle consciously revamped the organization into a political and policy player which deliberately worked to influence other corners of the government and enact policies friendly to Army interests as defined by its leaders. That is not to say the War Department was the most powerful organization within the bureaucracy, but it is striking how politically minded it became within the context of wartime Washington, especially compared to the Navy and State Departments. During a period when most cabinet officers were basically figureheads and it was unheard of for bureaucratic agencies to essentially possess quasi-independent political operations, Stimson's War Department reforms are instructive for understanding how executive branch agencies use the various tools at their disposal to jockey with one another for power and influence in Washington. As the countdown to war continued and the Army proceeded to evolve into a significant policymaking nexus, its leverage over U.S. national policy continued to grow.

Chapter Four

Between Deterrence and Compellence

This chapter examines the War Department's role in the formation of U.S. policy toward the European war and the growing crisis in the Pacific between the Fall of France in June 1940 and the Pearl Harbor attacks in December 1941. It starts by outlining how Stimson's experience during the Manchurian Crisis with Japan shaped his later strategic views toward the Axis powers as the War Department was navigating this 18-month period. This chapter argues that the War Department played a pivotal role in shaping American policy and actions in both the Atlantic and the Pacific during this time, but in different ways. In the Atlantic, the War Department was a primary impetus within the Roosevelt administration for increasingly interventionist policies. Not only did it consistently push President Roosevelt to act, but it influenced the politics of his decision-making at several crucial junctures. The War Department provided the crucial nexus between the executive branch, Congress, and outside pressure groups as the U.S. moved toward war. In the Pacific, the War Department pressed for a firm stand against Japan but helped muddle Far Eastern policy by working to undermine the State Department's more cautious stance. This bureaucratic warfare made it difficult to foster consensus around U.S. deterrence actions and contributed to worsening relations between Washington and Tokyo, setting the stage for the Pacific War.

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In one sense, Japan made Henry Stimson's career. When President Hoover appointed Stimson secretary of state in 1929, he was a fixture of the American elite with deep roots in the political establishment. But after the Manchurian Crisis with Japan revealed Stimson's moral clarity on the issue of unjustified military aggression while most senior U.S. officials were ambivalent about

Tokyo's actions in China, Stimson's reputation soared. Although Stimson's denouncements of Japan's wanton militancy ultimately failed to check its later empire building, they enhanced his credibility within American domestic politics as a leading spokesman on the dangers that expansionist foreign policies posed to the modern world and on the need for muscular U.S. leadership to uphold collective security. Indeed to Stimson and his allies, there were clear connections between the Manchurian Crisis and Hitler's "murdering and ravishing" in Europe."[1]

Reflecting on his four years as America's chief diplomat, Stimson observed in *Foreign Affairs* that across the globe, "political and commercial inter-connection had already so far developed that war anywhere in the world, even among those nations whose economic and social organization is less complicated, is always a potential danger to the rest of civilization. It is like a prairie fire; and a war once started in any portion of the earth is likely to envelop the whole. Nowhere can war be neglected as entirely innocuous to the rest of the world."[2] It was left unsaid, but it was not difficult to discern he was referring to Japan's actions in Manchuria and the Nazis' rise to power in Germany. For Americans, Stimson argued, the solution was not to bury their heads in the sand: "Our own experiences since the war have already demonstrated that the people even of the United States, with all of their advantages of geographical situation and self-contained resources, cannot retire within their own borders and lead a life of isolation from their neighbors…We have become too dependent upon the rest of the world for benefits and comforts which we will not give up."[3] Explicitly tying Japan's invasion of Manchuria to U.S. national interests years later, Stimson wrote, "Japan's attack upon China in September, 1931, was of interest to the American people not only because it was an attack upon the fundamental basis of

[1] Tex Bradford to Stimson, May 21, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 101.
[2] Stimson, "Bases of American Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1933, 384-85.
[3] Ibid, 385.

collective action in the modern world…but because it was also a destructive assault upon the good relations which must exist between neighbor nations if order and stability are to be preserved."[4] Stimson contended Japan's aggression in China should alarm the United States in the same manner "as the exploitation by a rearmed Germany of one of her European neighbors" would Britain.[5] But most Americans in the mid-1930s did not see it that way; the novelist John Dos Passos perhaps put it best when he wrote, "Rejection of Europe," and the world for that matter, "is what America is all about."[6]

Despite Stimson's inability to compel Japan to reverse course during the Manchurian Crisis, it is worth briefly recounting his actions and policies during that emergency for two reasons: it not only is a prime example of Stimson's internationalism where he employed elements of legalism, moralism, and what became known as New Deal-style multilateralism to pursue his objectives, but his experience also informed his later grand strategy for grappling with the fascist powers as the United States inched closer to war.

Since the announcement of the Open Door policy at the end of the nineteenth century, Washington had been on a collision course with Tokyo in the Asia-Pacific region. Their conflicting policies mainly centered around China: while the United States sought to protect the Open Door, economic access to China, and Chinese independence and territorial integrity through the Nine-Power Treaty, Japan desired to expand its control over large swathes of China to gain new sources of raw materials and enhance its security.[7] The "Washington System," a series of interlocking

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[4] Henry L. Stimson, *The Far Eastern Crisis: Reflections and Observations* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936), 235.
[5] Ibid, 236.
[6] Quoted in David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 387.
[7] The literature on Sino-American relations in this period is enormous, but for the best overviews, see Michael H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The U.S. and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Warren I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, Sixth Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019). On Japan's expansionism and security interests, see Michael A. Barnhart,

treaties and agreements stemming from the Washington Naval Conference of 1921-22 (the Nine-Power Treaty was one of them), seemed to defuse tensions and fulfill the ambitions of both sides for a while.[8] The U.S. achieved naval limitations, agreement to the Open Door and China's sovereignty, and a commitment to the maintenance of the status quo in the Pacific. Japan, increasingly dependent on the U.S. for raw materials and food imports, obtained a stable regional environment in East Asia and dependable trading partners for its economic security and prosperity.[9] But the Great Depression wrecked this arrangement when the United States and the European empires closed off their economies to foreign trade, unraveling the Washington System and leaving Japan powerless to acquire the imports it needed.[10] Right-wing Japanese militarists, who had been in the ascendency for years and were skeptical of collaboration with the West, used the Depression to denounce Japan's Western leanings, discredit its civilian leaders, and argue the only viable solution to the nation's economic ills was to attain autarky.[11] The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in September 1931 was the first step.[12]

Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919-1941 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

[8] Barnhart, 51.

[9] On the Washington System and America's role in stabilizing Asian-Pacific security, see Warren I. Cohen, *Empire Without Tears: America's Foreign Relations, 1921-1933* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987); Roger Dingman, *Power in the Pacific: The Origins of Naval Arms Limitation, 1914-1922* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976); Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953).

[10] Harold James, *The End of Globalization: Lessons from the Great Depression* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[11] Barnhart, 22-49; S.C.M. Paine, *The Japanese Empire: Grand Strategy from the Meiji Restoration to the Pacific War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 95-103.

[12] The Manchurian Crisis literature is sizable. The best analysis remains Christopher Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy: The West, the League, and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931-1933* (New York: Putnam's, 1973). Also see Ferrell, *American Diplomacy*; Sadako Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria: The Making of Japanese Foreign Policy, 1931-1932* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1964); Gary Ostrower, *Collective Insecurity: The United States and the League of Nations during the Early Thirties* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1979); Justus Doenecke, *When the Wicked Rise: American Opinion-Makers and the Manchurian Crisis of 1931-1933* (London: Associated University Presses, 1984); Ian Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism: Japan, China, and the League of Nations, 1931-1933* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1993). For a harsh take on Stimson's diplomacy, see Armin Rappaport, *Henry L. Stimson and Japan, 1931-33* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963). Michael Chapman argues Stimson was too prideful in his dealings with Japan and had he adopted a "neutral stance" to bring Chinese and Japanese negotiators together, the crisis could have been resolved. However this

Stimson found Japan's aggression perilous on multiple levels. The assault was not only a violation of the Nine-Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, agreements both China and Japan signed, and threatened the Open Door, but it also undercut the notion Japanese leaders were amicable toward Western interests and shared Stimson's commitment to creating a more peaceful world.[13] At first, Stimson took a cautious approach toward the incursion because it was unclear who authorized it and he wanted to avoid arousing "Japanese nationalistic feeling…in support of the Army."[14] But escalatory Japanese attacks, including the bombing of the Chinese city of Chinchow, convinced Stimson to favor stronger action.[15] The secretary of state began pursuing a dual-track policy of spurring Hoover to take a firmer stand against Japan while working with the League of Nations to pressure Tokyo to uphold its treaty obligations.

With this two-pronged strategy, the foundations of Stimson's blended internationalist framework for ending this crisis came into focus. By invoking Japan's commitments under the Nine-Power and Kellogg-Briand accords, Stimson was applying "legalistic-moralistic" rhetoric to reverse Japanese aggression. As a signatory to those agreements, Tokyo had agreed to respect Chinese sovereignty and renounce war as a legitimate policy instrument. But now Japan was breaching those pledges and in violation of international law. Although neither treaty contained specific enforcement mechanisms, Japan was a member of the League of Nations and the World Court, meaning it theoretically subscribed to international law and the punishments for nations which contravened it. In other words, Japan's aggression in Manchuria directly challenged the principle of collective security, one of the League's core pillars, and the penalty for this

ignores the Japanese militarists' influence, their distrust of the West, and that their goals were incongruous with Stimson's. See Michael E. Chapman, "Fidgeting Over Foreign Policy: Henry L. Stimson and the Shenyang Incident, 1931," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 4 (September 2013): 727–48, https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dht029.

[13] Malloy, 36.

[14] SecState to Minister in Switzerland, September 22, 1931, *FRUS*, 1931, The Far East, Volume III, Document 28.

[15] Schmitz, *Stimson*, 105.

transgression was facing economic sanctions by other League members, the organization's primary tool for enforcing international peace.[16] The League and its principal organs were designed to foster a global legal system which could arbitrate international disputes as a substitute to war. By citing Tokyo's treaty commitments as one of the main reasons for pushing back on the invasion, Stimson was grounding his condemnation in the legalistic-moralistic ethos.

Yet Stimson believed Japan must be compelled to reverse course. Stimson's close cooperation with the League is proof he understood a multilateral approach was necessary to end Japan's assault. Since the League possessed international legitimacy as a global intergovernmental institution, Stimson believed it was more likely Tokyo would back down if the League took united action to pressure Japan to honor its international obligations.[17] As noted in Chapter Two, this type of multilateralism was required for defending international law and penalizing offenders.[18] Therefore Stimson was formulating his strategy based upon a multifaceted framework that relied upon several forms of internationalism to defuse the crisis. But the League did not have an independent military it could use to pressure Japan; this is where Stimson's other policy track came in – encouraging Hoover to take a firm position against Japanese bellicosity. Although the U.S. was not a League member, Stimson calculated that without American power backing up League maneuvers, they would have insufficient impact.[19] Any League response would need energetic U.S. support to deter Japan from further aggression and compel it to withdraw from Manchuria.

Economic sanctions seemed to be the soundest method for accomplishing this. It was the recognized League response to international aggression and could pressure Japan to end its

[16] See Nicholas Mulder, *The Economic Weapon: The Rise of Sanctions as a Tool of Modern War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2022).
[17] Stimson Diary, October 10, 12, 1931, HLSD.
[18] This is what became known as New Deal-inspired multilateralism, but it would be anachronistic to define it as such here. However elements of that idiom can be seen in Stimson's approach.
[19] Stimson, *The Far Eastern Crisis*, 241.

invasion without sparking a wider conflict. The State Department estimated Japan was particularly vulnerable to sanctions: the U.S. market attracted 40 percent of Japanese exports while Japan received only 4 percent of American trade. The economic damage would grow acute within three-six months, leading Tokyo to negotiate with China and the West. Japanese industry "would be wrecked immediately by an economic boycott," a conclusion the British shared.[20] Consequently, Stimson invested political capital in marshalling a sanctions coalition that would force Japan to settle.

However, Hoover opposed any move he felt could entangle America in war. This included economic sanctions, a regional military buildup, or the use of force.[21] Presidential opposition and divisions inside the State Department, combined with the backdrop of the Great Depression and the gulf separating the United States, a non-League signatory, from League members such as Britain and France, ultimately short-circuited Stimson's efforts to assertively confront Japan.[22] Without full-throated American backing, it was difficult to see how the League could counter Japan's belligerence. The best Stimson could ultimately formulate was a nonrecognition policy that came in the shape of the "Stimson Doctrine," a pair of notes dispatched to China and Japan in January 1932 that defended the Open Door and declared the United States would not "recognize any situation, treaty, or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenants and obligations" of the Kellogg-Briand Pact.[23] Although the Stimson Doctrine fell short of the

[20] "Manchurian Situation: Economic Boycott" memo, December 6, 1931, Subject and Correspondence File, Box 288, Stanley Hornbeck Papers, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford, CA (hereafter HIA); TNA, CAB 47/4, Report ATB 86, "Economic Sanctions against Japan," March 1932.
[21] Schmitz, *Stimson*, 105-12.
[22] Under Secretary of State William Castle, Stimson's deputy, frequently clashed with Stimson on policy matters and privately mocked Stimson to Hoover. This incompatibility complicated Stimson's work and reduced State's influence on foreign policy throughout the Hoover presidency. Schmitz, *Stimson*, 80. The Castle Diary is filled with entries criticizing Stimson and ridiculing his character. For example, see William Castle Diary, November 27, 1929; September 30, 1930; June 25, 1931; July 19, 1931; February 3, 1932, William R. Castle Diaries, Houghton Library, Harvard University.
[23] SecState to the Ambassador in Japan, January 7, 1932, *FRUS Japan 1931-1941*, Volume I, Document 57.

stronger policies Stimson initially sought, he hoped it could be used as a moral weapon conveying U.S. opposition to Japanese aggression which could galvanize international public opinion against Tokyo without offending Hoover's risk-averse sensibilities.[24] Perhaps it would form the basis for coordinated diplomatic and economic action with other Western nations. But no leading European powers supported the Stimson Doctrine, partly due to financial and military weakness but also a general sense of sympathy with Japanese grievances that made it difficult to condemn the invasion without highlighting their own imperial practices.[25] European reluctance, combined with continual presidential resistance, left the Stimson Doctrine as the only genuine counteraction to Japan's offensive.

Yet words alone are unlikely to achieve much without any credible deterrence behind them. Predictably, Tokyo ignored Stimson's missive and maintained their attack, bombing the international city of Shanghai several weeks later. By late February 1932, Japan fully conquered Manchuria and established the puppet state of Manchukuo. Despite his attempts to the contrary, Stimson failed to halt Japan's territorial aggression and protect China. But as a secretary of state facing presidential obstruction and unable to muster international outrage, there was not much Stimson could achieve. To Stimson's gratification, the League later concluded Japan was fully responsible for the Manchurian Crisis and refused to recognize Manchukuo in line with the Stimson Doctrine, leading to Japan's withdrawal from the League in March 1933.[26]

Stimson did not know what the 1930s would bring or that he would later return to government, but his experience contending with the Manchurian Crisis influenced his strategic thinking and how he performed as a bureaucratic operator. On the strategic front, Stimson

[24] Stimson Diary, January 7, 1932, HLSD; Stimson, *The Far Eastern Crisis*, 90.
[25] Stimson Diary, February 19, 1932, HLSD; Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy*, 210-25.
[26] Schmitz, *Stimson*, 111-12.

understood isolated rhetoric would accomplish little if it was not supported by complementary policies. Accordingly, he urged Roosevelt to take concrete action after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and pressed for firm economic and military deterrence to check additional Japanese expansion and compel Tokyo to terminate its assault on China. Without American leadership, Japanese leaders would not be convinced to rethink their militarism. Put another way, Stimson's internationalist grand strategy for confronting the fascist powers had its roots in the West's failures to resolve the Manchurian Crisis. The silver lining for Stimson was that his clear stand against Japan increased his prominence and solidified the perch he used throughout the rest of the decade to plunge into U.S. foreign policy debates and savage noninterventionism.

To shape policy, one needs a reliable team and to understand where power lies. Working with Hoover and the divided State Department reminded Stimson of the importance of having trusted advisers who will support your political endeavors and contribute to their success. After presiding over a fractious State Department, Stimson evidently appreciated this could not be repeated when he returned to the War Department in 1940. Moreover, being secretary of state indicated you were powerful, but you were not the top American foreign policymaker; the president was. Cabinet officers looking to mold U.S. policy required coalitions of influential allies who could help persuade the president. Stimson later internalized this as a member of the Roosevelt administration. The Manchurian Crisis was Stimson's biggest test at this point in his career and he foundered, but ironically, it set the stage for his eventual return to government.

Defending the West

After France's spectacular collapse in June 1940, Britain's precarious position became a top concern for American policymakers. Weeks earlier, Winston Churchill, on his fifth day as British

prime minister, requested from Roosevelt 50 aging U.S. destroyers to restock the Royal Navy, which was incurring serious losses.[27] But with Britain now vulnerable to attack and invasion, most American strategists opposed aiding London while the U.S. was unprepared to safeguard the Western Hemisphere.[28] FDR shared those concerns and ignored Churchill's plea but believed Britain could still be assisted generally while rebuilding American defenses.[29] However the president was forced to sign into a law an amendment sponsored by Senate anti-interventionists prohibiting the shipment of matériel abroad unless Marshall and Admiral Stark, the chief of naval operations, certified the U.S. military did not need it, limiting Roosevelt's ability to support Britain.[30]

The War Department was in an awkward spot on this question as it pursued inconsistent policy tracks in the aftermath of France's surrender. Under Stimson's predecessor, Marshall and Army planners had favored prioritizing U.S. military rearmament and restricting material assistance to the Allies on the grounds munitions were desperately needed at home for hemispheric defense; France's defeat only strengthened that view to the point Marshall and Stark were asking Roosevelt for a "virtual ban on further arms sales to Britain."[31] But as one of the most vigorous proponents of aiding the Allies, Stimson worked to boost Roosevelt's dual-track policy of

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[27] Warren F. Kimball, ed., *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, Vol. I, 3 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), I: 37; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 243; Mark A. Stoler, *Allies in War: Britain and America against the Axis Powers, 1940-1945*, Modern Wars (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007), 15; Daniel Todman, *Britain's War: Into Battle, 1937-1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 462.

[28] David G. Haglund, "George C. Marshall and the Question of Military Aid to England, May-June 1940," *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 4 (October 1980): 745–60; Grant Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion: Reassessing Anglo-American Strategic Planning and the Foundations of U.S. Grand Strategy for World War II," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, July 2022, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2022.2104837.

[29] Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*, 79-83.

[30] Lacey, *The Washington War*, 88.

[31] "National Strategic Decisions" memo, May 22, 1940, WPD 4145-7, RG 165: Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, NARA; Ibid, Marshall to War Plans Division, May 23, 1940, WPD 4175-10; Ibid, Marshall statement to SLC, June 17, 1940, WPD 4250-3; Bland, *Marshall Papers*, II: 245-46; Haglund, "Marshall and the Question of Military Aid," *Journal of Contemporary History*; quotation is from Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*, 81.

strengthening U.S. military capabilities while bolstering Britain's campaign against Germany. As the secretary of war was lobbying to enlarge the Army's size, Stimson and Patterson were also coordinating with senior U.S. officials across the government to ensure Britain's existing weapons orders were filled, which were allowed to continue despite the amendment Roosevelt signed, as it faced possible Nazi invasion.[32] Stimson and Marshall both recognized the Army's paltry state, but Stimson was attuned the political dimension of this policy debate in a way Marshall was not. By taking steps to implement Roosevelt's twin initiatives, Stimson and Patterson were aligning the War Department more closely with the White House in a way it had not been earlier in 1940 under Harry Woodring and Louis Johnson. This decision helped position the War Department to adopt a political and policy role it previously lacked by demonstrating to Roosevelt and other areas of the executive branch the Army's civilian chiefs supported the contours of the president's foreign policy at a critical wartime juncture.

Outside the administration, Stimson and his advisers took informal steps to help shift the domestic politics on sustaining Britain. When Stimson became secretary of war, he was one of the *de facto* leaders of a loose-knit interventionist movement that included prominent elites, journalists, internationalist Republicans, pro-Allied pressure groups, and senior U.S. policymakers who favored taking stronger action to aid London.[33] This status presented Stimson's team with an opportunity to continue Stimson's previous efforts when he was a private citizen to rally the American people around confronting fascism abroad. During Stimson's first month in office, notable commentators such as Joseph Alsop, Walter Lippmann, and Dorothy Thompson approached Stimson about collaborating with the War Department on a series of columns outlining

[32] Stimson Diary, July 15-19, 22-24, 1940, HLSD; Morgenthau Diary, July 23-24, 1940, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL; Leighton and Coakley, 32-36.
[33] See Chapter Two for more details. Also see Johnstone, *Against Immediate Evil*, 73-90; Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World*, 47-80.

how Americans could help Britain and warning of the Axis threat to the United States, which Stimson agreed to quietly support with Army resources.[34]

In one piece published shortly before Stimson was sworn in that echoed his June radio address about ensuring Britain's survival, Thompson postulated that if the U.K. capitulated, Germany would escalate its propaganda offensive in the Western Hemisphere to convince the peoples of North and South America it did not want war while it recuperated from its conquest of Europe; once Hitler consolidated his new empire, he would attempt to subvert and undermine the United States from within.[35] In another article, Thompson borrowed one of Stimson's recommendations from his radio speech and suggested sending American ships to evacuate British children to North America who could otherwise become victims of German bombing campaigns.[36] Alsop predicted that if Britain crumbled, defending the Western Hemisphere would become exceedingly burdensome and "with Hitler ruling all Europe and a vast colonial empire as the greatest slave state in world history, the American economy will not long survive in its present shape."[37] And in an attention-grabbing essay titled "The Economic Consequences of a German Victory" published in *Life* magazine in late July, Lippmann insisted that if the other industrial regions of the world besides the United States – Western Europe, Russia, and Japan – were all controlled by hostile powers, then American free enterprise would cease to exist as the global economy became closed to U.S. trade and domestic companies struggled to compete with foreign "totalitarian monopolies…like naked soldiers trying to stop a charge of tanks."[38] Stimson

[34] Dorothy Thompson to Stimson, July 10, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 102; Stimson Diary, July 23, August 1, 1940, HLSD.
[35] Dorothy Thompson, "On the Record: German Plans as They Affect the United States," *New York Herald Tribune* (hereafter *NYHT*), July 3, 1940.
[36] Dorothy Thompson, "On the Record: Send American Ships to Save British Children from Terror," *NYHT*, July 15, 1940.
[37] Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, "Washington Backstage," *The Tampa Times*, July 29, 1940.
[38] Walter Lippmann, "The Economic Consequences of a German Victory," *Life*, July 22, 1940, 65-69. For more on Lippmann, and his links to Stimson, see Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (Boston: Little,

considered Lippmann's article so significant that he ensured Marshall received a copy of it in an effort to alter his thinking about supporting Britain.[39] Stimson viewed this type of unofficial back-channeling to foster political support for U.S. interventionist policies as essential for neutralizing "the efforts of the little group of isolationists to play politics" with national security.[40] It was a natural extension of his work as a private citizen during the 1930s to influence the public debate on American foreign policy. For the Army, Stimson's maneuvers helped place it in the center of raging political crosscurrents as the 1940 presidential campaign was heating up.

Around the time Lippmann's *Life* article was published, the politics on aiding Britain was changing. Two months before Germany's invasion of Western Europe, polling data showed 75 percent of Americans thought Britain should make peace with Hitler; now, a narrow majority thought Washington should do more to help London resist invasion.[41] Another survey recorded that 68 percent of respondents felt America should either assist the Allies further or enter the war itself soon.[42] Fresh intelligence reports, especially one from Colonel Donovan presented to senior U.S. officials, indicated the *Luftwaffe* would not achieve a knockout blow or establish the air supremacy needed for an invasion, raising hopes of British survival and granting policymakers some leeway to help more.[43] And Roosevelt's cabinet now included a group of staunchly pro-Allied members labelled the "cabinet hawks," consisting of Stimson, Knox, Morgenthau, and

Brown and Company, 1980); David Milne, *Worldmaking: The Art and Science of American Diplomacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2015), 168-216.

[39] William T. Sexton memo to Marshall, July 22, 1940, William Thaddeus Sexton Collection, Box 2, Folder 39, George C. Marshall Foundation, Lexington, VA (hereafter GCMF).

[40] Stimson Diary, August 20, 1940, HLSD.

[41] Gallup, 212, 233.

[42] *Fortune* (July 1940), OF 3618, FDRL.

[43] Stimson Diary, August 6, 7, 12, 1940, HLSD; "Possible Ability of a Successful German Invasion of England" memo, Morgenthau Diary, August 12-13, 1940, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL.

Interior Secretary Harold Ickes, who seized on these developments to forcefully push for sending additional relief to London.[44]

So when Churchill again requested the destroyers on July 31, Roosevelt was on safer political ground.[45] There were many figures involved in arranging what became known as the "Destroyers-for-Bases" deal, but the nexus for where many of these threads came together was the War and Navy Departments. They provided the crucial link between the U.S. government, the British, and the external pressure groups trying to facilitate the exchange. At a cabinet meeting on August 2, Knox suggested that to evade the legal restrictions on transferring U.S. military hardware abroad, the ships could be swapped with British air and naval possessions in the Americas.[46] This was an idea circulating within interventionist circles for several weeks.[47] The cabinet, led by the other hawks, supported the concept but most present, including Roosevelt, thought congressional approval was necessary.[48] Yet Stimson and Knox were quietly exploring with the British and pro-Allied elites if Roosevelt could bypass Congress and trade the destroyers via executive agreement.[49] Stimson privately urged Roosevelt to do so several times in early August by arguing the proposal was a traditional exercise of the chief executive's power over foreign affairs and that Marshall and Stark could certify the deal as strengthening the defense of the United States.[50]

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[44] Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*, 85. Also see Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*.
[45] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 56-57. The best account of the Destroyers-for-Bases agreement can be found in James R. Leutze, *Bargaining for Supremacy: Anglo-American Naval Collaboration, 1937-1941* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977), 94-127.
[46] Stimson Diary, August 2-3, 1940, HLSD; FDR memo, August 2, 1940, PSF Departmental Correspondence: Navy – Destroyers and Naval Bases – Part I, 1940, FDRL; Ibid, Morgenthau Diary, August 1-4, 1940, Morgenthau Diaries; Ickes, *Secret Diary*, III: 283.
[47] Memorandum of Meeting, July 25, 1940, Dinner Meetings, Fight for Freedom, Inc. Records, Box 50, MC025, Public Policy Papers, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University; Alan Brinkley, *The Publisher: Henry Luce and His American Century* (New York: Knopf, 2010), 262-63.
[48] FDR memo, August 2, 1940, FDRL; Ickes, *Secret Diary*, III: 283.
[49] H. Montgomery Hyde, *Room 3603: The Story of the British Intelligence Center in New York During World War II* (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1963), 36.
[50] Stimson Diary, August 3, 1940, HLSD; Stimson and Bundy, 357.

Influenced by the cabinet hawks, Roosevelt decided to investigate circumventing Congress. The War Department, looking beyond the deal's specific contents, sought to grease the political wheels by ensuring there was potential bipartisan support so it would not become a presidential campaign issue. Stimson and Patterson liaised with internationalist congressional Republicans to gain their assent and with CDAAA Chairman White to obtain Willkie's.[51] As the pair secured tacit GOP backing, Roosevelt learned from his legal advisers and outside interventionist lawyers such as Dean Acheson he could authorize the swap through executive agreement due to the president's constitutional prerogatives in foreign affairs, reinforcing Stimson's prior analysis.[52] Although the emerging deal was a collaborative effort between internationalist lobbying organizations and senior U.S. officials across the Roosevelt administration, the War Department served as the crucial link between the two.

Roosevelt seized on this legal reasoning to act unilaterally and in early September, he announced the Destroyers-for-Bases exchange.[53] A Gallup poll on September 6 showed 60 percent of Americans endorsed the deal, with nearly identical numbers of Democrats and Republicans in favor.[54] Over the span of a few months, public opinion had demonstrably shifted toward increased aid to the Allies. This attitude change and the destroyers deal were a victory for not only the internationalist cause, but also specifically for Stimson and the War Department. They had a played a key part in working the domestic side of the process by consistently encouraging Roosevelt to act and making it politically feasible for him to do so by laboring for bipartisan acceptance. With Hull on vacation during all this, Stimson also handled many of the diplomatic

[51] Stimson Diary, August 2-3, 6-9, 12-14, 1940, HLSD; Stimson to White, August 5, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 102; Stimson and Bundy, 357.
[52] Robert Jackson to FDR, August 27, 1940, PSF Departmental Correspondence: Navy – Destroyers and Naval Bases – Part I, 1940, FDRL; "No Legal Bar Seen to Transfer Destroyers," *NYT*, August 11, 1940.
[53] "Roosevelt Hails Gain of New Bases," *NYT*, September 4, 1940.
[54] Gallup, 240.

aspects of the negotiations with the British by back-channeling with Lord Lothian, the British ambassador in Washington, to acquire London's approval.[55] "It is a funny situation. For the last few days I have been acting more as Secretary of State than Secretary of War," Stimson wrote as the deal was being finalized.[56] This observation was indicative not only of Stimson's growing influence with Roosevelt, but also of the State Department's relative lack of clout, which could have theoretically handled the high-level facets of the bargaining in Hull's absence. That the War Department did instead suggests Roosevelt did not fully trust his diplomats to implement his most important foreign policies. It was also another sign that Stimson's War Department was increasing its stature in Washington policymaking.

By the fall, the War Department was closer to reconciling its internal policy differences. Britain's continued survival, senior civilian officials' emphasis on sustaining London, and articles such as Lippmann's warning what an Axis-controlled world would mean for the United States propelled Army officers to reconsider their strategic assumptions.[57] At Stimson's direction, Marshall and Army planners developed a new strategic estimate that accounted for changing global realities and what burgeoning Anglo-American cooperation would mean for U.S. defense requirements.[58] They concluded that while the U.S. was expanding its military capabilities, it must adopt a defensive grand strategy that prioritized the Atlantic theater and minimized hostilities with Japan in the Pacific.[59] This meant securing the British Empire was paramount for American national security as the U.S. strengthened its abilities to protect the Western Hemisphere. If Britain

[55] Stimson Diary, August 3, 8-9, 12-16, 19, 1940, HLSD.
[56] Ibid, August 19, 1940.
[57] Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion," *Journal of Strategic Studies*.
[58] Stimson Diary, September 23, 1940; "The Office of Secretary of War Under Henry L. Stimson – Part I: The National Emergency, July 1940-December 1941," Section B: 1-3, Stimson Papers, reel 169.
[59] "The Problem of Production of Munitions in Relation to the Ability of the United States to Cope with its Defense Problems in the Present World Situation," n.d. (but sometime in late September 1940), PSF Departmental Correspondence: War – Draft, 1940, FDRL.

collapsed or lost its fleet, the U.S. would be confronted with threats "for which we are not now prepared and will not be prepared for several years to come."[60] Army planners' reappraisal of American strategic priorities basically aligned their thinking with Stimson and Patterson's, who had been pushing this dual-track policy for months. As the war secretary explained to reporters, the Army needed to fortify the British "outer line of defense" while enhancing the American core.[61]

From this moment until Pearl Harbor, the War Department was essentially united around concentrating U.S. resources on the Atlantic while reducing the possibility of conflict with Tokyo through deterrence. Moreover, Army consensus on national interests impacted Navy thinking too with Stark concurring in early October with these assessments.[62] Although Stark's later "Plan Dog" memorandum has been called "perhaps the most important single document in the development of World War II strategy," its arguments were influenced by the Army's earlier analysis, especially on the links between American security and the survival of the British Empire.[63] After years of interservice feuding over the contours of American grand strategy, War Department maneuvering during 1940 eventually allowed the Army and Navy to reconcile their rival perspectives enough to produce a broad set of shared beliefs about the direction of U.S. national policy.

