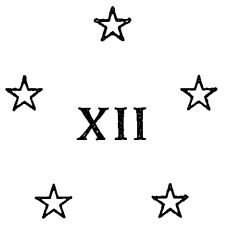


XII

Arcadia

SIMPLE and serene, ancient Arkady was an untroubled haven. Its rustic charm knew no harsher noise than the soft songs of birds and shepherds' sweet pipings. Either by the blind workings of bureaucratic choice that bestows on hurricanes the gentle names of Hazel and Dulcie or by Winston Churchill's conscious efforts to express his pleasure at having the United States at last as an ally, the first Anglo-American conference after Pearl Harbor was christened Arcadia. As the ominous thunder of enemy attacks rumbled half a world away, the leaders of Great Britain and the United States came together in Washington from December 22, 1941, to January 14, 1942. In their deliberations George Catlett Marshall was to come into his own.

Wrestling with the tasks of sending aid to General MacArthur, moving troops to the west coast, and scraping up scarce men and equipment, General Marshall—like his colleagues—would have preferred waiting until after the first of the year for a meeting. It was almost as if he hesitated to assume the vital role that he would hereafter play on the world stage. He had already taken his place in the councils of the President and established his leadership in the anterooms of Congress, but except for a brief appearance at Argentia he had not yet matched his wits with the political and military leaders of Great Britain. In the approaching conference he would bear the main responsibility for presenting the American military case. Although Stark was oldest of the Chiefs of Staff in point of service, he was already on his way out as the dominant figure in the Navy. General Arnold, beginning his full participation as a partner in the United States Chiefs of Staff at this confer-

ence, kept in the background, speaking up only when technical matters arose pertaining to the Army Air Forces. Admiral King, although an active participant in the meeting, had only recently arrived on the scene.

Even had he craved a star's role, Marshall would have been handicapped in trying to speak for the United States Chiefs of Staff. Despite the efforts made over several decades to develop close-knit collaboration among the President, the cabinet, and the Chiefs of Staff, no integrated system of defense control existed in Washington. Sir John Dill was not far wrong when he reported to General Brooke in 1942 that "the country has not—repeat not—the slightest conception of what the war means, and their armed forces are more unready for war than it is possible to imagine." He attributed these problems to the lack of regular meetings of the United States Chiefs of Staff, the absence of a Joint Secretariat, the President's haphazard way of consulting with his military advisers, and the lack of a system for regular sessions attended by the President, the service secretaries, and the Chiefs of Staff.[1]

In pointed contrast to the American lack of organization was the British system of military collaboration. For eighteen months Churchill, as Minister of Defence, had met almost daily with his Chiefs of Staff, whom he alternately bullied and cajoled. They had long since agreed on basic issues and acted together in international conferences with a sixth sense of understanding common to partners in a long and harmonious marriage. In the early meetings with the Americans they displayed a careful preparation of proposals and a singleness of purpose that gave them a decided advantage in debates. They were always conscious of the Prime Minister's control of policy even when he was absent from the scene.

The Arcadia meeting was suggested by Churchill. Sitting at Chequers on December 7 with United States Ambassador John G. Winant and the President's Special Representative, W. Averell Harriman, pondering ways to block a Japanese attack on Malaya, he had heard the staggering news of the attack on Pearl Harbor. His first reaction was enormous relief that the United States at last marched side by side with embattled Britain; his second was fear that, in their fury, the American leaders would shift their central interest from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He immediately proposed to President Roosevelt a meeting before the year's end to nail down Allied policy.

Within a week he and his chief advisers were aboard the *Duke of York* and headed for Hampton Roads. With him went Lord Beaverbrook, member of the War Council and chief of war production, and most of his top military advisers: Admiral Pound, the First Sea Lord; Field Marshal Dill, until recently the Chief of the Imperial General Staff; and Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Chief of the Air Staff. Left behind to mind the store in London was Dill's successor, General Sir Alan Brooke. Aboard ship, the indefatigable Prime Minister dashed off brilliant minutes to his advisers, confident that the Americans were still stunned by their sudden precipitation into war and consequently unprepared for the conference. He proposed a basic agenda that the conference followed and an outline of global strategy that was to be accepted by the Americans with few important changes.

Arriving off Hampton Roads on December 22, the Prime Minister canceled plans to proceed to Washington by water and flew instead to National Airport in the early evening. The day was cloudy and warm and the temperature still stood above freezing when the British arrived and were greeted by the President. When Press Secretary Stephen Early notified White House correspondents that Churchill was in Washington, he was almost trampled in the rush of newsmen to nearby telephones. Morning newspapers reminded their readers that Churchill was the first British Prime Minister to visit Washington in wartime and the only head of a great nation to cross the Atlantic while his country was in the midst of conflict. Indeed, only two previous Prime Ministers, David Lloyd George and Ramsay MacDonald, had made the trip at all. Churchill himself was no stranger, having visited the country before the turn of the century and on lecture tours before and after World War I.[2]

General Marshall and his colleagues looked with mixed feelings on this meeting with the visitors from overseas. So long as they were out of the war, they had been able to resist many British proposals for arms and material. Committed now to a common cause, the Americans wanted to make certain that they were not used to carry out a purely British strategy. Harry Hopkins had tried to avoid trouble by warning Churchill not to bring a cut-and-dried program to Washington. As Hopkins feared, the Prime Minister's proposed outlines for the conference raised dark suspicions among many of the American military planners.

After the war General Marshall conceded that there "was too much anti-British feeling on our side; more than we should have had. Our people were always ready to find Albion perfidious." He was amused at the lengths to which their doubts led some of his subordinates. "On one occasion our people brought in an objection to something the British wanted. I didn't see anything wrong with the British proposal, but our planners . . . explained that there was an ulterior purpose in this thing. So . . . I had our rebuttal to the proposal. Portal . . . read this memorandum from my planners. Portal said that he drafted the proposal and that it was taken from a memorandum of ours. And it was a fact; he showed it to me. I told him I would do anything in way of reparation. Our own paragraph was the key of our objection." [3]

The General found the British far less suspicious of American aims. "This may not have been a compliment," he said with a chuckle. "They may have just felt we weren't smart enough to cause them trouble." [4]

Fortunately for the British, Marshall seldom took an extreme position. "I made it my business to be on a very warm and understanding basis with the British, and they were appreciative of that," he recalled. He was aware that some of his more isolationist officers and friends believed that he was being overpersuaded by Roosevelt, Hopkins, and other pro-British leaders in the government.[5]

The Prime Minister's installation as a guest and temporary occupant of the White House contributed further to American doubts. Of necessity, he set up his office, map room, and command post near the President's own bedroom. The proximity of his quarters made it possible for him to confer with the President early and late. The continuous flow of advisers and couriers contrasted strangely with the activities of the small American military staff. An arrangement that could only make for closer relations between American and British political leaders created anxieties in the minds of the American military leaders. Because the President failed to keep his staff advised on his discussions with the Prime Minister, the British Chiefs of Staff, who were briefed regularly by Churchill, were often better informed on Roosevelt's thinking than the American service chiefs.

