

MOSCOW CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN SECRETARIES, 1943

*Protocol signed at Moscow November 1, 1943, with appendixes¹
Entered into force November 1, 1943*

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MOST SECRET PROTOCOL

of the Conference between the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom, Mr. A. Eden, and the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. V. M. Molotov, which took place in Moscow from the 19th through the 30th of October, 1943.

The following took part in the discussions:

For the United States:

Mr. Harriman,
Major General Deane,
Brigadier General Vandenburg
[Vandenberg],
Captain Ware.

For the United Kingdom:

Sir A. Clark-Kerr,
Lieutenant General Ismay,

For the U.S.S.R.:

Marshal K. E. Voroshilov,
A. Ya Vyshinski,
Major General Gryzlov.

“THE CONSIDERATION OF MEASURES TO SHORTEN THE DURATION OF THE WAR AGAINST HITLERITE GERMANY AND HER ALLIES IN EUROPE”

(Proposed by the Soviet Delegation on the 19th October, 1943)

On the question put on the agenda of the Conference of representatives of the Governments of the United States of America, United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, V. M. Molotov on the 19th October, 1943, made the following proposals which were handed in writing to Mr. Anthony Eden and Mr. Cordell Hull:

¹ The Moscow Conference met from Oct. 19 to Oct. 30, 1943.

“For the purpose of shortening the duration of the war it is proposed:

(1) To put into effect such urgent measures on the part of the Governments of Great Britain and United States of America in 1943, which will ensure the invasion of Anglo-American armies into Northern France and which, together with the powerful blows of the Soviet forces against the main forces of the German army on the Soviet-German front, must radically undermine the military strategic situation of Germany and lead to a definite shortening of the duration of the war.

In this connection the Soviet Government considers it necessary to determine whether the statement made by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt in the beginning of June, 1943, to the effect that Anglo-American forces will carry out the invasion of Northern France in the spring of 1944, remains in force.

(2) To propose to the Turkish Government on behalf of the three Powers that Turkey immediately enters the war.

(3) To propose to Sweden on behalf of the three Powers that she should provide the Allies with air bases for the struggle against Germany.”

(a) With regard to point (1) of the proposals of the Soviet Delegation of 19th October 1943, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, Mr. Eden, and the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. Hull, on the 20th October 1943, endorsed the statement made by the British Lt-General Ismay and the American Major-General Deane (see appendices: statement of Lt.-General Ismay and statement of Major-General Deane) as being an accurate presentation of the most recent decisions of their Governments, taken at the Quebec Conference in August 1943.²

With regard to the question put by the Soviet Delegation: whether the statement made by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt in the beginning of June, 1943, to the effect that Anglo-American troops will carry

The People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, V. M. Molotov, stated that the Soviet Government take note of Mr. Eden's and Mr. Hull's statements, as well as of the statements of Lt-General Ismay and Major-General Deane, and express the hope that the plan of invasion by Anglo-American troops of Northern France in the spring of 1944, contained in these statements, will be carried out on time.

² For a joint statement by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill at Quebec Aug. 24, 1943, see *Department of State Bulletin*, Aug. 28, 1943, p. 121.

out the invasion of Northern France in the spring of 1944, remains in force, Mr. Eden and Mr. Hull gave an affirmative reply declaring that the decision to undertake the invasion of Northern France in the spring of 1944 had been reaffirmed at the recent conference in Quebec, subject to the conditions quoted by General Ismay in his statement. Mr. Eden and Mr. Hull added that this decision has not been changed and that preparations to carry out the above mentioned operation are being pressed forward as rapidly as possible.

(b) With regard to points (2) and (3) of the proposals of the Soviet Delegation (regarding Turkey and Sweden)

(c) The United States delegates placed the following proposals before the conference.

(1) That, in order to effect shuttling bombing of industrial Germany, bases be made available in the U.S.S.R. on which U.S. aircraft could be refueled, emergency repaired, and rearmed.

(2) That more effective mutual interchange of weather information be implemented. In order to effect this, it is essential that means of communication between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. be strengthened.

(3) That air communication between these two countries be improved.

Mr. Hull, Mr. Eden, and V. M. Molotov recognise the desirability of the Governments of the United States of America, United Kingdom and Soviet Union continuing to study the question of Turkey and Sweden.

V. M. Molotov said that the U.S.S.R. agrees to the United States proposals in principle and that the appropriate Soviet authorities will be given instructions to meet with Generals Deane and Vandenberg for the consideration of concrete measures which would be necessary to carry out these proposals.