British Crisis Creates American Opportunity

At the end of 1940, Britain was in dire straits again. The Royal Navy was sustaining heavy losses, and London was running short on cash to pay for supplies. After Roosevelt defeated Willkie for an unprecedented third term, Churchill requested further U.S. support including financial

[60] Ibid.
[61] Stimson press conference, September 19, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 135.
[62] Watson, 117-18. Also see Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion," *Journal of Strategic Studies*.
[63] Morton, "Germany First," 35.

assistance, increased arms shipments, and naval escorts for British merchant ships.[64] At a meeting of the Cabinet Defense Council in mid-December, Stimson and Marshall prodded their colleagues to lobby Roosevelt to allow U.S. merchant vessels to transport supplies to Britain. Stimson reminded the group it was counterproductive to handicap themselves when "we are up against warlike measures" in trying "to save Great Britain."[65] Army entreaties seemed to have worked because at a follow-up CDC session to review U.S. grand strategy, everyone agreed "that this emergency could hardly be passed over without this country being drawn into the war eventually" and "the eventual big act will have to be to save the lifeline of Great Britain on the North Atlantic."[66] The three cabinet secretaries resolved to work with the other cabinet hawks to convince Roosevelt to fulfill Churchill's pleas.[67]

Roosevelt already thought similarly. Fresh off his reelection victory and buoyed by the cabinet hawks, the president told reporters on December 17 that the "best immediate defense of the United States is the success of Great Britain defending itself." To sidestep Britain's financial difficulties and "eliminate the dollar sign," Roosevelt proposed converting existing British munitions orders into American ones and then leasing them to Britain.[68] This became the policy of lend-lease, and in a fireside chat on December 29, Roosevelt explained lend-lease was necessary for safeguarding U.S. national security and the American way of life. Germany planned "to enslave the whole of Europe, and then to use the resources of Europe to dominate the rest of the world."[69] "In a military sense," Roosevelt declared, "Great Britain and the British Empire are today the

[64] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 102-09.
[65] Stimson Diary, December 13, 1940, HLSD; "Memorandum of Conference," December 13, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 127.
[66] Stimson Diary, December 16, 1940, HLSD; "Memorandum of Army and Navy Conference," December 16, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 127.
[67] Stimson Diary, December 16-17, 1940, HLSD.
[68] FDR press conference, December 17, 1940, Press Conference Transcripts, FDRL.
[69] FDR, "Fireside Chat," December 29, 1940, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/fireside-chat-9, accessed January 16, 2023).

spearhead of resistance to world conquest." "Does anyone seriously believe," he asked, "…that we could rest easy if the Axis powers were our neighbor" in the Atlantic?[70] If Britain fell, "the Axis powers will control the continents of Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australasia, and the high seas – and they will be in a position to bring enormous military and naval resources against this hemisphere." In an Axis-dominated world, "we would have to convert ourselves permanently into a militaristic power on the basis of a war economy." Therefore, the United States "must be the great arsenal of democracy" by using its productive capacities to aid the Allies; lend-lease would be the mechanism to achieve this.[71]

Stimson, Patterson, McCloy, and Lovett applauded Roosevelt's "forthright and outright analysis…of the Nazis' bid for world power."[72] They interpreted it as vindication of their policy views and their endeavors to move the War Department from the periphery to the center of U.S. government decision-making. Indeed, Roosevelt was making the same argument Stimson had been for months and was throwing his presidential weight behind sending maximum aid to the Allies. Lend-Lease legislation was introduced in Congress on January 10, 1941, and the War Department plunged into the political debate and committed its resources to passing the bill.[73]

Senior War Department officials leveraged their political connections and knowledge of the congressional process to shape much of Lend-Lease's legislative strategy. Before the bill was submitted, Stimson and Patterson recommended it be separate legislation instead of an amendment to pre-existing statutes to steer it away from anti-interventionists on the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees.[74] This gambit was partly successful: Lend-Lease was

[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Stimson Diary, December 29, 1940, HLSD.
[73] Warren F. Kimball, *The Most Unsordid Act: Lend-Lease, 1939-1941* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969) is still the authoritative account on the passage of the Lend-Lease Act.
[74] Stimson Diary, January 6, 1941, HLSD.

introduced as new legislation but was referred to the two foreign relations panels to prevent Congress from delaying the bill.[75] Top U.S. officials testified before Congress on different aspects of Lend-Lease, but Stimson led the administration's drive for the program.[76] Appearing five separate times, the various elements of the White House's case fused together in Stimson's testimony. The primary argument was that Lend-Lease was essential for America's defense.[77] It would help the U.S. protect itself without direct military intervention by supplying Britain with the assistance it needed to fight. Lend-Lease would centralize the current haphazard system for weapons procurement, grant the government new powers to expedite armaments production and accelerate domestic preparedness, and empower the president to fully address the world crisis facing the nation.[78] Stimson summarized the administration's position before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

> We are really seeking to purchase her [Britain's] aid in our defense. We are buying – not lending. We are buying our own security while we prepare…We are buying the protection which is accorded us by the continuance of the British sea power in the North Atlantic while our own main fleet is busy protecting us in the Pacific…In our own interest – and purely in our own interest – it is good national policy to preserve today a hard-fighting Britain, a Britain which has not been ground down by hard bargains sapping its resources.[79]

Preparedness, procurement, munitions production, supporting Britain, and full aid to the Allies, all vital to U.S. interests, would be facilitated by passing Lend-Lease.

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[75] Kimball, *Unsordid Act*, 141-46.
[76] Stimson Diary, January 14, 1941, HLSD; "Meeting of Hull, Morgenthau, Stimson and Knox re: preparation for appearance before Congressional committee on Lend-Lease Bill," January 14, 1941, Stimson Papers, reel 127; Schmitz, *The Sailor*, 112.
[77] "Memo on Hearing," January 14, 1941, Stimson Papers, reel 127.
[78] Ibid, Lend-Lease testimony notes, January 13, 1941; "Resume of Situation Relative to Bill 1776," January 22, 1941, Safe File, Box 9: "Lend-Lease," RG 107, NARA.
[79] *Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations on S. 275*, U.S. Senate, 77th Congress, 1st Session, January 29, 1941, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1941), 87.

Comparable to its methods for passing the Selective Service Act, the War Department initiated its own whipping operation to ensure the bill's adoption. Stimson and his aides privately lobbied lawmakers, strived for Republican backing, updated Roosevelt on the legislation's progress, and worked with their congressional allies to defeat amendments that would hurt the bill.[80] These labors were effective: Lend-Lease easily passed both houses of Congress and Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease Act into law on March 11, handing him the authority to sell, transfer, exchange, lease, or lend matériel to any nation whose defense he deemed vital for the United States.[81] Lend-Lease effectively ended U.S. neutrality and shifted it toward unfettered support for Britain and the Allies. Stimson and his advisers considered Lend-Lease a major endorsement of their strategic outlook; this was especially true for Stimson himself, who regarded it as a prime method for carrying out his internationalist grand strategy. Lend-Lease was one of the most "important legislative achievements" of the conflict because it was "a declaration of economic war" against Hitler and a clear American response to the Axis.[82] To be sure, securing Lend-Lease's passage required a whole-of-government approach that extended beyond the War Department. But the War Department toiled for Lend-Lease's approval in ways few other agencies did and operated as unofficial Roosevelt administration lobbyists for its enactment. The War Department's sophisticated legislative affairs operation proved again to be crucial for passing fundamental legislation to America's defense requirements. With Lend-Lease secure, it was clear the War Department was now a pivotal Washington player on both sides of Pennsylvania Avenue.

[80] For example, see Stimson Diary, January 5, 9-10, 14, 21, 25, February 1, 2, 4-5, 13, 15, 17, 26, 28, March 1-4, 7-8, 1941, HLSD; "HLS talk with Senators on Lend-Lease," February 4, 1941, Stimson Papers, reel 127; Stimson to FDR, February 27, 1941, Safe File, Box 15: "White House Correspondence," RG 107, NARA; Bird, *The Chairman*, 123-24.
[81] Kimball, *Unsordid Act*, 219-20.
[82] Stimson and Bundy, 360.

Lend-Lease was a sweeping victory, but bad news from Europe tempered the elation. During the spring, Britain suffered crushing defeats in the eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and North Africa that revived anxieties about its capacity to fight Germany. As temperatures rose, the *Luftwaffe* resumed its aerial bombardment campaign, shattering several British cities. Shipping losses skyrocketed as the *Kriegsmarine* feasted on British ships, magnifying concerns Britain might fall.[83] Already observing several months earlier the astonishing losses in shipping– over four million tons in 1940 alone – due to German U-boats, Stimson pressured Roosevelt to "plug the leaky bathtub" by protecting British vessels with U.S. naval power.[84] After Roosevelt signed Lend-Lease, Stimson and the cabinet hawks responded to this spring crisis by exhorting Roosevelt to take increasingly interventionist steps to bolster Britain. As the cabinet hawks' *de facto* leader, Stimson became the primary agitator within Roosevelt's senior team on Britain's behalf.[85]

Throughout the spring, Stimson, Patterson, Bundy, and McCloy repeatedly championed U.S. naval action to aid Britain's cause, including naval convoys to protect British shipping and shifting a major portion of the U.S. Pacific Fleet to the Atlantic to halt German submarine attacks.[86] Weaker measures, Stimson warned a group of correspondents, would leave the U.S. in "great world-wide peril."[87] During a primetime radio address in May, Stimson argued the Nazis were attempting to demolish global freedoms, and unless Americans fought to preserve them, Hitler would win the war.[88] These public statements, along with Stimson and the cabinet hawks' private

[83] Donovan to Stimson, February 7, 1941, Safe File, Box 4: "Donovan, Col. William," RG 107, NARA; Waldo Heinrichs, *Threshold of War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Entry into World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 57-60.
[84] Stimson Diary, December 19, 1940, HLSD.
[85] Lacey, *The Washington War*, 139.
[86] For example, see Stimson Diary, March 24, April 10, 15, 22, 24-26, 1941, HLSD; "The Office of Secretary of War Under Henry L. Stimson – Part I: The National Emergency, July 1940-December 1941," Section B: 19-25, Stimson Papers, reel 169.
[87] Stimson Diary, March 21, 1941, HLSD.
[88] "Address by the Secretary of War to be Broadcast Over Networks of Mutual Broadcasting System and National Broadcasting Co.," May 6, 1941, Stimson Papers, reel 132.

counsel, were designed to persuade Roosevelt to adopt their policy prescriptions. Dissatisfied with what they regarded as presidential vacillation, the hawks tried to create a domestic political environment they felt would force Roosevelt to take stronger action. Polling data revealed this was having an impact; shortly after Stimson's radio speech, 54 percent of respondents said U.S. naval convoys should be instituted to protect British ships, and 76 percent backed continuing to aid Britain even if it meant war with Germany.[89] Although Roosevelt resisted the convoys, he agreed to move part of the Pacific Fleet and extend the Navy's patrol sphere to cover the western Atlantic, freeing up British ships to be employed elsewhere.[90] The hawks did not get everything they wanted, but their pressure tactics were clearly influencing presidential decision-making and Roosevelt's response to the war.

By June, there was somewhat of a reprieve when Hitler launched his invasion of the Soviet Union.[91] Due to dismal beliefs about the Soviet Red Army's capabilities, American and British intelligence sources initially believed Germany would quickly defeat the USSR.[92] Although Russia's capitulation would greatly augment Germany's military resources which could later be redirected toward Britain, the War Department saw the invasion as an opportunity.[93] With Germany preoccupied in the East, Stimson, Marshall, and their advisers agreed "now was the time to make as strong a drive as possible…in the Atlantic."[94] The cabinet hawks and Harry Hopkins

[89] Hadley Cantril to Anna Rosenberg, n.d. (but providing polling conducted May 7-17, 1941), PSF Subject File: Public Opinion Polls, 1935-1941, FDRL.
[90] Heinrichs, 46-47, 73-74.
[91] On the Soviet-German conflict, see Evan Mawdsley, *Thunder in the East: The Nazi-Soviet War, 1941-1945* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2005).
[92] Leland Morris to SecState, June 25, 1941, 740.0011 EW/12458, Central Decimal Files, RG 59: Records of the Department of State, NARA; Ibid/12615, Laurence Steinhardt to SecState, June 26, 1941; Ibid/13771, U.S. military attaché-Moscow report, June 30, 1941; Ibid, WPD to Marshall, "Strategic Estimate," July 1, 1941, WPD 4510, RG 165; Stimson Diary, June 23, 1941, HLSD; Ibid, Stimson to FDR, June 23, 1941; TNA, CAB 122/100, Joint Planning Staff memo, June 23, 1941; Ibid, Eden to Halifax, June 26, 1941; Ibid, "Russo-German War" memo, June 28, 1941; Ibid, Halifax to FO, July 2, 1941.
[93] Aldrich, 237.
[94] Stimson Diary, June 23, 1941, HLSD.

endorsed the Army viewpoint.[95] Stimson communicated their collective stance to Roosevelt and suggested using this "unforeseen period of respite" to increase naval support to Britain. This "was the right way to help Britain, to discourage Germany, and to strengthen our own position of defense against our most imminent danger."[96] Or better yet, direct U.S. military intervention was the soundest way to aid "those free nations who are still fighting for freedom in this world," or risk having to fight alone if they surrendered.[97] At the very least, the War Department recommended U.S. troops occupy Iceland to relieve a British garrison already stationed there and to prevent Germany from using it to menace the Atlantic's shipping lanes and the Western Hemisphere.[98] The president sidestepped the Army's more interventionist suggestions but authorized the Icelandic occupation on the basis of safeguarding U.S. national security.[99] This dynamic followed a familiar pattern for Roosevelt and the War Department in 1941: By steadily prodding the president to escalate American wartime involvement, the Army played a valuable role in keeping Roosevelt focused on how the conflict was affecting American security. Roosevelt was more cautious than the War Department due to his domestic political sensitivities, but the Army's pressure helped compel him toward deepening America's integration with the Allied war effort.

Despite his reluctance to directly intervene, Roosevelt recognized a different type of Soviet potential to alter the European war from his advisers. If Russia could withstand Germany's assault, it would dramatically shift the military balance against Hitler.[100] This perception led Roosevelt to extend Lend-Lease assistance to Moscow, a decision reinforced by Hopkins' positive reports of

[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid, Stimson to FDR, June 23, 1941.
[97] Ibid, Stimson to FDR, July 3, 1941.
[98] Ibid, Stimson to FDR, July 7, 1941.
[99] FDR, "Message to Congress on Landing Troops in Iceland, Trinidad, and British Guiana," July 7 1941, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/message-congress-landing-troops-iceland-trinidad-and-british-guiana, accessed January 16, 2023).
[100] FDR to William Leahy, June 26, 1941 in Elliott Roosevelt, ed., *FDR: His Personal Letters* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1947), II: 1177.

his meetings with Soviet leader Joseph Stalin during a secret trip there.[101] Although it was clear by August Russian resistance was stronger than anticipated and Hitler's forces would not cruise to victory, the War Department hamstrung aid shipments to Moscow throughout the summer despite presidential policy.[102] Similarly to mainstream perceptions of Britain's fighting chances after France's collapse in 1940, War Department leaders were concerned that every piece of equipment that was sent to the USSR would delay the American military buildup or hinder Lend-Lease aid to Britain.[103] Since the War Department was managing most U.S. war production, it possessed considerable powers to hobble Roosevelt's decision and prioritize its own objectives. The president belatedly realized the potency of bureaucratic inertia when he accused the War Department of impeding arms shipments to Russia.[104] The first assistance package arrived that fall, but the Army's obstruction was a powerful reminder of the bureaucracy's ability to stymie policies it did not support. Revealingly, once the Army concluded Soviet survival was paramount to U.S. security, Lend-Lease shipments to Russia accelerated and it did everything it could to support the Eastern Front.[105]

By the fall of 1941, the War Department had detectable influence over U.S. national policy and had completed its transformation into a conscious bureaucratic and political player. Since the Fall of France, Stimson and his team's maneuverings had placed the Department at the center of government foreign policymaking on the European war and ensured it played a role in all the key decisions. The War Department moved between facilitating policy decisions, politically supporting them, and galvanizing the policy process forward. Through its struggle to support

[101] The best work on this remains Raymond H. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia, 1941* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1959).
[102] Stimson Diary, July 28, 30, 1941, HLSD; Bland, *Marshall Papers,* II: 578-79; WPD to Marshall, "Strategical Estimate of the Situation," July 18, 1941, WPD 4510, RG 165, NARA.
[103] Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*, 138-39.
[104] Stimson Diary, August 1, 1941; Morgenthau Presidential Diary, August 4, 1941, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL.
[105] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 54.

Britain, the War Department increased its leverage over U.S. strategy and policy by aligning itself with other Washington heavyweights and using its connections to fulfill its political agenda. It did not always achieve its objectives in the manner it desired, but its concerted effort to push the U.S. toward military intervention in Europe had a noticeable impact on Roosevelt's actions. So when war finally did arrive, it was ironic that it came not from the Atlantic, but from the Pacific.

Rumbles in the East

Throughout 1940-41, American policymakers mainly focused on Europe, a position the War Department championed. They did not believe Japan posed an existential threat to the United States in the way Germany did and felt Tokyo was so dependent on Western raw materials it would not risk war. Consequently, U.S. officials were comfortable adopting a defensive strategy in the Pacific while concentrating on the Atlantic.[106]

However, Japan was not ignored, either. U.S. strategy sought to deter Japan from mounting further aggression in East Asia while compelling it to end its war in China and reach a diplomatic settlement with the West. A War Department analysis finalized days before Stimson took office emphasized this: "The United States is today in position to discourage, and to render difficult if not impossible, a move by <u>one</u> [Japan] one of the aggressors which…would place that aggressor in undisputed control of a huge area…in the Pacific."[107] There were three problems with implementing this strategy though: U.S. activities were not entirely defensive, little consensus existed around which deterrence actions to take, and senior officials failed to fully appreciate the ideological motivations behind Japanese militancy. Japanese hardliners did not want war with the

[106] Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion," *Journal of Strategic Studies*.
[107] "Reflections on Certain Features of the Far Eastern Situation and Certain Problems of U.S. Far Eastern Policy," July 4, 1940, Safe File, Box 5: "Far East," RG 107, NARA (emphasis in original).

U.S., but they were willing to risk it to expand Tokyo's sphere of influence.[108] The result was a muddled Far Eastern policy that provoked rather than deterred Japan.

Stimson's Manchurian Crisis experience guided the War Department's thinking about Japan. He believed for years afterward that had Washington forcefully responded to Japan's invasion, Tokyo would have withdrawn.[109] "To get on with Japan," Stimson noted to Lord Lothian, "one had to treat her rough, unlike other countries. She doesn't understand any other treatment."[110] As he explained to his colleagues, Japan has "historically shown that when the United States indicates by clear language and bold actions that she intends to carry out a clear and affirmative policy in the Far East, Japan will yield to that policy even though it conflicts with her own Asiatic policy and conceived interests."[111] A policy of firmness, supported by robust deterrence, would check Japanese bellicosity and prevent war in the Pacific.

Hitler's victories in Europe significantly encouraged Japan. Taking advantage of Allied weakness, Tokyo demanded Western withdrawal from China and a cessation of supply shipments to the Chinese Nationalists.[112] Roosevelt's decision to move the main U.S. fleet from California to Hawaii earlier that year to deter Japan from additional expansion seemingly had little impact on Tokyo's behavior.[113] The other main U.S. coercive instrument was economic sanctions. Since Japan was a resource-poor island nation waging a costly war in China, American officials, especially at the War Department, believed it would be even more susceptible to sanctions than it

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[108] Barnhart, 163-64.
[109] See Chapter Two.
[110] Stimson Diary, August 25, 1940, HLSD.
[111] Ibid, "Historical Memorandum as to Japan's Relations with the United States Which May Have a Bearing Upon the Present Situation," October 2, 1940.
[112] This was not completely surprising to U.S. officials. See Office of Naval Intelligence memo to CNO, "Japanese Policy of Empire Expansion," July 13, 1940, attached to D.J. Callaghan memo to FDR, July 16, 1940, PSF Departmental Correspondence: Navy, July-October 1940, FDRL.
[113] Jonathan Utley, *Going to War with Japan, 1937-1941* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 84.

was during the Manchurian Crisis.[114] Morgenthau exploited this reasoning in July 1940 by advocating Roosevelt use his control of export licenses to ban the sale of all petroleum products and scrap metal to Japan.[115] The State Department opposed any form of economic warfare out of fear it would spark a Pacific crisis, but Roosevelt's cabinet was now dominated by Stimson and the hawks, who favored aggressive anti-Japanese measures.[116] Both sides ultimately compromised on embargoing aviation fuel and high-grade scrap; this disagreement exemplified the bureaucratic wrangling that defined the creation of U.S. Far Eastern strategy in 1940-41.[117] Improvisation often mitigated the bureaucratic infighting yet did not create the "clear and affirmative" policy process Stimson warned was necessary for deterring Japan.

The War Department worked to undermine the State Department's cautious stance by coordinating with other agencies to assemble the foundations for expanding the embargo. In the weeks after the original restrictions were announced, Stimson and Morgenthau notified Roosevelt Japan was still buying types of aviation fuel due to loopholes in the embargo.[118] They also moved to enlarge the boycott by readying the export licenses needed to ban additional products' sale to Japan.[119] When Japan invaded the northern half of French Indochina and signed the Tripartite Pact with the European Axis powers in September 1940, formalizing a defensive alliance with Hitler and Mussolini and confirming current U.S. policy was insufficient, the State Department had little

[114] G-2 to Marshall, "Use of U.S. Gasoline by Japan and the Axis Powers," July 25, 1940, Safe File, Box 4: "Embargo," RG 107, NARA; Ibid, Edward Stettinius memo to Stimson, July 26, 1940.
[115] Blum, *Morgenthau Diaries*, II: 351-54.
[116] Stimson Diary, July 18-19, 26, 1940, HLSD.
[117] Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*, 89.
[118] Stimson Diary, August 6-7, 13, September 9, 1940, HLSD; Morgenthau to FDR, "Petroleum Situation in Japan," August 14, 1940, Safe File, Box 4: "Embargo," RG 107, NARA; Ibid, Morgenthau to FDR, "Summary of Oil Situation in Japan, Germany, and German-Controlled Territory," September 6, 1940; The Office of Secretary of War Under Henry L. Stimson – Part I: The National Emergency, July 1940-December 1941," Section B: 12-13, Stimson Papers, reel 169.
[119] Stimson Diary, September 9, 1940, HLSD; Morgenthau to Stimson, "More Effective Control of Scrap Exports," Morgenthau Diary, September 11-13, 1940, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL.

choice but to acquiesce to new restrictions.[120] Roosevelt extended the embargo to all scrap metal and even considered a total ban on oil exports, but ditched the latter out of belief he needed peace in the Pacific to win reelection.[121] The conundrum to crafting a coherent Pacific strategy therefore was "not the absence of a foreign policy," as historian Jonathan Utley observed, "but too many policies within one administration."[122]

As evidence accumulated in 1941 that U.S. diplomatic and economic pressure was failing to deter Japanese expansion, the War Department's concerns grew. Washington lacked the resources to fight a Pacific conflict, especially while it was focused on the Atlantic. This left U.S. strategists facing a vexing dilemma between reaching a settlement with Japan that would likely forsake China and America's Pacific possessions or risking the possibility of a war the U.S. was not prepared to wage. In classic Rooseveltian fashion, his administration pursued both options.

While Hull negotiated with the Japanese, the War Department embraced a new form of airpower it believed could forestall Tokyo's advances. The B-17 "Flying Fortress" bomber was a long-range aircraft which could fly at high altitudes and unleash its payload with novel accuracy.[123] Army officials were so confident in their deterrent power that Marshall informed Stimson in April 1941 that the deployment of B-17s to the Pacific would ensure that "the Japs wouldn't dare attack Hawaii, particularly such a long distance from home."[124] The bombers appeared to be the answer to solving the fraught standoff with Japan, and if not, would still provide a major offensive weapon against Japanese forces after fighting commenced.[125] When Japan conquered the remainder of

[120] David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-1941: A Study in Competitive Co-Operation* (Raleigh, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 138-43.
[121] Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 242.
[122] Utley, 102.
[123] Michael S. Sherry, *The Rise of American Airpower: The Creation of Armageddon* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 55.
[124] Stimson Diary, April 23, 1941, HLSD.
[125] Sherry, *The Rise of American Airpower*, 103-05.

French Indochina in July, the transfer of B-17s to the Philippines and other forward U.S. bases in the Pacific convinced the War Department and the other cabinet hawks to back a complete embargo.[126] Roosevelt announced he was freezing Japanese assets in the United States, effectively imposing an oil embargo, but as implemented by U.S. officials, it became a *de facto* total trade embargo.[127] The War Department believed that Japanese leaders, confronted by a total economic embargo and the B-17s, would have no choice but to yield. Marshall even leaked the B-17s' deployment and their military capabilities to reporters to frighten Tokyo.[128] Although this had the opposite effect by making the Japanese increasingly desperate and fueling the likelihood of war, Stimson was telling Roosevelt and top administration officials weeks before Pearl Harbor that recent U.S. actions had the ability to "shake the Japanese out of the Axis" and prevent conflict in the Pacific.[129]

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor finally brought the United States into World War II. Not only was the U.S. Pacific Fleet decimated in Hawaii, but the B-17s in the Philippines were destroyed as Japan launched a massive offensive throughout Southeast Asia.[130] American improvisation, infighting, and miscalculation laid the groundwork for Japan's surprise assault, but it also led the War Department to making one of the gravest mistakes of the war: interning over 100,000 Japanese Americans, a majority of whom were native-born citizens.[131] After U.S. entry into the war, West Coast politicians and Army officials began agitating for the removal of Japanese

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[126] Stimson Diary, July 5, 1941, HLSD; Patterson to Stimson, "Notes of Cabinet Meeting," July 18, 1941, Stimson Papers, reel 127; D.W. Bell cabinet notes, Morgenthau Diary, July 23-25, 1941, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL.
[127] Heinrichs, 135, 177-78.
[128] Bland, *Marshall Papers*, II: 676-81.
[129] For example, see Memorandum of Conference Between Secretary Hull and Secretary Stimson, October 6, 1941, HLSD; Ibid, Memorandum of Conference with W. Averell Harriman at Woodley, October 21, 1941; Ibid, Stimson to FDR, October 21, 1941; Ibid, Stimson Diary, October 28, 1941.
[130] HB Oral History, COHP.
[131] For comprehensive treatment on Japanese American internment, see Roger Daniels, *The Decision to Relocate the Japanese Americans* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1975); Greg Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Americans away from the Pacific coastline, claiming without evidence the population was filled with spies and saboteurs.[132] Stimson tasked McCloy with determining if evacuations were necessary, with McCloy initially skeptical of their efficacy.[133] But after steady pressure from those favoring removal, McCloy flipped and convinced Stimson to back internment despite Stimson's legal misgivings.[134] Astonishingly, neither man requested substantive proof of these extraordinary allegations.

After overcoming opposition from the Justice Department, Stimson obtained Roosevelt's approval for the relocations and Executive Order 9066 was issued on February 19, 1942, stripping tens of thousands of American citizens of their civil rights.[135] Stimson's racism clearly played a role in his decision – he wrote in his diary while considering the issue that Japanese Americans' "racial characteristics are such that we cannot understand or trust even the citizen Japanese…the people of the United States have made an enormous mistake in underestimating the Japanese."[136] However, it is also crucial to understand the decision's context. Japan was scoring victory after victory in Asia, generating fears amongst military leaders it could soon achieve naval dominance in the Pacific and then attempt an invasion of the West Coast.[137] A Japanese fifth column inside the United States, according to this logic, would be crucial for any successful attack. But perhaps even more important for grasping Stimson's decision was the faith and trust he put in McCloy, one of his closest aides. Part of Stimson's attraction to McCloy when he hired him was McCloy's

[132] Aldrich, 279-81.
[133] Daniels, 42, 93-99.
[134] Bird, *The Chairman*, 150-52. Stimson initially worried internment could violate the Constitution. See Stimson Diary, February 10, 1942, HLSD.
[135] Stimson Diary, February 18, 1942, HLSD; Executive Order 9066 – Authorizing the Secretary of War to Prescribe Military Areas, February, 19, 1942, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-9066-authorizing-the-secretary-war-prescribe-military-areas, accessed January 23, 2023).
[136] Stimson Diary, February 10, 1942, HLSD.
[137] Ibid.

experience working on wartime sabotage.[138] Before recruiting him full-time, Stimson asked McCloy to advise him on how to defend the country from German subversion.[139] With America now at war, McCloy was the best person at the War Department to explore potential Japanese disruption on the West Coast. So when McCloy recommended internment to Stimson, it is not surprising Stimson ultimately accepted it. Stimson's racial prejudices certainly were a factor, but not the decisive one. Indeed, more German- and Italian Americans were relocated, interned, or repatriated than Japanese Americans during World War II.[140] Nevertheless, internment was a blight on Stimson's War Department and one of the largest American moral failings of the war.

Unlike the War Department's performance in devising American policy toward the European war, where it played a positive role, its record on the Pacific side was mixed. U.S. Far Eastern strategy was plagued by sharp disagreements which resulted in bitter bureaucratic infighting about how to face Japan and avert war. The War Department and the other cabinet hawks successfully prodded Roosevelt to gradually squeeze Tokyo, but their inability to establish consensus around how regional deterrence might work and their failure to comprehend Japanese motivations in the Pacific made hostilities likelier. The Army's experience confronting Japan in 1940-41 was a lesson in deterrence's limits and how hardline rhetoric combined with tough measures do not always guarantee favorable outcomes. Successful strategy requires an alignment of objectives and capabilities, which eluded U.S. policymakers throughout this period. As the War Department shifted toward striving to defeat the Axis powers and winning the war, it would be reminded of this again and again.

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[138] McCloy had worked extensively on the Black Tom sabotage case from World War I.
[139] Bird*, The Chairman*, 113.
[140] John E. Schmitz, *Enemies Among Us: The Relocation, Internment, and Repatriation of German, Italian, and Japanese Americans During the Second World War* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2021).

Chapter Five

The Proper and Orthodox Way of War[1]

Traditional accounts of the Allied grand strategic debates during World War II stress the divergence between the American and British approaches to waging war against the Axis. In these interpretations, Roosevelt, Churchill, and their military chiefs were the primary shapers of grand strategy and policy. However, this chapter argues these studies have focused too much on certain figures and have relatively marginalized others who played crucial roles in shaping these debates. One of those comparatively overlooked figures was Henry Stimson, who was a vital player on the American side in influencing the politics of U.S. strategy and pushing it toward launching a cross-Channel invasion of France. The Joint Chiefs of Staff were often internally divided over how to win the war and struggled to influence policy accordingly. The lack of focused political coordination between the War Department and the JCS made it difficult to convince Roosevelt to open a second front in Western Europe, which opened the door to following the British Mediterranean strategy for defeating Germany, starting with the Anglo-American invasion of North Africa.

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As news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor trickled into Washington on December 7, 1941, Henry Stimson did not feel anger or sorrow, but instead a sense of relief. Despite the disastrous reports of American losses, Stimson was not alarmed. "For I feel," Stimson wrote, "that this country united has practically nothing to fear." From that day forward, the United States was again

[1] A version of this chapter was published as Grant Golub, "The Proper and Orthodox Way of War: Henry Stimson, the War Department, and the Politics of U.S. Military Policy During World War II," *The International History Review* 44, no. 6 (2022): 1248–68, https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2022.2046624.

able to 'take unified action for the peace and security of herself and the world.'[2] After a week of frantic efforts to bolster U.S. defenses of its War Department-run possessions in the Philippines and the initial chaos and shock of the attack on Pearl Harbor subsided, Stimson began to focus on "the step which I have looked forward to and prophesied for so long – that of an open declared war against the Axis minions of evil."[3]

On a broader level, the Japanese assault and America's subsequent entrance into World War II allowed Stimson and the War Department to focus on formulating an American military policy for defeating the Axis powers. However, the War Department's role as a bureaucratic and political actor in this process has largely been obscured by historians' more narrow focus on top elected leaders and senior military officials. In many major studies of the Anglo-American war effort, it is often portrayed that Roosevelt, Churchill, the JCS, and their British counterparts on the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COS) were the primary designers of their nations' joint military strategy. More specifically, it is argued that Marshall and the JCS, established in early 1942, were the chief advocates of a direct assault on German military power through an invasion of northwestern Europe and the main opponents of British strategic concepts, which envisioned a series of peripheral engagements in the Mediterranean basin designed to weaken the Germans in a war of attrition.[4] In other words, the image one predominantly gains from these interpretations features a bifurcated policy process largely driven by each countries' military chiefs and their

[2] Stimson Diary, December 7, 1941, HLSD; Stimson and Bundy, 394.
[3] Stimson to John S. Muirhead, December 15, 1941, Stimson Papers, reel 105.
[4] For example, see Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*; Larrabee, *Commander in Chief*; Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*; Stoler, *Marshall*; Stoler, *Allies in War*; Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front*; Steele, *The First Offensive*; Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*; Todman, *Into Battle*; Weigley, *The American Way of War*; Michael Howard, *The Mediterranean Strategy in the Second World War* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968); Michael Howard, *History of the Second World War: Grand Strategy*, vol. 4 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1972); Andrew Buchanan, *American Grand Strategy in the Mediterranean during World War II* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Daniel Todman, *Britain's War: A New World, 1942-1947* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

political masters while both sides were at loggerheads as they inflexibly pushed their preferred approaches.

This representation is an incorrect oversimplification. In critiquing this standard depiction, this chapter makes two overlapping and mutually reinforcing arguments. The first argument is that these accounts obscure other influential voices in the Allied grand strategic debates and marginalize those who played crucial roles in shaping American strategy. Stimson is one of those comparatively overlooked figures, yet he was one of the main shapers of U.S. grand strategy during the early phase of American wartime involvement. As secretary of war, Stimson was setting the agenda on the U.S. side and driving much of the politics of the strategic debate. While Stimson was steadily advocating for a direct European invasion, his JCS colleagues oscillated between which strategies to pursue and were often internally divided over how to win the war. In fact, after official U.S. entry, the JCS alternated between pushing their own ideas and accepting British ones.[5] At one point, they decided to abandon the Europe-first approach and formed a broad consensus around a Pacific-first strategy. Their military advice usually shifted based on strategic developments in the European and Pacific theaters. This dysfunction and inconsistency ultimately made it difficult for the JCS to influence military policy.

This leads to the second argument, which is that these divisions between the War Department and the JCS made it difficult to present a united front to Roosevelt and coherently press for certain policies, such as the cross-Channel invasion, to be adopted. As these debates were unfolding, Roosevelt was wavering on how to get U.S. troops into battle. For political reasons, Roosevelt was overwhelmingly concerned with having U.S. forces engage the Axis in 1942

[5] For an argument that points this out to some degree, see James Lacey, "Toward a strategy: Creating an American strategy for global war, 1940-1943" in Williamson Murray, Richard Hart Sinnreich, and James Lacey, eds., *The Shaping of Grand Strategy: Policy, Diplomacy, and War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

somewhere in the European theater; he was flexible about the location itself, so long as Americans saw their troops fighting Germans. When the British were able to provide this to a growingly impatient Roosevelt in the summer of 1942 in the form of a North Africa invasion, he seized it, thus temporarily ending the debate.