The Prime Minister wasted no time in beginning his person-to-

person campaign with the President. On his first evening in Washington as he, Lord Halifax, and Lord Beaverbrook dined at the White House with the President, Secretary Hull, Secretary Stimson, Hopkins, and Undersecretary of State Welles, Churchill outlined his strategy. In an expansive mood and without his military advisers at his elbows, the President seemed to agree to most of his visitor's proposals. It was the sort of situation Marshall and his colleagues dreaded most when the two men were together.

In retrospect General Marshall could see why the British had to take the lead at a time when the Americans, shocked by Pearl Harbor, were looking little beyond the day-to-day problems of saving the Philippines and rushing aid to beleaguered garrisons around the world. Their mistake lay in the assumption that they could draw on United States manpower and weapons as if these had been swept into a common pool for campaigns tailored to suit the interests and convenience of Great Britain. From the British standpoint it was easy to conclude that a course of action favorable to their national interests was simply good strategic sense and that failure of the Americans to agree showed inexperience, immaturity, and bad manners.

A disturbing incident, created by Churchill's aggressiveness and the President's impulsiveness, occurred shortly after the visitors arrived. General Marshall and his staff learned on the morning of the 25th that the President on the previous evening had been wheeled into a meeting with the Prime Minister and some of his advisers. There Roosevelt had agreed to discuss the possibility of turning over to the British reinforcements intended for the Philippines if it proved impossible to get them to MacArthur. Although a practical solution on its face, it could be interpreted as a British effort to write off the Philippines in favor of Singapore. Tempers flared when the head of the British secretariat called for a meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff to consider the proposal. Marshall, Arnold, and Eisenhower rushed at once to Stimson's office to protest the matter.

Extremely angry, the Secretary of War resolved to force a showdown. He rang up Harry Hopkins and warned that if Roosevelt persisted in this type of decision-making he would need a new head of the War Department. Already disturbed by the President's habit of accepting casually some of the Prime Minister's proposals, Hop-

kins found a moment when the two leaders were talking together to drop Stimson's bombshell in their midst. Both men denied that any such agreement had been made. When Roosevelt later made a slighting reference to incorrect statements that were going around, Stimson read him extracts from a record made by a British secretary of the informal discussions of the previous evening. Apparently realizing that he had burned his fingers, Roosevelt assured his military advisers that he had no intention of depriving MacArthur of men and supplies.[6]

General Marshall was painfully aware that the British had the feeling, which he thought "fully justified," that American ground forces were of uncertain value for current operations. The Prime Minister aroused his fears by stressing the role of the United States Navy in protecting the lifelines of the Empire and the increase in the United States Air Force to reinforce British offensive and defensive strength in Europe. Underestimating the requirements of ground troops for the defeat of Germany, Churchill seemed to look upon the building of a large American Army as nothing less than a calamity in that it would absorb most of the weapons and supplies the British would need for the next two years.

From the moment that Marshall and Stark learned that the British were coming to Washington, they agreed that the United States should hold to its former agreements with Great Britain that Germany was the main enemy and its defeat "the key to victory." But they were sorely conscious of current demands in the Pacific and the limitations of their resources. With their forces suffering for lack of reinforcements, they could not withhold aid from the Philippines and the threatened possessions of the Southwest Pacific. In the Atlantic they were thrown back to the capabilities of 1940—to protect Latin America against German threats, to maintain lines of communications to Great Britain, to preserve the security of the British Isles, and to look toward a future return to the Continent. The defeat of Germany remained for them the first order of business and nothing could be spared for sideshows.

Only by recalling the weakness of the United States position in December 1941 is it possible to escape a common misconception of early American strategy and plans. It has been popular to find in America's continental position and wealth of resources a large-scale approach to war that demanded head-on assaults on the enemy and

the employment of mass armies. Proponents of a theological approach to history have found in America's Puritan past a predilection for great crusades against evil that required a battle unto the death. The fact that this type of thinking has recurred in American statements both during and since World War II should not blind historians to the views of the military planners at the outset of the conflict.

On December 21, as they studied British proposals for an agenda, the Americans were extremely modest in their plans. They assumed that at the moment the British could do no more than maintain their position in the British Isles and the Middle East and attempt to send reinforcements to the Far East. Any operations other than these "must necessarily be of an opportunist nature, executed with exceedingly small forces and with very doubtful chances of success." The prospects for United States action were more modest still. At the moment it was capable of defending its own coasts against air raids, holding Hawaii, the Panama Canal, and other bases, gradually relieving the British in Iceland, possibly reinforcing the Philippines or the Dutch East Indies, occupying Natal, and perhaps some other base, such as the Cape Verde Islands or the Azores, not seriously defended by the Axis or its sympathizers. It might be necessary, the Americans agreed, to send some troops to the British Isles in the winter or spring. Shipping shortages, they added, "preclude the possibility of executing more than one, or at most two, of these operations concurrently." [7]

General Marshall's handwritten notes summarize the proposals of the Prime Minister and the replies of the President at the opening conference at the White House on the afternoon of December 23. The high points of Churchill's views, carefully worked out on shipboard, had been outlined to the President the evening before. Now, as the British and American military leaders listened, Churchill let his mind range round the world on Allied strategy for the future. Encouraged by recent British victories in Libya, he hoped that he could soon shift forces westward into Tunisia. If Italian and German forces could be defeated in the desert, perhaps the Vichy French might be encouraged to invite the Allies into their North African possessions. It was an alluring prospect. Exhilarated by prospects of clearing one shore of the Mediterranean and of uniting British forces in the Atlantic and the Middle East, he