[For the United States:]
[For the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:]
[For the United Kingdom:]

CORDELL HULL
V. MOLOTOV
ANTHONY EDEN

1 Nov. 1943.

APPENDIX 1

*Statement Made by Lt. Gen. Ismay Before Tripartite Conference
on October 20th, 1943*

I am instructed to address myself to the following proposal put forward by the Soviet Delegation:

“In order to shorten the duration of the war it is being proposed:

That the Governments of Great Britain and the U.S.A. take in 1943 such urgent measures as will ensure the invasion of Northern France by Anglo-American armies and, coupled with powerful blows of Soviet troops on the main German forces on the Soviet-German front, will radically undermine the military-strategical situation of Germany and bring about a decisive shortening of the duration of the war.

In this connection the Soviet Government deems it necessary to ascertain whether the statement made in early June, 1943, by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt to the effect that Anglo-American forces will undertake the invasion of Northern France in the spring of 1944 remains valid.”

The answer to both the points raised by the Soviet Delegation is provided by the decisions taken at the recent Anglo-American Conference at Quebec, which was presided over by the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain and attended by the Chiefs of Staff of the two countries. Thus I shall be speaking on behalf of the American Delegation as well as the British Delegation; but my American colleague, General Deane, will, I hope, interrupt if I say anything with which he does not agree, and will in any case amplify and explain those matters which are predominantly American interests.

Let me say at the outset in all truth that at every single Anglo-American Conference since we have been in the war together, the thought uppermost in all our minds has been so to arrange our affairs as to ensure the maximum possible diversion of enemy land and air forces from the Russian front. I do not for a moment suggest that in so doing we have thought only of Soviet interests. On the contrary, it has been unanimously and invariably recognized as the soundest strategy in the interests of the Allies as a whole. Let me also say that the urgency of the business has always been present in our minds. Thus the following resolution was adopted at one of our earliest Conferences and was absolutely confirmed less than two months ago at Quebec:

The overall objective is—

“In co-operation with Russia and other Allies to bring about at the earliest possible date repeat at the earliest possible date the unconditional surrender of the Axis *in Europe*.”

I should not, however, like it to be inferred that we can concentrate the whole of our combined resources against the Axis *in Europe*. It is essential

for us to maintain and extend unremitting pressure against Japan for the purpose of continually reducing her military power and attaining positions from which her ultimate surrender can be forced. If the Conference so desires, further information on this subject will be furnished by General Deane.

I now turn to describe the decisions taken at Quebec as to the operations to be undertaken in 1943-44 for the defeat of the Axis powers in Europe. First, there is the bomber offensive. I mention this first, as not only does it come first in chronological order, but it is an essential prerequisite to the invasion of North West Europe. It was decided that the progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic system, the disruption of vital lines of communication and the reduction of German air combat strength by the prosecution on an ever increasing scale of the day and night bomber offensive against Germany and German Occupied Europe from all convenient bases, should continue to have the highest strategic priority.

As is well known, the American Air Force stationed in the United Kingdom carry out precision bombing by day whenever the weather is suitable, while the British Royal Air Force concentrate more particularly on area bombing against German war industry by night. The prodigious scale of the damage which has already been done is not generally recognized. The American Delegation have therefore brought with them an officer who can give as full details as the Conference may desire of the effects of the day bombing, while the British Delegation have similarly brought with them an officer who can unfold the story of the British night bombing offensive. The graph which I now pass round shows the steadily mounting weight of bombs that have been cast on German war industry by the Royal Air Force alone during the past few months. In August alone it amounted to over 20,000 tons. The graph also shows by way of contrast, the weight of bombs cast on England when the whole weight of the German Air Force was concentrated on us.

It is also to be noted that this combined bomber offensive is to be prosecuted from all convenient bases. It is hoped that shortly we will be in possession of airfields in the vicinity of Rome, which will enable us to attack important war industries in Southern Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Rumania with almost the same intensity that we have been attacking Northern Germany during the past year. These industries have hitherto been out of reach or at extreme range.

I now turn to the cross-Channel operation which it has been decided to undertake in 1944. It has been decided that the invasion of Northern France by Anglo-American forces will be the primary U.S./British ground and air effort against the Axis in Europe in 1944. This invasion is to be launched as soon as practicable after weather conditions in the English Channel become favourable.

The scale of the initial assault is to a large extent dictated by the quantity of special assault shipping and special landing craft which is available when

the time comes. Both in the United States and in the United Kingdom the greatest efforts are being made to increase the production of these vital craft. The recent success of the antisubmarine campaign has enabled us to take the risk of turning over a larger part of our shipbuilding capacity to the construction of this type of vessel. It is to be remembered that these special craft are essential not only for the assault itself, but for maintaining and reinforcing the invading armies across open beaches until such times as deep water ports have been captured and put into order. At a conservative estimate, it is calculated that we will have to maintain and reinforce over the beaches for a period of two or three months. It is for this reason, apart from any other, that it is a physical impossibility to undertake the operation in the period of winter storms. Comparatively settled weather is essential.