By examining these strategic disputes in this manner, this chapter sheds light on the underappreciated level of improvisation that underpinned U.S. grand strategy in this period. In doing so, it helps clarify who can be responsible for crafting strategy, especially during wartime.[6] The stakes of this strategy debate could not have been higher. Its outcome would have far-reaching repercussions for how ordinary Americans understood the war and the way the Allies would strive to conquer the Axis. This meant it was essential to get the policy right so support for the war could be won. With all that in mind, the often chaotic and divided American approach to winning the war is better understood.

Battle Lines

Before the United States entered the war, American strategists were already considering how it could defeat the Axis. In November 1940, days after Roosevelt won an unprecedented third term, Admiral Stark forwarded a memorandum to Navy Secretary Frank Knox in which he argued American security was linked to the survival of the British Empire, which was needed to preserve the European balance of power and prevent the rise of a dominant Continental hegemon. If Britain collapsed, he warned, it was likely the Axis powers would seek to expand their control and attempt penetration into the Western Hemisphere. He also pointed out Britain lacked sufficient manpower and war material to defeat Germany, necessitating assistance from allies who could launch expansive land offensives, namely, the United States. In Stark's view, America had four major

[6] Borgwardt et al., *Rethinking American Grand Strategy*; David Gethin Morgan-Owen, "History and the Perils of Grand Strategy," *The Journal of Modern History* 92, no. 2 (June 2020): 351–85, https://doi.org/10.1086/708500.

strategic choices, but he argued the final one, Plan D or "Dog," was superior: maintain the defensive against Japan in the Pacific while focusing on launching massive offensive operations in the Atlantic and Europe against Germany. Ultimately, Stark believed 'the continued existence of the British Empire, combined with building up a strong protection in our home areas, will do most to ensure the status quo in the Western Hemisphere, and to promote our principal national interests.'[7] Knox sent the memorandum to the White House, but Roosevelt avoided endorsing it. However, the president did approve secret military staff talks with the British, one of Stark's recommendations.

Those conversations, which took place between January-March 1941 in Washington, yielded the ABC-1 agreement. In it, both sides agreed to a 'Germany-first' framework for vanquishing the Axis and a set of peripheral action policies to accomplish that: economic pressure and blockade, strategic bombing, early elimination of Italy from the war, minor raids and offensives; support for resistance movements, and offensive operations in North Africa and the Mediterranean to establish bases for the final campaign against Germany.[8] Crucially, the British had proposed those policies during the talks, and the Americans agreed to support the British "indirect" approach to Nazi defeat.[9] Although the agreement was not binding since the U.S. was

[7] Stark to Knox, "Memorandum for the Secretary," November 12, 1940, PSF Safe File: Navy Department, 'Plan Dog,' FDRL. Stark's memorandum can also be found in Steven T. Ross, ed., *American War Plans, 1919-1941, 5 vols*. (New York: Garland, 1992), 3: 225-74. See also Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion," *Journal of Strategic Studies*; Morton, "Germany First."

[8] The ABC-1 report can be found in TNA, CAB 99/5, "British-United States Staff Conversations, 1941." ABC-1 and the revised RAINBOW 5 are also reproduced in Ross, *American War Plans*, 4: 3-66 and 5: 3-43.

[9] The two sides did disagree however over British requests for U.S. aid in the defense of Singapore. After the British stressed the importance of Singapore to their interests in the Far East, the American delegation invited their counterparts to present an appreciation of their views. In their memorandum, the British indirectly requested U.S. naval assistance for Singapore, which infuriated the Americans. In an aide-mémoire of their own, the Americans explicitly declined to reinforce Singapore. When Churchill learned about all this, he was angry his directives had not been followed to avoid the Singapore question and ordered the entire matter should be abandoned for the duration of the talks. See U.S.-U.K. Conversations Minutes, February 10, 1941; "The Far East," Appreciation by the United Kingdom Delegation, February 11, 1941; Statement by the United States Staff Committee, "The United States Military Position in the Far East," February 19, 1941, all in TNA, CAB 99/5. For the U.S. Army delegates' private thoughts on Singapore, see Stanley Embick, Leonard Gerow, Sherman Miles, and Joseph McNarney memo to

not an active belligerent, U.S. military planners used it to revise their primary war plan – RAINBOW 5, solidifying a future blueprint for Anglo-American coalition warfare. Several months later, they upheld those policies in a set of documents known as the "Joint Board Estimate of United States Overall Production Requirements," which attempted to formulate a clear American grand strategy for potential involvement in the war.[10] Before Pearl Harbor then, the American and British military establishments largely agreed on grand strategy: they would concentrate on defeating Germany first and pursue the British indirect method to do it.[11]

Seen as the culmination of a year's worth of transatlantic exchanges on grand strategy, the Anglo-American military conclusions reached in Washington between December 1941-January 1942 make more sense. Codenamed ARCADIA, the First Washington Conference led to a series of pivotal determinations that shaped the war effort in 1942-43. As the British traveled to Washington, Churchill summarized his strategic views for Roosevelt. In keeping with the peripheral or "Mediterranean strategy," Churchill proposed an Anglo-American invasion of

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Marshall, "Dispatch of United States Forces to Singapore," February 12, 1941, OPD Exec. 4, item 11, RG 165, NARA. For Churchill's instructions to avoid the Singapore issue before the ABC-1 talks, see TNA, CAB 121/146 "Minute by the Prime Minister commenting on Washington Telegram No. 2952 dated 7 December," December 7, 1940. For Churchill's order to drop the Singapore issue during the ABC-1 conversations, see TNA, Records of the Admiralty, ADM 116/4877, Churchill minute to First Lord and First Sea Lord, February 17, 1941.

[10] Marshall and Stark to FDR, "Joint Board Estimate of United States Overall Production Requirements," September 11, 1941, PSF Safe File: American-British Joint Chiefs of Staff, FDRL. It can also be found at http://www.alternatewars.com/WW2/VictoryPlan/JointBoard.htm and is reproduced in Ross, *American War Plans,* 5: 143-298. Many historians have referred to the Joint Board Estimate and its supporting documents as the 'Victory Program,' crediting then-Major Albert C. Wedemeyer as the major or even sole author, especially the Army 'Ground Forces Requirements' study. For example, see Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 140-41; Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries,* 45-50; Steele, 30-31; Lowenthal, *Leadership and Indecision*, II: 624-41; Charles E. Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future and a Doubtful Present: Writing the Victory Program of 1941* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1992). However, Lacey argues it is one of the "more enduring myths of World War II" that Wedemeyer drafted the Victory Program and that industrial planners found the Joint Board Estimate's mobilization estimates "so wildly inaccurate as to be worthless." See Lacey, "Toward a strategy," 187-88. See also James Lacey, "World War II's Real Victory Program," *The Journal of Military History* 75, no. 3 (July 2011): 811–34. Due to this discrepancy, this document is referred to as the Joint Board Estimate.

[11] A meeting between Stimson, two of his civilian deputies, and top Army planners further indicates that senior Army officials felt the U.S. did not have the munitions capacity to undertake "major offensive operations" against Germany and would not for some time. See "Conference of the Secretary and McCloy and Bundy with General Gerow and Major Wedemeyer," September 16, 1941, Stimson Papers, reel 127.

French North Africa – Operation GYMNAST – as their first major 1942 offensive operation. If it was successful, the West could establish control over the entire North African shore and use it as a base for further offensives on the European continent in 1943.[12]

In response, the Joint Army-Navy Board suggested a series of defensive moves to shore up Allied positions in the face of worldwide Axis advances. One project deviated though – supporting British armies in North Africa with matériel, air units, and eventually ground troops if necessary. Moreover, aiding the establishment of additional bases needed to maintain sea and air communications across the Atlantic was a priority, including along the African coasts.[13] It was likely American forces would be needed for that. The Joint Board did not mention any potential European offensive operations, undercutting the narrative that had been U.S. strategy from the beginning. Churchill's memorandum and the Joint Board reply basically amounted to the opening American and British positions at ARCADIA. There was little daylight between them.

Once ARCADIA began, vital decisions were placed in a grand strategy memorandum produced by the U.S. and British Chiefs of Staff. Known as ABC-4/CS-1 or WW-1, the military chiefs reaffirmed the Germany-first approach. On *how* to defeat Germany, they adopted the indirect British strategy first developed in ABC-1 and later supported in the Joint Board Estimate, which they called "closing the ring." This required securing the Russian front, supporting Turkey's resistance to the Axis, strengthening Allied forces in the Middle East, and seizing control of North Africa. From there, European land offensives could be planned and initiated. Critically, the chiefs noted "it does not seem likely that in 1942 any large-scale land offensive against Germany except

[12] Churchill memo, December 16-20, 1941, *FRUS: The Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca, 1943*, Document 23.
[13] Ibid, Papers by the Joint Board, December 21, 1941, Document 34. Brigadier General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who at the time was Deputy Chief of the Army War Plans Division, played a large role in drafting this document. See Alfred D. Chandler, ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970) (hereafter *Eisenhower Papers*), I: 20.

on the Russian front will be possible" but added a "return to the Continent" could occur in 1943.[14] This was entirely in line with the U.S. strategy outlined in the Joint Board Estimate, which clearly stated offensive operations on the German periphery were required to mount a successful invasion of mainland Europe.[15]

Additionally, the U.S. chiefs, who are often identified as the leading opponents of the peripheral strategy, voiced little to no opposition to British strategic concepts or to offensive operations in North Africa, specifically GYMNAST.[16] At one point, Marshall explicitly argued in GYMNAST's favor, reasoning that if the Allies did not take the initiative, the Germans would capture North Africa; after that, ejecting them would become exceedingly difficult.[17] One historian contends Marshall presented his objections to GYMNAST in a January 9 memorandum to Roosevelt.[18] Nowhere in the memorandum, however, does he oppose the operation in principle; instead, his reservations were logistical and tactical as opposed to strategic.[19] Indeed, in multiple reports written during ARCADIA, U.S.-U.K. military planners maintained joint Anglo-American occupation of French North Africa was integral to the war effort. Although they shared some of Marshall's logistical concerns, they argued an Anglo-American occupation was of "first strategical importance in the Atlantic Area" and that "our primary object is to establish ourselves in Northern

[14] "American-British Grand Strategy," Memorandum by the United States and British Chiefs of Staff, December 31, 1941, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 115.
[15] Marshall also explicitly argued this in a memorandum he sent to Roosevelt a few days before the president received the Joint Board Estimate. He wrote, "Our broad concept of encircling Germany and closing in on her step by step is the only practical way of wearing down her war potential by military and economic pressure. In the final decisive phase we must come to grips with and annihilate the German military machine." See Marshall to FDR, "Ground Forces," September 22, 1941, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War, September-December 1941, FDRL. See also Stimson to FDR, September 23, 1941, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War – Henry L. Stimson, 1940-1941, FDRL.
[16] The U.S. chiefs offered slight revisions to British ideas, but no fundamental changes. See *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Documents 47-48, 52, 56, 67, 80, 83, 88, 96-97, 99, 105-107, 110, 112.
[17] "Notes on Conference at Office of the SW," January 4, 1942, Stimson Papers, reel 127. See also Steele, *The First Offensive*, 65-68.
[18] Buchanan, 36-37.
[19] Marshall to FDR, "North Africa," January 9, 1942, PSF Safe File: North Africa, FDRL.

French Morocco as quickly as possible" to "form a base from which Allied control of all North Africa could be extended."[20] Therefore, alternative explanations for why the U.S. military chiefs acceded to a strategy they were allegedly hostile toward do not pass muster.[21] At this stage, in contrast to the claims of other historians, they did not have serious issues with British military strategy because it largely reflected their own.

Meanwhile, Stimson had more explicit reservations about the peripheral strategy and military operations in Africa. As an artillery commander in France during World War I, Stimson had witnessed firsthand the massive wartime mobilization of American resources, believing they helped the Allies overwhelm Germany and deliver the decisive blow on the Western Front. This experience shaped his strategic thinking and convinced him that both concentration of force and direct attacks on an enemy's industrial base were the soundest way to quickly defeat adversaries.[22] Similarly to many other contemporary U.S. military strategists, Stimson pointed to American history for additional evidence of this approach's superiority. This group believed the Union ultimately won the American Civil War through Ulysses S. Grant's Overland Campaign, which repeatedly entailed Grant's forces directly attacking Confederate armies in their industrial heartland, eventually threatening their supply bases and the Confederate capital. The U.S. experience during World War I only seemed to reinforce this perspective. Moreover, as a savvy New York corporate attorney, Stimson personified the idea of direct action. Overwhelming your opponent was how Stimson practiced law: in the courtroom, he preferred to overcome his foes

[20] "Project – Gymnast," Report by the Planning Committee of the United States and British Chiefs of Staff, December 26, 1941, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 126; "Movements and Projects in the Atlantic Theater – For the First Half of 1942," Report by the Planning Committee of the United States and British Chiefs of Staff, January 13, 1942, Document 143.
[21] For example, see Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front*, 25; Steele, *The First Offensive*, 60-68; J.R.M. Butler and J.M.A. Gwyer, *History of the Second World War: Grand Strategy*, vol. 3 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), 357-58.
[22] Morison, 581-82, 592; Jonathan W. Jordan, *American Warlords: How Roosevelt's High Command Led America to Victory in World War II* (New York: NAL Caliber, 2015), 158.

with mountains of evidence and liked to attack problems with lengthy, forceful memoranda.[23] Accordingly, guided by experience and temperament, he believed any diversion of scarce U.S. resources away from conclusively confronting Germany, America's chief enemy, was a detriment to the national interest and could prejudice ultimate U.S. victory in the war.

Starting in October 1941, during meetings with senior American and British officials, Stimson emphasized that if the United States entered the war, the first task must be to secure the British Isles from a potential German invasion. For example, he told Hull U.S. forces could not get "bogged down in any of the side issues," such as Africa or the Middle East, before the invasion threat to Britain was removed.[24] Stimson derided a potential U.S. plan to send American troops to Northwest Africa to distract the Germans from invading Britain as foolish because it could leave Britain virtually defenseless. An American invasion of Northwest Africa would also prevent mobilization for more vital theaters of war, such as Britain and the North Atlantic.[25] Stimson, with Marshall by his side, advised Roosevelt against plans that would spread American forces into disparate regions and that U.S. troops were needed to defend Britain, especially if the Germans defeated the Soviets on the Eastern Front.[26] But unlike Marshall or the other military chiefs, who expressed at least an openness to African operations, Stimson plainly resisted a vast majority of the proposed ones even before the U.S. had entered the war.[27]

Before the British arrived in Washington for ARCADIA, Stimson sent Roosevelt a memorandum outlining the issues the United States now faced as a full-scale belligerent after

[23] Ibid; Stimson to FDR, August 10, 1943, HLSD; For more on Grant's influence on World War II-era American military strategists, see Weigley 312-59.
[24] "Memorandum of Conference Between Secretary Hull and Secretary Stimson," October 6, 1941, HLSD.
[25] Ibid, Stimson Diary, October 7, 10, 1941.
[26] Ibid, Stimson Diary, October 9-10, 1941; Lord Halifax to Churchill, October 11, 1941, Correspondence with Winston Churchill, Prime Minister, Papers of Lord Halifax, Hickleton Papers, Borthwick Institute for Historical Research, University of York, Yorkshire, UK.
[27] For Marshall and senior Army planners' openness to operations in North or West Africa in the fall of 1941 before Pearl Harbor, see Steele, 30-33.

consulting with Marshall, Lieutenant General Henry Arnold, the chief of the Army Air Forces (AAF), and top Army planners. He argued the North Atlantic should be America's principal operational theater and that U.S. troops should immediately be sent to the British Isles to fortify their defenses. Stimson also contended that if the southwestern Pacific fell entirely into Japanese hands, it would demoralize America's European allies and would threaten the entire U.S. position in the overall Pacific theater; consequently, it should receive the most attention after the North Atlantic. [28] An Allied expeditionary force in West Africa would be helpful for protecting trans-Atlantic communication lines, but for the remaining theaters, Stimson believed the U.S. should only supply British efforts and should not dispatch military units. This basic outline would guide Stimson's thinking during ARCADIA and throughout 1942. The president concurred with Stimson's suggestions on the North Atlantic and the Pacific while ordering the other theaters be studied for potential action.[29]

Throughout ARCADIA, Stimson pushed for concentrating U.S. forces in the British Isles and consistently against peripheral operations in Africa. Both sides agreed with Stimson that the primary objective should be to protect Anglo-American communication lines across the North Atlantic and that American troops should begin arriving in the British Isles immediately.[30] At the first meeting, Churchill repeated his earlier proposal of American landings in French Morocco, provided a Vichy French "invitation," as the beginning of offensive operations to secure North Africa. But Stimson was the only American to counter, suggesting U.S. troops moving into Ireland would convince the Vichy French of American resolve and would facilitate British and French

[28] Stimson to FDR, "A suggested analysis of the basic topics and their attendant problems," December 20, 1941, HLSD.
[29] "Memorandum of Decisions at White House," December 21, 1941, HLSD.
[30] Stimson Diary, December 23, 1941, HLSD.

resistance arrangements for securing the region.[31] Roosevelt said it was important to get U.S. forces "somewhere in active fighting across the Atlantic" in 1942, but the conversation ended without resolution. At the beginning of ARCADIA then, it was immediately clear there were divisions within the American camp over military policy. While the military chiefs supported the British approach and Roosevelt obsessed over the political dimensions of the issue, Stimson was skeptical of invading North Africa. In Stimson's mind, operations there would do little to move the Allies closer to their ultimate goal: defeating Germany. These gaps persisted throughout the remainder of the conference.

Stimson continued to advise against North African operations. After meeting with Marshall, Arnold, and senior Army officers on January 3, he told Roosevelt about some of their unease with GYMNAST. Stimson explained it would be harder to achieve success in North Africa than Churchill believed, and that America's first large operation should be a "resounding success."[32] He added Hitler would put special effort into denying them a victory for precisely this reason because it would shift world opinion toward the Allies if "the great republic of the West moved in strongly." Therefore, the implication was that undertaking an operation such as GYMNAST was a risky proposition at best.

At another White House meeting, Stimson strongly voiced his concerns about GYMNAST. He implied the conferees were spending "considerable" amounts of time on GYMNAST, which the secretary found imprudent given North Africa's relative insignificance in his eyes.[33] Stimson then raised his political and military concerns with the operation. He worried about the unstable political situation in French North Africa and whether the Spanish would be able to deter a German

[31] Marshall memo, December 23, 1941, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 47.
[32] Stimson Diary, January 3, 1942, HLSD.
[33] "Notes by Lieutenant General Arnold," January 4, 1942, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 97.

invasion of the Iberian Peninsula, which Germany would need as a base to launch a successful counterattack to GYMNAST. Stimson said GYMNAST would only be successful if the Allies could establish air superiority until the landings were complete, something he was not optimistic about, and that an operation such as this would require considerable amounts of U.S. naval assets, a critical diversion from the Pacific.[34] He fretted over the possibility of the Germans establishing themselves on the Iberian Peninsula, claimed the Axis had better knowledge of North Africa than the Allies, and said they required a "fifth column" in the region to feed them reliable intelligence, something Stimson believed the Allies currently lacked. Roosevelt shared Stimson's anxieties about the French and Spanish, but challenged Stimson's other conclusions, saying he thought the Axis would have similar problems.[35] Throughout the rest of the meeting, Stimson continued to voice his concerns while the other military advisers refrained from questioning the operation, but the meeting adjourned without a decision.

The issue became moot on the last day of ARCADIA when Roosevelt and Churchill settled on a timeline for GYMNAST. At the final high-level meeting of the conference, it was agreed that if the North African political situation remained stable, the operation could begin in May.[36] Marshall added one U.S. infantry division would be immediately ready and another could arrive four weeks after GYMNAST began.[37] However, if Germany invaded French North Africa before that, Roosevelt felt the Allies should counterattack with whatever forces they then had available. To allay Stimson's concerns, Roosevelt assured everyone other steps were being taken to ensure

[34] Ibid, "Meeting of Roosevelt and Churchill with their military advisers, 5:30 p.m.," January 4, 1942, Document 96.
[35] Ibid.
[36] "Meeting of Roosevelt and Churchill with their military advisers, 5:30 p.m.," January 14, 1942, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 112.
[37] Ibid. Also see "Operation Super-Gymnast," Report by the Planning Committee of the United States and British Chiefs of Staff, January 14, 1942, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 144.

Vichy French cooperation and to organize opposition to a potential German North Africa occupation.

Stimson did not object to these decisions at the meeting, perhaps because he felt they were unlikely to be definitive considering how delicate the Pacific situation was at the time.[38] Notwithstanding, Stimson remained opposed to GYMNAST, which he made clear to General Joseph Stilwell, the officer originally chosen to lead any North African invasion. Stimson told Stilwell he thought GYMNAST was too risky due to probable inability of establishing air protection for the invading ground forces, but that a West African operation could be feasible if necessary.[39] Despite his lack of protests at the final meeting, Stimson had established himself as the primary high-level antagonist to GYMNAST, North African operations, and the broader Mediterranean strategy. While Marshall and the other U.S. military chiefs had some tactical reservations about GYMNAST, they agreed to the British peripheral strategy summarized in WW-1 and supported North African operations in principle. This was in line with the strategic views outlined in the Joint Board Estimate, which had called for initial offensive action on the German perimeter. At the same time, Stimson made it clear he favored amassing U.S. forces in the British Isles to protect them from German invasion and to prepare for an eventual European invasion. Yet the apparent gaps between Stimson, Roosevelt, and the Chiefs on military policy were not confined to ARCADIA. In fact, it was merely a preview of what was to come, an opening chapter in the discordant and disorderly American approach to military strategy.

Alliance Politics and Military Strategy

[38] Stimson and Bundy, 415.
[39] Stimson Diary, January 14, 1942, HLSD; Joseph W. Stilwell, *The Stilwell Papers*, ed. Theodore H. White (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1948), 25.

By early 1942, the emerging "Grand Alliance" between Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union was on uneven ground. After roughly eighteen months of burgeoning Anglo-American cooperation before Pearl Harbor, thorny diplomatic, military, and political questions began to create serious areas of contention between the two countries. Managing relations with their uneasy Soviet allies is arguably where many of these hurdles converged.

After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 killed the Nazi-Soviet nonaggression pact of August 1939, Churchill and Roosevelt welcomed Stalin as an ally and pledged assistance to his beleaguered nation. Although American and British diplomatic and military intelligence sources initially believed Germany would quickly defeat the Soviets, by the late summer it was clear Russian resistance was stronger than anticipated and German forces would not cruise to victory.[40] In response, London and Moscow signed an agreement to supply each other with all possible aid and to not conclude a separate peace with Germany while Roosevelt worked to accelerate U.S. material support to Russia.[41]

However, Stalin was suspicious of Western motives and demanded further action. He wanted postwar recognition of recent Soviet territorial acquisitions granted under the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the immediate establishment of a second front in Western Europe to relieve pressure on his armies. Both demands horrified many in London, but eventually Churchill and Eden reluctantly calculated accepting the Soviet annexations was critical for building trust with Moscow.[42] Yet the Americans opposed such territorial settlements as a violation of the Atlantic Charter and believed it would reward prior Soviet aggression and create diplomatic and political problems such as those

[40] See Chapter Four.
[41] Mark A. Stoler, "The Grand Alliance in World War II," in Peter R. Mansoor and Williamson Murray, eds., *Grand Strategy and Military Alliances* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 137.
[42] Steven M. Miner, *Between Churchill and Stalin: The Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the Origins of the Grand Alliance* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 184-213.

stemming from the secret treaties during World War I.[43] With the legacy of Woodrow Wilson in mind, Roosevelt informed Churchill he strongly opposed clandestine deals and that such agreements should not be decided until a postwar peace conference.[44]

It was within these convoluted circumstances that larger debates over military strategy began to erupt. By February 1942, the U.S. military chiefs, now organized as the JCS, and their planners shifted strategic course in response to political and military developments. In late January, the British offensive in Libya, a key perquisite for GYMNAST, failed when the Germans launched a successful counterattack from El Aghelia and drove British forces back to the Gazala line, just west of Tobruk. At the same time, the Vichy French declined to cooperate with an Anglo-American invasion of their North African territory, dashing another GYMNAST necessity. In the Pacific, Army planners originally agreed to send reinforcements to stem the Japanese advance, but with Allied naval fleets decimated and the Japanese capture of Singapore in February, these efforts backfired. Japan's full conquest of the Dutch East Indies and the Philippines now appeared inevitable, making additional reinforcements pointless.[45] Brigadier General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the chief U.S. Army planner, summed up the emerging Army opinion on military strategy at the time in a personal memorandum: "We've got to go to Europe and fight – and we've got to quit wasting resources all over the world – and still worse – wasting time."[46]

Following Allied reversals and major shipping losses, Churchill and Roosevelt decided in early March to postpone GYMNAST indefinitely. In response to these events, Army planners developed proposals in late February for an immediate buildup of Allied forces in Britain for a direct continental attack across the English Channel on northwestern Europe. They thought this

[43] Stoler, "The Grand Alliance in World War II," 143.
[44] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 221-22. Also see Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 14-46.
[45] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 71.
[46] Chandler, *Eisenhower Papers*, I: 66.

concept would address the two basic military issues they saw facing the Allies in 1942: the global diffusion of military forces and the need to relieve pressure on the Soviets fighting on the Eastern Front.[47]

The Army proposals seemed logical enough, but not everyone viewed the strategic situation similarly. While Army planners was devising these blueprints, the U.S. Joint Staff Planners (JPS), consisting of officials from across the military, examined the global picture and came to opposite conclusions. As the JCS's main strategic planning organization, the JPS and their analyses carried significant influence with their bosses. Since the Army, Navy, and AAF were all equally represented, the JPS was seen as reflecting the broad opinion of all three service branches on a variety of key issues.

Due to the deterioration of the Allied position in North Africa and the Southwest Pacific, the JPS argued the U.S. should adopt the strategic defensive across the world and focus on expanding munitions production. Once additional forces became available, the U.S. should stabilize the situation in the Mediterranean basin and Southwest Pacific through offensive action in North Africa and Southeast Asia. At the same time, it should continue to undermine the Axis through blockade, aerial bombing, and subversive activities.[48] In other words, the U.S. should mostly adhere to the grand strategy affirmed at ARCADIA. Although these differences were at lower levels of the defense bureaucracy, they were indicative of the increasing levels of improvisation that characterized American military strategy at the time. Different groups of U.S. officials would evaluate new developments but make strikingly different judgements over how to

[47] Ibid, 149-55.
[48] JPS 4-A, "Agreed Concepts of Grand Strategy: Evaluation and Revision Where Appropriate of Agreed Concepts as Affecting Deployment of United States Forces," February 14, 1942, CCS 381 (2-2-42), RG 218: Records of the Joint and Combined Chiefs of Staff, NARA.

proceed. This continuously hampered the U.S. ability to coherently craft their own approach to fighting the war.

Around the same time Eisenhower was drafting his plan to amass U.S. forces in the British Isles, Stimson was independently coming to the same conclusions. He felt it had been a mistake not to agree to any strategic plans during ARCADIA to use Britain as a base for offensive operations on the European continent. Stimson was concerned the absence of such a plan was allowing diversionary shipments of soldiers and supplies to secondary theaters.[49] Days before Eisenhower sent Army cross-Channel proposals to Marshall, Stimson told Eisenhower and McCloy it was time to end the worldwide dispersal of U.S. forces and set limits on how many Army personnel were being sent to the southwestern Pacific.[50] Stimson's comments likely reinforced Eisenhower's emerging beliefs and showed him he had political support at the highest level of the War Department for his team's cross-Channel proposals. Stimson repeated his judgement to Arnold, and during another conversation with McCloy, he said the top thing they could do to keep the Germans off balance was to "press hard" on building up forces in Britain and not allow further diversions.[51]

His conversation with Stimson and Eisenhower's memorandum seemed to have an impact on Arnold, for on March 3, he pushed Marshall to concentrate air and ground forces in Britain to end their dispersal and to support a European invasion "at the earliest possible moment."[52] At the highest Army levels, Stimson had clear support for building up U.S. strength in Britain, which he had strongly advocated for during ARCADIA while the JCS supported the indirect approach to

[49] Stimson and Bundy, 415-16.
[50] Stimson Diary, February 23, 1942, HLSD.
[51] Ibid, February 24, 1942.
[52] Arnold to Marshall, "Employment of Army Air Forces," March 3, 1942, Special Official File, Box 39, Henry H. Arnold Papers, LoC.

defeating Germany. The War Department was becoming unified on strategy as Stimson continued his political efforts to push the Allies toward preparing for a European invasion. As a result, Stimson and the Army became more effective in pushing their strategy with Roosevelt and the British.

In early March, Stimson made the Army case for a cross-Channel invasion to Roosevelt. In a recent cable, Churchill suggested increased American commitments in non-European areas of the world to counter the Axis threat emerging in Africa, the eastern Mediterranean, and the Pacific.[53] He was asking for a further dispersion of U.S. forces to every world front, the opposite of what Stimson and senior Army officials were advocating. During a White House meeting with Roosevelt, Marshall, Arnold, Stark, Hopkins, and Admiral Ernest J. King, the commander in chief of the U.S. Fleet, Stimson took the lead for the War Department in attacking Churchill's letter and making the case for a cross-Channel invasion. For Stimson, there were three possibilities for American action: a Pacific offensive, sending forces through the Persian Gulf to aid the Soviets and divide the German attack on the Caucasus region, or a military buildup in the British Isles to prepare for a direct Continental invasion. However Stimson, reflecting Army thinking, concluded the only acceptable plan was for a massive military buildup in the British Isles for an attack on the Germans in France.

In a Clausewitzian sense, Stimson told the group this "proper and orthodox" attack would allow the Allies to strike at the heart of German military and industrial power.[54] An attack on France would fulfill the Germany-first strategy, shore up "sagging" British morale, and keep the Soviets engaged by forcing Hitler to fight on two fronts. Arnold and Marshall strongly supported Stimson's arguments, demonstrating a coordinated War Department approach on the issue. The

[53] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 381-84.
[54] Stimson Diary, March 5, 1942, HLSD.

Navy was not enthusiastic, with King writing to FDR the same day that the U.S. could not allow Japan to overrun Australia and New Zealand; therefore, he recommended focusing on Pacific offensive operations..[55] But Roosevelt was impressed with Stimson's ideas, as was Hopkins.[56]

Stimson and the War Department's cross-Channel proposal was the latest manifestation of Stimson's original strategic concept for the chief American focus: building up forces in the British Isles. The Army's senior chiefs were now openly backing him having moved away from their support for the British indirect approach, but the Navy favored Pacific offensive operations. While Stimson remained consistent enough to not only drive the U.S. strategic debate and build political consensus around the cross-Channel attack inside the War Department, he was also starting to sway Roosevelt, who did not have the clearest idea of where to send American soldiers into battle. Stimson was offering FDR a realistic opportunity to fulfill his twin political goals of satiating Stalin's demands for a second European front and having the American public see their troops fighting Germans, which was his top ambition so he could sustain support for the war against Germany.[57] Moreover, Roosevelt could use Stimson's plan to solve his alliance problems by offering it as substitute for Stalin's desired frontiers treaty and potentially convincing the Soviet leader to drop the issue entirely. In that way, Stimson was one of the main U.S. figures shaping the politics of strategy; he was providing solutions to the problems perceived by most senior American officials and working tirelessly to secure backing for them. While his Army colleagues on the JCS could share Stimson's optimism, fissures were beginning to develop within the JCS as

[55] Ernest J. King to FDR, "Areas of Responsibility," March 5, 1942, PSF Safe File: Ernest J. King, FDRL. See also Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front*, 32. Additionally, King had already been requesting Army troops to garrison Pacific islands, a step that would have drained crucial resources during a period when they were scarce and potentially prejudice the Germany-first concept. See Chandler, *Eisenhower Papers*, I: 112-13; Maurice Matloff and Edwin Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1941-1942* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1953), 154-55.
[56] Stimson Diary, March 5, 1942, HLSD.
[57] On this latter point, see Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 80-93.

King and top naval planners pushed for reinforcements not only to block Japanese advances but also to mount counterattacks and offensives.[58] These emerging cracks within the JCS meant it was going to have a difficult time crafting and influencing national policy.

After additional meetings, Stimson was optimistic that Roosevelt would pursue the cross-Channel concept. He reported, "The matter is working along in the direction I had hoped. The President seems to have accepted it into making it his own."[59] In response to Churchill's cable, Roosevelt agreed to his requests for shipping dispersions to the Pacific in exchange for postponing GYMNAST. The president also said he was eyeing "definite plans for establishment of a new front on the European Continent." Roosevelt emphasized this final point by writing, "I am becoming more and more interested in the establishment of this new front this summer."[60] FDR's reply delighted Stimson, who noted the president "had accomplished what I have been hoping and working for, namely he took the initiative out of the hands of Churchill where I am sure it would have degenerated into a simple defensive operation to stop up urgent rat holes, most of which I fear are hopeless."[61]

Over the next several weeks, the cross-Channel proposal gained steam. On March 15, during a private meeting with Roosevelt, Stimson urged the president to build public support for a European offensive, explaining they were likely to be "hammered" for not allowing further dispersions to Australia and the Middle East.[62] Stimson also recruited supporters inside and outside the administration for a cross-Channel attack. After Stimson met with John G. Winant, the U.S.