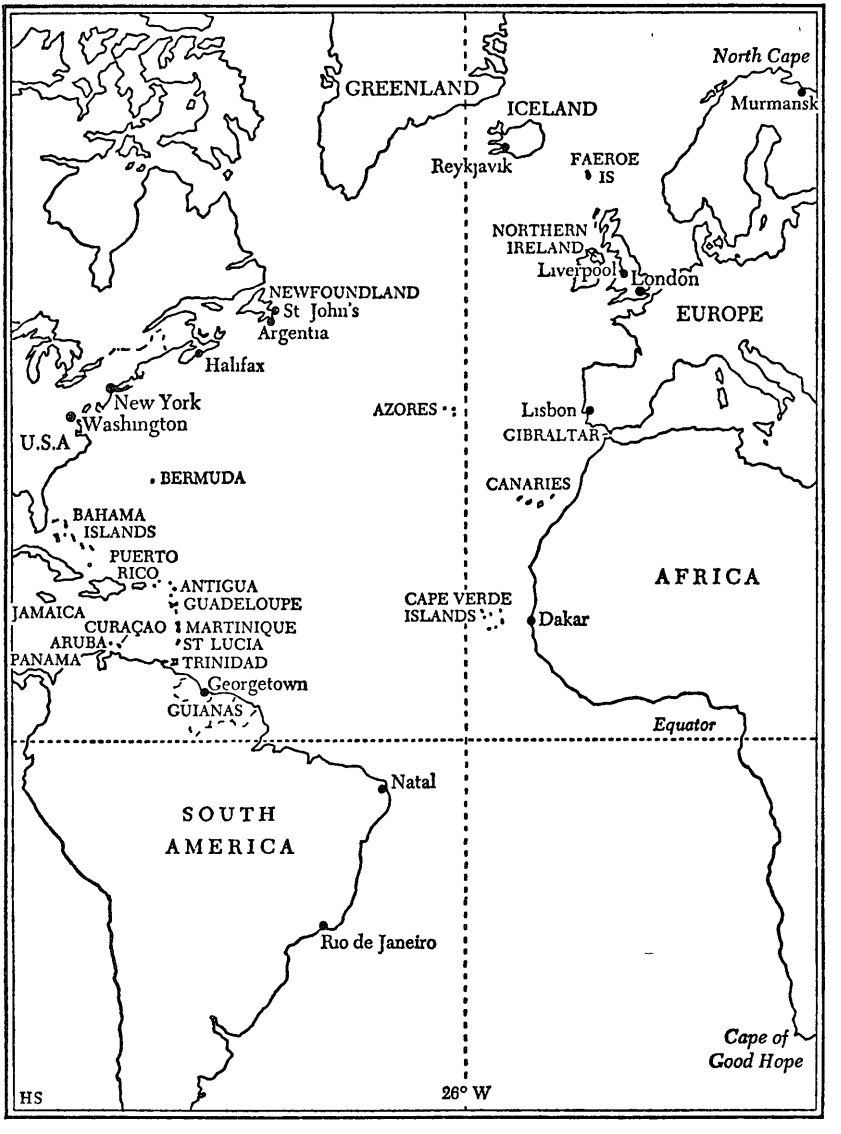
asked for American cooperation in preparing expeditions that could move quickly into French Africa, with or without an invitation, if a situation developed favorable to the Allied cause. The British had 55,000 troops ready to load on ship at short notice and capable of landing in North Africa within three weeks. If the United States could support this effort, Churchill thought it might be successful.[8]

In order to release trained British units for service in the Middle East and for strengthening the North African effort, the Prime Minister proposed that the United States dispatch divisions to Iceland and Northern Ireland to relieve his forces. Stressing the value of even a few bomber squadrons in damaging German and aiding French morale, he asked that American units assist in British air offensives against Germany. Basic to the success of his whole plan for the future were continued naval and air superiority in the Atlantic, the maintenance of sea communications between the United States and Britain, and the protection of the British Isles against attack—propositions on which Marshall and Stark were in complete agreement.[9]

The Prime Minister refrained from asking too much at the outset. He pleased General Marshall by agreeing that it was unwise to send American troops to the Middle East. In the Pacific he proffered aid in containing the Japanese advance. He spoke confidently of Singapore's ability to hold out for another six months and of efforts to strengthen Burma and hold on to the Burma Road—an unwarranted optimism about possibilities in the Far East matched only by the confidence of the Americans.

President Roosevelt was also in good form. As he talked, however, the British became uneasily aware that his support of some of the Prime Minister's proposals had weakened since the night before. They assumed that he had been in conference with his advisers. Instead, he seems merely to have returned to Secretary Stimson's outline of December 20 that gave the War Department's views on questions to be considered at the conference. He agreed with Churchill on the value of sending United States bomber squadrons to Great Britain, the importance of substituting American for British units in Northern Ireland, the elimination of a mixed force in Iceland by relieving all other troops there with American soldiers, and the necessity of finding a way to capitalize on favorable developments in North Africa.[10]

The Atlantic Theater



The plenary session was followed on the morning of December 24 by the first formal meeting of the British and United States Chiefs of Staff, which took place in the Federal Reserve Building, clean-cut in its newness and contrasting strangely with the aging and severely utilitarian World War I structures across Constitu-

tion Avenue where the War and Navy Departments were located. The staff organization was less than desirable. The delay of the opening session because the officer in charge of arrangements had selected too small a room for the meeting reflected a lack of preparation that General Marshall was determined to eliminate.[11]

The Americans went into their first meeting ill at ease, edgy about the Prime Minister's influence over the President, and uncertain of their ability to cope effectively with the British proposals. Although outwardly calm and self-possessed, Marshall must have had moments of doubt as he took stock of the new undertaking on which he was about to enter. He and Stark and Arnold had sat down with the British at Argentia, where they had first conferred with Pound and Dill of the present delegation, but they had then spoken only as potential allies of what they might some day contribute to the common cause. Now they must act as partners and make final agreements that involved American lives. They had the difficult task of holding up their end of the planning in face of skilled professionals who had been at the business of making tough decisions for the past two years.