I cannot yet give details of the scale of the initial assault as this is still under urgent and detailed examination, but our plans and preparations are based on being able to get about 18 divisions ashore after 14 days, together with an appropriate strength of supporting aircraft. After 90 days we hope to have 30 divisions ashore, again with an appropriate strength of supporting air formations. Thereafter three to five divisions per month will be sent from the United States direct to the theatre of operations.

The German strength in France and the Low Countries is estimated at 40 divisions at the present time, including coastal, G.A.F. [German Air Force] and training divisions. The beach and coast defences of France and the low Countries have been built up over the long period of German occupation. Our experience at Dieppe showed without any doubt that, even to gain a footing in North West Europe, is a most formidable operation. Moreover, the enemy disposes of excellent lateral communications across Europe which enable him to move reinforcements to the West by road and rail far quicker than we could reinforce our initial lodgments by sea. The enemy rate of reinforcement is thus limited by the availability of his forces and not by his communications.

In view of the above, it was agreed at Quebec that certain conditions must be present for the invasion to have a reasonable prospect of success. We are fairly confident that these conditions will be fulfilled.

First, there must be a substantial reduction in the strength of the German fighter force in North West Europe between now and the date of the assault. It is expected that the ever increasing Anglo-American bomber offensive will produce this result.

The second condition is that the German reserves in France and the Low Countries as a whole must not be more on the day of the assault than about 12 full strength, first quality, mobile divisions. This is of course exclusive of coastal, training and German Air Force divisions. Furthermore, it must not be possible for the Germans to transfer from

other fronts more than 15 first quality divisions during the first two months of the operations.

It is hoped that these conditions may be rendered possible by the following:

- (I) The softening effect of the Anglo-American bomber forces.
- (II) The maintenance of unremitting pressure by Anglo-American land and air forces in Italy.
- (III) Allied landings in Southern France—threatened or actual, synchronizing with the invasion of Northern France.
- (IV) Operations in the Balkans by guerilla forces which will be sustained by sea and by air.
- (V) And lastly, but of course by far the most important of all, co-ordinated pressure on the Eastern front by the Soviet forces.

The third condition is that the problem of beach maintenance of large forces in the tidal waters of the English Channel over a prolonged period must be overcome. The success of our plans depends on our ability to construct at least two artificial ports. The experiments which have been pursued for some time hold out good promise.

I now turn to the decisions covering operations in Italy. These were conceived in three phases.

- (I) *First phase:*
The elimination of Italy as a belligerent and establishment of air bases in the Rome area, and, if feasible, further north;
- (II) *Second phase:*
Seizure of Sardinia and Corsica;
- (III) *Third phase:*
The maintenance of unremitting pressure on German forces in Northern Italy and the creation of the conditions required for the cross-Channel assault and of a situation favorable for the eventual entry of our forces, including the bulk of the reequipped French Army and Air Force, into Southern France.

It is to be particularly noted that operations in Italy are to be carried out by the forces already in the Mediterranean theatre. Seven U.S. and British battle-ried divisions are to be brought back in the near future from the Mediterranean to the United Kingdom in order to form the spearhead for the assault across the Channel. These are divisions which have had experience in amphibious warfare. It has been laid down that, wherever there is a shortage of resources of any kind, the governing principle will be that they will

be distributed and employed with the main object of ensuring the success of the invasion of Northern France.

The operations described above will stretch our resources to the limit. It has therefore been decided that Operations in the Balkan area will be limited to the supply of the Patriot Armies by air and sea transport, to minor Commando forces and to the bombing of strategic objectives.

That concludes my survey of the decisions taken at Quebec. It remains to say a few words about the urgent measures which are being taken to give effect to these plans. In the first place, U.S. divisions are being concentrated in the United Kingdom at the greatest rate that shipping resources allow, and their training in amphibious operations pressed forward vigorously. General Deane will elaborate this point. Secondly, United States air forces in the United Kingdom are being reinforced at the greatest possible rate. General Deane will also speak on this point. Thirdly, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the United Kingdom is being turned into one vast airfield. Fourthly, a cross-Channel invasion on the scale contemplated against long prepared defences, manned by German troops, is an operation of a character which has never before been attempted in the history of war. It requires most extensive and elaborate administrative preparations at the ports of embarkation and on the lines of communication leading to the ports. All these measures are being pressed forward with the greatest vigour.

APPENDIX 2

Statements Made by Major General J. R. Deane, U.S.A., Before Conference 20 October 1943

In the first proposal submitted by the Soviet delegates they recommended that urgent measures be undertaken in 1943 which would insure an invasion of Northern France. I should like to outline some of the measures that are now under way.