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[58] King to FDR, "Areas of Responsibility," March 5, 1942, FDRL; Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 68-69. King also argued to Knox a strategically defensive strategy in the Pacific would fail. See King to Knox, February 8, 1942, Series I, Knox Folder, Ernest J. King Papers, Archives Branch, Naval History and Heritage Command, Washington, DC (hereafter NHHC).
[59] Stimson Diary, March 7, 1942, HLSD.
[60] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 398-99.
[61] Stimson Diary, March 8, 1942, HLSD.
[62] Ibid, March 15, 1942.

ambassador to Britain, the ambassador heartily endorsed the plan. Stimson then worked on Knox, who had strongly supported GYMNAST during ARCADIA, showing him how many men would be available for a European offensive after allocating enough forces to the Pacific.[63] After that, Stimson lunched with Justice Felix Frankfurter, his old protégé and a close adviser to Roosevelt, and shared the cross-Channel proposal with him to gain Frankfurter's assistance in convincing Roosevelt to firmly adopt the plan.[64]

Yet, Stimson was concerned Roosevelt had avoided taking a definitive position on U.S. force dispersion and a European offensive. At Stimson's urging, Roosevelt finally agreed to review the proposals on March 25.[65] In the meantime, Stimson was pursuing every avenue to ensure broad-based establishment support for a cross-Channel attack so Roosevelt could not find a justification to follow a different strategy; Stimson even tried to persuade Sir John Dill, the Chief of the British Joint Staff Mission and Churchill's personal representative in Washington, of the merits of a European offensive. Dill was cool to the idea, and Stimson's entreaties led to a shouting match between the two men.[66] Although this was not a successful appeal, it is worth highlighting that Stimson was trying to obtain allies wherever he could find them, even in the most unlikely corners, for promoting cross-Channel operations. He was expending all his effort to create a friendlier political environment for the War Department's strategic plans and to shape Roosevelt's choices. By working to build a sizable political coalition in favor of a European invasion inside the War Department, within the wider executive branch, and even outside the administration, Stimson encouraged Roosevelt to adopt a second front. If enough advisers were repeating the

[63] Ibid, March 16, 1942.
[64] Ibid, March 17, 1942.
[65] Ibid, March 20, 1942.
[66] Ibid, March 23, 1942. In his book on Dill, Alex Danchev does not mention this episode between the two men. For more, see Alex Danchev, *Very Special Relationship: Field-Marshal Sir John Dill and the Anglo-American Alliance, 1941-1944* (London: Brassey's, 1986).

Army's ideas, it would become more difficult for Roosevelt to say no. This is exactly what he wanted, but in other corners of the defense establishment, Stimson's efforts were potentially becoming undermined by continued friction.

As Stimson was assembling endorsements for a Western front, U.S. military planners were unable to find consensus. While the AAF was willing to accept the loss of the Southwest Pacific if it meant freeing up units for a 1942 cross-Channel strike, the Navy pushed for Pacific offensives. Trying to find some middle ground, Army planners recommended maintaining the strategic defensive in the Southwest Pacific while initiating a rapid buildup in the British Isles for 1942 offensive operations.[67] Unable to reconcile the divergent approaches, the JPS forwarded the studies to the JCS and recommended they choose a course of action. At this point, Stark had been relieved of his duties as CNO and was replaced by King, who refused to accept the loss of the Southwest Pacific. Arnold and Marshall were equally against a Pacific-first strategy, leaving the Army proposal as the only option. At a March 16 meeting, the JCS agreed to a buildup in the United Kingdom while maintaining force levels in the Southwest Pacific "in accordance with current commitments."[68]

However, this apparent resolution did nothing to alleviate the JCS strategic rift and created a *de facto* Pacific-first strategy. Since Japan was still pressing, massive numbers of U.S. troops and matériel were needed in the theater just to hold present American positions. Combined with shipping shortages, this meant there were few soldiers available to be sent to Britain for a 1942 assault.[69] The JPS later admitted that due to shipping allocations, there might be no U.S. ground

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[67] JCS 23, "Strategic Deployment of Land, Sea, and Air Forces of the United States," March 14, 1942, CCS 381 (1-30-42), RG 218, NARA.
[68] Ibid, Walter Bedell Smith to Vivian Dykes, "Strategic Deployment of Land, Sea, and Air Forces of the United States," March 16, 1942.
[69] Lowenthal, *Leadership and Indecision*, II: 836-37; Stoler, *The Politics of the Second Front*, 34; Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 75-77.

forces available for a European offensive. To overcome this difficulty, they said Britain would need to provide most of the troops for any 1942 attack; if it refused, the U.S. should contemplate rethinking its grand strategy and the "possibility of concentrating U.S. offensive effort in the Pacific Area considered."[70] In their own memorandum, Army planners agreed.[71] Put another way, if London was not willing to mount a risky attack, Washington should reorient its entire war machine toward Japan. Clearly, the commitment to Europe first had its limits. This fundamentally left the military's efforts to influence U.S. grand strategy listless and groping for solutions to stem major Axis advances. Instead, Stimson stepped into the breach and drove U.S. decision-making toward opening a second front in Western Europe.

Toward the end of March, Stimson neared the War Department's objective of persuading Roosevelt to approve a European invasion. The president flirted with sending troops to the Middle East or the Mediterranean, but Marshall presented Roosevelt and his other senior military advisers with a convincing memorandum which concluded an attack on northwestern Europe would best accomplish America's chief objectives: protecting Britain and the Middle East along with retaining the Soviet Union in the war.[72] After consulting with Hopkins and Marshall, Stimson followed up with a personal letter to Roosevelt to persuade him to approve the Army plan. He continued to serve as the primary administration spokesperson for a European invasion and was pulling every lever he could to sway Roosevelt. Stimson wrote, "The only way to get the initiative in this war is to take it…so long as we remain without our own plan or offensive, our forces will inevitably be dispersed and wasted."[73] He also advised Roosevelt to send his "most trusted messenger" to present Churchill and the COS with the cross-Channel proposal when it was completed.

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[70] Appendix II to JPS 2/6 in JCS 23, March 14, 1942, CCS 381 (1-30-42), RG 218, NARA.
[71] Chandler, *Eisenhower Papers*, I: 205-08.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Stimson to FDR, March 27, 1942, HLSD; Stimson and Bundy, 417-18.

At the same time, Army planners finalized a European invasion plan. The proposal called for the expeditious concentration of forces in Britain (Operation BOLERO) for a full-scale invasion of France during the spring of 1943 (Operation ROUNDUP). If Germany was "critically weakened" before that or the Eastern Front was in danger of collapsing, the plan made provisions for a smaller "emergency" attack in the fall of 1942 to open up a second front and relieve pressure on the Soviets (Operation SLEDGEHAMMER).[74] While the Army recognized the dangers in launching SLEDGEHAMMER and realized it could fail, Stimson and senior War Department officials thought it was worth the risks because continued Soviet participation in the war was indispensable for defeating Germany.[75] Without the Eastern Front, the European war would likely become unwinnable. Stimson and his advisers sought to secure a Western European invasion from Britain at the earliest possible moment; Stimson did not prefer when this occurred, only that strategic developments dictate it.

On April 1, Roosevelt approved the Army plan. He also took Stimson's earlier advice, instructing Hopkins and Marshall to fly to London to secure British support.[76] Two weeks later, Marshall informed Stimson that the British had formally accepted the Army's cross-Channel proposals.[77] Stimson was thrilled. His preferred military strategy, which he first articulated in late 1941 as the best way to defeat Germany, was now official Allied policy. Up to this point, Stimson had done more than any other player inside the Roosevelt administration to build political support for a cross-Channel invasion. Now that it was approved, Stimson immediately began work on

[74] Marshall to FDR, "Basis for preparation of attached outline plan for Invasion of Western Europe," n.d. (but sometime between March 27 and April 1), PSF Safe File: George C. Marshall, 1941-April 14, 1942, FDRL. The plan is reprinted in Butler and Gwyer, *Grand Strategy*, vol. 3, 675-81. The codenames for these operations were assigned later after the British agreed to the American proposals in London in April. See Matloff and Snell, 190-91, 383.
[75] Stimson Diary, March 30, 1942, HLSD; Stimson and Bundy, 418-19.
[76] Stimson Diary, April 1, 1942, HLSD.
[77] Ibid, April 20, 1942; Matloff and Snell, 187-190; Bland, *Marshall Papers*, III: 162-63.

BOLERO. But just below the surface, the situation was not as sanguine as Stimson thought because the divides within the JCS over military strategy began to widen.

As the Army was preparing its proposals, the Navy was still pushing for Pacific offensive operations. Days before Roosevelt authorized the Army plan, King requested additional U.S. forces at the expense of the European theater. While King did not object to BOLERO in principle, he thought it should not occur until the Allies seized the Pacific initiative.[78] In other words, he favored a *de facto* Pacific-first strategy. But realizing early on the odds were against him and he would not be able to fully concentrate on Japan while Germany was still fighting, King reluctantly blessed the Army memorandum.[79]

Yet several weeks later, Churchill was suggesting a return to GYMNAST in line with the original peripheral strategy.[80] King used the British vacillation as an opportunity to revive his demands for fresh Pacific reinforcements. In early May, he insisted to his JCS colleagues that BOLERO "must not be permitted to interfere with our vital needs in the Pacific," which are "certainly more urgent" than BOLERO.[81] Although Roosevelt reiterated BOLERO was the priority, it was clear the Army and Navy were "completely divided, the latter going all out for the South-West Pacific and the former for BOLERO."[82] After Japan suffered decisive blows at the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway in May and June, respectively, King proposed a counter-offensive to seize the Pacific initiative. If such an offensive were launched and Pacific commitments were increased, BOLERO would be threatened due to manpower and shipping

[78] Matloff and Snell, 211.
[79] Henry H. Arnold, *Global Mission* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 304-05; Ernest J. King and Walter Muir Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1952), 390-91.
[80] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 494.
[81] King to JCS, "JCS 48 – Defense of Island Bases in the Pacific," May 4, 1942, PSF Safe File: George C. Marshall, April 15, 1942-1944, FDRL.
[82] Ibid, FDR memo to Marshall, May 6, 1942; For the quotation, see Alex Danchev, *Establishing the Anglo-American Alliance: The Second World War Diaries of Brigadier Vivian Dykes* (London: Brassey's, 1990), 139.

shortages. In essence, King was proposing a shift away from a cross-Channel attack and toward a Pacific-first strategy based on recent U.S. victories. As the summer began, the JCS remained split on how to prosecute the war as Stimson was working on BOLERO.

In the middle of all this, a reprieve came when Stalin dropped his insistence on a postwar frontiers treaty. While it's not certain what drove this shift, the declining Soviet military position on the Eastern Front was likely pivotal; this made securing a second front Stalin's top priority, even if that meant delaying postwar questions to secure additional Western military support. The Germans had launched a spring offensive and were quickly pushing toward the oilfields of the Caucasus – renewing fears in London and Washington of a Russian defeat. "I would rather lose New Zealand, Australia or anything else than have the Russians collapse," Roosevelt confided privately.[83] In June, FDR assured Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov of his desire to open a 1942 second front.[84] Although it was somewhat ambiguous if this would be in France, Roosevelt concurrently cabled Churchill he was anxious for a cross-Channel invasion sometime in 1942.[85] "It must be constantly reiterated," the president reminded his advisers, "that Russian armies are killing more Germans and destroying more Axis material than all twenty-five united nations put together. To help Russia, therefore, is the primary consideration."[86] To Roosevelt, the Stimson-Army plan was still the best method for achieving this politico-military objective while also maintaining public support for the Germany-first concept.

Yet while King was attempting to force a strategic adjustment, the British were trying to do the same. After Churchill suggested revisiting GYMNAST, arrangements were made for him

[83] Morgenthau Presidential Diary, March 11, 1942, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL.
[84] Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 563, 575.
[85] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 494-95, 503-04.
[86] FDR memo to Stimson, Marshall, Arnold, Knox, King and Hopkins, May 6, 1942, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War: George C. Marshall, 1941-1942, FDRL.

and his military advisers to visit Washington to answer the latest strategic questions. During a White House meeting announcing Churchill's visit, Marshall and Stimson attacked GYMNAST while "King wobbled around" in a way that made Stimson "rather sick with him."[87] Stimson was furious, writing in his diary that pursuing GYMNAST over BOLERO would be a "very foolish thing."[88] With Marshall's unequivocal support, Stimson decided to send a detailed letter to Roosevelt arguing the war could only be won through a cross-Channel invasion. It was the most forceful defense made of formal Allied strategy to date.

In his letter, Stimson argued the matter was simple. He asserted Hitler "dreaded" a second European front and that it was the "best hope" of keeping the Soviets in the war and defeating the Germans.[89] The British Isles provided the only safe base to concentrate U.S. troops and supplies, meaning BOLERO was the finest method for halting Germany's Russia offensive, defeating her armies, and winning the war. "Geographically and historically BOLERO was the easiest road to the center of our chief enemy's heart," he reminded Roosevelt. Amassing U.S. forces in Britain would allow the Allies to strike a decisive blow against the center of German industrial power; this was the only real method for relieving pressure on the Soviets. For the first time, Stimson explicitly attacked GYMNAST as a diversion that would only protect the British Empire and do nothing to aid the Soviets. If the Soviets were defeated while U.S. and British forces were engaged in North Africa, it was conceivable Germany would attempt to invade Britain. Since GYMNAST would weaken BOLERO, defending Britain in the event of an invasion would become "impossible."[90]

[87] Stimson Diary, June 17, 1942, HLSD.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid, Stimson to FDR, June 19, 1942.
[90] Ibid.

On the other hand, if the Soviets kept the Germans pinned down on the Eastern Front, an invasion of France would become easier. In either scenario, BOLERO was the solution. Following up in his own memorandum for Roosevelt, Marshall said GYMNAST was a "poor substitute" for BOLERO and would be a pointless diversion.[91] But Marshall was following Stimson's lead in excoriating GYMNAST ahead of the British arrival. In fact, Marshall called Stimson's letter to Roosevelt a "masterpiece" and it came with Marshall's handwritten endorsement, which underscored that he fully supported Stimson's views.[92] As at ARCADIA, Stimson continued to play the role of chief opponent to British military strategy. At the same time, the JCS's inability to coalesce around one set of policies hindered its ability to shape the direction of U.S. strategy.

In Washington, Churchill clashed with Stimson and the JCS over military policy. Nevertheless, the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) crafted a compromise that was basically a restatement of Stimson's letter to Roosevelt. BOLERO would continue as the "principal offensive effort," but 1942 offensive operations could be launched "in case of necessity" or "an exceptionally favorable opportunity." In that case, SLEDGEHAMMER or invasions of Norway and the Channel Islands were preferable to GYMNAST. The CCS reiterated GYMNAST should not happen "under the existing situation."[93]

After heated debate, Churchill and Roosevelt agreed to continue with the BOLERO buildup until September 1, at which time existing plans would be reexamined. But they rejected no offensive action in 1942, insisting a 1942 offensive was "essential" and pushing GYMNAST as an alternative if SLEDGEHAMMER was "improbable."[94] Stimson was lukewarm to the

[91] Marshall to FDR, "Memorandum for the President," June 23, 1942, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 301.
[92] Marshall to FDR, June 19, 1942, PSF Safe File: Marshall, Apr. 15, 1942-1944, FDRL; Stimson Diary, June 19, 1942, HLSD.
[93] Report by the Combined Chiefs of Staff, "Offensive Operations in 1942 and 1943," June 21, 1942, *FRUS: Washington, 1941-1942*, Document 296.
[94] Ibid, Note by the Secretariat of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, June 24, 1942, Document 304.

September 1 reassessment; his main problem with this decision is that it mistakenly understood BOLERO as a 1942 operation, not a 1943 one. If BOLERO slowed down in 1942, it would reduce the chances for a 1943 French invasion. At any rate, Stimson was pleased GYMNAST was not definitively authorized, considering this a major win.[95]

Within a few weeks though, Churchill was reneging on these decisions. In early July, he cabled Roosevelt that the British considered SLEDGEHAMMER's chances increasingly remote due to continued setbacks in North Africa and the Atlantic; in the North African desert, Germany had defeated the British at the Gazala line, captured Tobruk, and forced British troops to retreat into Egypt toward the Nile River Delta. Alternatively, Churchill suggested GYMNAST would be the best way to assist the Soviets.[96]

The JCS vehemently objected. In response, Marshall extraordinarily proposed at a JCS meeting that if the British exhorted GYMNAST over SLEDGEHAMMER, the U.S. should "turn to the Pacific for decisive action against Japan."[97] Marshall reasoned such a move would concentrate U.S. forces in a specific theater; be popular with America's Pacific allies and the public, and second only to BOLERO, would have the greatest effect on the Soviets by deterring the Japanese from taking advantage of the Russians' deteriorating military fortunes and attacking Siberia.[98] King backed the proposal, which was forwarded to Roosevelt as a formal memorandum. In it, they warned GYMNAST would be an indecisive operation, drain limited resources, and preclude cross-Channel operations in both 1942 *and* 1943. If London demanded North African

[95] Stimson Diary, June 21, 1942, HLSD.
[96] Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt*, I: 520-21.
[97] JCS meeting minutes, July 10, 1942, CCS 334 (23 June 42), RG 218, NARA.
[98] For some of the evidence on the likelihood of a Japanese attack on Siberia, see Bland, *Marshall Papers*, III: 208-09; Joint Intelligence Committee memo, "Japanese Capabilities and Intentions regarding Siberia," June 17, 1942, OPD 381 Japan, Case 4, RG 165, NARA; Akira Iriye, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 90-91; U.S. Department of Defense, *Entry of the Soviet Union into the War against Japan: Military Plans, 1941-1945* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 1955), 9-10.

operations, Marshall and King advised abandoning Germany-first and launching all-out offensives against Japan.[99]

Marshall informed Stimson of these developments, who found a "very stirred up and emphatic" Marshall calling for a "showdown." Stimson supported Marshall and King's decision, believing it would serve as an "effective block" to GYMNAST, but if the British continued to backtrack on their agreements, "we will turn our backs on them and take up the war with Japan."[100] As historian Mark Stoler has shown, Marshall and King were equally inclined to act on their threat if Britain remained obstinate.[101] Indeed, Marshall said exactly that in a second memorandum to Roosevelt. "My object," he wrote, "is again to force the British into acceptance of a concentrated effort against Germany, and if that proves impossible, to turn immediately to the Pacific with strong forces for a decision against Japan."[102] Put another way, Marshall was willing to shift toward a Pacific-first strategy if the British were not willing to support SLEDGEHAMMER, and by extension, BOLERO. In fact, Marshall had already agreed to divert scarce resources to the Pacific by sanctioning limited offensives there to follow up on the U.S. victory at Midway.[103]

This was a major shift in the debates over Allied military strategy. It demonstrated Marshall, the apparent undisputed champion of Germany-first and cross-Channel operations, was more than willing to change course and embrace a Pacific-first approach if perceived circumstances required it. In Marshall's mind, British intransigence over BOLERO-SLEDGEHAMMER was a good reason to focus American forces on the Pacific. With Marshall's

[99] Marshall and King memo to FDR, July 10, 1942, CCS 381 (3-23-42), RG 218, NARA.
[100] Stimson Diary, July 10, 1942, HLSD.
[101] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 79-102. See also Mark Stoler, "The 'Pacific-First' Alternative in American World War II Strategy," *The International History Review* 2, no. 3 (July 1980): 432–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.1980.9640221.
[102] Bland, *Marshall Papers*, III: 271-72.
[103] Ibid, 252-56; 261-66; Kent Roberts Greenfield, *American Strategy in World War II: A Reconsideration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1963), 7.

Pacific proposal, the JCS were now generally united again for the first time in months, forming a broad consensus around offensive Pacific operations if SLEGEHAMMER was no longer an option.

At the same time, Stimson tried to assist Marshall by helping him build political support for his proposal. After Roosevelt demanded an outline for a Pacific-first strategy, the JCS hastily compiled one, but admitted "there is no completed detailed plan for major offensive operations in the Pacific."[104] Following a "vigorous discussion," Stimson endorsed the memorandum "as the only thing to do in such a crisis." Stimson hoped the plan would succeed, but if the British persisted "in their fatuous defeatist position as to it [BOLERO]" then the Pacific operation was the next best option.[105] However, a skeptical Roosevelt told Stimson he disliked the Pacific alternative and that "it was a little like taking up your dishes and going away." Stimson appreciated the president's view, but warned it was essential to use the Pacific threat "if we expected to get through the hides of the British."[106] Despite Stimson's attempts to persuade him, Roosevelt separately told Marshall he thought the proposal was "something of a red herring, the purpose for which he thoroughly understood."[107] After months of the War Department trying to persuade Roosevelt to back a cross-Channel attack, it is not surprising he was unconvinced shifting toward a Pacific-first strategy was sound.

While FDR had been swayed by previous War Department arguments for a second European front, British resistance had upended the calculus. Roosevelt was now searching for a plan that would get American troops fighting the Germans; the JCS proposal did not offer that.

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[104] Stimson Diary, July 12, 1942, HLSD. For the JCS proposal, see JCS to FDR memo, "Pacific Operations," July 12, 1942, CCS 381 (3-23-42), Part 3, Section 2, RG 218, NARA.
[105] Stimson Diary, July 12, 1942, HLSD.
[106] Ibid, July 15, 1942.
[107] Bland, *Marshall Papers*, III: 276-77.

Whether they realized it or not, the JCS had undercut Stimson and the Army's previously careful campaign to launch a cross-Channel invasion. While the British were also an impediment, in Stimson's mind they had been overcome before, and they could be again. However due to inelegant JCS maneuvering, Stimson and the War Department's efforts had been diminished, especially when the secretary of war decided to support Marshall's Pacific alternative.

Roosevelt rejected the Pacific proposal and ordered Hopkins, Marshall, and King to London to decide on some 1942 action against German forces.[108] In Washington, Stimson was attempting to support them by convincing Roosevelt to continue with BOLERO. He argued London's abandonment of SLEDGEHAMMER was the result of their "fatigued and defeatist mental outlook" and said they should now concentrate on ensuring a 1943 invasion of France while "enlarging" their air attacks on Germany in 1942.[109] Stimson also warned GYMNAST would permit the Axis to maintain the initiative and would do nothing to either aid the USSR or destroy Hitler's armies. Looking to shore up political support, Stimson even enlisted Hull and Knox to convince Roosevelt to stay the course.[110]

But it was too late. Realizing SLEDGEHAMMER would be impossible without the British and bowing to FDR's pressure, King and Marshall proposed a compromise. SLEDGEHAMMER was off the table, but preparations would continue for both ROUNDUP and a North African invasion, renamed TORCH, until September 15, at which time a final decision would be made depending on the Eastern Front. Pursuing TORCH would make ROUNDUP impossible in 1943 and would be tantamount to accepting a defensive European strategy that would allow the U.S. to pursue Pacific offensive operations. After initially objecting, the British relented, and the proposal

[108] FDR memo to Marshall, King, and Hopkins, July 16, 1942, PSF Safe File: Harry Hopkins, FDRL; Sherwood, 603-05.
[109] Stimson to FDR, July 23, 1942, HLSD.
[110] Ibid, Stimson Diary, July 21, 1942.

was formalized as CCS 94.[111] Importantly, the JCS interpreted CCS 94 as opening the doors to a Japan-first strategy, hardening a broad consensus around focusing on the Pacific that began emerging earlier that month.[112] However, Roosevelt did not approve CCS 94, refusing to accept that TORCH would cancel ROUNDUP. The president also subverted the rest of the document by ordering that TORCH should be launched by October 30.[113]

When Stimson learned of these decisions, he was stunned. He told FDR he wanted it on the record he uniformly opposed U.S. landings in North Africa.[114] Confiding in his diary, Stimson worried that turning on BOLERO, the "sound and correct strategy," would lead to a "dangerous diversion and a possible disaster." Stimson, having spent months fighting North African operations and championing a cross-Channel invasion, felt defeated. He had single-mindedly pushed the Allies to invade France and solitarily fought the British strategic approach every step of the way. As the JCS fluctuated on military strategy, Stimson unambiguously pushed Roosevelt to open a second front throughout this period. Now he felt Germany would keep the initiative and could win the war. Having lost the strategic debate for now, Stimson looked ahead to future opportunities.

Over the next few months, the Allied notched important victories. TORCH was a success, allowing Anglo-American forces to occupy French North Africa. Across the desert, the British had won a major victory at El Alamein in Egypt, forcing the Germans to retreat into Libya. On the Eastern Front, the Soviets halted a German advance on the critical city of Stalingrad and in mid-November, launched a massive counterattack that eventually forced the German Sixth Army to surrender in January 1943. In the Pacific, the Allies launched several counteroffensives in the Solomon Islands and New Guinea that began to turn the tide against the Japanese.

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[111] CCS 94, "Operations in 1942/43," July 24, 1942, CCS 334 (5-26-42), RG 218, NARA.
[112] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 90.
[113] Stimson Diary, July 25, 1942, HLSD; Sherwood, 611-12.
[114] Stimson Diary, July 25, 1942, HLSD.

As a result, Churchill and Roosevelt decided to have another conference to plot their war strategy for 1943, which was planned for January in Casablanca, Morocco. Stimson wanted a firm commitment to a cross-Channel attack, but during late 1942, the JCS and their planners were divided again on strategic policy.[115] Army planners were split over whether to continue further Mediterranean operations by invading Sicily or Sardinia, or instead to focus on a maximum buildup in Britain for a cross-Channel invasion.[116] Arnold and AAF planners pushed their colleagues to focus on the air offensive against Germany followed by an invasion of France.[117] The Joint Strategic Survey Committee, the JCS's top strategic advisers, forcefully opposed any plans to attack Sicily and Sardinia, arguing those prospective operations would not accord with U.S. grand strategy.[118] The military was so split that at a pre-Casablanca meeting with Roosevelt, Marshall was forced to admit there was no "united front" on cross-Channel operations. While the JCS favored a cross-Channel invasion over additional Mediterranean operations, "the question was still an open one."[119] The British favored exploiting TORCH's success by planning an amphibious invasion of Sicily or Sardinia to help knock Italy out of the war, which Marshall admitted was likely a "desirable objective."[120] Due to U.S. fissures prior to Casablanca, the JCS basically acquiesced to new Mediterranean operations since they did not possess a credible alternative and it made strategic sense to exploit TORCH's success by opening up the Mediterranean and

[115] Ibid, January 7, 1943.
[116] Thomas Handy memo to Marshall, "American-British Strategy," November 8, 1942, WDCSA 381, RG 165, NARA; Ibid, CPS 49/2 "Planning for Operations Subsequent to 'Torch'", December 5, 1942, CCS 381 (11-16-42), RG 218.
[117] JCS 152, Arnold to JCS, "Strategic Policy for 1943," November 16, 1942, CCS 381 (11-16-42), RG 218. NARA; Ibid, CPS 49/2 "Planning for Operations Subsequent to 'Torch'", December 5, 1942, CCS 381 (11-16-42).
[118] Ibid, JSSC 4/1, "Operations Subsequent to TORCH," December 31, 1942.
[119] "Joint Chiefs of Staff Minutes of a Meeting at the White House," January 7, 1943, *FRUS: Casablanca, 1943*, Document 329.
[120] Ibid; Memorandum by the British Chiefs of Staff, "Basic Strategic Concept for 1943 – The European Theater," January 2, 1943, Document 400.

attempting to precipitate Italy's collapse .[121] However, now it was likely that a second front would have to wait until 1944.

Improvised Warfighting

The Casablanca Conference represented a milestone in Allied military planning. Due to lack of consensus over U.S. strategic priorities before the conference, the JCS and their planners were unable to present viable substitutes to Britain's Mediterranean strategy. Partly as a result, the JCS bowed to strategic reality and accepted additional Mediterranean operations would occur in 1943 even before meeting with their British counterparts.[122]

But seen from a different angle, the pre-Casablanca strategic conversations in the fall of 1942 were not all that different from what American strategists had largely been experiencing during the entire year. Their disagreements, inconsistencies, and infighting critically obstructed their ability to mold and shape U.S. strategy. Since they were largely unable to offer a unified set of policies, their influence over their nation's approach to warfighting was unsurprisingly limited.

The War Department was usually spared from this reality because its civilian and professional leaders – Stimson and Marshall – were so often working closely together that the organization's performance as a bureaucratic and political actor in these debates was noticeably successful. Their warm personal relations and routinely close working partnership helped aid their efforts to create a military strategy that matched their strategic preferences. Yet there were also occasions where they were not as closely aligned as they thought: while Stimson consistently pushed for a cross-Channel assault, Marshall sometimes shifted between supporting a direct

[121] Ibid, "Meeting of Roosevelt with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 5 p.m.," January 16, 1943, Document 347; "Meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff with Roosevelt and Churchill, 5 p.m.," January 18, 1943, Document 355; Memorandum by the Combined Chiefs of Staff, "Conduct of the War in 1943," January 19, 1943, Document 408; "Final Report of the Combined Chiefs of Staff to the President and Prime Minister," January 23, 1943, Document 416.
[122] Lacey, "Toward a strategy," 201-06.

European invasion and favoring the British Mediterranean strategy. Although Stimson enjoyed some success as the one of the primary political influencers of American military policy for a time, the divisions between the War Department and other senior U.S. defense officials left that success ephemeral.

By reappraising these wartime strategic debates from the disorderly American perspective explored here, this chapter examined who is responsible for crafting strategy, especially during wartime. In the case of early U.S. grand strategy during World War II, those usually spotlighted and focused on were revealed to be plagued by inconsistency, indecision, and infighting. Previous historical accounts that have focused on these actors, especially the JCS and the military, have depicted them as having high levels of influence over national policy. Yet this chapter has shown that during the first months of America's struggle against the Axis, this was largely not the case.

Alternatively, the bureaucratic dysfunction that is often endemic to the strategy and foreign policy process allowed a figure who has been mostly overlooked by historians to step forward and drive the politics of U.S. strategic policy. Stimson had the ambition, consistency, determination, experience, and vision to drive the American strategic debate. While Army planners provided some of the details, Stimson used his organizational and political skills to build a coalition around a second European front and push Roosevelt to adopt this approach for defeating Germany. His efforts proved remarkably successful for a time until he was undermined by the military's sharp internal disagreements, the dynamics of the fighting in North Africa and the Pacific, and eventual British reluctance to mount a cross-Channel invasion. Of course, Stimson's thinking eventually triumphed when the Allies successfully invaded northwestern Europe in June 1944, but it would take two more long years of continued bureaucratic struggle and heavy fighting to reach that point. Yet even though a second front in France was not opened in 1942, this experience sheds light on

the frequently disparate nature of American strategy formation and how unexpected figures can play outsized roles in that process.

Ultimately, the general hesitancy and indecision of most American policymakers led them to rely on an astonishing level of improvisation in determining how it should wage global war. Some improvisation is natural in fighting wars, but how often policymakers displayed it in this period is surprising. Yet how this spontaneity underpinned U.S. strategy could not be appreciated without focusing on the role of domestic institutions and executive branch agencies in fashioning grand strategy and foreign policy. In writing the histories of American grand strategy, it is vital to examine the U.S. state and come to grips with how the bureaucracy instrumentally shapes American policy and strategy. If this early period of U.S. wartime involvement reveals anything, it is both that the prewar military establishment was wholly unprepared to fight global war, and that the subsequent chaotic, divided, and slapdash American approach to the war cannot be understood without appreciating the agendas, efforts, and motivations of the myriad national security officials who attempted to define it.

Chapter Six

The Americans are Coming

This chapter examines how U.S. officials responded to their ultimately unsuccessful attempts to shape Anglo-American grand strategy during 1942 by changing their approach to these debates in 1943. It argues that War Department civilian and military officials led this effort by overhauling U.S. strategic planning processes and forcefully criticizing British strategy and policy as antithetical to American political objectives. Army planners tactically used their position within the U.S. foreign policy process to craft a hostile narrative about British military aims to shape how their superiors approached U.S.-U.K. strategy formation and to prioritize their own conceptions of America's geopolitical ambitions. These efforts hardened U.S. officials' determination to advance Washington's wartime goals above London's and helped forge a strong level of political coordination between the War Department and the JCS for ensuring this occurred. The result was that American defense officials were able to convince President Roosevelt to back their strategic views and to shun Britain's Mediterranean approach for defeating Germany.

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In June 1943, the historian Edward Mead Earle sent a lengthy study to the War Department's Military Intelligence Division. Earle was a well-known scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton who consulted for various U.S. government agencies, including the Army Air Forces and the OSS.[1] Entitled "The Changing Power Position of Great Britain as a Factor in the Defense

[1] David Ekbladh, "Present at the Creation: Edward Mead Earle and the Depression-Era Origins of Security Studies," *International Security* 36, no. 3 (Winter 2011/12): 107–41. Also see Andrew Preston, "National Security as Grand Strategy: Edward Mead Earle and the Burdens of World Power," in Borgwardt et al., *Rethinking American Grand Strategy*; Dexter Fergie, "Geopolitics Turned Inwards: The Princeton Military Studies Group and the National Security Imagination," *Diplomatic History* 43, no. 4 (September 2019): 644–70, https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dhz026.