The senior British representative, Admiral Pound, First Sea Lord since the spring of 1939, was sixty-four, only three years younger than the Prime Minister. A seasoned sailor, he had commanded the battleship *Colossus* at Jutland and had been director of the Admiralty's plans division as early as 1922. Although beginning to show his age, an impression heightened by signs of lameness, he was still a formidable battler for the interests of the Royal Navy. Inclined to doze through dreary stretches of some of the meetings, he instantly came to life when he thought his fleet was threatened. "I was affectionately fond of Pound as I think he was of me," General Marshall said after the war.[12]

New to General Marshall and most of the Americans was Air Chief Marshal Portal, Chief of the Royal Air Force since October 1940, a post he had reached at the age of forty-seven. Educated at Winchester and Oxford, he entered the British Army in 1915. A year later he transferred to the Air Branch and at the war's end accepted a permanent commission in the Royal Air Force. From March to October 1940 he headed the British Bomber Command, directing attacks on German bases in France and the Low Countries and helping to frustrate enemy plans for the invasion of Brit-

ain. "Swarthy, eagle-beaked, and young," keenly alert to everything around him, he instantly gained the respect of the Americans at the conference. Calm, unruffled in argument, with what General Marshall called "the best mind of the lot," he followed the most tedious arguments, prepared to find the defects in a faulty presentation.[13]

Throughout the war in sessions with the British Chiefs of Staff, Portal and Marshall took the lead in trying to reach understandings when matters reached an impasse. General Laurence S. Kuter, who sat in on a number of conferences of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, observed that in later conferences when a controversy reached the boiling point, "with Admiral King red in the neck and inarticulate, General Arnold apparently furious but quiet, Brooke equally red-faced and inarticulate, it was Lord Portal on the British side and General Marshall on the American side that calmed things down in very simple language: 'We can't blow up on points like this. Something has to be done which one side or the other isn't going to agree on. Let's get on with it.' " [14]

Marshall's closest friend among the British was Sir John Dill, who was to serve in Washington until his death near the end of 1944. He came to the Washington conference under difficult circumstances, having been relieved of his post as Chief of the Imperial General Staff only a few weeks before. Although a year younger than Marshall, the Belfast-born field marshal had become a brigadier in World War I. Like Marshall, Dill spent much of his career as a staff officer. He became Commandant of the Staff College at Camberley in the 1930s, where his fine brain impressed many of the future officers of World War II. After two years as Director of Military Plans at the War Office, 1934-36, he became commander of British Forces in Palestine with the rank of lieutenant general. Early in 1940 he was leading the 1st Corps of the British Expeditionary Force in France when Churchill recalled him to succeed Ironside as head of the British Army.

In the most trying days of the war Dill had struggled to prepare the Army for greater sacrifices and to restore the units that had been badly battered at Dunkerque. Worn with anxiety by the mortal illness of his first wife, who had been paralyzed in 1940, he fought a losing battle with the Prime Minister, who insisted on measure after measure that Dill considered impractical. Dill found

that he was unable to throw off his cares and incapable of coping effectively with Churchill's vigorous demands. His body and spirit exhausted, Dill as well as the Prime Minister was aware, by November 1941, that he could no longer carry the burden of his post. Churchill replaced him with General Brooke and proposed to send Dill to Bombay as governor. For a dedicated soldier it was a bitter ending to a long career. Then, as he prepared to set off for his new assignment, the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor and the Prime Minister proposed his trip to the United States. At General Brooke's urging, Churchill included the weary soldier in the British delegation, opening the way to Dill's last and finest assignment.

In suggesting that Dill go to Washington as a possible permanent representative of the Prime Minister in the American capital Brooke may have been merely attempting to soften the blow of the recent demotion. In accepting this advice Churchill may have acted from similar motives. Whatever their reason, nothing they did during the war was more effective in creating good relations between the American and British military staffs. In his sincerity, frankness, and self-discipline Dill in many ways resembled Marshall. The two men had liked each other at once on meeting at Argentia and had agreed before parting to keep in touch with each other. The British commander had written candidly about his supply problems, and Marshall had moved at once to help him. Their correspondence became increasingly cordial and they had disposed of formalities of address before they saw each other again in Washington.[15]

A man of great warmth and charm, Dill later won friends in the United States by his openness and ability to see Allied problems as if he were an American. It was a tribute to his breadth of view that Marshall worried lest Churchill and Brooke would feel that Dill was becoming too thoroughly American in his outlook. The friendship of the two officers grew and flourished and became one of the finest legends of Anglo-American cooperation. By their ability to speak frankly without rancor and by their confidence in each other, some of the sharpest British and American differences were smoothed away and the basis laid for full trust and confidence.[16]

Joining the American representatives at the meeting was Admiral King, who had been named "Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet" six days earlier. In an Executive Order that greatly

increased the significance of the post and relocated it in the Navy Department in Washington, the President gave King "supreme command of the United States Navy and the operating forces of the naval coastal frontier commands . . . directly responsible, under the general direction of the Secretary of Navy, to the President of the United States." [17] Until March, when Stark was sent to London as "Commander, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe," King had the task of planning and directing the actual operations of the Navy's fighting forces while the Chief of Naval Operations dealt mainly with the professional administration of the Navy. On Stark's departure, King also became Chief of Naval Operations.

The first session was remarkable for the variety of topics touched on as the British and American representatives brought forward dozens of projects for consideration. Stark and Marshall stilled British fears on future strategy by announcing that the Japanese attack in the Pacific had not changed the earlier understanding that the Allies should concentrate on defeating Germany first.[18]

Looking toward a landing in North Africa, the British were surprised to find the Americans still worried about the security of South America. Both Stark and Marshall still believed in the existence of a German threat to Brazil and European possessions in the Caribbean. Stark caught the attention of the British with the reminder that the Guianas, particularly vulnerable to German machinations, provided from their refineries 95 per cent of the oil sent to the eastern seaboard and one-half of Britain's Lend-Lease allotment. Admiral Pound at once promised to press for diplomatic action that would permit the United States to move into Dutch Guiana.

Despite dismal news from the Pacific, the United States Chiefs of Staff shared Prime Minister Churchill's optimism about holding on to the Philippines and Singapore. In the face of mounting disaster, they still expected to bar the enemy from the Dutch East Indies, to safeguard the Burma Road, and to develop Australia into an effective base for future operations.

The warm glow of these false hopes shone through the gloom on Christmas Eve in the short ceremony at twilight as Churchill joined the President on the balcony of the Executive Mansion to watch the lighting of the tree in the White House garden. The day had been warm, with the temperature going to about 60 in the

afternoon, and a crowd of some 20,000 had assembled. The President spoke briefly, and the Prime Minister won the hearts of his hearers by saying that he could not "feel myself a stranger here in the centre and at the summit of the United States." Next morning he and the President went to Foundry Methodist Church and sang together the hymns of Christmas. For a moment, as Churchill had suggested in his brief address, they caught the joy and promise of the season.[19]

Christmas for the Marshalls, as for many American families, contrasted strangely with the one of the previous year. Only Clifton, soon to enlist in the Army, was to spend the holidays with them. Young Tupper Brown was not old enough for his parents to come down from Poughkeepsie for the holidays. Molly Winn, who had been married only the year before, was in Panama with her husband and not quite two-month-old baby. Mrs. Marshall fretted because there was not sufficient transport to bring her and the other families of service personnel back to the United States. It would be May before the Winns returned.