In the first place we consider the combined bomber offensive from the United Kingdom as being by far the most positive and important preparation for a cross-channel operation. In this connection we should welcome an opportunity to make a complete presentation to you gentlemen, and to such others as you may wish, which would give a comprehensive picture of what has been accomplished in the bomber offensive and what is planned for the future. As a preview to this presentation I have asked General Vandenberg to present pictures of our most recent bombing operation against Marianburg. Target in this instance was the Focke-Wulf aircraft factory. It was moved to Marianburg by the Germans for security reasons. Its destruction was almost complete. This particular picture was selected as an illustration because the objective was the most distant from the United Kingdom that has been attacked thus far and also it is the closest to the Soviet front. (at this point Gen-

eral Vandenberg displayed several pictures of bombing operations and explained their significance.)

As I have said, our most urgent preparation for a cross-channel operation is the bomber offensive of the British-American air forces from the United Kingdom and from the Mediterranean. The mission of the offensive is the progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial, and economic systems, and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened. It is estimated that the bomber offensive shall be far enough advanced by 1 May 1944 to permit the release of its entire strength to support a cross-channel operation. The build-up of the force necessary for the bomber operations will be, for the most part, accomplished by the addition of United States formations. At the present time the United States has in the neighborhood of 20 Groups of 4-engined heavy bombers in the United Kingdom. It is planned that this force will be expanded to approximately 48 Groups or approximately 2,300 aircraft by 1 April 1944. Planned fighter aircraft expansion will be from approximately 9 Groups at present in the United Kingdom to 31 Groups by 1 April 1944. This should amount to approximately 2,300 fighter aircraft by that date. The R.A.F. strength will be about the same and the existing formations will be maintained and kept at full operation strength.

The expansion indicated above is progressing on schedule, the necessary ground installations are being constructed, the ground crews and the operating personnel are being assembled. In order to furnish fighter support for the cross-channel operation it is necessary that approximately 100 additional airfields be constructed in Southern England. This construction is underway and will be completed prior to the time the operation is launched.

The cross-channel operation agreed upon calls for a build-up of 30 mobile infantry and armored divisions to be in the United Kingdom by April 1944. This force will include appropriate corps, armies, and service troops and will be utilized for securing the initial bridgehead.

The build-up of the ground and air force in Britain will necessitate transporting more than one million men from the United States to Great Britain in the next seven or eight months. This will require the unloading of 400 personnel ships and over 1,000 cargo vessels in the United Kingdom during that period. To do so will tax the port capacity of Britain to the utmost and require that it be diverted exclusively to this purpose.

Approximately 3,300 assault ships and craft will be necessary for the operation. To obtain these the landing craft program has been expanded 35% in the United States despite resulting dislocation in the over-all production program.

It must be expected that German forces will accomplish almost complete destruction of German port facilities in France prior to their capture. It will

therefore be necessary to support the operation initially over the beaches, a condition which will probably exist for the first 90 days of the occupation. In the early stages it is estimated that 15,000 tons of supplies per day will be necessary. This figure will increase as the operation expands.

I have presented but a few of the preparations that are now being made. I have selected them because they are of major importance, but as you know for an operation of the magnitude contemplated there are a great many others. The military mission of the United States in Moscow is authorized to keep the Soviet thoroughly informed as to the progress of our preparations. It is hoped that this mission will be utilized as a medium for closer collaboration between our respective staffs.

With a view to measures which might be adopted for hastening the conclusion of the war against Germany I have been authorized to make certain proposals which I shall read and then distribute the translation of them for your information. The proposals are as follows:

That, in order to effect shuttle bombing of industrial Germany, bases be made available in the U.S.S.R. on which U.S. aircraft could be refueled, emergency repaired, and rearmed.

That more effective mutual interchange of weather information be implemented. In order to effect this, that U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. communications be strengthened.

That improved air transport be effected between the two countries.

Later, in response to a question presented by Mr. Molotov as to the validity of the decision for a cross-channel operation I made the following statement:

The decision to undertake a cross-channel operation in the spring of 1944 was reaffirmed at the last conference in Quebec. Now it must be understood that such decision, as is the case with any military decision made far in advance, is subject to certain conditions existing at the time the operation is to take place. The conditions in this case have been stated to you. We confidently feel that these conditions will exist and are proceeding with full scale preparations to launch the attack. One can only appreciate the firmness of the decision by witnessing the intensive spirit with which preparations are now being carried out. I have spoken previously of the landing craft program which has recently been expanded in the United States. The effects of such a readjustment are felt not only in England but throughout the breadth of the United States including the California coast. Such a change in production affects the shipyards along the coast and the engine manufacturers in the middle west. It is inconceivable that such dislocation of industry would be permitted if the intention to launch the operation was questionable.