Problem of the United States," Earle's analysis examined how Britain's position within the international system was changing and what that meant for U.S. national security.[2]

Earle's conclusions were startling, but not entirely surprising. Over the last 50 years, Britain had experienced "steady decline" due to a multitude of economic, geopolitical, military, and technological factors. It was experiencing acute relative economic decline due to the international spread of industrialization, the rise of new global economic centers, and an aging population. Britain's traditional geopolitical strength and complementary sea power had been undermined by the development of overland communications; the rise of American, German, Japanese, and Soviet power, and technological innovations such as airplanes and submarines. The British Isles were a "weak defensive position, an insecure home base." Britain's hold on its empire was weakening as its overseas possessions demanded greater autonomy or independence and it could no longer rely upon unfettered support from the Dominions. British influence was still substantial for historical reasons, but it no longer matched Britain's current power position.[3]

According to Earle, British decline posed "a situation full of potential danger for the United States." British grand strategy was focused on its imperial areas because Britain's "future world position…will depend…upon the nature of postwar reconstruction" and without costly defense expenditures, it could not protect itself. Washington should not follow British direction nor allow London to "gravitate towards an exclusive association with Soviet Russia, that might eventually align the manpower and resources of Eurasia against us. Our interest demands that the United

[2] Edward Mead Earle, "The Changing Power Position of Great Britain as a Factor in the Defense Problem of the United States," Edward Mead Earle Papers, Box 32: National Security Folder, MC020, Public Policy Papers, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University (hereafter Earle Papers).
[3] Ibid. "Defense" was replaced with "Security" in the title of Earle's copy.

States, not Great Britain, become the stabilizing balance wheel of the world."[4] In other words, U.S. leadership, not Britain's, must anchor the postwar world to safeguard American national security.

Earle's analysis was not necessarily novel, but it contained stark implications for U.S. grand strategy and fit into an increasingly anti-British intellectual framework germinating inside the War Department and the armed forces. Suspicions about British strategy and policy were especially pronounced within the War Department, which progressively felt London was more interested in protecting its empire rather than winning the war as quickly as possible.[5] Although anti-British sentiment existed in different forms throughout the military and the American political establishment, this chapter argues the Army was the most vociferous in criticizing British grand strategy and the most active in using the foreign policy process to defend U.S. national interests from perceived British manipulation.[6] This perception was not simply a judgment confined to Army circles: it directly impacted the formation of U.S. military policy by pervading the Anglo-American strategic debates of 1943 as the Allies continued to struggle to determine the best way to defeat the Axis. Fears of British duplicity also strengthened the political coordination between the War Department and the JCS; that coordination had been lacking throughout 1942 but was needed to convince Roosevelt of their strategic ideas. "It used to be said that in Washington," the historian D.C. Watt observed, "war was being waged with five enemies in descending order of priority: with the army or navy, with the Republican Party, with the British, and thereafter with the Germans and the Japanese." For many U.S. officials, "it was the third of these which occupied

[4] Ibid. Earle was likely referencing the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942, an agreement creating a miliary alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union until the end of the war and a political alliance to last 20 years.
[5] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 113.
[6] For example, King and his top subordinates were known to hold acerbic anti-British views reflecting deep-rooted Navy Anglophobia dating back to World War I. See Thomas Buell, *Master of Seapower: A Biography of Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), 145-46; John Gooch, "'Hidden in the Rock': American Military Perceptions of Great Britain, 1919-1940," in Lawrence Freedman, Paul Hayes, and Robert O'Neill, eds., *War, Strategy, and International Politics: Essays in Honour of Sir Michael Howard* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 155-73.

most of their time and thoughts."[7] That was certainly true for the War Department during America's second full year of war.

Hammering the Empire

American policymakers' concerns that they could be manipulated into advancing British interests were nothing new. In fact, they plainly articulated those anxieties throughout 1940-41.[8] Those concerns temporarily subsided after official U.S. wartime entry due to Axis victories and the need to quickly shore up Allied positions, but by mid-1942, they were revived. Back in July when Hopkins, Marshall, and King were negotiating with the British in London over SLEDGEHAMMER, Stimson told Roosevelt that British insistence on GYMNAST was an "attempt to preserve its empire in the Middle East."[9] London's "fatigued and defeatist mental outlook" was causing the British government to focus on its imperial interests; this would allow the Axis to maintain the strategic initiative and block the "arrival of young, vigorous, forward-looking Americans" in Europe who would present Washington with leverage in negotiations over the postwar world.[10] With these comments, the secretary of war was reigniting longstanding U.S. worries about London's strategic aims and America's role in fulfilling them.

At the end of 1942, those anxieties about British strategy were magnified. Ahead of the Casablanca Conference, the British COS proposed exploiting TORCH's success by undertaking additional Mediterranean operations, including expanding the bombing offensive against Germany and Italy from North Africa, invading Sicily or Sardinia to precipitate Italian collapse, sending material aid to Turkey to bring it into the war, and supporting anti-Axis guerillas in the Balkans.

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[7] D.C. Watt, "U.S. Globalism: The End of the Concert of Europe," in Warren F. Kimball, ed., *America Unbound: World War II and the Making of a Superpower* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 48.
[8] Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion," *Journal of Strategic Studies*.
[9] Stimson to FDR, July 25, 1942, HLSD.
[10] Ibid Stimson Diary, July 23, 1942; Ibid, Stimson to FDR, July 23, 1942.

The COS argued this plan would aid the Soviets in 1943 more than a cross-Channel invasion by dispersing German forces over a wide area, leading to a decline in their military strength that would relieve the Eastern Front and make a 1944 attack on France easier. If the Italians surrendered, the COS additionally reasoned, then German occupation responsibilities would substantially increase in the Balkans and Aegean Sea, further sapping Germany's fighting capabilities. The BOLERO buildup would continue subject to the limitations imposed by Mediterranean operations so that the West could assault northwestern Europe if "conditions hold out a good prospect of success." And in the Pacific, only "limited" offensives to "contain" Japan should be launched, effectively maintaining the strategic defensive.[11]

U.S. military planners interpreted this plan as a downgrading of the entire Pacific theater at the expense of a costly and likely inconclusive Mediterranean strategy that would leave some Allied forces inert in Britain.[12] Coming after Churchill's famous Mansion House speech in November where he declared "I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire" and a War Department study that argued an Allied toehold could have been secured in France with the soldiers and equipment used for TORCH, the COS proposal appeared to be an overt bid by London to preserve and potentially enlarge the British Empire that would sacrifice a speedy victory over Germany and Japan's successive downfall.[13] If the U.S. did not want to further London's political interests at the expense of defeating the Axis powers, American strategic planners warned, then Britain's Mediterranean strategy must be soundly rejected.

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[11] Memorandum by the British Chiefs of Staff, "Basic Strategic Concept for 1943 – The European Theater," January 2, 1943, *FRUS: Casablanca, 1943*, Document 400; Ibid, Memorandum by the British Chiefs of Staff, "American-British Strategy in 1943," January 3, 1943, Document 401.
[12] "Comments on British Concept," n.d. (but early January 1943), CCS 381 (8-27-42), RG 218, NARA.
[13] "Prime Minister Churchill's Speech," *NYT,* November 11, 1942; Stimson Diary, November 23, 1942, HLSD; Stoler, *Politics of the Second Front*, 72.

As we know, the opposite occurred at the Casablanca Conference. Although the JCS consented to new Mediterranean operations before the conference because the Americans could not formulate plausible substitutes despite their concerns about British strategic thinking, Army officials used the Casablanca experience as evidence that U.S. military planning needed radical overhaul. They maintained that a lack of substantive politico-military coordination within the armed forces and between the military and its civilian superiors was creating disunity and hampering the creation of U.S. strategy and policy. If American military policy was not linked to "the full weight of national policy as opposed to that of the British," then London's strategic designs would dominate the war effort.[14] Washington had been "outmaneuvered" at previous Allied conferences, according to two Army planners, "primarily" because British military objectives "based on national aims, have been clear-cut and understood by all concerned. In presenting their strategy and plans they have had the benefit of a nicely integrated politico-economic-military planning organization developed by experience over a long period of time."[15] In contrast, American "war aims have not been so clearly defined and the integration in our strategy of economic, and especially political factors with the purely military factors has not been so thoroughly effected."[16] In addition to erecting new planning organizations that could address these problems, coherent assessments of U.S. versus U.K. national policies and their connections to the two countries' military strategies were required.

Throughout most of 1943, U.S. military strategists, led by Army planners and War Department officials, produced exactly those types of evaluations. Specifically, three different

[14] Wedemeyer to Handy, January 23, 1943, OPD Exec. 3, Item 1A, Paper 5, RG 165, NARA; Ibid, Wedemeyer memo to Deputy Chief of Staff, "Report of Mission Headed by General Devers," April 28, 1943, OPD 381 Security, Section 3, 118.
[15] Colonels W.W. Bessell and R.C. Lindsay, special report, "Conduct of the War," July 25, 1943, ABC 381 Security (9-25-41), RG 165, NARA.
[16] Ibid.

military committees provided the bulk of the analysis: the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC), a group of "elder statesmen" set up to advise the JCS on "national policy and world strategy;" the Joint War Plans Committee (JWPC), a supplemental planning body reporting to senior JPS officials, and within the Army Operations Division (OPD), a new Strategy and Policy Group (S&P) designed to serve as the Army's "brain trust" on key issues, including the synchronization of strategic priorities and political goals.[17] Although the JSSC and the JWPC were both composed of officials from all three service branches, in reality they were dominated by Army planners, who possessed a numerical advantage over their Navy counterparts and many of whom were drawn from S&P.[18] This substantial overlap between all three groups allowed Army thinking to heavily influence the committees' deliberations and subsequent analyses of American and British grand strategy.[19]

Fundamentally, British desires for "restored control of the Mediterranean," according to the JSSC, was "an objective of national policy essential to the maintenance of their present Imperial power." After the strategic disputes of 1942 and the Casablanca experience, this was not a surprising verdict. However, the Axis powers' defeat would theoretically restore Britain's regional influence. Considering this point, it seemed there were more foundational reasons for the disparities between American and British military policy. The JSSC surmised these divides

[17] Maurice Matloff, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1943-1944* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1959), 106-11; Ray S. Cline, *Washington Command Post: The Operations Division* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1951), 135. On the JSSC, see Mark A. Stoler, "From Continentalism to Globalism: General Stanley D. Embick, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, and the Military View of American National Policy during the Second World War," *Diplomatic History* 6, no. 3 (July 1982): 303–21, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1982.tb00378.x.

[18] Matloff, 108-09; Cline, 136.

[19] There were also familial connections between these groups. Brigadier General Wedemeyer, the S&P chief from June 1942-September 1943, was the son-in-law of Lieutenant General Stanley Embick, the unofficial JSSC head. Wedemeyer and Embick shared similar strategic opinions. According to one Army planner, Embick often attended S&P meetings and conveyed S&P's analyses to his JSSC colleagues. Stoler, "From Continentalism to Globalism," *Diplomatic History*; Paul W. Caraway Oral History, Oral Histories – Senior Officer Debriefing Program, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center Archives, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

stemmed from "the differences in the geographical situation of the two nations vis-à-vis the several enemies, and in the marked contrast between the two nations in respect to their territorial structures and the bases of their power."[20]

Controlling a widely distributed empire based in the British Isles, London had historically attempted to nurture a balance of power on the European continent while maintaining its overseas holdings.[21] These geopolitical objectives lent themselves to a military strategy focused on the Mediterranean basin devised to enfeeble Germany in a war of attrition. This could help reconstruct Britain's predominance in the area while helping it avoid the massive casualties likely to occur during a cross-Channel invasion.[22] Despite their acceptance of Roosevelt's "unconditional surrender" policy toward the Axis, which had been pronounced at Casablanca, the British might have "mental reservations" about it based on their traditional adherence to a balance-of-power framework in Europe and feel unease about what Soviet mastery of the European continent might mean if Germany was completely destroyed.[23] "A defeated and prostrate Germany leaving a strong and triumphant Russia dominating Europe, is not in accord with that unchanging policy. It would be in strict accord with that policy, however, to delay Germany's defeat until military attrition and civilian famine, had materially reduced Russia's potential toward dominance in Europe."[24] A

[20] JCS 283 and 283/1, "Current British Policy and Strategy in Relationship to That of the United States," May 3 and 8, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43), Section 3, RG 218, NARA.
[21] David G. Morgan-Owen, *The Fear of Invasion: Strategy, Politics, and British War Planning, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
[22] JCS 283 and 283/1, "Current British Policy and Strategy in Relationship to That of the United States," May 3 and 8, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43), Section 3, RG 218, NARA.
[23] Ibid; Embick and Muir Fairchild memo to Marshall, "Comments on C.C.S. 135/1 and 135/2," January 4, 1943, ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7, RG 165, NARA.
[24] Embick and Muir Fairchild memo to Marshall, "Comments on C.C.S. 135/1 and 135/2," January 4, 1943, ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7, RG 165, NARA.

Mediterranean strategy, the JSSC contended, could help the British facilitate Germany and Russia's mutual exhaustion and promote their most essential national policies.[25]

Moreover, Britain was allegedly using the war to expand its empire. The two Army members of the JSSC explained to Marshall this was a distinct prospect by citing a Washington columnist who claimed Britain's determination to dominate North Africa was an "open secret" that would allow it to solve the problem of "the United Kingdom's crying need for British-controlled raw materials and markets," which North Africa could provide.[26] If this accurately represented British policy, according to the two generals, then London would want islands around the Mediterranean as "fortified outposts of the empire guarding the mandated territory of North Africa…If these islands have been seized from the enemy and are firmly in British possession at the time of the peace settlement, Great Britain might be able to maintain her claim to their permanent possession. Hence the necessity from the British viewpoint of undertaking these operations *prior* to undertaking decisive operations directly against Germany."[27] These campaigns would also permit Britain to move into the eastern Mediterranean and coax Turkey to join the Allies, cementing British influence in an area of historic Anglo-Russian competition while blocking Moscow's control of the Dardanelles and keeping it away from the Suez Canal.[28] British grand strategy therefore was "not primarily military…but political."[29]

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[25] JCS 283/1, "Current British Policy and Strategy in Relationship to That of the United States," May 8, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43), Section 3, RG 218, NARA.
[26] Ibid, Embick and Muir Fairchild memo to Marshall, "Comments on C.C.S. 135/1 and 135/2," January 4, 1943, ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7, RG 165.
[27] Ibid (emphasis in original).
[28] JSSC memo, "Probable Russian Reaction to Anglo-American Operations in the Aegean," May 5, 1943, CCS 381 (5-5-43), RG 218, NARA; Ibid, JCS 443, "Quadrant and European Strategy," August 6, 1943, CCS 381 (5-25-43), Section 1. Another copy of the JSSC memo can be found in the Marshall Papers, Box 56, Folder 1, GCMF.
[29] Embick and Muir Fairchild memo to Marshall, "Comments on C.C.S. 135/1 and 135/2," January 4, 1943, ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7, RG 165, NARA.

In other words, pursuing Britain's Mediterranean strategy would damage America's military posture by globally dispersing U.S. forces and using them to achieve London's imperial objectives. This was especially a problem in the Pacific since Mediterranean operations would delay U.S. action against Japan by absorbing finite American resources.[30] Britain had significant overseas possessions in the Far East, but due to its geographical distance from the region, it felt Japanese defeat could be postponed indefinitely without significant repercussions, an opinion the Americans did not share.[31] Allied inattention to the Pacific would allow Tokyo to reinforce its imperial conquests in the area enough that dislodging Japan would become exceedingly difficult. Delay would additionally damage the U.S. policy of supporting and developing China as a future great power, which faced an increasingly grave situation in its conflict with Japan without Western assistance or military action.[32] If China collapsed, Tokyo would be able to establish hegemony in East Asia, and with approximately 55 percent of the world's population under its control would present "a greater ultimate threat to the United States than would a similar outcome in Europe."[33] Accordingly, "a successful outcome of the war in the Pacific is of a concern to the United States at least as great as a similar outcome in Europe."[34]

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[30] JCS 271, "Operations Subsequent to 'Husky,'" April 24, 1943, ABC 384 Post-Husky (14 May 1943), RG 165, NARA; Leahy for JCS to FDR, "Recommended line of action at coming conferences," May 8, 1943, Map Room Papers (hereafter MRP), Box 164, Naval Aide's Files: General Correspondence, FDRL.
[31] JCS 283/1, "Current British Policy and Strategy in Relationship to That of the United States," May 8, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43), Section 3, RG 218, NARA.
[32] CCS Memorandum for Information No. 43, "Value of China to the Allied War Effort," January 23, 1943, CCS 381 China (6-23-42), RG 218, NARA; Ibid, CCS Memorandum for Information No. 111, "Contribution of China to Allied Strategy," July 5, 1943, ABC 381 Japan (25 June 43), RG 165; "Memorandum of Conversation with General Stilwell by the Secretary of War and Mr. McCloy," April 30, 1943, Stimson Papers, reel 133; Charles F. Brower, *Defeating Japan: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and Strategy in the Pacific War, 1943-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 5-7; Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 156-76.
[33] JCS 506, "Instructions Concerning Duty as Military Observer at American-British-Soviet Conference," September 18, 1943, CCS 337 (9-12-43), Section 1, RG 218, NARA.
[34] Ibid.

Overall, the JSSC insisted the "fundamental difference" between American and British grand strategy revolved around "the relation of the war in the Pacific to the war as a whole" and the emphasis that should be placed on it.[35] Differing Anglo-American ideas about Japan's downfall revealed their contrasting national policies and how to achieve them. The U.S. approach to the European war reflected its relatively basic desire to defeat Germany as quickly as possible so that it could redirect its energies toward vanquishing Japan and protecting U.S. national interests in the Pacific, where America's "swelling power" had secured its regional preeminence.[36] Britain's "political" approach to the Mediterranean reflected its perceived imperial interests there and that "her Asian Empire had been little more than an anachronism and a façade, dependent on American assistance."[37] Japan was a threat to British regional interests too, but evidently London saw its future strength flowing from elsewhere. American visions of the postwar world rested heavily on the diminution of Japanese power and the rise of China as a global force in international politics. Since this apparent divergence in national policies was unlikely to be bridged, Washington must prioritize its own political aims and not help Britain fulfill its goals at the expense of defeating the Axis as soon as conceivable.

The Army's S&P Group and the JWPC supplemented the JSSC's analysis by attacking British strategy and policy in even sharper terms. In many colorful strategy papers, S&P officers argued Britain was adhering to its orthodox naval-focused military policy that had previously allowed it to preserve its empire. To effectively employ that sea power, Britain required a balance of power on the European continent. Consequently, British policymakers championed a peripheral strategy, S&P asserted, so that Germany and the Soviet Union were more likely to drain each

[35] JCS 167/3, "Basic Strategic Concept for 1943," January 5, 1943, CCS 381 (8-27-42), Section 1, RG 218, NARA.
[36] Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 164-65.
[37] JCS 283/1, "Current British Policy and Strategy in Relationship to That of the United States," May 8, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43), Section 3, RG 218, NARA; Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 165.

other's resources while Britain consolidated its hold on the Mediterranean basin.[38] The JWPC agreed, explaining that "British war policy is influenced by these national policies and her post-war economic, territorial and political ambitions."[39]

Britain was a "weak and defenseless island" without its empire, which was already disintegrating due to acute economic and military stresses.[40] Axis victories, especially in the Far East, had reduced British imperial territory while growing U.S. clout in North America and the Pacific had weakened ties between Britain and the Dominions.[41] The Empire had contracted to portions of Africa, the Middle East, and India, and London was struggling to maintain even this smaller realm.[42] British grand strategy was focused on the Mediterranean then because the country needed to bolster the areas it still controlled and deploy forces that could extend its influence to new domains relatively close to the British Isles, which London could either "retain or use for bargaining purposes when peace is negotiated."[43] This included North Africa, the Balkans, strategic islands in the Mediterranean such as Sicily and the Dodecanese, and considerable portions of the Middle East.[44] Britain's postwar sphere of influence would be centered on Iraq and Iran, which were vital to British naval power due to their substantial oil reserves.[45] Since this area could only realistically be invaded through Turkey or the Caucasus, which bordered Turkey, convincing

[38] For example, see Wedemeyer memo to Marshall, n.d.; Colonels Truman Smith and T.J. Betts memo to Wedemeyer, May 18, 1943; Colonels W.W. Bessell and R.C. Lindsay, special report, "Conduct of the War," July 25, 1943; "Agreements with the British with respect to Future Operations" memo, August 8, 1943; "Notes on Strategic Policy – U.S. vs. U.K." memo, "Strategic Considerations" memo, and "U.S.-British Strategy" memo, all n.d., all in ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7, RG 165, NARA; Ibid, "Probable British Proposals for Further Operations in 1943 and 1944 in the European-African Theaters" memo, April 14, 1943 and "Conduct of the War in Europe," August 4, 1943, both in ABC 381 (7 January 1943).
[39] JWPC 14, "Conduct of the War, 1943-44," May 7, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43), RG 218, NARA.
[40] "U.S.-British Strategy," ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7, RG 165, NARA.
[41] Ibid, "Probable British Proposals for Further Operations in 1943 and 1944 in the European-African Theaters," April 14, 1943, ABC 381 (7 January 1943).
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid, "U.S.-British Strategy," ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid, "Probable British Proposals for Further Operations in 1943 and 1944 in the European-African Theaters," April 14, 1943, ABC 381 (7 January 1943).

Ankara to join the Allies while securing the eastern Mediterranean were both crucial British geopolitical objectives.[46]

However, S&P planners claimed none of this would work. The British could no longer rely on sea power since its capacity to defend territory had been "strongly disputed if not entirely abrogated by the introduction" of airpower.[47] This meant protecting a "far-flung empire" was militarily untenable.[48] The Mediterranean strategy would not vanquish the European Axis powers because it would not aid the Soviets and was not "of a magnitude which could seriously injure Germany."[49] Indeed, "every Mediterranean proposal of Winston Churchill tends not to defeat Hitler quickly, but to enhance the strength and security of the new British Empire…none of these plans tends toward bringing real help to Russia or ending the war in Europe by a sharp decisive blow…these proposals appear to be patriotically conceived in the century-old traditions of British imperialism."[50] As long as American and British national policies were in conflict, the S&P agreed with the JSSC, the Anglo-American strategic dispute would persist.

The JWPC reiterated this point by explicitly linking U.S.-U.K. strategic differences to Washington and London's contrasting policy agendas. Its analysis laid bare the shifting parameters of the so-called "Special Relationship" and the emerging power asymmetry between the two countries. America's international political aims were hemispheric security and "the improvement of her world economic position by reciprocal trade pacts;" Britain's were "the maintenance of the integrity of the British Empire and of her supremacy in world trade."[51] Since the U.S. enjoyed unchallenged hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, its policy was "not strongly influenced by

[46] Ibid.
[47] "Strategic Considerations" memo and Wedemeyer memo to Marshall, both n.d., ABC 381 (9-25-41), Section 7, RG 165, NARA.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid, "Notes on Strategic Policy – U.S. vs. U.K.," n.d.
[50] Ibid.
[51] JWPC 14, "Conduct of the War, 1943-44," May 7, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43), RG 218, NARA.

post-war aims" and instead could focus on "the early and decisive defeat of the Axis." Meanwhile, Britain must use duplicitous and indirect means to attain its goals: "She dominates her empire by controlling the economic destiny of her dominions and crown colonies. She maintains her position in the European area by preserving the balance of power on the Continent. She exploits the resources and people of other nations to insure her position of dominance."[52] Britain preferred "neither Germany nor Russia…emerge in a dominating position in Europe, and that the balance of power in Europe rest in British hands."[53] The JWPC warned London was now attempting to manipulate the United States and its other allies to secure Britain's postwar future by using military strategy to undermine America's "economic supremacy" and U.S. plans to make China an Asian great power.[54]

Taken altogether, the three committees' examinations of British strategy and policy plainly illuminated the strategic issues plaguing the Anglo-American alliance, at least from the U.S. perspective. After widespread War Department frustration with U.S.-British strategy formation in 1942, these Army-dominated groups used their locations within the strategic planning process to influence how their superiors and other senior officials perceived America and Britain's political objectives. Specifically, they exercised their capacity to control the information flow to their bosses to push a specific narrative about the development of the joint Anglo-American war effort, a technique Stimson had already been employing with Roosevelt since 1940. Their analyses clearly had an impact: the JCS and their top aides backed their findings and rapidly approved these papers with only slight modifications.[55] For example, Admiral William D. Leahy, Roosevelt's liaison to the JCS and its unofficial chairman, described one of the JSSC studies as "most forceful and

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] JCS meeting minutes, May 8, 10, 14, 1943, CCS 334 (3-29-43), RG 218, NARA.

useful" and sent it directly to the White House, requested a separate one to personally show the president, and recorded his agreement with many of the planners' judgments about British grand strategy in his diary.[56] To be sure, anti-British attitudes and suspicions could be found in other areas of the Roosevelt administration.[57] However, Army officials tactically used their leverage over American strategic planning in a methodical way other agencies did not to promote their conceptions of U.S. national policy and shape the Allied military debates of 1943. The result was that U.S. officials hardened their resolve to ensure Washington's interests were prioritized and to develop a military policy to meet them.

The American Way of War

If there was agreement that U.S. strategic priorities needed to forcefully take precedence over British ones, it did not extend to how to make that happen. The American infighting over military policy that occurred throughout 1942 persisted into the early months of 1943. While the Pacific theater continued to absorb U.S. resources with the intensification of the Solomon Islands and New Guinea campaigns, there were sharp American disagreements about the future of global strategy. Navy planners pushed to escalate U.S. efforts against Tokyo by launching fresh offensives in the Central Pacific, essentially favoring a *de facto* Japan-first strategy. Their Army and AAF counterparts dissented but were divided over whether to launch a cross-Channel invasion or to take advantage of opportunities that could arise from additional Mediterranean operations.[58]

By the spring of 1943, U.S. defense officials had reached a compromise. The United States would support continued offensives in the Mediterranean basin if they met the following

[56] Ibid, JCS meeting minutes, May 8, 1943; Embick memo to Marshall, May 5, 1943, Marshall Papers, Box 56, Folder 1, GCMF; William D. Leahy Diary, May 2, 7, 27, 1943, William D. Leahy Papers, LoC.
[57] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 116-17; William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 198-211.
[58] Matloff, 164-67; Louis Morton, *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1962), 447-54.

conditions: they were limited campaigns and subordinated both to a 1944 cross-Channel attack and ongoing/future operations in the Pacific, including fresh advances in the Central Pacific. If Britain did not agree, Washington would use its independent control of munitions production and the main Allied war effort against Tokyo to transfer American resources to the Pacific, essentially codifying the *de facto* Japan-first strategy that the JCS had been following since the previous summer.[59] This military strategy would prioritize U.S. national policies and help fulfill those goals: quick and total defeat of the Axis by keeping Russia and China fighting and the elimination of overseas threats to the American way of life. As Major General James H. Burns, the executive of Roosevelt's Soviet Lend-Lease Protocol Committee, later explained to Hopkins, it was vital for Washington to militarily support Moscow through a cross-Channel invasion since "Russia is so necessary to victory and peace that we must give her maximum assistance and make every effort to develop and maintain the most friendly relations with her."[60] This compromise military policy was designed to achieve this and other fundamental U.S. political objectives.

However, finding interservice agreement was only half the battle. After internal JCS discord and disunity between the War Department and the service chiefs ultimately hampered Stimson's mission to open a second front in France the year before, political coordination this time was key to success. Ahead of the TRIDENT conference in Washington that May and the

[59] JCS meeting minutes, May 10, 1943, CCS 334 (3-29-43), RG 218, NARA; Ibid, JWPC 14, "Conduct of the War, 1943-44," May 7, 1943, CCS 381 (4-24-43); Ibid, JCS 291/1, "Invasion of the European Continent from the United Kingdom in 1943-1944," May 8, 1943, CCS 381 (3-23-42); Ibid, JCS 243/3, "Survey of the Present Strategic Situation," April 13, 1943, CCS 381 (8-27-42); Ibid, JPS 231, "Operations in the European-Mediterranean Area, 1943-1944: Adequacy of Trident Strategy," July 26, 1943, CCS 381 (6-7-43); Ibid, JCS 271, "Operations Subsequent to 'Husky,'" April 24, 1943, ABC 384 Post-Husky (14 May 1943), RG 165; Ibid, JCS 422/1, "Quadrant," July 25, 1943, ABC 337 (25 May 1943); Leahy for JCS to FDR, "Recommended line of action at coming conferences," May 8, 1943, MRP, FDRL; "Conduct of the War in 1943-1944," Study by the United States Joint Staff Planners, May 14, 1943, *FRUS: The Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Document 87; Ibid, "Strategic Plan for the Defeat of Japan," Plan Prepared by the United States Joint Staff Planners, May 14, 1943, Document 103.

[60] Major General James H. Burns memo to Hopkins, August 10, 1943, *FRUS: Quebec, 1943*, Document 317.

QUADANT meeting in Quebec during August, U.S. officials overhauled their processes for building political support for their proposals and how they encountered the British.[61] There would be specific studies confronting British ideas and furthering U.S. thinking; increased joint staff planning; closer political and policy coordination between the War and Navy Departments, and greater input from the State Department. The Americans needed to practice how they would confer with the British and during CCS meetings, each U.S. chief would cover a specific aspect of the war effort.[62] If the British insisted on their Mediterranean strategy, Marshall or Leahy would threaten switching U.S. focus to the Pacific to create the impression of JCS consensus. Assertive negotiating tactics should be employed and open disagreements in front of the U.K. chiefs must be avoided.[63]

Army planners equally stressed the need to persuade Roosevelt of this strategic thinking to avoid the failures with him in 1942. They had internalized a lesson Stimson had learned early on: it was crucial to restrict the flow of information to the president as much as possible. If Roosevelt could regularly receive analyses that favored the Army's perceptions of America's wartime political ambitions, it might shape his strategic views and make him less inclined to follow Britain's designs. Stimson took the lead on this front: after consulting with Marshall and their War Council, he urged the president in late April to crush Britain's "stupid opposition" to launching a

[61] Matloff, 110-11; Cline, 312-20.
[62] Leahy would serve as the JCS leader, preside over the meetings, cover the political and diplomatic connections to military strategy, and represent Roosevelt. Marshall's subject was the European war, King's the connections between the Pacific and European theaters, and Arnold's the air offensives. JSSC memo to JCS, "Procedure of Chiefs of Staff at Conference," August 9, 1943, CCS 381 (10-17-43), Section 1, RG 218, NARA. Also see Stimson Diary, May 4, 1943, HLSD.
[63] JPS 189, "Preparations for the Next U.S.-British Staff Conference," May 25, 1943, CCS 381 (5-25-43), Section 1, RG 218, NARA; Ibid, JCS 422/1, "Quadrant," July 25, 1943; Ibid, JSSC memo to JCS, "Procedure of Chiefs of Staff at Conference," August 9, 1943, CCS 381 (10-17-43), Section 1; Ibid, JPS 231, "Operations in the European-Mediterranean Area, 1943-1944: Adequacy of Trident Strategy," July 26, 1943, CCS 381 (6-7-43). For examples of Marshall and Leahy's Pacific warnings, see *FRUS: Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Documents 31, 35, 38, 46, 73, 376.

cross-Channel attack.[64] Equipped with the JSSC's analysis on London's perceived postwar aims, Stimson warned Roosevelt in early May that eastern Mediterranean operations could resurrect past Anglo-Russian rivalries in the area at precisely the time the president was attempting to foster closer Soviet-American relations.[65] "As the oldest member of the cabinet," Stimson wrote in his diary, "I could remember the sharp issue between Britain and Russia in the 80's. I said I was afraid that this antagonism would react sharply against his [Roosevelt's] proposition in Russia…I could see that I put a new idea into his head which I hope will bear fruit."[66]

Around the same time, Stimson and Hull also informed Roosevelt of their objections to Britain's plans for administering captured territory in the Mediterranean on the grounds they would stymie Axis defeat and strengthen London's, not Washington's, wartime geopolitical objectives.[67] And throughout the spring and summer of 1943, Leahy and Marshall sought to complement Stimson's initial forays by bolstering the political coordination necessary to bring Roosevelt into their strategic camp. Leahy personally sent to Roosevelt the JSSC and JWPC studies outlining the dubious assumptions behind British military strategy while Marshall forwarded comparable OPD and S&P ones. They also advised the president about how Britain's peripheral approach to defeating Germany would harm the Pacific War and Western relations with Moscow.[68]

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[64] Stimson Diary, April 28, 1943, HLSD.
[65] Ibid, Stimson Diary, May 3, 11, 1943.
[66] Ibid, Stimson Diary, May 3, 1943.
[67] Ibid, Stimson Diary, April 12-13, 1943; "Notes after Cabinet Meeting," June 4, 1943, Stimson Papers, reel 133; Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1964), 166-67.
[68] JCS meeting minutes, May 8, 1943, CCS 334 (3-29-43), RG 218, NARA; Ibid, JCS meeting minutes, July 26, 1943, CCS 334 (5-21-43); Ibid, JWPC 85, "Lessons from Quadrant," September 2, 1943, CCS 381 (5-25-43); Leahy Diary, May 2, 7, 24, and October 7, 1943, LoC; "Conduct of the War in Europe," Memorandum Prepared in the Operations Division of the War Department General Staff, August 8, 1943, *FRUS: Quebec, 1943*, Document 223; Ibid, "Strategic Plan for the Defeat of Japan," Memorandum by the United States Joint War Plans Committee, August 9, 1943, Document 213.

But Stimson was even more diligent than Marshall and Leahy. After temporarily stepping back from the strategic debate to focus on preparing the Army for its North African and Sicilian offensives, Stimson forcefully plunged back into the bureaucratic and coalition politics with which he was so familiar. Although Roosevelt by this time had started to work more directly through Marshall and the JCS when considering grand strategy, Stimson was fully aware of the issues since Marshall constantly updated him on these interactions and he received copies of JCS meeting minutes and memoranda.[69] Additionally through the Cabinet Defense Council, Stimson continued to routinely coordinate foreign and defense policy matters with Hull and Knox, which gave the secretary of war additional access and means to influence the contours of presidential policymaking. And Roosevelt was still relying on Stimson to serve as a political troubleshooter of sorts on a variety of thorny problems, including labor-industrial relations, civil unrest stemming from tensions over domestic wartime production, and administration of captured Axis territory.[70] The Stimson-Roosevelt relationship had shifted to some extent since 1940 when Stimson joined the administration, but the president still considered his secretary of war and the department he led to be key lieutenants in his prosecution of the war.