Instead of members of the family, guests from overseas and Washington joined the Marshalls for the midday Christmas meal. Lord and Lady Halifax, Admiral and Mrs. King, Beaverbrook, Pound, Portal, and Dill made up the list. The dinner was turned into a double celebration when they discovered, belatedly, that it was Field Marshal Dill's birthday. Mrs. Marshall at once suggested a cake with candles, but she realized she couldn't trust her cook's baking capabilities. When she discovered that pastry shops in Washington had been emptied by holiday shoppers, she sent into action Sergeant Powder, the General's resourceful orderly. Using skills in foraging that he had learned through long service in the Army, he not only wangled a cake from a downtown bakery but found the last set of British and American flags, made in Japan, in a five-and-ten-cent store, to add to the birthday candles.[20]

The meal was successful, although interrupted sporadically by London's reactions to a diplomatic incident created the previous evening when Free French Forces loyal to General Charles de Gaulle had occupied the Vichy-administered islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, off Newfoundland Secretary of State Hull's violent condemnation of the action and demands that the Free French be thrown out of the islands soon had the wires busy be-

tween London and Washington. The British Ambassador was summoned frequently to the telephone and then returned to confer with Lord Beaverbrook over the proper course of action to be recommended.

The high points of the day were Sir John Dill's birthday cake, his first, he said, since he was a small boy, and a "singing" Western Union "Happy Birthday" message, which Dill's wife Nancy, whom he had married in October, had cabled from the United Kingdom. Unfortunately the full performance failed to take place when Secret Service agents refused to permit the messenger to enter.

On the day after Christmas the British and United States Chiefs of Staff resumed the discussion of unified command that General Marshall had sprung the afternoon before. He was to consider it one of his major contributions to the winning of the war. Closer cooperation between the United States Army and Navy had been a favorite concept pushed by the General since he became Chief of Staff. He had worked closely with Admiral Stark and impressed on General Short when he went to Hawaii in February 1941 the importance of working closely with the Navy. One of the last problems he discussed with MacArthur before Pearl Harbor was closer relations with Admiral Hart in the Philippines. As recently as December 19 he had helped prepare a directive by which the Army and Navy commands were unified in the Caribbean. He realized that the need for unity between the various commands in the Pacific would be necessary now that several nations were engaged in fighting the Japanese. His views on this subject were strengthened on the 21st by a cable from Lieutenant Colonel Francis G. Brink, American representative at the recently held Allied conference at Singapore, urging the immediate formation of a supreme command over American, British, Dutch, and Australian forces in the Pacific.[21]

Colonel Brink's recommendation gained additional weight as a result of the episode on Christmas Eve when President Roosevelt had lightly agreed to Churchill's proposal that reinforcements intended for MacArthur would be diverted to Singapore if it appeared they could not get through to the Philippines. Although strong action by Stimson and the Chiefs of Staff had headed off this suggestion, General Marshall was convinced that only the appointment of a supreme commander for the Pacific would permit a logi-

cal arrangement for dealing with similar proposals in the future. When the British called for a special session on Christmas afternoon to discuss the question of reinforcements for MacArthur, he seized the opportunity to propose a unified command in the Pacific.

After a routine beginning, dealing with North Africa and oil supplies for Australian bases, the question of Allied dispositions in the Pacific was introduced. General Marshall at once grasped the initiative. He took the view "that it was premature to make such a decision." Such questions would come up again and again until unity of command was achieved over all Allied forces and all categories of force in the Far East. No local commander, he believed, could see the situation whole. Only a commander responsible for the whole theater could decide the question of the allocation of defense forces.[22] Explaining carefully that he spoke only for himself, he insisted that the most important consideration before them was unity of command. "I am convinced," he said, "that there must be one man in command of the entire theater—air, ground, and ships. We cannot manage by cooperation. Human frailties are such that there would be emphatic unwillingness to place portions of troops under another service. If we can make a plan for unified command now, it will solve nine-tenths of our troubles." [23]

General Marshall read addresses poorly, but when he spoke without a manuscript and from deep feeling he achieved an eloquence that was never forgotten by his hearers or recaptured in type. Strongly committed to his proposal, he argued that the objections to a single command were "much less than the hazards that must be faced" by the Allies if they did not achieve it. He called for one man, operating under a directive from a combined body in Washington, to direct activities in each theater. "We had to come to this in the First World War," he continued, "but it was not until 1918 that it was accomplished, and much valuable time, blood, and treasure had been needlessly sacrificed. If we could decide on a unified command now, it would be a great advance over what was accomplished" during that war.[24]

If he had hoped that, by raising the specter of divided counsels preceding the appointment of Marshal Foch as generalissimo late in the war, he could win immediate acceptance of his views, General Marshall was mistaken. Admiral Stark was noncommittal

when the Chief of Staff ended his appeal. The British were obviously unwilling to discuss the matter without sounding out the Prime Minister. To parry the suggestion, Air Marshal Portal argued that once the highest authority had decided on allocations and issued a directive, everything else would move smoothly. Marshall strongly disagreed. The Americans and British were in complete agreement on allocations, he countered, but unity of command had certainly not been achieved. Portal won his postponement by asking that a study of distribution of forces, based on whether the Philippines held or not, should first be made. This task was assigned to the senior members of the British-American planning committee. On this note of agreement the conference had adjourned for Christmas dinner.[25]

Perceiving that he had made a tactical blunder by failing to prepare the ground for his sweeping proposal, General Marshall moved at once to correct his mistake. He turned to General Eisenhower at the close of the meeting and directed him to draft immediately a letter of instruction for the supreme commander of the Pacific area, outlining his mission, defining his authority, and safeguarding each nation's control over those matters pertaining to national sovereignty. He hoped by this means "to convince the other members of the conference that no real risk would be involved to the interests of any of the Associated Powers, while on the other hand great profits should result." [26]

In the midst of detailed discussions of the proposed expedition to West Africa on December 26, General Marshall found time to outline his command plan to Secretary Stimson and Assistant Secretary McCloy. He confided to them his willingness to give the Pacific Command to General Wavell if that appointment would win British approval.