This dynamic helped Stimson assume his previous role from 1942 in working the politics of U.S. strategy and direct much of his energies toward convincing Roosevelt not to follow Britain's Mediterranean proposals. He regularly cautioned the president about the political foundations of British grand strategy and the erroneous military beliefs behind London's Mediterranean approach. Similar to his comments in July 1942, Stimson believed there were "very deep" differences between U.S. and U.K. "national characteristics and interests" that went further than "a mere difference of military tactics and strategy" because the British were "straining every

[69] As discussed in Chapter Three.
[70] Aldrich, 363-65.

nerve to lay a foundation throughout the Mediterranean for their own empire after the war is over."[71] He bluntly told Roosevelt that "if the British succeed in getting us pulled out any further into the limb in the Mediterranean, we shall face a widespread loss of support for the war among our people. Polls show that the public would be very much more interested in beating Japan than in beating the European Axis."[72] New Mediterranean operations would additionally damage any prospect for solid postwar Soviet-American relations because they would be akin to the West holding "the leg for Stalin to skin the deer" which would "be a dangerous business for us at the end of the war. Stalin won't have much of an opinion of people who have done that and we will not be able to share much of the post-war world with him."[73] After returning from a summer trip to England where he argued with Churchill "hammer and tongs" about invading northern France, Stimson derided to Roosevelt the prime minister's obsession with Mediterranean "pinprick warfare" and exhorted the president to "assume the responsibility of leadership" in vanquishing Hitler.[74]

At first, it was unclear whether these political and strategic undertakings were successful with Roosevelt.[75] By mid-1943, the president's strategic thinking rested on seemingly inconsistent considerations. On the one hand, he agreed with his military advisers that a cross-Channel assault was the best way to quickly defeat Germany and assist the Soviets, which Roosevelt hoped would engender willingness in Moscow to compromise on future postwar issues. With U.S. industry

[71] Stimson Diary, May 19, June 1, 1943, HLSD.
[72] Ibid, Stimson Diary, May 19, 1943.
[73] Ibid, Stimson Diary, May 17, 1943.
[74] Ibid, Stimson Diary, August 4, 9, 10, 1943; Ibid, "Brief Report on Certain Features of Overseas Trip," August 4, 1943; Ibid, Stimson to FDR, August 10, 1943; Stimson to FDR and FDR to Stimson, August 4 and 8, 1943, PSF Departmental Correspondence: War – Henry L. Stimson, 1942-1945. Stimson's trip report is also in *FRUS: Quebec, 1943*, Document 220.
[75] For example, compare Matloff 125-25 with Richard Leighton, "Overlord Revisited: An Interpretation of American Strategy in the European War, 1942-1944," *The American Historical Review* 68, no. 4 (July 1963): 919–37, https://doi.org/10.2307/1847256.

producing a breathtaking 86,000 aircraft, 16,000 landing vessels, and nearly 30,000 tanks in 1943 alone, Roosevelt believed Washington now possessed the requisite resources and experienced soldiers to mount a successful attack across the English Channel. He consequently worried about how additional Mediterranean action could impede an invasion of northern France. On the other hand, Roosevelt wanted to keep the Allied forces currently in the Mediterranean engaged with the enemy to keep the Axis on the defensive.[76] If Sicily was successfully seized, it would be difficult to pass up an opportunity to invade the Italian mainland and force Rome out of the war. And since Stalin's postwar intentions were still unclear, Roosevelt felt taking control of significant territory in southern Europe could potentially shield this area from Soviet power and possible expansion.[77]

These factors made landing American troops in Europe a vital necessity, but the president appeared unaware of the tension between these outwardly incompatible goals in his thinking. It would be extremely difficult to prioritize 1944 cross-Channel operations to aid the Soviets if there were also concerns those activities could facilitate Moscow's postwar domination of Europe. Due to these apparent contradictions, Roosevelt initially questioned the War Department and the JCS's judgements and outwardly continued to be enticed by Mediterranean campaigns.[78]

But after months of Stimson and the JCS's lobbying, Roosevelt shifted course.[79] He began to express his fears to Stimson and the JCS about conflicting American and British political goals

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[76] Unlike in 1942, Roosevelt was not concerned anymore about keeping the American public focused on the European war since TORCH had sparked much greater interest in defeating Germany before Japan. See Casey, 105-06

[77] Stimson Diary, May 3, 1943, HLSD; CCS minutes, "Meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff with Roosevelt and Churchill, 2:30pm," May 12, 1943, *FRUS: Washington, 1943*, Document 29; William D. Leahy, *I Was There* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1950), 157-58; I.C.B. Dear and M.R.D. Foot, eds., *The Oxford Companion to the Second World War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1183; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 395, 399-400, 409-11.

[78] FDR handwritten notes on Leahy for JCS to FDR, "Recommended line of action at coming conferences," May 8, 1943, MRP, FDRL.

[79] Already at TRIDENT, Roosevelt indicated he would need "to read the Riot Act" to the British if they did not compromise and thought Churchill was acting like a "spoiled boy" who needed to "shut up." See Stimson Diary, May 17, 27, 1943, HLSD.

in language similar to theirs when they raised their concerns about U.K. strategy and policy. Roosevelt also started to actively agree with their advice concerning Churchill's requests for further eastern Mediterranean operations and implemented their suggestions on this issue for his correspondence with the prime minister.[80] Britain's ill-fated Dodecanese islands campaign in the eastern Mediterranean during the fall of 1943 was a perfect example of what American strategists had warned Roosevelt about and wished to avoid: a costly diversion from the main Allied war effort that seemed designed to advance London's postwar interests which ended in failure.

After the War Department and the JCS's political bungling in 1942, their newfound level of coordination created a united front that was able to persuade the president of their strategic views. This was visible in the TRIDENT and QUADRANT Anglo-American military conclusions: in Washington, both countries agreed to a cross-Channel invasion by the spring of 1944 and to exploit the Allied invasion of Sicily (Operation HUSKY) through additional Mediterranean operations "best calculated to eliminate Italy from the war and to contain the maximum number of German forces."[81] But seven divisions and considerable numbers of scarce landing craft would be withdrawn from the Mediterranean by November 1 to attack northern France in 1944 and the CCS would have to approve any new Mediterranean offensives, handing the JCS a veto. The British also consented to fresh offensives in the Pacific, expanding the war with Japan and granting the Americans a key concession.[82] After HUSKY's rapid success and the collapse of Mussolini's regime in Italy in July, at QUADRANT the JCS acceded to an Italian campaign up to Rome, but

[80] Stimson Diary, May 10, 12, August 10, 1943, HLSD; "Minutes of Meeting Between the President, Secretary of War, and the Chiefs of Staff," August 10, 1943, MRP, Box 29, Minutes of Meetings of FDR with Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1942-1945, FDRL; "Memorandum for General Handy," The Chief of Staff, United States Army to the Chief of the Operations Division, War Department General Staff, August 9, 1943, *FRUS: Quebec, 1943*, Document 225; Leahy, 157-58.
[81] Report of the Combined Chiefs of Staff to President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, May 25, 1943, *FRUS: Washington, 1943*, Document 150.
[82] Ibid.

the 1944 invasion of northwestern Europe (Operation OVERLORD) was labelled the "primary effort" against Germany.[83] Resource distribution would favor OVERLORD and any future Mediterranean offensives would need to take place within the force posture agreed upon at TRIDENT unless changed by the CCS. And new operations would go forward in the Pacific designed to compel Japan's surrender within 12 months of Germany's.[84]

At first glance, these agreements might seem to favor British proposals. But in reality, they reflected U.S. priorities and the new political symbiosis between the War Department and the JCS that was previously missing in 1942. While further Mediterranean operations were implemented, they took place within tight limits where the JCS possessed a veto power it formerly lacked. The seven divisions would still be transferred from the Mediterranean to England for the 1944 cross-Channel assault unless the Americans thought otherwise, giving the JCS additional leverage. Moreover, despite Britain's perceived indifference toward the Pacific conflict, the Americans secured additional resources for the war against Japan, an essential U.S. concern, especially for the Navy.

This would not have been possible without gaining presidential support, which indicates the joint War Department-JCS political front had a significant impact on Roosevelt's strategic thinking. While it is possible Roosevelt may have eventually lost interest in waging war throughout the Mediterranean, it is clear Stimson and the JCS's lobbying, combined with the extensive Army-dominated analysis on Britain's postwar aims conducted during this period, played a vital role in speeding up that process. Although OVERLORD was not definitively pushed through until Stalin interceded in the debate at the Tehran Conference in late 1943, the War Department and its

[83] The Combined Chiefs of Staff to President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, August 24, 1943, *FRUS: Quebec, 1943*, Document 523.
[84] Ibid.

counterparts laid the groundwork for this decision by shaping Roosevelt's views throughout the year. Roosevelt's conversion was on full display in Tehran when he consistently supported Stalin's second front proposals against Churchill's pleas for extra Mediterranean action.[85] Yet Roosevelt's shift stemmed at least in part from the Army's drive to influence his strategic outlook: McCloy might have put it best when he told Stimson after reviewing the Tehran summit minutes that "in many cases I got the impression that Marshal Stimson was talking and not Marshal Stalin."[86]

As 1943 ended, the War Department was in a much different place vis-à-vis the U.S. grand strategy process. After the disagreements and inconsistencies amongst U.S. strategists in 1942 left them somewhat politically isolated and unable to convince Roosevelt to open a second front, they responded by changing how they operated. Army officials realized they needed coherent and uniform assessments of American strategy and policy, especially in relation to Britain's. Throughout 1943, Army planners and their associates set out to produce exactly those evaluations, consistently attacking London's military policy as politically motivated and strategically dubious. With the War Department leading this charge, U.S. defense officials used the national security policy process to promulgate their anti-British views and shape the Anglo-American strategic debates by disseminating studies that favored U.S. goals and ensuring they reached top decision makers. Armed with these analyses, Stimson, Marshall, and their JCS colleagues pressed ahead with persuading Roosevelt that following British strategic thinking would not accomplish U.S. political objectives or decisively defeat Germany. This time around, they were markedly successful in bringing the president over to their side. After intense bureaucratic struggle, the War Department had the commander-in-chief in their corner, and he delivered for them and their

[85] For example, see Charles Bohlen minutes and CCS minutes, "First plenary meeting, 4 p.m.," November 28, 1943, *FRUS: The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943*, Documents 360-61; Ibid, Charles Bohlen Minutes and CCS minutes, "Second plenary meeting, 4 p.m.," November 29, 1943, Documents 366-67.
[86] McCloy to Stimson, December 2, 1943, HLSD.

strategic plans by eventually shunning Churchill and embracing a cross-Channel invasion as the surest way to relieve the Soviets and vanquish the Nazis. The Army's vociferous critiques of British strategy and policy and its leveraging of the bureaucracy to achieve its strategic aims had finally proven fruitful for on June 6, 1944, the Allies began their successful invasion of northwestern Europe and the final drive toward Germany's downfall. After a year of misfires and setbacks, the War Department had seized considerable control over the machinery of U.S. strategy formation and deployed it to great effect. Throughout this process, Stimson's warriors had transformed themselves into politicians. It was both a blessing and a curse as they began planning for the postwar world.

Chapter Seven

The New Superpower World Order

This chapter examines how the War Department approached planning for the postwar world. It specifically focuses on the future of Soviet-American relations and how that relationship impacted preparations for the defeat and eventual occupation of the vanquished Axis powers. This chapter makes several main arguments. The first one is that the War Department as a bureaucratic actor often adopted ambiguous and confusing stances toward the Soviet Union when it came to postwar planning issues. Stimson, his senior advisers, and Marshall primarily felt a durable postwar peace required a cooperative Washington-Moscow relationship while Army planners and mid-level War Department officials expressed strong concerns about Soviet behavior in Eastern Europe and what that meant for the future. Given Army planners' central role in the strategic planning and policy process, these divisions helped blur and muddle Washington's broader Russia policy and helped reinforce American hawks' views that the future Soviet-American relationship would be dominated by conflict and superpower rivalry. The hawks' increasingly strong beliefs made confrontational U.S. policies more likely and helped construct the foundations for the pugnacious atmosphere in the developing superpower relationship that would become a central theme of the Cold War.

The second main argument of this chapter is that War Department leaders' beliefs about postwar Soviet-American relations greatly impacted their views on how to manage the defeated Axis powers. As this chapter discusses in greater detail below, Stimson and his top aides believed Germany, Italy, and Japan would need to be jointly occupied by the Allies for potentially a 15-30 year period, which could only happen with Soviet assistance. To accomplish this and protect global security more broadly, the War Department subscribed to a variation of President Roosevelt's Four

Policemen concept. A great power interim government consisting of America, Britain, China, and the Soviet Union, operating alongside an eventual world security organization, would formally continue the wartime alliance and embed postwar cooperation amongst the big powers in the international political system.

This thinking had a sizable effect on the War Department leadership's approach to postwar Germany. During the heated internal debate over the Morgenthau Plan for postwar Germany in the fall of 1944 for instance, the War Department argued that contrary to mainstream perceptions of Moscow's future economic and security imperatives, the plan would damage postwar Soviet-American relations by creating extra political, economic, and social burdens in Germany that would probably cause future tensions between the two superpowers. According to the War Department, the Morgenthau Plan would make occupying and governing Germany exceptionally harder and create new points of friction between the Allies due to artificially created economic hardship and poverty stemming from Western occupation policies. If Washington truly wanted to engender a friendly relationship with Moscow, Stimson and his advisers maintained, a robust and economically healthy Germany was required for facilitating Europe and the USSR's postwar economic recovery.

As this chapter will show, Stimson and his top team's advocacy for policies designed to facilitate a cooperative postwar American-Soviet relationship was a hallmark of their approach to the postwar world until internal Army opposition eventually eroded their confidence in Moscow's good faith and began to darken their views on whether that collaboration was really possible.

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On January 24, 1943, President Roosevelt held a joint press briefing with Prime Minister Churchill, the final day of the Casablanca Conference. Noting that he and Churchill believed "peace can come

to the world only by the total elimination of German and Japanese war power," Roosevelt declared "the elimination of German, Japanese, and Italian war power means the unconditional surrender by Germany, Italy, and Japan…It does not mean the destruction of the population of Germany, Italy, or Japan, but it does mean the destruction of the philosophies in those countries which are based on conquest and the subjugation of other people."[1]

With that statement, Roosevelt officially committed the Allies to total victory over their enemies. "Unconditional surrender" seemed simple enough, but its repercussions, and how to implement the policy, were not. After Roosevelt's untimely passing in April 1945, it fell to Vice President Harry S. Truman to determine how to enact FDR's vision for ending the war. The new president was committed to his predecessor's policies, but beyond Roosevelt's public statements, Truman struggled to ascertain those policies' details and how Roosevelt planned to execute them.[2] At the very least, Truman pledged to achieve Germany and Japan's outright defeat.[3]

Unconditional surrender was undoubtedly important as a war termination policy and for avoiding the mistakes of the messy peace negotiations following World War I; it was arguably just as significant, if not more so, as a tool for building friendly relations with the Soviet Union and ensuring Moscow did not sign a negotiated peace with Berlin.[4] In the weeks and months after Roosevelt announced the unconditional surrender policy, Americans officials recognized the

[1] FDR, "Joint Press Conference with Prime Minister Churchill at Casablanca," January 24, 1943, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/joint-press-conference-with-prime-minister-churchill-casablanca, accessed February 6, 2023).
[2] Marc Gallicchio, *Unconditional: The Japanese Surrender in World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 16. For more on the Roosevelt-Truman transition, see Wilson D. Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[3] Harry S. Truman, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress," April 16, 1945, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-before-joint-session-the-congress, accessed February 6, 2023).
[4] Roosevelt explained these connections between his unconditional surrender policy and Soviet-American relations to several people, including his son Elliott, who served as his military attaché during several wartime conferences, and Robert Murphy, an American diplomat and Eisenhower's political adviser in the North African and Italian occupied territories. See Elliott Roosevelt, *As He Saw It* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946), 117; Robert Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors* (London: Collins, 1964), 280-81.

United States and the Soviet Union would emerge from the war as the world's dominant powers and began to frame their postwar thinking in terms of future Soviet-American relations.[5] Thus the dilemma became, as the historian Warren Kimball has described, "how to keep the Soviets in the fight without helping to create a monster that threatened American interests."[6] The "fight" was not only the one against Germany, but also included the war with Japan and the future shape of the international order.

As the American military establishment increasingly focused on postwar policy questions, how to manage the future Soviet-American relationship became a central issue in its strategic planning.[7] The armed forces became so consumed with this overarching issue and so dominant in the policymaking process that when it came to coordinating U.S. strategy and policy, the State Department, in the words of historian Ernest May, "became almost an auxiliary arm of the military services" as "the strategists took command."[8] And due to its considerable influence over U.S. strategic planning and its political leverage within the defense bureaucracy, War Department views

[5] For example, see Embick memos to Marshall, October 11 and 29, 1943, Marshall Papers, Box 56, Folder 1, GCMF; JCS 973/1, "Fundamental Military Factors in Relation to Discussions Concerning Territorial Trusteeships and Settlements," August 3, 1944, CCS 092 (7-27-44), RG 218, NARA; Ibid, JCS Memorandum for Information No. 121, "Strategy and Policy: Can America and Russia Cooperate?", August 22, 1943, CCS 092 USSR (8-22-43); Ibid, "Disarmament of Germany" memo, January 4, 1944, ABC 381 Strategy Section Papers (7 January 1943), RG 165; Bullitt memos to FDR, January 29, May 12, and August 10, 1943, PSF Diplomatic Correspondence: William C. Bullitt, 1941-1943, FDRL; Ibid, George Earle to FDR, October 1, 1943, PSF Subject File: George H. Earle; Ibid, JCS Memorandum for Information No. 180, "Report on Political Conditions in Occupied Europe," January 17, 1944, MRP, Box 171, Naval Aide's Files: President's File, September 2, 1942-February 19, 1945; Burns memo to Hopkins, August 10, 1943, *FRUS: Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Document 317; David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 300. Also see Edward Mead Earle, "The Changing Power Position of Great Britain as a Factor in the Defense Problem of the United States," Earle Papers.

[6] Warren F. Kimball, "Stalingrad: A Chance for Choices," *The Journal of Military History* 60, no. 1 (January 1996): 89–114, https://doi.org/10.2307/2944450.

[7] Michael S. Sherry, *Preparing for the Next War: American Plans for Postwar Defense, 1941-45* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 42-47.

[8] Ernest R. May, "The Development of Political-Military Consultation in the United States," *Political Science Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (June 1955): 161–80, https://doi.org/10.2307/2145220.

on Soviet-American relations played a substantial role in the development of American policy toward Moscow.[9]

Unlike the consensus eventually formed around the Soviets' essential wartime role in defeating Germany, this chapter contends the War Department as a bureaucratic actor often adopted ambiguous and confusing stances toward the Soviet Union on other thorny policy issues, specifically postwar ones. The War Department was divided on whether to adopt conciliatory or hardline positions toward the USSR on postwar policy problems. Stimson and his senior advisers predominantly believed postwar peace required a cooperative attitude toward Moscow while Army planners expressed greater concerns about Soviet actions in Eastern Europe and what they meant for the future.[10] These divisions helped blur and muddle Washington's broader Soviet policy and helped strengthen U.S. hawks' views that the future of Soviet-American relations would be one of conflict and competition. These views made confrontational American policies more likely and helped lay the foundations for the contentious atmosphere in the emerging superpower relationship that would become a hallmark of the Cold War. This chapter does not explicitly discuss the War Department's leadership in the Manhattan Project to build the first atomic bombs or the U.S. decision to use those bombs against Japan in 1945 since they have already been covered in exhaustive detail elsewhere. But it discusses how nuclear weaponry factored into War Department thinking about Washington's future relationship with Moscow and its larger plans for the postwar world.[11]

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[9] As explored in Chapters Four-Six.

[10] For a useful overview of Stimson's postwar grand strategic thinking, see Joé Majerus, "Final Strategy: The Post-War Grand Strategic Designs of Henry L. Stimson," *The International History Review* 41, no. 4 (2019): 845–65, https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2018.1464492.

[11] The literature on the Manhattan Project and the atomic bombings of Japan is overwhelming, but the best place to start is Malloy, *Atomic Tragedy*. For an overview of the issues, disputes, and legacies surrounding the atomic bombings, see Michael D. Gordin and G. John Ikenberry, eds., *The Age of Hiroshima* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020); Michael J. Hogan, ed., *Hiroshima in History and Memory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and J. Samuel Walker, "Recent Literature on Truman's Atomic Bomb Decision: A Search

The Origins of the Cooperative and Confrontation Frameworks

After U.S. strategists determined the Red Army would initially withstand Germany's military onslaught on the Eastern Front in 1941, they made sustaining the Soviets' fighting capabilities a centerpiece of the Allied war effort. Throughout 1942-43, U.S. military planning focused on how to keep Russia in the war by crafting proposals with this cardinal objective in mind, principally cross-channel operations designed to force the Nazis to fight on two major European fronts.[12] This made sense given the "overwhelming bulk" of Hitler's eight million-strong army was deployed on the Eastern Front and the Red Army was inflicting a sizable majority of German casualties.[13] This reasoning partly explained why many U.S. officials consistently attacked Britain's Mediterranean strategy: if Washington got involved in areas of historic Anglo-Russian rivalry, it could arouse Moscow's suspicions about the West's commitment to German defeat and possibly induce Stalin

for Middle Ground," *Diplomatic History* 29, no. 2 (April 2005): 311–34, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.2005.00476.x. For the traditionalist/orthodox interpretation, which emphasizes the bomb as a method for ending the Pacific War, avoiding a bloody invasion of Japan, and saving countless American and Japanese lives, see Robert H. Ferrell, *Harry S. Truman: A Life* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1994), esp. 198-218; Robert James Maddox, *Weapons for Victory: The Hiroshima Decision Fifty Years Later*, Second Edition (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2004); Richard B. Frank, *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2001); Wilson D. Miscamble, *The Most Controversial Decision: Truman, the Atomic Bombs, and the Defeat of Japan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011) . On the revisionist side, which argues the bombs did not need to be dropped because Japan was close to surrender anyway and instead stresses fledgling Cold War tensions for the bombs' use, see Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*, Second Edition (London: Pluto Press, 1994); Gar Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Knopf, 1995); Robert Messer, *The End of an Alliance: James F. Byrnes, Roosevelt, Truman and the Origins of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); Campbell Craig and Sergey Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008). On the middle ground synthesis between these two approaches, which places the bomb within the Pacific War context but acknowledges American diplomatic motives with the Soviets, Barton Bernstein is the best-known proponent. For a summary of his arguments, see Barton J. Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 1995, 135-52. Another middle-ground approach can be found in J. Samuel Walker, *Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs Against Japan*, Third Edition (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2016). Also see Martin J. Sherwin, *A World Destroyed: Hiroshima and Its Legacies*, Third Edition (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Phillips P. O'Brien, "The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Atom Bomb, the American Military Mind and the end of the Second World War," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 42, no. 7 (2019): 971-991, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2018.1559150.

[12] See Chapters Five and Six.

[13] Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 19; David M. Glantz and Jonathan M. House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015), 297, 356-57, 383-89.

to sign a negotiated peace with Hitler.[14] Admiral King therefore probably summed up these beliefs best when he declared to an off-the-record meeting of reporters in late 1942 that "In the last analysis, Russia will do nine-tenths of the job of defeating Germany."[15]

American policymakers recognized however the political and geostrategic dilemma U.S. support for Moscow was creating: if the Soviets could successfully fend off the Nazi military machine and continued to fight until Europe was liberated from Axis domination, they would wield incredible power and influence in the postwar world. The Soviet Union was an ally of convenience in the war against a dangerous coalition of enemies, not a likeminded partner which shared similar ideals and values, and because of this, it might still distrust the West while seeking to establish hegemony over its neighbors. In February 1942, Army intelligence officers warned Marshall that a triumphant Stalin would be "certain" to intimidate and "very likely" to communize large portions of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia. "Independent action, "imperialistic expansion, and communistic infiltration," they maintained, "must always be expected from the U.S.S.R."[16] Over a year later, the U.S. Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) concluded that while evidence of Stalin's postwar goals was fragmentary and unclear, it was likely he desired "political hegemony in all European countries east of Germany and the Adriatic Sea;" substantial influence over Germany and Western Europe; a Soviet presence in the Dardanelles, northern Iran, and the Persian Gulf, and warm-water ports in northeast Asia if his forces entered the Pacific conflict.[17] In other

[14] See Chapter Six for more details. Also see Vojtech Mastny, "Stalin and the Prospects of a Separate Peace in World War II," *The American Historical Review* 77, no. 5 (December 1972): 1365–88, https://doi.org/10.2307/1861311.
[15] Memorandum of Meeting, November 30, 1942, Research Materials (A Naval Record): Cornelius H. Bull Records of Meetings, November 6, 1942-April 16, 1944, Box 13, Folder 12, Thomas B. Buell and Walter M. Whitehill Collection on Ernest J. King, U.S. Naval War College Archives, Newport, RI.
[16] G-2 to Marshall, "Possibility of a Negotiated Russo-German Settlement," February 12, 1942, Box 218, Harry L. Hopkins Papers, FDRL.
[17] JIC 129, "U.S.S.R. – Situation, Capabilities, and Intentions," August 20, 1943, ABC 336 Russia (22 August 1943), RG 165, NARA.

words, there was a distinct possibility that once Nazi Germany was vanquished, the United States might have another potential adversary in the Soviet Union, all while having helped secure Moscow's postwar preeminence in the first place by substantially assisting Russia during the war.

Given this Russian conundrum, the question became how to solve it. Within the U.S. defense community, and especially the War Department, two schools of thought emerged on postwar Soviet-American relations: one based on cooperation and compromise, and the other premised on confrontation and competition. To start with the cooperative approach, those who favored it argued Moscow's vital importance to the Allied war effort meant that if the Allies achieved victory, the growth of Soviet influence in world politics was unavoidable, even if this postwar expansion of Soviet power could pose potential problems for U.S. security.[18] This made cultivating close Soviet-American ties and efforts to eliminate Soviet suspicion or antagonism, according to the cooperative camp, the only feasible policy option.

On the day he became secretary of war in 1940, nearly a year before Germany invaded the USSR, Dorothy Thompson suggested to Stimson the United States should form a military alliance with Russia against the Axis. Thompson acknowledged Moscow had signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop nonaggression pact with Berlin in 1939, but this had been done "to protect herself" and she argued it was likely Hitler would terminate the treaty at some point anyway to attack the Soviet Union.[19] Thompson counseled that America should not fear Russia's future power since the spread of communism worldwide was a "bogey invented by the Nazis to help them bulldoze the world" and Moscow "has proven that she is perfectly willing to throw the communists in other

[18] Edward M. Bennett, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Search for Victory: American-Soviet Relations, 1939-1945* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1990), 88; John Lamberton Harper, *American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 88-89, 120-24.
[19] Thompson to Stimson, July 10, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 102.

countries into the ashcan for the sake of some aid to her national existence."[20] Stimson concurred with Thompson's assessments and believed a new understanding could be found with Moscow because prior to the Bolsheviks' rise to power, "Russia was one of our most constant friends." He added that his reading of Russian history indicated Russia "had not been a formidable aggressive power outside of her own domains for several centuries" and that it could serve as a geopolitical "counter-weight" to maintain the balance of power in Asia and Europe.[21]

Other senior War Department leaders felt similarly to Stimson. Major General Burns of the President's Soviet Protocol Committee told Hopkins in December 1942 that Russian collapse "might prevent us from defeating either Germany or Japan" and that Allied victory would allow Russia to become "one of the three most powerful countries in the world."[22] "We not only need Russia as a powerful fighting ally in order to defeat Germany but eventually we will also need her in a similar role to defeat Japan. And finally, we need her as a real friend and customer in the post-war world," Burns asserted.[23] This made fostering solid wartime and postwar relations between the two nations a fundamental U.S. policy aim. On the eve of the QUADRANT conference eight months later, Burns forwarded a comparable set of proposals to Hopkins supported by a "very high level" military estimate on Russia that concluded Moscow's "post-war position in Europe will be a dominant one. With Germany crushed, there is no power in Europe to oppose her tremendous military forces."[24] According to the estimate, the implications were obvious: "Since Russia is the decisive factor in the war, she must be given every assistance and every effort must be made to obtain her friendship. Likewise, since without question she will dominate Europe on the defeat of

[20] Ibid.
[21] Stimson to Thompson, August 12, 1940, Stimson Papers, reel 102.
[22] Burns memo to Hopkins, "Importance of Soviet Relationships and Suggestions for Improving Them," December 1, 1942, Box 317, Robert Sherwood Collection, Hopkins Papers, FDRL. According to Robert Sherwood, this memo was an "excellent statement of Hopkins' own views." It is reprinted in Sherwood, 641-43.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Burns memo to Hopkins, August 10, 1943, *FRUS: Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Document 317.

the Axis, it is even more essential to develop and maintain the most friendly relations with Russia."[25]

Marshall, the JCS, and the JSSC held analogous cooperative views. Besides their warnings about abetting Britain's goals in the eastern Mediterranean out of concern it could reignite Anglo-Russian rivalry in the area, they echoed Burns' belief that full Soviet involvement in the European war was critical to defeating Germany and should Russia withdraw, "Anglo-American ground operations on the Continent will become impracticable."[26] They notified Major General John R. Deane, the new head of the U.S. Military Mission in Moscow, that upon German collapse, "Russia will be in possession of a military machine that cannot successfully be challenged to the eastward of the Rhine and the Adriatic by any power or combination of powers."[27] Therefore, Marshall and his JCS colleagues advised Deane to pursue cooperation with the Soviet government based upon three "cardinal factors": recognition that Allied victory in Europe required Stalin's total support; acknowledgement of the reality that Russia alone would possess the military means to decide the fate of Central Europe and the Balkans, and the importance of Soviet entry into the war against Japan after the Nazis' downfall.[28] U.S. officials who favored the cooperative framework, including Stimson, his senior aides, and Marshall, believed that since there was very little America or Britain could do to change this set of circumstances, it was only sensible to work closely with the Soviets. Arnold made a nearly identical argument when he called for closer Anglo-American-Russian military collaboration and touted its many apparent advantages to his JCS colleagues.[29] Even Roosevelt seemed to accept this reasoning when he told the Archbishop of New York after the

[25] Ibid.
[26] JCS 506, "Instructions Concerning Duty as Military Observer at American-British-Soviet Conference," September 18, 1943, CCS 337 (9-12-43), Section 1, RG 218, NARA.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Arnold to JCS, "Military Policy Toward Russia," n.d., OPD 381 Russia, RG 165, NARA.

QUADRANT conference that Russia would "predominate" in postwar Europe and "there is no point to oppose these desires of Stalin because he has the power to get them anyhow…the U.S. and Britain cannot fight the Russians."[30]

The cooperative camp's conclusions about how to manage postwar Soviet-American relations were likely drawn from several academic and popular analyses percolating at this time about the future of great power politics. In addition to Edward Mead Earle's examination of the long-term trends in Britain's power position for Army military intelligence (discussed in Chapter Six), Lippmann's 1943 bestselling book *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* had an impact on policymakers.[31] Lippmann stressed the connections between American security and the Eurasian balance of power. With the destruction of German and Japanese power, the "crucial question of the epoch we are now entering is the relationship between Russia and the Atlantic Community."[32] Lippmann expected the central issues in the relationship to be whether "Russia will seek to extend her power westward into Europe in such a way that it threatens the security of the Atlantic states" and whether "the United States and Russia will move towards rivalry or towards a common ground of understanding" in Asia.[33] But given historic Russian-American

[30] Robert I. Gannon, *The Cardinal Spellman Story* (New York: Doubleday, 1962), 222-23.
[31] The book was published in a dozen languages and sold nearly 500,000 copies, popularized in an abridged version by *Reader's Digest* and in a cartoon strip in *Ladies' Home Journal*, and distributed to U.S. troops at home and abroad. See Steel, 406. Other examinations influential with the military establishment include Sir Halford Mackinder, "The Round World and the Winning of the Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1943, 595-605; Nicholas John Spykman, *America's Strategy in World Politics: The United States and the Balance of Power* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942); Nicholas John Spykman, *The Geography of the Peace*, ed. Helen R. Nicholl (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1944). On the growing ties between the academic community and the military in this period, see Fergie, "Geopolitics Turned Inwards;" Preston, "National Security as Grand Strategy;" Gene M. Lyons, "The Growth of National Security Research," *The Journal of Politics* 25, no. 3 (August 1963): 489–508, https://doi.org/10.2307/2127969. Also see John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 22-25.
[32] Walter Lippmann, *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1943), 146.
[33] Ibid.

friendship, Lippmann, similarly to Stimson, felt Washington and Moscow had a "profound common interest" in reaching mutually advantageous compromises.[34]

In fact, Stimson applauded Lippmann's book and discussed it with his colleagues. The secretary of war specifically recommended it to Hull and Knox during a Cabinet Defense Council meeting as part of the "revolutionary effort" the American people required "in a new and correct education to build up a new and correct foreign policy" since the country had been victimized by a "false history" propagated by noninterventionists.[35] King was equally impressed with Lippmann's book and sent him a personal note praising it and thanking him for producing a volume he would "oblige every American citizen to read."[36] Lippmann's analysis coincided with King's, who insisted during a confidential press briefing around the time Lippmann's book was published that Stalin was a "realist" who understood the need to cooperate with his major allies after the war.[37] "For all their mutual suspicions," John Lewis Gaddis summarized about the logic underscoring the cooperative camp's thinking, "the United States and the Soviet Union have never been such bitter rivals as to blind themselves indefinitely to the emergence of common threats, or to the necessity of devising cooperative means by which to oppose them."[38]

The geopolitical analysis underwriting the cooperative approach, however, could easily be construed to support the opposite conclusion: immense postwar Soviet power on the Eurasian landmass was dangerous to U.S. national security and must be explicitly challenged. This leads to the confrontation framework, the other school of thought in the War Department and armed forces on the future of American-Soviet relations. This camp was dominated by Army planners and U.S.