On the following morning the Chief of Staff dictated a suggested agreement on unity of command for which he hoped to win the President's backing. Delighted with the draft, Secretary Stimson proposed that Marshall and Arnold accompany him to the White House at 10 a.m. "The President fully approved of the plan which General Marshall has fathered and at the close of the conference . . . asked me if I would tell Knox about it," Stimson wrote at the end of their successful session.[27]

At noon the General made his appeal for Navy support in a spe-

cial meeting with Navy Department representatives in Admiral Stark's office. Only King had spoken up for the proposal in its early stages, and Stimson believed that the bulk of the admirals were "pretty stubborn" in their opposition.[28]

General Marshall first won agreement to a united command in the Pacific. Then he took up the more difficult question of giving the supreme command to a British ground commander. With Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and British and Dutch islands at stake, it would be difficult for Great Britain to accept an American for this post. Wavell was the logical choice. In Africa and the Middle East he had gained experience in successful campaigns and in those ending with a setback. He was accustomed to moving large bodies of troops and he knew India. Particularly important was the fact that with him in command the Prime Minister's fears that troops would be withdrawn from the defense of Singapore would be quieted.[29]

Some Navy leaders questioned the selection of a British officer for the command but ended by conceding that the step might be necessary to win Churchill's consent. Admiral King clinched the argument by throwing his support to Marshall's proposal. Colonel Robinett, who had accompanied his chief to the meeting, recorded: "When King said this all the other Navy people smiled and concurred in their own way. . . . Admiral Stark finally gave his blessing though I think he had always followed General Marshall's lead. The Chief has gone a long way toward winning his battle." [30]

With his position now clearly outlined and strongly buttressed by presidential and Navy backing, General Marshall on December 27 resumed his plea to the British Chiefs of Staff. Such a scheme had never been imposed on the British Navy before and, in Stimson's phrase, "they kicked like bay steers." [31] The Chief of Staff conceded that it would be impossible to choose anyone for supreme command who would have full technical knowledge of all the services. By selecting an officer of good judgment they could minimize this problem. Marshall cited the safeguards written into the draft directive preventing the commander from exploiting one area of his theater at the expense of another. In the Pacific the Associated Powers were opposed by an enemy possessing unity of command in its highest sense. He warned that in light of the dispersion of

Allied forces in the Pacific, no plan could be "made worse" than the one then existing.[32]

To General Marshall's surprise, the British who had been resisting the entire concept of unified command suddenly shifted their ground and criticized his plan as restricting the supreme commander too strongly. He promptly agreed, saying that he had tried to be a realist in drawing up the paper. Seeing the British yielding, Admiral Stark quickly declared that the important thing was to establish the principle of unified command and then revise it as needed. The conference ended on a happy note with the combined staffs agreeing to prepare a directive for presentation to the President and Prime Minister. General Marshall recalled proudly fifteen years later, "The chief of the naval planners rushed to the door to shake hands with me and put his arm around me, which surprised me. And Dill followed me and threw his arms around me, and still another one acted explosively." [33]

The backing of the Prime Minister still had to be won. On first hearing of the Chief of Staff's plea of December 24 he had expressed strong doubts as to the desirability of the plan. During the evening of the 27th Churchill argued the matter with President Roosevelt at the White House, insisting that there was a great difference between one man's commanding the widely scattered forces in the Pacific and Foch's handling of Allied troops from the Channel to the Vosges in 1918. Instead of Marshall's proposal, he suggested that each service act on its own with its individual commander reporting to the Supreme War Council in Washington. Lord Beaverbrook, who was listening to the discussion, passed a note to Harry Hopkins, advising: "You should work on Churchill. He is being advised. He is open-minded and needs discussion." [34] Hopkins found an opportunity later to beg the Prime Minister not to turn down the proposition until he heard the name of the officer the Americans had in mind for the command.

General Marshall's showdown with the British leader, arranged by Hopkins, came in Churchill's bedroom on the morning of the 28th.[35] The Prime Minister had continued in Washington his practice of staying up late, sleeping late, and then remaining in bed until lunchtime while he dictated letters or talked business with visitors. Marshall found him propped up in bed, ready for action. Aware from his talks with Roosevelt that a man on his feet had

an advantage in an argument, the General walked up and down as he talked. Churchill began his attack by observing that a ship was a very special thing and that it was therefore hard to expect the Navy to put its vessels under an Army commander. Once a battalion commander but twice First Lord of the Admiralty, the Prime Minister asked belligerently what an Army officer could know about handling a ship. Marshall hotly retorted, "What the devil does a naval officer know about handling a tank?" He was not trying to enlist sailors as tank drivers, he continued, but to get unified control of the armed forces.

"I told him," Marshall recalled later, "I was not interested in Drake and Frobisher, but I was interested in having a united front against Japan, an enemy which was fighting furiously. I said if we didn't do something right away we were finished in the war." Perhaps the doughty old statesman was aware that he would have to yield, but he continued to hold out. Breaking off the meeting to take a bath, he came out a few minutes later with a towel wrapped around him to declare that Marshall would have to take the worst with the best. With this apparent warning of an unfavorable decision, he summoned the British Chiefs of Staff. As Marshall left the room, he met Portal and Pound coming in and saw that they were both wearing gloomy expressions.[36]

Marshall had in fact won his fight. On the 28th the Prime Minister informed the British Cabinet:

> Last night President urged upon me appointment of a single officer to command Army, Navy, and Air Force of Britain, America, and Dutch, and this morning General Marshall visited me at my request and pleaded case with great conviction. American Navy authorities take opposite view, but it is certain that a new far-reaching arrangement will have to be made. The man the President has in mind is General Wavell. Marshall has evidently gone far into detailed scheme and has draft letter of instructions. So far I have been critical of plan, and while admiring broadmindedness of offer have expressed anxiety about effects on American opinion. Chiefs of Staff have been studying matter all day and tonight I will send you my considered advice after receiving their views.[37]

In the course of the day the Prime Minister decided that he could not wait for an answer from London. After talking further

with Roosevelt he cabled: "I have agreed with President, subject to Cabinet approval, that we should accept his proposals, most strongly endorsed by General Marshall." The arrangement included the establishment of unity of command in the Southwest Pacific with Wavell as supreme commander and an American, probably General Brett, as deputy. Wavell's directive would be issued by a joint body responsible to the President and Prime Minister.[38]

Now that he had accepted Marshall's proposal, the Prime Minister pressed the War Cabinet to approve it, saying that "I have not attempted to argue the case for and against our accepting this broadminded and selfless American proposal, of merits of which as a war-winner I have become convinced." He called for quick action, adding that a decision would probably be necessary before he returned from a short trip to Canada on January 1.[39]

Secretary Stimson, eagerly following the course of negotiations, welcomed Churchill's action, a development "due largely—almost wholly—to Marshall's initiative and vigor." Stimson believed that if the example of the Pacific could be followed elsewhere, the Allies could "avoid a year of disaster which . . . attended the Allies in the last war arising out of disunity." [40]

Many of the British were unhappy with the arrangement. Calling the proposal "wild and half-baked," General Brooke condemned it for its emphasis on the western Pacific rather than the Indian Ocean. Sir John Dill, who had accepted the concept of unified command, nonetheless feared that it would be fatal "to have a British commander responsible for the disasters that are coming to the Americans as well as ourselves." [41] A member of General Marshall's staff agreed: "General Wavell has been chosen for supreme commander in the Southwest Pacific. The poor fellow must again plan a defensive role in a desperate situation. What a job he must undertake in an effort to coordinate and fight [with] the air, sea, and land forces of such diverse elements as British, Indian, Dutch colonial, Australian, and American over such a vast area of scattered land masses." [42]

In proposing the command arrangement for the Pacific, General Marshall made no claim that it could assure immediate victory. He was aware that the command "covered a region from Burma and India down to Australia, the Philippines, and so forth, and one

man couldn't possibly get at it very well." But as matters stood, "the thing was so messed up that no one was in command anywhere." It was therefore necessary "to do something." [43]

Overlooked by many critics was the fact that the ABDA Command, far-flung and loosely organized as it was, gave some unity to an existing British and American command structure in the Pacific and Far East that reached from Hawaii to India. When a conference in Washington had to be repeatedly interrupted to discuss whether cargoes should be sent to Manila, Singapore, or Australia, it was vital to have that decision considered by a commander who had responsibilities for the defense of all three.

In making his recommendation General Marshall was looking beyond the immediate situation in the Pacific. His hope was to open the way to the establishment of unified command for all theaters to which the United States sent troops. ABDA Command was not ideal, but it served as an opening for over-all acceptance of this principle.

Of equal concern to General Marshall was the nature and composition of the Allied council that would give the supreme commanders their directives. Among the decisions that had to be made was whether there should be two committees of equal authority, sitting in Washington and London; whether all of the Allied and Associated Powers should be represented by political and military officials on such councils; and what the status of British representatives to the supreme council in Washington should be if a decision were made to have one joint body located in Washington.

Early in the discussions the British indicated a willingness to have a single council sitting in Washington to which they would appoint officers to represent the Chiefs of Staff in London. A proposal that their delegation should be headed by Sir John Dill, who would serve as representative of the Prime Minister at a level above the Chiefs of Staff, immediately drew American fire. General Marshall explained gently that if he would accept anyone for such a position it would be Dill. He was unalterably opposed, however, to interposing an additional level of authority between the service chiefs and the political heads of Great Britain and the United States. Embarrassed, Dill suggested that the matter be dropped.

Seeing that an imperfect arrangement might result from hasty action, General Marshall recommended the adoption of a simple

provision that directives would be issued by a combined council later to be established. He changed his mind, at Admiral King's insistence that unity of command in the Pacific required agreement on the control organization. Marshall then moved that the conference accept a British proposal for stationing in Washington a Joint Staff Mission that would represent the British Chiefs of Staff in regular meetings with their American counterparts. Without debate the military representatives established a committee called the Combined Chiefs of Staff to direct Anglo-American strategy until the war's end. In international conferences the British Chiefs of Staff would act for themselves. Otherwise they made their wishes known through the Joint Staff Mission, headed by Field Marshal Dill.

The new organization required a change in the American staff arrangement, owing to the need to provide some counterpart for the Royal Air Force representation on the British side. General Marshall had taken General Arnold with him to the Argentia conference in August 1941 and had invited him to be present as a full-fledged member at the Arcadia conference. Thoroughly aware of the dangers of trying to put through a basic change in organization, he resorted to a pleasant subterfuge. Knowing that the President was about to issue a statement about his military advisers, he arranged with Marvin McIntyre, the President's secretary, to include the name of General Arnold among the Chiefs of Staff. Thereafter, without special legislation, "Hap" Arnold sat with Marshall and King as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Technically the first meeting of this body took place on February 9, 1942. No formal document was ever issued establishing such a group. In actuality it was born at the Arcadia meeting.

The larger organization, now called the Combined Chiefs of Staff, provided the Allies in the Second World War with an effective instrument for close cooperation that was completely lacking in the First. Even General Brooke, whose strong criticisms included "the false arrangements made in Washington"—the Combined Chiefs of Staff organization—had to agree finally that it was "the most efficient [organization] that had ever been evolved for coordinating and correlating the war strategy and effort of two allies." [44]

No coalition requiring the combined efforts of two great powers,

each jealous of its traditions and prerogatives, ever functioned more smoothly. Much of its success depended on a common purpose and a common language. Equally important was the fact that, in the early stages of the alliance, the two powers contributed much the same in men and matériel to the common venture and commanded mutual respect for their views. Toward the end of the war, when the United States became completely ascendant in manpower and production, the British had no alternative but to go along with American strategic views.[45]

Above all, the Combined Chiefs of Staff organization worked well because of Marshall's close friendship with Sir John Dill, chief British representative in Washington. In an amazing balancing act, Dill was able to represent British wishes to the Americans without antagonizing them and to warn London of the limits of American forbearance without arousing suspicion on the part of his own chiefs that he had become a captive of his hosts. For his part, Marshall continued to be more favorable to the British than most of his advisers and was willing to listen sympathetically to Dill's presentation of Britain's case. His respect for the Field Marshal's mind, fairness, and integrity grew rapidly as their intimacy increased.