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[34] Ibid, 147-154.
[35] Stimson Diary, May 11, 1943, HLSD.
[36] King to Lippmann, July 21, 1943, Box 13, Walter Lippmann Folder, Ernest J. King Papers, LoC.
[37] Glen C.H. Perry, *"Dear Bart": Washington Views of World War II* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 168.
[38] Gaddis, *The Long Peace*, 17.

defense officials who felt Washington and Moscow's postwar national interests were mutually incompatible and would lead to inevitable conflict.[39] Brigadier General Albert Wedemeyer, the Army S&P chief, warned his superiors in December 1942 that Russian-American collaboration was only benefitting Moscow and that this would continue unless Washington assumed a "firm stand" with the Soviets. Moreover, Stalin did not share the "democratic principles" enshrined in the Atlantic Charter and they were not part of his war aims, which would likely cause problems in the future.[40] General Thomas Handy, Eisenhower's successor as the top Army planner, concurred with Wedemeyer's assessment and suggested to Marshall reducing Soviet assistance because "victory in the war will be meaningless unless we also win the peace. We must be strong enough at the peace table to cause our demands to be respected."[41] S&P's Policy Committee boldly suggested continuing Lend-Lease shipments to Russia only if it "cooperated with us and takes us into her confidence."[42] Distinctly connecting military strategy with national policy, AAF intelligence cautioned Arnold in August 1943 that unless U.S.-British forces invaded France by year's end, "we will merely sit on the sidelines while Russia decides the European politics."[43]

Army planners were not the only ones suspecting postwar Soviet influence and objectives could harm U.S. security interests and advocating for more hawkish policy choices. William

[39] Edward M. Bennett, "Challengers to Policy: Proponents of an Inevitable Soviet-American Confrontation," Box 1, World War II Research Papers presented at the Second Soviet-American Relations During World War II Symposium, October 1987, FDRL; Bennett, *Roosevelt and the Search for Victory*, 88-90. General fears of communism were widespread during the interwar period, which were also present in the U.S. military. On this, see Jonathan Haslam, *The Spectre of War: International Communism and the Origins of World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021); Edward Mark, "October or Thermidor? Interpretations of Stalinism and the Perception of Soviet Foreign Policy in the United States, 1927-1947," *The American Historical Review* 94, no. 4 (October 1989): 937–62, https://doi.org/10.2307/1906590.
[40] Wedemeyer memo to Handy, "Military Policy Toward Russia," December 10, 1942, OPD 381 Russia, RG 165, NARA.
[41] Ibid, Handy memo to Marshall, "Heavy Bombers for Russia," March 5, 1943, OPD 452.1 Russia, Section 1, Case 24.
[42] Ibid, OPD Policy Committee, "The Weekly Strategic Resume," January 23, 1943, OPD Policy Committee (1 Aug. 1942).
[43] Edgar Sorensen memo to Arnold, "Reconsideration of Invasion Timing," August 4, 1943, Journals and Notebooks, Box 2, Arnold Papers, LoC.

Howard Gardiner, the former president of the Navy League, warned Joseph Grew, the former U.S. ambassador to Japan and now a senior adviser to Hull, that Russia could "dictate the terms of German surrender in Berlin long before Anglo-American forces get within really effective striking distance of that capital – whereupon the major problem of western Europe would be: How to halt the westward and southwestward drive of Russia?"[44] To Gardiner, the only way to avoid this outcome would be for Western troops to reach Berlin before the Russians could.[45] In a series of anti-Russian memoranda for Roosevelt, former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union William C. Bullitt pressed for a stricter Lend-Lease policy and a major Anglo-American offensive in the Balkans to prevent Soviet penetration into the region and the Russians "from replacing the Nazis as masters of Europe." Bullitt reminded Roosevelt the Soviet Union was "a totalitarian dictatorship" which did not subscribe to the president's Four Freedoms and ultimately wished to spread communism worldwide.[46] The only way to check postwar Soviet expansion, Bullitt contended, was to place massive numbers of U.S. and British troops into Europe as quickly as possible.[47] And the Security Subcommittee of the State Department's Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, concerned about the prospects for future Soviet-American collaboration, recommended not totally disarming Western Europe after the war. According to Norman Davis, the security subcommittee chair and president of the Council on Foreign Relations, European

[44] William Howard Gardiner to Joseph Grew, March 12, 1943, enclosed in Grew to FDR, April 8, 1943, PSF Departmental Correspondence: State, January 1942-May 1943, FDRL. Grew also forwarded Gardiner's letter to Leahy; Leahy circled Gardiner's comments about the USSR on his copy. See Grew to Leahy, April 8, 1943, attached to Leahy Diary, LoC.
[45] Gardiner to Grew, March 12, 1943, FDRL.
[46] In his 1941 State of the Union Address, Roosevelt declared there were four universal freedoms all people should possess: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. They came to symbolize America's eventual war aims once it officially entered World War II. See FDR, "Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union," January 6, 1941, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/annual-message-congress-the-state-the-union, accessed February 28, 2023).
[47] Bullitt memos to FDR, January 29, May 12, and August 10, 1943, PSF Diplomatic Correspondence: William C. Bullitt, 1941-1943, FDRL. The quotations are from Bullitt to FDR, January 29, 1943.

security was the "fundamental issue between Russia and the United States. We must make it clear that arrangements in Western Europe vitally affect our security." If Allied cooperation was not possible, the subcommittee must consider alternatives for navigating Soviet power.[48]

Since U.S. officials deemed ongoing Russian participation in the war a paramount American objective, most policymakers continued to believe the cooperative framework for Soviet-American relations was superior to a competitive approach. This extended to the War Department's top leaders, including Stimson, his deputies, and Marshall. This is why OVERLORD was so important: not only would it satiate one of Stalin's key demands, hopefully reduce Soviet enmity, and hasten the war's end, but it would also put enormous numbers of Western troops in the heart of Hitler's *Festung Europa*, which could theoretically limit Moscow's freedom of maneuver and make it more politically accommodating. Yet as a hedge, those forces would be present to restrain Soviet expansion if collaboration failed. As the OSS observed, a second front in Western Europe was "indispensable" to Soviet-American cooperation, but it was also vital for making a Soviet policy of hostility "costly" and "unattractive," strengthening the West's "bargaining position" in Europe, and impeding Russian encroachment if collaboration faltered.[49] In case Germany weakened or collapsed before OVERLORD could be launched, the CCS approved the RANKIN plans at QUADRANT for emergency landings across Europe as a contingency measure "to be ready to get to Berlin as soon as did the Russians."[50] Senior American leaders, including at the War Department, were principally guided by and ultimately prioritized the cooperative approach with Moscow. But confrontational policies were lurking below the

[48] S89 Summary Statement of Security Subcommittee Views and Security Subcommittee minutes, May 20, 1943, Box 76, Harley A. Notter Papers, RG 59, NARA.
[49] JCS Memorandum for Information No. 121, "Strategy and Policy: Can America and Russia Cooperate?", August 22, 1943, CCS 092 USSR (8-22-43), RG 218, NARA.
[50] CCS minutes, "Meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff with Roosevelt and Churchill, 5:30 p.m.," August 23, 1943, *FRUS: Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Document 415; Ibid, Memorandum by the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander Designate, "Digest of Operation 'RANKIN'", August 14, 1943, Document 448.

surface in U.S. thinking, which would gradually come to the fore as postwar planning accelerated inside the executive branch.

The New Soviet-American World Order

Roosevelt's conception of the postwar international order rested upon cooperative Soviet-American relations. Similarly to many of his advisers, Roosevelt understood the United States and the Soviet Union would be the world's two mightiest nations after the war. The president did not believe, unlike some U.S. officials, the Kremlin desired territorial aggrandizement through military aggression in the manner Germany did.[51] "I think the Russians are perfectly friendly; they aren't trying to gobble up all the rest of Europe or the world," Roosevelt told the Advertising War Council Conference in 1944. "They haven't got any crazy ideas of conquest."[52] To obtain Russia's postwar cooperation, Roosevelt sought to mollify Stalin's security concerns through preservation of the wartime alliance.[53] A new international security organization would eventually be formed, but at the heart of Roosevelt's postwar designs was his "Four Policemen" concept, in which he envisioned the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and China acting as "sheriffs" or "policemen" around the globe.[54] The rest of the world would be disarmed and regular inspections would hamper covert rearmament. This "Big Four" would share global policing responsibilities,

[51] FDR to Pope Pius XII, September 3, 1941, in *FDR: His Personal Letters*, II: 1204-05.
[52] FDR, "Remarks to the Advertising War Council Conference," March 8, 1944, APP (available at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-advertising-war-council-conference, accessed February 28, 2023).
[53] John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947*, Revised Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 6-8.
[54] Roosevelt shared his "Four Policemen" concept with Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov in May 1942 while Molotov was visiting Washington. See Cross White House conference memo, May 29, 1942, *FRUS*, 1942 Volume III, Document 468. On the Four Policemen and Roosevelt's grand designs, see Forrest Davis, "Roosevelt's World Blueprint," April 10, 1943 and "What Really Happened at Teheran," May 13 and 20, 1944, both in *Saturday Evening Post*; Gaddis, *Origins of the Cold War*, 6-8, 24-26; Warren F. Kimball, *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 83-105; Robert A. Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 57-65; Warren F. Kimball, "The Sheriffs: FDR's Postwar World," in David B. Woolner, Warren F. Kimball, and David Reynolds, eds., *FDR's World: War, Peace and Legacies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 91-121.

but each nation would have specific obligations to preserve peace in their regional neighborhoods. In Roosevelt's thinking, the extension of Soviet power into Eastern and Central Europe was expected upon Hitler's downfall.[55]

The War Department's two chiefs supported Roosevelt's cooperative approach toward Moscow but focused on different aspects of it. For both Stimson and Marshall, the Soviet Union's continuing participation in the European conflict and its eventual entrance into the war against Japan were at the center of the Army's thinking on American grand strategy.[56] As Mark Stoler noted, it was "no accident" Stimson and Marshall were two of the "strongest and longest-lasting supporters of the cooperative policy vis-à-vis the Soviets, for it was the Army that would have to take the bulk of the additional casualties in any extended war against Germany and Japan without Soviet participation and in any future war against the USSR."[57] Due to this reality, Marshall took steps to ensure Soviet-American military cooperation continued unabated, such as opposing any discussion of postwar territorial settlements until at least Germany's defeat out of concern this could weaken the Grand Alliance, a decision that echoed previous White House policy.[58]

Stimson supported Marshall's moves within the wartime context, but also contemplated America's relationship with Russia from a wider perspective. As previously noted, Stimson was partly motivated to push for a second front in Western Europe so the United States could "share…the post-war world" with Stalin.[59] Yet given his longstanding concerns with trying to

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[55] Harper, 88.
[56] See Chapters Five and Six.
[57] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 269.
[58] For example, see JCS 838/1, "Disposition of Italian Overseas Territories," May 6, 1944, ABC 092 Italy (27 April 1944), RG 165, NARA; Ibid, JCS 577/12-14, "Occupation of Certain Areas in the Mediterranean Theater under Rankin 'C' Conditions," May 18-26, 1944, ABC 384 NW Europe (20 August 1943), Section 5A; Ibid, JCS 973/1, "Fundamental Military Factors in Relation to Discussions Concerning Territorial Trusteeships and Settlements," August 3, 1944, CCS 092 (7-27-44), RG 218; Ibid, JCS 1039/1, "Policy for the Equipping of the Forces of the West European Allies," September 28, 1944, CCS 400 (7-30-44); Marshall to Hull, August 3, 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Volume I, Document 410. On previous White House policy regarding territorial settlements, see Chapter Five.
[59] Stimson Diary, May 17, 1943, HLSD.

eliminate war and create a more peaceful world, Stimson recognized this could only be achieved through great power collaboration.[60] In the immediate postwar period, the vanquished Axis nations would need to be occupied for potentially a 15-30 year period, an undertaking only possible with Soviet help.[61] The mechanism for enacting this in Stimson's mind, along with guaranteeing international security more broadly, was a variation of Roosevelt's Four Policemen idea. As the secretary of war explained to the president, Stimson's concept envisioned a "simultaneous interim government," consisting of the U.S., Britain, China, and the USSR (potentially joined by a reconstituted France), operating alongside a "permanent world organization" that would extend the wartime alliance under a formal compact.[62] This transitional arrangement would cement postwar cooperation amongst the big powers, Stimson maintained, while creating the necessary conditions for a larger international body to take shape that could uphold global security following the immediate postwar era.[63] Accordingly, the War Department's top two leaders favored the cooperative framework with Moscow as the best method for achieving various U.S. wartime and postwar political objectives.

The War Department's thinking about the future of Soviet-American relations converged on the interrelated issues of how to manage the defeated Axis powers once the war was over. It was within these delicate discussions that the Army's split thinking about U.S. policy toward Russia fully emerged and began to impact Washington's broader approach toward Moscow and the postwar world. Although Stimson, his senior advisers, and Marshall favored cooperation with the Kremlin, numerous Army planners and mid-level officials expressed serious doubts about the wisdom of this approach and whether collaboration was possible. Their dissent fueled the

[60] Ibid, Stimson Diary, June 2, 1942.
[61] Ibid, "Memorandum as to Problems of Germany," August 25, 1944.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

confrontational outlook on Soviet-American relations circulating within the War Department and other corners of the Roosevelt administration, creating a steady level of pressure on top policymakers to abandon compromise and adopt hawkish positions toward the USSR. By mid-1945 and with the arrival of a new president, their pressure helped bring about that policy reversal.

Soon after the Allies' successful invasion of northern France in June 1944, the question of Germany's future became an urgent one. Stimson worked with Bundy, McCloy, and George Harrison, Stimson's adviser on atomic matters, to formulate the War Department's initial position on postwar Germany.[64] The country should be occupied by the Allies. Nazi leaders should be arrested, interned, put on trial, and perhaps executed for their crimes. The "outer edges of Germany" – East Prussia, Alsace-Lorraine, and Silesia – should be "trimmed" and allotted to the Soviets, French, and Poles, respectively. The Allies could assume international control of the Ruhr and Saar industrial regions.[65] But a program of "mass vengeance" to destroy the German nation must be avoided since Germany's reintegration into the European economy was necessary for postwar recovery and could repeat the mistakes of the Versailles settlement after World War I.[66] Partitioning Germany, for example, would be a disastrous error.

Roosevelt, however, had long favored a harsh peace with Germany. He did not give specifics when he announced the unconditional surrender policy, but his commitment to the destruction of German power at Casablanca did not theoretically bode well for Germany's future.[67] On several occasions in 1943, Roosevelt indicated his support for partitioning Germany, a

[64] Ibid, Stimson Diary, August 23-25, 1944. Harrison had been president of New York Life Insurance Company when he joined Stimson's office as an adviser in summer 1943.
[65] Ibid, "Memorandum as to Problems of Germany" and "Brief for Conference with the President," August 25, 1944; Stimson Diary, August 25-September 3, 1944.
[66] Ibid, Stimson Diary, August 26-September 3, 1944.
[67] On the development of Roosevelt's thinking toward postwar Germany, see James McAllister, *No Exit: America and the German Problem, 1943-1954* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 49-54.

preference he shared with Churchill and Stalin in Tehran.[68] He agreed with Stalin that the German nation should be totally dismantled, a belief he repeated to the JCS, and made little distinction between the German people and their Nazi leaders.[69] "We have got to be tough with Germany and I mean the German people, not just the Nazis," Roosevelt asserted.[70] The president even advocated "eliminating Germany at a possible and even probable cost of a third world war."[71] Roosevelt's ideas, in other words, were clearly at odds with War Department thinking.

This divide over how to handle Germany erupted when Secretary Morgenthau presented the Treasury Department's plans for the country in September 1944. The "Morgenthau Plan," as it became known, was a set of proposals that called for the deindustrialization, denazification, partition, and pastoralization of postwar Germany.[72] Given his longstanding interest in a punitive peace, it is not surprising Roosevelt was attracted to the Morgenthau Plan, telling Stimson, Hull, Morgenthau, and Hopkins that he agreed it was "a fallacy that Europe needs a strong industrial Germany" and "I believe in an agricultural Germany."[73] The War Department led the vigorous opposition to the Morgenthau Plan in one of the most heated bureaucratic disputes of the Roosevelt presidency, with Stimson attacking the Treasury proposals in several detailed memoranda for the president. Stimson told Roosevelt this "Carthaginian" peace that would reduce Germans to "subsistence levels" of existence would confine the country to "a condition of servitude" and

[68] Memorandum by Hopkins, March 15, 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, Volume III, Document 13; Ibid, Memorandum of Conversation by Welles, March 16, 1943, Document 21; Memorandum of Conversation with President Roosevelt, October 5, 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, Volume I, Document 544; Minutes of the President's Meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff [aboard U.S.S. Iowa], November 19, 1943, *FRUS: Cairo and Tehran*, Document 238; Bohlen minutes, "Tripartite Political Meeting," December 1, 1943, *FRUS: Tehran*, Document 379.
[69] Bohlen minutes, "Tripartite Dinner Meeting," November 28, 1943, *FRUS: Tehran*, Document 362; Memorandum by President Roosevelt to Joint Chiefs of Staff, April 1, 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Volume I, Document 273.
[70] Morgenthau Presidential Diary, August 19, 1944, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL.
[71] FDR to Acting SecState, February 21, 1944, MRP, Box 167, Germany and German-occupied countries, FDRL.
[72] The best treatment of the Morgenthau Plan remains Warren F. Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares? The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany, 1943-1946* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1976).
[73] Morgenthau Presidential Diary, September 9, 1944, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL.

"create tensions and resentments far outweighing any immediate advantage of security…such methods, in my opinion, do not prevent war; they tend to breed war."[74] To impose such a peace would be "a crime against civilization itself."[75]

The Army's opposition to the Morgenthau Plan was also predicated on practical considerations connected to America's future relationship with Europe and the Soviet Union. Stimson emphasized how Germany, with its vast natural resources and industrial capacity, was crucial to Europe's postwar economic recovery and this recovery was essential to future global peace. Without it, "I cannot but feel that you would be…poisoning the springs out of which we hope the future peace of the world can be maintained."[76] Yet an implicit, and overlooked, factor in the War Department's argument was how the Morgenthau Plan would impact Roosevelt's goal of creating friendly relations with Moscow. An original aspect of the Treasury's rationale for its tough proposals was that it would help preserve the wartime alliance after Axis defeat, which surely was a reason Roosevelt officially signed onto the plan in mid-September at the second Quebec Conference.[77]

The War Department flipped this logic around by contending the Morgenthau Plan would actually *damage* postwar Soviet-American relations by creating additional political, economic, and social problems in Germany that would likely cause future tensions between Washington and Moscow. The War Department's reasoning on this point was influenced by Isaiah Bowman, a prominent geographer serving as president of Johns Hopkins University and a member of the State

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[74] Stimson to FDR, September 5, 1944, *FRUS: Quebec, 1944*, Document 85; Ibid, Stimson to FDR, "Memorandum for the President," September 15, 1944, Document 292. Also see two Stimson memoranda to FDR, September 9, 1944, enclosed in Stimson to Hull, September 9, 1944, *FRUS: Quebec, 1944*, Document 90.
[75] Stimson to FDR, "Memorandum for the President," September 15, 1944, *FRUS: Quebec, 1944*, Document 292.
[76] Ibid, Stimson to FDR, September 5, 1944, Document 85.
[77] "The Situation in Europe in Twenty-Five Years," Morgenthau Diary, September 22-25, 1944, Morgenthau Diaries, FDRL; Memorandum Initialed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, September 15, 1944, *FRUS: Quebec, 1944*, Document 283.

Department's Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy. Bowman told Stimson a harsh peace with Germany akin to the Morgenthau Plan would make occupying and administering the country exceedingly difficult and create friction between the Allies due to the burdens generated by a poverty-stricken Germany. Moreover, since Stalin was expecting reparations for the unfathomable damage Hitler's invasion had inflicted upon the Soviet Union, pastoralizing Germany would engender additional economic and financial troubles for the Soviets and could complicate the West's relationship with Russia.[78] Fostering Europe's postwar reconstruction would consequently become harder, which Stimson repeated to Roosevelt when he told the president, "our Allies in Europe will feel the need of the benefit of such productivity if it should be destroyed. Moreover, speed of reconstruction is of great importance, if we hope to avoid dangerous convulsions in Europe." Stimson was talking about Britain and France, but he meant America's relations with the Soviets, too.[79] By framing the War Department's opposition to the Morgenthau Plan around the repercussions it could have on one of the president's top political priorities, Stimson was using postwar Soviet-American relations as a tool to help compel Roosevelt to rethink how a harsh peace with Germany could negatively impact one of his signature initiatives.

Roosevelt eventually backed away from the Morgenthau Plan after its substance was leaked to the press and the public reaction was negative.[80] The War Department's prediction that the Morgenthau Plan could cause tensions in the Soviet-American relationship was evidently confirmed when Soviet officials told the State Department that "Mr. Morgenthau's thinking was

[78] Stimson Diary, September 7, 1944, HLSD; "Talk with Dr. Isaiah Bowman," September 8, 1944, Stimson Papers, reel 127. The British Foreign Office independently arrived at similar conclusions and framed its postwar planning for Germany around its thinking about future relations with the Soviets. See TNA, FO 371/39080/4010, "The Dismemberment of Germany" memo, September 10, 1944.
[79] "Talk with Dr. Isaiah Bowman," September 8, 1944, Stimson Papers, reel 127; Stimson to FDR, September 5, 1944, *FRUS: Quebec, 1944*, Document 85.
[80] Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares*, 41-44.

not acceptable to the Soviet government."[81] Although the Morgenthau Plan's demise was a bureaucratic victory for the War Department, it came amidst an intensifying split inside the organization about the direction of America's Russia policy. There were growing concerns from Army planners and other War Department officials outside the secretary of war's office over whether postwar Soviet-American cooperation was possible and whether Russia was a legitimate threat to U.S. national security. Their increasing dissent raised doubts about the cooperation policy's efficacy amongst top decision-makers, blurred Washington's views of the Kremlin, and sowed the seeds for the adoption of hardline positions toward the USSR during the war's final months.

Fears of Soviet power within the U.S. defense community were well-established, but by 1944 they had demonstrably escalated as the Red Army moved into Eastern Europe and the Allies argued over the future of Poland and the wider region.[82] According to those skeptical of the cooperative policy, the Soviet military strength many top U.S. policymakers cited as reason to collaborate with Moscow actually threatened the European balance of power American strategists had previously stressed was vital to U.S. national security.[83] Within American circles, this outlook was strongest amongst Army planners and especially S&P officers, who began fiercely challenging in 1944 their superiors' beliefs in Soviet-American collaboration in the postwar world.[84]

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[81] Memorandum of Conversation by Mr. Leo Pasvolsky, September 28, 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Volume I, Document 486.
[82] On the Soviet-Western controversy over Poland and Eastern Europe, see Lynn E. Davis, *The Cold War Begins: Soviet-American Conflict over Eastern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974); Lloyd C. Gardner, *Spheres of Influence: The Great Powers Partition Europe, From Munich to Yalta* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993); Edward Mark, "American Policy toward Eastern Europe and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1946: An Alternative Interpretation," *The Journal of American History* 68, no. 2 (September 1981): 313–36, https://doi.org/10.2307/1889975.
[83] Davis, 141-42; Golub, "The Eagle and the Lion," *Journal of Strategic Studies*. The irony here is profound given U.S. military planners repeatedly ridiculed Britain's alleged obsession with the European balance of power in their critiques of U.K. grand strategy as discussed in Chapter Six.
[84] Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries*, 183.

Specifically, S&P had "serious questions" about the cooperative framework, which it labeled "appeasement."[85] Proponents of "feeding the bear to keep it quiet apparently overlook the fact that in every case the bear has turned upon the nations feeding him with the result that either the feeders are themselves eaten or are certainly severely mangled in the ensuing melee," one S&P officer warned.[86] "To continue to accede to all Soviet demands and desires merely because we are afraid the Soviets may precipitate another war and be an adversary difficult if not impossible to defeat" was "the sheerest folly" and "the premise that the USSR must be appeased to keep peace…is basically unsound."[87] S&P planners criticized senior U.S. officials' reluctance to face potential Anglo-Russian clashes over the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean out of concern this could stymie Soviet-American cooperation, claiming British control of this area was crucial for safeguarding Mediterranean communications lines and the Suez Canal, which was in America's interest because "a strong United Kingdom is believed to be of the greatest importance to the defense of the United States."[88] Brigadier General George A. Lincoln, one of Wedemeyer's successors as S&P chief, disputed the idea of relinquishing Eastern Europe to Soviet hegemony, arguing this would upset the postwar European balance of power and could result in Germany's resurgence.[89] Lincoln further questioned the projected extent of Britain's postwar decline, noting its empire possessed "enormous resources," and protested the idea there was "little or no possibility of conflict between Russia and the United States," contending Moscow's "record of suspicion, unilateral action, and noncooperation" raised the chances of conflict.[90]

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[85] Caraway memo to S&P Chief, "JCS 838/1, Disposition of Italian Overseas Territories," May 13, 1944, ABC 092 Italy, (27 April 1944), RG 165, NARA
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid, SS 307, "Course of Action in the Balkans and Aegean," July 14, 1944, ABC 384 Sweden-Turkey (25 October 44), Section 4. This was seemingly a reversal of S&P's previous warnings not to facilitate Britain's postwar influence in the eastern Mediterranean.
[89] Ibid, George Lincoln memo to Handy, "JCS 838/1," May 15, 1944, ABC 092 Italy (27 April 1944).
[90] Ibid.

Washington maintained the cooperative framework in 1944, but S&P's challenges gradually began to undermine it with top U.S. policymakers, including the War Department leadership. Handy, the Army OPD chief, began questioning the JSSC's previous conclusions about the weakening of the British Empire within the context of postwar Grand Alliance relations, arguing an Anglo-American alliance could not defeat the Soviets in a future war *only* if defeat meant "physical occupation."[91] He also told Marshall the JSSC's judgements about the likely postwar power positions and policies of many countries, including the Soviet Union, were "based on questionable assumptions," a view Marshall later repeated to Stimson and his JCS colleagues.[92] Stimson agreed with Handy, particularly noting the JSSC was "unduly pessimistic about the future of the British Empire."[93] McCloy additionally started opposing any plans to include the Soviets in an international trusteeship of the Ruhr and Saar industrial regions out of alarm about "giving this addition to Russia's power."[94]

At the same time, new studies of a postwar U.S. air base network heavily suggested those bases were necessary to counter a potentially hostile Soviet Union, a conclusion Stimson also drew in early 1945 due partly to examinations such as these of postwar American security requirements.[95] For example, the United States needed to acquire the former Japanese Mandated Islands, Stimson explained to Edward Stettinius, Hull's successor as secretary of state, as

[91] Handy memo, July 28, 1944, OPD Exec. 2, Item 11, RG 165, NARA.
[92] Ibid, Handy memo to Marshall and Marshall memo to Handy, July 30 and August 1, 1944, both in OPD Exec. 17, Item 24.
[93] Ibid, Marshall memo to Handy, August 1, 1944, OPD Exec. 17, Item 24; Stimson Diary, July 31-August 2, 1944, HLSD.
[94] Stimson Diary, September 7, 1944, HLSD.
[95] Stimson Diary, January 20-21, 1945, Stimson to SecState, January 23, 1945, HLSD; Perry McCoy Smith, *The Air Forces Plans for Peace, 1943-1945* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), 77-81. Also see Stimson Diary, March 30, April 17-18, 1945, HLSD and Stimson to FDR, March 29, 1945, Safe File, Box 13: "Trusteeships," RG 107, NARA. On the development of U.S. plans for a global postwar overseas military base network, see Elliott V. Converse III, *Circling the Earth: United States Plans for a Postwar Overseas Military Base System, 1942-1948* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 2005).

"necessary bases for the defense of the security of the Pacific for the future world…their acquisition is appropriate under the general doctrine of self-defense by the power which guarantees the safety of that area of the world."[96] A potential "clash of fundamental ideas and interests with Russia" was part of Stimson's rationale for establishing these overseas bases.[97]

Army planners' doubts about postwar collaboration with Russia came as leading U.S. officials in Moscow started echoing similar concerns. Those warnings from Moscow had the effect of amplifying Army strategists' misgivings and pushed War Department leaders to begin reconsidering whether the two emerging superpowers could work together after the war. W. Averell Harriman, the U.S. ambassador in Moscow, started pressing for a major shift in American policy amidst the Kremlin's refusal to aid the Polish resistance's uprising in Warsaw from August-October 1944. Arguing Moscow's attitude and the Red Army's behavior throughout Eastern Europe as it drove the *Wehrmacht* back toward Germany represented a "startling turn" in Soviet-American relations, Harriman asserted the Soviets were "bloated with power" and "expect they can force acceptance of their decisions without question upon us and all countries." Moscow had "misinterpreted" Washington's "generous attitude…as a sign of weakness." Unless American officials adopted a tougher line with Russia, "there is every indication the Soviet Union will become a world bully wherever their interests are involved," a view endorsed by General Deane and U.S. embassy officers in Moscow.[98] One of those officers was George F. Kennan, who was concurrently writing his "Russia – Seven Years Later" memorandum, which warned of the inherent nature of Soviet expansionism and the duplicitous means Moscow had used to secure Western military assistance; with the Soviets now on the offensive, they would attempt to achieve

[96] Stimson to SecState, January 23, 1945, HLSD.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Harriman to Hopkins, September 10, 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Volume IV, Document 901; W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946* (New York: Random House, 1975), 340-45.

the aims they failed to accomplish in 1939: total conquest of Eastern Europe.[99] And in his own letter to Marshall, Deane insisted U.S. Lend-Lease policy should be reexamined given the Red Army's successes on the Eastern Front and concluded "we must be tougher if we are to gain their respect and be able to work with them in the future."[100]

U.S. Moscow officials' apprehensions directly reached the War Department leadership and added pressure on it to rethink the cooperative framework. Combined with Army planners' challenges, this led to slight shifts in the War Department's outlook on postwar Soviet-American relations, which started muddling Washington's broader Russia policy. Harriman returned to Washington in October 1944 and directly relayed his anxieties to Stimson, who began to fear the "way in which the Russians were trying to dominate the countries which they are 'liberating' and the use which they are making of secret police in the process."[101] Coming shortly after the controversy over the Morgenthau Plan, Harriman's warnings led Stimson to believe the Soviets were aiming to construct a closed economic sphere in Eastern Europe and question for the first time whether Stalin was a reliable diplomatic partner.[102] Marshall also shared Deane's letter with Stimson, who forwarded and discussed it with James Forrestal, Knox's successor as navy secretary, Stettinius, and Roosevelt.[103] Stimson highlighted Harriman's agreement with Deane's letter and that he and Marshall "feel it is an apt presentation with sound recommendations."[104]

In response to all this skepticism about postwar Soviet-American cooperation, War Department leaders began gradually shifting ground. McCloy was already opposing Soviet

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[99] Memorandum by the Counselor of Embassy in the Soviet Union, September 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Volume IV, Document 826.
[100] General Deane to Marshall, December 2, 1944, ABC 336 Russia (22 August 1943), Section 1A, RG 165, NARA reprinted in *FRUS: Malta and Yalta, 1945*, Document 287.
[101] Stimson Diary, October 23, 1944, HLSD.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Bland*, Marshall Papers*, IV: 702-03; Stimson to FDR, January 3, 1945, PSF Safe File: Russia, 1942-1945, FDRL reprinted in *FRUS, Malta and Yalta*, Document 287; Stimson Diary, January 9, 1945, HLSD.
[104] Stimson to FDR, January 3, 1945, PSF Safe File: Russia, 1942-1945, FDRL.

inclusion in plans to internationally control the Ruhr and Saar regions and Marshall endorsed adopting a tougher position with the Soviets in negotiations. Eisenhower, now the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, recommended in response to JCS concerns about postwar European politics that Washington recognize Charles de Gaulle's provisional French government because "if France falls into the orbit of any other country the other countries of Western Europe will do the same" and it would not "be in our interest to have the continent of Europe dominated by any single power."[105] Now Stimson, who previously accepted a likely postwar Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean, was worried about how a Soviet-controlled economic zone in this region could hurt Europe's broader postwar recovery.[106] Thinking this could damage the Washington-Moscow relationship, Stimson felt "the success of our relations with Russia" now depended on at least a partial liberalization of its society and eventual sphere of influence.[107] To extract favorable concessions from Stalin, Stimson suggested some type of "quid pro quo" where, for example, Soviet liberalization measures were undertaken, such as granting U.S. economic access to Soviet-occupied territory in Germany and Eastern Europe, in exchange for allowing Moscow access to the atomic bomb project and eventual international control of atomic energy.[108] This was not meant to be another major giveaway to the Soviets, but instead a hard-boiled negotiating move to get them to "play ball."[109] The Kremlin should not receive openhanded American goodwill, Stimson asserted, until Washington started receiving "more

[105] Jefferson Caffery telegram to SecState, October 20, 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Volume III, Document 684.
[106] Stimson Diary, October 23, 1944, HLSD. For Stimson's willingness to accept a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean, see Stimson Diary, January 11, and June 21, 1944, HLSD.
[107] Stimson Diary, October 23, 1944, HLSD.
[108] Ibid, Stimson Diary, December 31, 1944, February 13 and 15, 1945; "Memorandum of Conference with the President," December 31, 1944, Stimson Papers, reel 128; "Minutes of Meeting of the Committee of Three," January 9, 1945, Safe File, Box 3: "Committee of Three," RG 107, NARA; Stettinius memo to FDR, January 8, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Volume V, Document 707.
[109] Stimson to Truman, May 16, 1945, HLSD.

tangible 'fruits of repentance' from the Russians."[110] Roosevelt, who was starting to grow frustrated with Moscow despite his overall commitment to cooperation, began to agree.[111]

To be sure, Army planners and officials were not the only ones challenging the cooperative approach within the U.S. military establishment. Forrestal privately noted in his diary there were "widespread fears in America that a Russian menace would be substituted for a German menace" and complained the Russians received whatever they desired to ensure their postwar security while if the Americans did the same, they would be labeled "fascist or imperialist."[112] To change this dynamic, Forrestal created the Post-War Naval Planning Section in late 1944, which warned in an extensive review of postwar security policy that "the primary risk of an armed conflict between the United States and Russia will lie in the fact that these nations will be the protagonists of the social and economic systems which will be competing in the minds of men for exclusive and universal acceptance and each of which, by the very fact of its existence, represents a continuing threat to the other."[113] And the JIC claimed in an assessment of likely Soviet postwar grand strategy that communist ideology propagated "inevitable conflict" between capitalist and communist states while Moscow would demand total control over Eastern Europe; equal influence to the West's in Central Europe, China, and Japan, and "negative power" in Western Europe to block the emergence of an anti-Soviet bloc.[114]

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[110] Ibid, Stimson Diary, February 13, 1945.
[111] Memorandum of Conference with the President," December 31, 1944, Stimson Papers, reel 128; Gallicchio, *Unconditional*, 17.
[112] James V. Forrestal Diary, August 8 and September 2, 1944, James V. Forrestal Papers, MC051, Public Policy Papers, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University (hereafter Forrestal Papers).
[113] Captain Moore for Postwar Plans to Post-War Naval Planning Section, "Basis for Establishing the Size, Character, and Disposition of the Post-War Navy," November 22, 1944, Records of Post-War Naval Planning and Sea Frontier Section, 1943-1947, Series XIV, Box 197, Strategic Plans Division Papers, NHHC; Ibid, Naval Planning Section Draft, December 26, 1944, Series XIV, Box 197.
[114] JIC 250 series, "Estimate of Soviet Post-War Capabilities and Intentions," January 18-February 2, 1945, ABC 336 Russia (22 August 1943), Section 1A, RG 165, NARA.