Although Dill never permitted himself to reach the point attained by United States Ambassador Walter Hines Page in World War I, when he would read a protest by his government to the British Foreign Secretary and then suggest they work together on a reply, he rapidly evolved a formula that permitted him to pass on to his chiefs the full flavor of the Chief of Staff's studied wrath. "He would bring his stuff to me and read it," Marshall recalled, "but not say that Churchill had asked him for my reactions. I would react, I am ashamed to say, with curse words. Dill would write it down. Then he would say that Churchill had asked for my views. He would show me the notes and we would strengthen the language. . . ." Dill then reported that the Chief of Staff had been very rude when he heard of the message. But the reaction had been recorded outside regular channels and the chance of friction had been reduced. On the British side, Dill smoothed away the rough edges of some of the official messages entrusted to his care and explained to the Chief of Staff the compelling reasons his colleagues in London had for insisting on some of their demands.[46]

To some British observers it seemed that Dill was educating Marshall to the realities of world strategy; to some Americans it appeared that Dill was taking advantage of his friendship with Marshall to lead him into British traps.[47] So far as Marshall was concerned, there was no question of Dill's great worth. As the British representative, Dill defended his country's position in conversation with the American Chief of Staff. But he went no further than Marshall wanted him to go. Early in their relationship, Marshall sensed what Dill could give him and his value in explaining the American position to the British. Instead of being worried about Dill's pro-British influence, he feared that London would decide that the Field Marshal was too pro-American in his views. If, as Marshall believed, only his strenuous efforts saved Dill's job during the last year of the Britisher's life, his intervention served both the cause of the United States and Great Britain.[48]

General Marshall's final service to the cause of Allied cooperation during the conference came in the debate over the establishment of the special board under the Combined Chiefs of Staff to allocate production. For months before the conference the British had been seriously alarmed over American failure to decide on an orderly method of allocating munitions to the military services of the United States and the Associated Powers. They were equally concerned over the delay in developing an industrial program that would insure the production needed for victory.

The American military leaders welcomed British pressure for a more effective machinery of control. As early as August 1941 Marshall and Stark had tried vainly to place the allocation of military matériel under the Joint Chiefs of Staff. After Pearl Harbor the President attempted to meet their request by appointing Hopkins, Marshall, and Stark as members of a strategic munitions board to establish programs for allocating munitions to the United States and the countries receiving defense aid. They had not held any formal meetings before the Arcadia conference.

At the end of the first week of January 1942 a British representative suggested a combined committee in Washington to make bulk allocations to Great Britain and British protégé nations (the Dominions, France, Netherlands, Egypt, and Turkey), with the actual distribution to be made by a British committee. Few propositions could have been devised that would more quickly arouse

American suspicions that the British were planning to use United States supplies to serve purely national interests.[49]

On the next to last day of the Arcadia conference the British delegation formally presented a plan authorizing the establishment of guidelines to govern the distribution of available weapons of war. General Marshall agreed with the proposal but insisted that there be no duplication in London of the controlling agency. He had no objection to the parallel allocation committees in London and Washington but held that "there could be only one Combined Chiefs of Staff" to give broad directives on the allocation of matériel.[50]

At strong British urgings the United States Chiefs of Staff finally agreed that "finished war matériel should be allocated in accordance with strategic needs." They rewrote a draft agreement to emphasize Marshall's point that allocating committees in Washington and London would be under the Combined Chiefs of Staff.[51]

Although the United States Chiefs of Staff signed the statement reluctantly, it gave General Marshall a weapon in his later discussions with the President and Prime Minister. Having won his battle at the Chiefs of Staff level, he found that he had to wage another with his political superiors. Much earlier in the conference Hopkins had suggested the creation of a two-man civilian board, with an American and a British member, to advise on the allocation of war matériel. Beaverbrook had gone further and asked for a supreme command over supplies as well as strategy, with Hopkins coordinating production in the United States, Great Britain, and Canada. By mid-January these two ideas had been merged in a proposal by which a board of two parts, one in Washington and one in London, would report directly to the President and Prime Minister and be independent of the Combined Chiefs of Staff.[52]

Marshall found himself back in a debate that he thought ended. Although ever the stanch supporter of civilian control of grand strategy and national policy, he was firmly set against the establishment of a civilian body that could interfere with established plans by refusing to allocate matériel. As a former aide of Pershing, he was thoroughly aware of the World War I commander's views on keeping control of supply operations. Possibly Marshall also feared that a civilian director would be inclined to grant the British a degree of control over American military activities that they could not get from the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

A few minutes before British and American representatives filed into the President's White House office for their last meeting, Roosevelt summoned Marshall for a brief chat. In the presence of Harry Hopkins, the Chief Executive handed the Chief of Staff a proposed draft of an order setting up boards under Hopkins and Beaverbrook and making them independent of the Chiefs of Staff. Marshall quickly made clear that his views had undergone no change. He added that if control of supply matters by the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington was not accepted, he could not continue to accept the responsibilities of his office. Although it seems likely that his hint at resignation was rhetorical rather than deeply serious, he impressed Roosevelt by his earnest opposition. The President turned at once to Hopkins, apparently expecting that Hopkins would support the two-board proposal. To Marshall's surprise and pleasure, Hopkins agreed completely with the Chief of Staff.[53]

In the conference that followed, the President presented the General's case, calling on Marshall and Hopkins to repeat their arguments. When Churchill and Beaverbrook debated the question, pointing to the possibility of disagreements, Hopkins suggested that in case of disputes the civilian board members could appeal to the President and Prime Minister. Reluctantly Churchill agreed to try the arrangement for one month. Pleased at this concession, Roosevelt quickly closed the bargain by saying, "We will call it a preliminary agreement and try it out that way." As a result, Munitions Assignment Boards were set up in Washington and London shortly after the meeting and continued in operation during the rest of the war. Marshall's stand was firmly upheld.[54]

For a third time in three weeks, Marshall had appeared as the most forceful proponent of Allied command unity and of a strong Combined Chiefs of Staff organization centered in Washington. The Prime Minister now singled him out for special treatment. When Churchill flew down to Florida on January 5 for a short vacation, he begged the President to send Marshall along. He used the opportunity to become better acquainted with the American Chief of Staff and to explore a number of questions that had been raised at the conference.[55]

Churchill had found that in every showdown between British and American representatives over the issues of command, the President had supported his Chief of Staff. But he was too clever to

have missed the basic point on which Roosevelt and General Marshall differed. In speaking of the proposed North African operation, the Chief of Staff had emphasized that a "failure in this first venture would have an extremely adverse effect on the morale of the American people." [56] The President took a slightly different view. As noted by General Marshall, the President in the first conference "considered it very important to morale, to give the people of this country a feeling that they are in the war, to give the Germans the reverse effect, to have American troops somewhere in active fighting across the Atlantic." [57] Roosevelt agreed with his Chief of Staff on the need for victory, but his emphasis was on action soon. By playing on the divergence between the two approaches, Churchill was to find the means of winning Roosevelt to his strategy of invading North Africa in the fall of 1942.