Yet despite these forecasts and protestations emanating from other branches of the armed forces, it is crucial to highlight that they largely started *after* Army officials began questioning the cooperative framework and initiating the process of muddling Washington's views on Russia. For example, Forrestal frequently lunched with McCloy to learn about what was happening in the War Department and the JCS, whose meetings McCloy often observed on Stimson's behalf.[115] Forrestal would learn about Army thinking on a variety of issues from these lunches; it stands to reason McCloy shared with him some of the concerns Army planners had about postwar Soviet-American collaboration, which McCloy certainly knew about from his vantage point as one of Stimson's key lieutenants.[116] And as early as the summer of 1944, Stimson and Marshall were sharing some Army officers' skepticism toward Moscow with their colleagues throughout the Roosevelt administration, which had the effect of amplifying those doubts during a critical period of postwar policy formation. Army planners were clearly not the only ones voicing their fears and frustrations about the Soviets but given their ability to wield the strategic planning process to their advantage, they understood how to disseminate their views with the goal of influencing their superiors. It did not lead to a reversal of the cooperative approach at first, but it kept confrontational policies at the forefront of top decision-makers' minds as the war moved into its final months. That made it easier to adopt those hawkish policies as Soviet-American relations began to sour toward the war's conclusion.

By the spring of 1945, postwar Soviet-American cooperation remained a cornerstone of U.S. policy. There were multiple reasons for this despite mounting calls for a policy shift: the continued need for Russian military cooperation in the war against Germany; the importance of

[115] Townshend Hoopes and Douglas Brinkley, *Driven Patriot: The Life and Times of James Forrestal* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 188.
[116] Ibid.

Soviet entry into the Pacific conflict, and the fact Roosevelt was still committed to constructing friendly relations with Moscow.[117] But two key developments provided a major opportunity to finally revise it: the breakdown of the Yalta Conference Accords of February 1945 and the arrival of a new president. During the Yalta Conference, Roosevelt had successfully negotiated a series of agreements with Stalin over issues plaguing the Grand Alliance, including Poland and Eastern Europe, postwar Germany, and the future United Nations organization, while securing Stalin's commitment to enter the war against Japan within three months of Nazi surrender and to only recognize Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese Nationalist government.[118] Those agreements started to unravel though almost immediately due to Soviet actions throughout Eastern Europe demanding the creation of friendly governments to Moscow while excluding political parties the Kremlin viewed unfavorably.[119] Roosevelt became increasingly worried about Soviet behavior, but his death in April 1945 left how to respond to a new president.[120]

President Truman was committed to Roosevelt's policies, but he had trouble determining what many of them were. Given his executive inexperience, especially in foreign affairs, Truman initially requested that all of Roosevelt's advisers remain in their positions as the new president settled into the White House and to help create continuity between the two administrations.[121] Truman came to rely upon Stimson and the War Department, especially on atomic bomb issues, as he oversaw the war's conclusion and included the secretary of war in nearly all of his deliberations, but Stimson never established the same personal and professional relations with

[117] Gaddis, *Origins of the Cold War*, 63-94.
[118] For an excellent overview of the Yalta Conference that places it within a global wartime context, see Fraser J. Harbutt, *Yalta 1945: Europe and America at the Crossroads* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[119] Gaddis, *Origins of the Cold War*, 171-73; Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman*, 66-70; Melvyn P. Leffler, "Adherence to Agreements: Yalta and the Experiences of the Early Cold War," *International Security* 11, no. 1 (Summer 1986): 88–123, https://doi.org/10.2307/2538877.
[120] Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman*, 69-70.
[121] Ibid, 91-92.

Truman that he had with Roosevelt. This was partly exacerbated in the early days of the Truman administration as the secretary of war found himself somewhat out of step with the hawkish positions the president was taking toward the USSR.[122] Nevertheless, according to Melvyn Leffler, the War Department possessed immense standing during Truman's first months in office, which was enhanced by Stimson's personal prestige and the Navy and State Department's relative lack of clout under Forrestal and Stettinius, and wielded considerable authority over policymaking.[123]

As Truman began discussing Roosevelt's intentions with the former president's advisers, he discovered how incoherent Washington's views on Russia had become.[124] By this time, two loose-knit groups with roughly contrasting mindsets had formed. One group of advisers, such as Deane, Forrestal, Harriman, and Leahy, pushed a hard line with the Soviet Union. The other group, including Stimson, Marshall, Hopkins, and Secretary of Commerce and former Vice President Henry Wallace, encouraged Truman to understand Stalin's security anxieties and forge mutually advantageous compromises.[125] But even members of this latter group were sometimes advocating for tougher negotiating measures and shying away from conciliation, leaving their advice somewhat ambiguous.

Given Soviet intransigence in Eastern Europe, those favoring a hawkish shift in policy exploited the opportunity of having a new occupant in the White House to bring this about.[126] Eight days after Truman took office, Harriman warned him it was necessary to oppose Stalin's

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[122] Schmitz, *Stimson*, 176.
[123] Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 28-29.
[124] Melvyn P. Leffler, "The emergence of an American grand strategy, 1945-1952," in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War: Volume I, Origins* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 69. On Truman's early views of Russia, see Gaddis, *Origins of the Cold War*, 198-243.
[125] Leffler, "The emergence of an American grand strategy," 69.
[126] Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012). 312-58; Diane S. Clemens, "Averell Harriman, John Deane, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the 'Reversal of Co-Operation' with the Soviet Union in April 1945," *The International History Review* 14, no. 2 (May 1992): 277–306, https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.1992.9640615.

"barbarian invasion of Europe."[127] During a crucial White House meeting on April 23, the Russia hawks blatantly accused Moscow of repeatedly violating the Yalta agreements, argued it was part of a larger pattern of domination in Eastern Europe, and urged Truman to oppose this behavior even if it meant "a real break with the Russians."[128] The War Department, represented by Stimson and Marshall, forcefully pushed back on this advice and cautioned against such a perspective, but Truman sided with the hardliners.[129] A telling indication, however, that Truman was influenced by Washington's disjointed views toward Moscow was his belief that Stimson's thinking on Russia was "very sound" despite it being relatively incompatible with Truman's more hardline instincts.[130]

Yet there were multiple signs the War Department leadership's Russia outlook was not as clear-cut and placatory as the one presented during the April 23 meeting. A few weeks earlier, Marshall had alerted his JCS colleagues to reports "indicating increasing Russian non-cooperation with U.S. military authorities" and breaches of the Yalta agreements. He indicated Soviet actions seemed "indicative" of the Kremlin's "increasing non-cooperative attitude" and that potential retaliation, advocated by Deane and Harriman, could "stop [this] undesirable trend."[131] Marshall and the JCS also approved Deane's recommended modifications to their Soviet cooperative approach one day after the April 23 White House meeting, including withdrawing from collaborative military projects and a general stiffening of American negotiating attitudes, and

[127] Memorandum by Bohlen, April 20, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Volume V, Document 190.
[128] Ibid, Memorandum by Bohlen, April 23, 1945, Document 195.
[129] Ibid; Stimson Diary, April 23, 1945, HLSD; Forrestal Diary, April 23, 1945, Forrestal Papers. There is a discrepancy as to whether Leahy supported the Stimson-Marshall position. Forrestal noted in his diary Leahy did, but Stimson does not mention this.
[130] Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 25.
[131] JCS 1301, "Arrangements with the Soviets," April 3, 1945, CCS 092 USSR (3-27-45), Section 1, RG 218, NARA.

notified Truman of this decision.[132] This was all occurring while Stimson was concluding "we simply cannot allow a rift to come between the two nations without endangering the entire peace of the world" and McCloy was telling Truman that in Europe's "atmosphere of disturbance and collapse, atrocities and disarrangement, we are going to have to work out a practical relationship with the Russians."[133] The War Department's rather contradictory counsel for the new president obscured the broader collaborationist perspective on Soviet-American relations and made it easier for the Russia hawks to press for their desired shift in policy, in part because they presented Truman with a easily digestible narrative of Moscow's behavior and how to handle it.

These disagreements intensified with Germany surrender's on May 8 and as the war with Japan reached its climax. They centered around two issues: Soviet entry into the Pacific war and Moscow's fresh set of territorial demands before the Potsdam Conference in July. To start with the Pacific war, American officials had long desired Russia to join the fight against Japan but now some were so wary of it they encouraged Truman to modify his calls for Tokyo's unconditional surrender and seek modest peace terms as a method for balancing postwar Soviet influence in East Asia.[134] As preparations for the invasion of the Japanese home islands got underway, the JPS concluded one day after the JCS modified their Russia policy that U.S. ability to interdict Japanese movement between the Asian mainland and Japan meant Soviet entry into the war "is no longer

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[132] Ibid, JCS 1313 series, "Revision of Policy with Relation to Russia," April 16-24, 1945.
[133] Stimson Diary, April 2, 1945, HLSD; McCloy to Truman, April 26, 1945, Box 151, "Germany: General" Folder, Subject File: Foreign Affairs File, 1940-1953, President's Secretary's Files, Harry S. Truman Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Independence, MO.
[134] For example, see Memorandum by the Second Secretary of Embassy in the Soviet Union, July 10, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Volume VII, Document 659; Walter Millis, ed., *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking, 1951), 47, 52, 57-58; Joseph C. Grew, *Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945*, ed. Walter Johnson, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), II: 1444-46. On the interrelated issues of ending the war with Japan and Soviet entry into that conflict, see Gallicchio, *Unconditional*; Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005). Also see Marc Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia: American East Asian Policy and the Fall of the Japanese Empire* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1988); Marc Gallicchio, *The Scramble for Asia: U.S. Military Power in the Aftermath of the Pacific War* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008); Waldo Heinrichs and Marc Gallicchio, *Implacable Foes: War in the Pacific, 1944-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

considered necessary to make this invasion feasible."[135] Acting Secretary of State Grew asked Stimson and Forrestal if Soviet entry into the Pacific war was still "of such vital interest" that it would preclude renegotiating the Yalta agreements to grant Stalin the concessions he desired and make it easier to deny Moscow a share of the "military occupation of the Japanese home islands."[136] In an analysis prepared by S&P and backed by Marshall and Forrestal, Stimson replied that the War Department felt Soviet entry would "have a profound military effect" on the conflict. But at the same time, Stimson's memorandum also noted it was likely undesirable if it meant joint Soviet-American occupation of the Japanese home islands.[137] On this latter point, the S&P indicated this, and harsh peace proposals generally, should be avoided because it could force Japan to embrace communism and ignored "the fact that some members of the United Nations…translate 'democracy' differently than we do."[138] Thus, in a sign of how far the War Department's position on Soviet-American relations had evolved, it recommended to Truman following two seemingly inconsistent policies throughout the late spring and early summer of 1945: inducing Moscow to declare war on Japan while pushing the president to modify unconditional surrender, which would hopefully convince Tokyo to capitulate before the Russians entered the conflict and demanded a

[135] JCS 924/15, "Pacific Strategy," April 25, 1945, ABC 384 Pacific (1-17-43), Section 9, RG 165, NARA reprinted in U.S. Department of Defense, *Entry of the Soviet Union into the War against Japan*, 61-68.
[136] Grew memo to Forrestal and Stimson, May 12, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Volume VII, Document 609; "Minutes of Meeting of the Committee of Three," May 15, 1945, Safe File, Box 3: "Committee of Three," RG 107, NARA. For more on U.S. preparations for a postwar Japanese occupation, see Dayna L. Barnes, *Architects of Occupation: American Experts and Planning for Postwar Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017).
[137] Stimson memo to Acting SecState, May 21, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Volume VII, Document 612.
[138] Colonel Roberts memo to Lincoln, "JCS 1380/1 (SWNCC 150) – 'Initial Post Defeat Policy Relating to Japan,'" July 25, 1945, Box 6, Folder 3, George A. Lincoln Papers, Archives and Special Collections, U.S. Military Academy Library, West Point, NY.

stake in the Japanese occupation.[139] Truman didn't necessarily heed this advice, but it kept the Soviets in his mind as he deliberated how to end the war.[140]

U.S. officials simultaneously contended with Moscow's new territorial appeals. The Soviets wanted basing rights and treaty revisions regarding the Dardanelles, the Kiel Canal connecting the Baltic and North Seas through Germany, and Norway's Bear and Spitsbergen Islands. In line with their previous recommendations from 1943-44, the Army members of the JSSC suggested avoiding Anglo-Russian geopolitical rivalries and acquiescing to Moscow's demands out of respect for Russia's geography, security interests, likely postwar policies, and power position combined with the need to preserve the wartime alliance.[141] These proposals basically dovetailed with Stimson's thinking as well. "Our geographical position with respect to Russia, as well as our position in the world," Stimson told McCloy in May, "made it perfectly possible for us to get along without fighting; that as long as she did not threaten any of our vital interests…we never need fight the Soviets."[142]

S&P planners, however, once again challenged attempts to foster postwar Soviet-American cooperation and attacked them as "appeasement" based on unfounded fears "that any other action

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[139] For example, see Stimson Diary, June 19, 1945, HLSD; McCloy to Stimson, Stimson to Marshall, Handy to General Hull, Hull to Handy, Marshall to Stimson, Handy to Hull, and Marshall to Stimson, all memos on ending the Pacific war, May 28-June 15, 1945, Safe File, Box 8: "Japan," RG 107, NARA; Ibid, Marshall memo to Stimson, "Basic Objective in the Pacific War," June 9, 1945; Ibid, "Timing of Proposed Demand for Japanese Surrender" memo, June 29, 1945; Ibid, McCloy memo to Stimson with attachment, June 29, 1945; Ibid, "Comments re: Proposed Program for Japan" memo to McCloy, June 28, 1945, Box 38, ASW 387 Japan, RG 107; "Minutes of Meeting Held at the White House," June 18, 1945, *FRUS: The Conference of Berlin, 1945*, Volume I, Document 598; Ibid, Stimson memo to Truman, "Proposed Program for Japan," July 2, 1945, Document 592. Also see Brian L. Villa, "The U.S. Army, Unconditional Surrender, and the Potsdam Proclamation," *The Journal of American History* 63, no. 1 (June 1976): 66–92, https://doi.org/10.2307/1908990.

[140] Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," 145-46.

[141] JCS 1418/1, Enclosure A, "United States Policy Concerning the Dardanelles and Kiel Canal," July 12, 1945, ABC 093 Kiel Section 1-A (6 July 1945), RG 165, NARA; Ibid, Embick memo to Handy, "Position That Should Be Taken by the U.S. Relative to Probable Russian Proposals Relative (1) The Straits, and (2), the Internationalization of the Kiel Canal with attached memo, "Russian Policy in Relation to the Straits," July 4, 1945; Ibid, JCS 1443/1, Enclosure A, "Soviet Demands with Respect to Bear Island and the Spitsbergen Archipelago," July 17, 1945, ABC 386 Spitsbergen (14 July 1945).

[142] "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation with the Secretary of War," May 19, 1945, Stimson Papers, reel 128.

will endanger future World Peace."[143] This might be acceptable if "Russia would be content to stop" with those acquisitions, "*but* there is no proof that she will and considerable indication that she won't."[144] If Washington did not oppose these demands, Moscow will "capitalize on any show of weakness and very soon would be asking for (to us) absolutely impossible things such as a share of the Panama Canal."[145] S&P's assessments were supported by Army intelligence officials who declared Stalin's intentions included "the unlimited expansion of Soviet influence and control whenever and wherever possible" by any means necessary.[146] The JSSC's Navy representative additionally backed these Army planners' views when he extraordinarily dissented from his JSSC Army counterparts' proposals regarding the Soviets' territorial demands by insisting that "from the long-range security point of view…we should, in so far as practicable, resist demands and policies which tend to improve [the] Soviet position in Western Europe."[147]

By the summer of 1945, Army planners' repeated challenges to their superiors' policy preferences had played a significant role in shifting their views. As top War Department officials began serious postwar planning after the Allied invasion of France in June 1944, they embraced Roosevelt's cooperative approach for managing postwar Soviet-American relations. Yet over a year later, Army leaders were abandoning that policy and moving toward the confrontation alternative heavily advanced by their strategists. During the interim, the War Department's

[143] Handwritten, undated notes on Embick memo, ABC 093 Kiel Section 1-A (6 July 1945), RG 165, NARA.
[144] Ibid. Emphasis in original.
[145] Ibid, Lincoln to McCloy and Lincoln to Embick memos with enclosures, "Internationalization of the Kiel Canal and Russian Interest in the Dardanelles," July 6-7, 1945. Also see "U.S. Position Relative to Soviet Intentions in Turkey and the Near East," undated draft memo; Roberts memo to Lincoln, "Comment on JCS 1418/1," July 16, 1945, both in ABC 093 Kiel Section 1-A (6 July 1945), RG 165, NARA.
[146] Ibid, G-2 paper, "Soviet Intentions," July 6, 1945, ABC 092 USSR (15 November 1944), RG 165.
[147] Ibid, JCS 1418/1, Enclosure B, "United States Policy Concerning the Dardanelles and Kiel Canal," July 12, 1945, ABC 093 Kiel Section 1-A (6 July 1945) and Ibid, JCS 1443/, Enclosure B, "Soviet Demands with Respect to Bear Island and the Spitsbergen Archipelago," July 17, 1945, ABC 386 Spitsbergen (14 July 1945), both in RG 165.

conflicting signals on Russia policy helped scramble Washington's approach to Soviet-American relations and made it easier for Russia hawks to promote their hardline prescriptions.

Now influenced by this confrontational thinking and those calling for hawkish stances with the Soviets, Marshall and the JCS confirmed this reversal in approach by approving the JSSC Navy representative's minority report on Moscow's territorial aspirations over the Army members' recommendations and informing their civilian colleagues of their change in attitude.[148] Stimson and McCloy approved this shift, which was later communicated to James Byrnes, Truman's new secretary of state, and Truman himself.[149] Indeed, the Army planners' influence on McCloy could be seen that June when he criticized JSSC proposals as having "a rather restricted concept of what is necessary for national defense."[150] Stimson, who was one of the leading proponents of Soviet-American collaboration, now felt the Russians were "throwing aside all their previous restraint as to being only a Continental power and not interested in any further acquisitions, and are now apparently seeking to branch in all directions."[151] The successful atomic bomb test on July 16 only reinforced the acceptance of increasingly hawkish thinking for some U.S. officials such as Stimson, whose diary during this period indicates he felt it could be used to at least moderate Soviet behavior.[152]

Although the War Department's often confusing and seemingly incoherent stances on postwar U.S.-Soviet relations during the war's final months could make it difficult for American officials to formulate clear and consistent policy given the Department's role in governmental decision-making, Army planners' ultimately successful drive to adjust their agency's views is a

[148] "Decision Amending JCS 1418/1," July 18, 1945, ABC 093 Kiel Section 1-A (6 July 1945), RG 165, NARA; JCS memo to State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, July 17, 1945, *FRUS: Berlin*, Volume II, Documents 751 and 1363.
[149] McCloy memo to James Dunn, July 19, 1945, *FRUS: Berlin*, Volume II, Document 1365.
[150] Colonel Gerhardt memo to Hull, June 16, 1945, ABC 686 (11-6-43), Section 18, RG 165, NARA.
[151] Stimson Diary, July 23, 1945, HLSD.
[152] Ibid, Stimson Diary, February 3, 13, 15, March 5, May 14-16, 28, 31, 1945. Also see Malloy, 80-86, 91-134.

powerful reminder of what harnessing the bureaucracy can achieve. The War Department often practiced this to devastating impact on its bureaucratic rivals throughout World War II, but sometimes it came back to hurt the organization. Politics and policy are forever intertwined, a lesson policymakers ignore at their own peril.

Conclusion

It is difficult to overstate the horrors unleashed by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. While it has been challenging over the decades to determine the precise number of casualties, it is probably safe to say they number in the hundreds of thousands.[1] Those who were not instantly obliterated in the attacks had to face exposure to the blasts, extreme heat, nuclear fallout, radiation poisoning, and the complete and utter destruction of their cities. Some survivors experienced life-threatening health problems stemming from these weapons months, years, or even decades after the bombings, including organ failure, transgenerational genetic damage, and multiple types of cancer. Journalists such as John Hersey and Charles H. Loeb helped reveal these devastations to millions of people who could hardly fathom them.[2] Stimson himself was badly shaken by the reports he received in the bombings' aftermath. He told members of the Ausable Club in upstate New York days after the nuclear strikes that the war had "compelled" America "to invent and unleash forces of terrific destructiveness. Unless we now develop methods of international life backed up by the spirit of tolerance and kindliness, viz: the spirit of Christianity, sufficient to make international life permanent and kindly and war impossible, we will with another war end our civilization."[3]

In his final days as secretary of war in September 1945, Stimson made one final attempt as a cabinet officer to leave his imprint of U.S. government policy. The atomic bombings' shattering impact seemed to have encouraged Stimson to overcome his growing distrust of the Soviet Union

[1] For an overview of the different casualty numbers and the methods for determining them since the bombings, see Alex Wellerstein, "Counting the dead at Hiroshima and Nagasaki," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, August 4, 2020 (https://thebulletin.org/2020/08/counting-the-dead-at-hiroshima-and-nagasaki/, last accessed March 16, 2023).
[2] John Hersey, *Hiroshima*, New Edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1989); William J. Broad, "The Black Reporter Who Exposed a Lie About the Atom Bomb," *NYT*, August 9, 2021.
[3] "H.L.S. statement at the Ausable Club," August 18, 1945, HLSD.

and urge the Truman administration to approach Moscow with a plan to internationally control atomic energy.[4] Not only was this a wide-ranging attempt to forestall a potential nuclear arms race, but it was a return to Stimson's general belief that world peace could only be facilitated by postwar Soviet-American cooperation. In a pair of memoranda for Truman dated September 11, 1945, Stimson expressed his concerns about the Soviet Union's internal political system and how the Kremlin would impose it on Eastern Europe, but he concluded "it would not be possible to use our possession of the atomic bomb as a direct lever to produce…change," a diplomatic maneuver advocated for by Secretary of State Byrnes.[5] Stimson warned the president that "unless the Soviets are voluntarily invited into the [atomic] partnership upon a basis of cooperation and trust" it would "stimulate feverish activity on the part of the Soviets toward the development of this bomb in what will in effect be a secret armament race of a rather desperate character."[6] Stimson's plan to prevent this was simple even if it lacked any detail: directly approach the Soviets with the British and enter an arrangement "to control and limit the use of the atomic bomb as an instrument of war and so far as possible to direct and encourage the development of atomic power for peaceful and humanitarian purposes."[7] After the atomic bombings, Stimson was convinced Soviet-American relations could be "irretrievably embittered by the way in which we approach the solution of the bomb with Russia. For if we fail to approach them now and merely continue to negotiate with them, having this weapon rather ostentatiously on our hip, their suspicions and their district of our purposes and motives will increase."[8]

[4] Malloy, 145-46.
[5] Stimson to Truman, September 11, 1945, HLSD; Ibid, Stimson Diary, September 4, 1945; Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 38-39.
[6] Stimson memo to Truman, "Proposed Action for Control of Atomic Bombs," September 11, 1945, HLSD.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

Stimson made an impassioned plea along similar lines for postwar American-Russian collaboration over international control of atomic energy on September 21 at his last cabinet meeting as secretary of war, his final day in office and his 78th birthday.[9] The rest of the War Department, however, continued to adhere to the tough stances toward the USSR it had begun to adopt in the months before Japan's official surrender on September 2. Tokyo's defeat removed the last formal military justification for facilitating constructive relations with Moscow, and continued Soviet obstinacy dashed any hopes remaining within the Army and the armed forces that Stalin's security desires were strictly defensive.[10] Most Army strategists and U.S. military planners believed the new United Nations organization, christened in June 1945 and meant to fulfill Roosevelt and Stimson's vision for a novel world security institution designed to uphold global peace, could not handle a Soviet-American conflict. Accordingly, they emphasized how atomic weaponry had forever changed the character and nature of international warfare and recommended not only quickly establishing an overseas base system but also first-strike capability and a new worldwide foreign intelligence network to thwart potential attacks on the United States.[11] The World War II experience and the negative prognoses for Soviet-American relations circulating through the War Department and the military had pushed most U.S. defense officials to adopt a global view of American national security and ever expansive means for safeguarding it.[12]

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[9] Ibid, Stimson Diary, September 21, 1945.
[10] JCS 1496-1496/3, "United States Military Policy," August 30-September 20, 1945, ABC 092 (18 July 45), Section 1A, RG 165, NARA; Ibid, JCS 1518, "Strategic Concept and Plan for the Employment of United States Armed Forces," September 19, 1945, CCS 381 (5-13-45), Section 1, RG 218.
[11] JCS 1518-1518/3, "Strategic Concept and Plan for the Employment of United States Armed Forces," September 19-October 13, 1945, CCS 381 (5-13-45), Sections 1 and 2, RG 218, NARA; Ibid, McCloy memo to Marshall, "U.S. Military Policy in Relation to the United Nations Organization," September 23, 1945, OPD 336 TS (2 October 45), Case 192/4, RG 165; Ibid, JCS 1477/1, "Overall Effect of Atomic Bomb on Warfare and Military Organization," October 30, 1945, ABC 471.6 Atom (17 August 45), Section 2, RG 165; Embick memo to Marshall, "United Nations Organization: Its Limitations for the Enforcement of the Peace; Its Relation to the Monroe Doctrine," n.d., Marshall Papers, Box 67, Folder 42, GCMF.
[12] Melvyn P. Leffler, "The American Conception of National Security and the Beginnings of the Cold War, 1945-1948," *The American Historical Review* 89, no. 2 (April 1984): 346-381, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/89.2.346.

Even though Stimson's calls for working with the Soviets on the atomic bomb vis-à-vis the Grand Alliance were largely cast aside, by the time of his resignation in September 1945 his belief in American internationalism and the need for a global perspective on protecting U.S. national security and the American way of life had become firmly entrenched in the War Department and the armed forces. It was no wonder then Stimson desired to cement this belief system in the wider American elite through actions such as his October 1947 *Foreign Affairs* article calling on his fellow citizens to heed the challenges the country now faced as a global superpower.[13] Ironically in many ways, it was the rejection of the cooperative framework for postwar Soviet-American relations that confirmed the military establishment's adoption of an internationalist outlook on U.S. strategy and policy. By viewing U.S. interests from a global standpoint, most American officials now believed only the USSR posed any legitimate threat to those interests and they acted accordingly.[14] This was probably not exactly what Stimson had in mind when he tried to bequeath his overall vision for American foreign policy to the next generation of U.S. officials, but it is difficult to argue it was an illegitimate interpretation of Stimson's ideas given Soviet behavior, intentions, and power, and America's war against the Axis coalition. In other words, U.S. officials were trying to strangle threats in their proverbial cribs and plant the seeds of American international primacy.[15]

Throughout World War II, Stimson's War Department played a major role in facilitating this shift in American grand strategy by spearheading and supporting policies designed to give the United States larger international duties and responsibilities. By moving the War Department from

[13] See the Introduction.
[14] Leffler, "The American Conception of National Security," *The American Historical Review*; Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 55-99.
[15] David Milne, "Grand Strategies (or Ascendant Ideas) since 1919," in Borgwardt et al., *Rethinking American Grand Strategy*, esp. 146-52.

the periphery to the center of U.S. government power, Stimson and his top civilian aides made the Army a consequential bureaucratic, political, and policy actor in Washington that often dominated foreign policy formation and decision-making. This occurred because Stimson and other War Department leaders streamlined their organization's bureaucracy and improved civil-military relations within the Army to craft coherent political and policy objectives. On this point, Stimson and his aides were greatly assisted by Stimson's close personal and working relationship with Marshall. War Department leaders cultivated relationships with key executive branch officials and legislators, including Roosevelt and Truman themselves, to build coalitions to support their policy initiatives. Finally, Stimson and his lieutenants inserted the War Department into political conversations and decision-making processes it previously was not involved in to ensure the Army's interests were met. The result was that the War Department gained important leverage over its bureaucratic rivals – namely the Navy and State Departments – which helped it drive the political and policy conversation within the executive branch and in Washington during the war.

The War Department did not win every bureaucratic or policy battle it waged, but by transforming the agency into an active political player, Stimson and his assistants helped lay the foundations for the checkered rise of military influence over U.S. foreign policy. Of course the JCS played their part in this process too, but as this thesis demonstrated, the American military chiefs were often divided on grand strategy and consumed with internal strife that often hindered their ability to influence policy accordingly. After Stimson and his top team's departure from the War Department with the conclusion of the war, the organization fell prey to bureaucratic squabbling over the future shape of the U.S. military establishment; many Army officers resisted unification of the armed forces and vied with their Navy and eventually Air Force counterparts for finite resources in the postwar era.

But even as Patterson succeeded Stimson at the War Department as secretary of war and contended with these new rounds of bureaucratic struggle, the Army was still a political heavyweight within the U.S. foreign policy establishment. The nature of the War Department's influence shifted as the Truman administration began reorganizing the military and the foreign policy apparatus, yet the Army – and the military more broadly – now possessed a substantial voice in foreign and national security policymaking unlike anything it had before Stimson's tenure during World War II. Stimson and his civilian aides' political transformation of the War Department left a lasting legacy that changed the way Army officers and officials interacted with their civilian overseers and the strategy and policy formation process. As World War II gave way to the Cold War and the War Department was absorbed into the Department of Defense, Army officials firmly internalized what Stimson and his team implemented during the war: if one wants influence over policy, one must behave and operate like a politician. Playing politics in all its forms was now just another part of the policy process.

Since the Second World War, the U.S. defense and national security bureaucracy has increasingly gained more and more power over the way the United States interacts with the wider world. This has come at the expense of Congress's constitutional role in the creation of American foreign policy. As the American people's elected representatives have basically abrogated their own prerogatives in the foreign affairs sphere, it has become crucial to understand how unelected U.S. defense and national security officials conceptualize, define, and influence American foreign relations. This requires studying how executive branch agencies and organizations conceive and envisage what U.S. foreign policy ought to be and compete with one another to influence policymaking and achieve their preferred policy outcomes and visions. As this thesis explored with the War Department during World War II, U.S. domestic bureaucratic and political institutions

possess immense capacity to mold and shape the means and ways America conducts itself abroad. As such, to understand how the United States has historically and continues to operate in the world, it is crucial to focus on the U.S. state and its many branches. The Army and the armed forces are just some of those extensions, but since World War II they have been some of the most influential. Thanks to their World War II-era predecessors, they have extensive input in the U.S. strategic planning and policy process. And because of its political influence in Washington, the military is one of the most powerful organizations in the United States. To comprehend how U.S. foreign policy is crafted and implemented, it is vital to concentrate on the role of the armed forces. Henry Stimson and his aides may not be household names, but their War Department markedly shifted the military's role in American politics and policymaking. It is a legacy Americans have lived with ever since.

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