INITIAL CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING
A TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE

No. 1

Truman Papers: Telegram

Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman

TOP SECRET

Prime Minister to President Truman. Number 34. Personal and top secret.

I send you in my immediately following telegram 2 the personal answer 3 which U. J. 4 has sent to me on my long telegram of April 29 5 which latter you thought well of and also supported by the message quoted in your Number 25. 6 It seems to me that matters 7 can hardly be carried further by correspondence and that, as soon as possible, there should be a meeting of the three heads of governments. Meanwhile we should hold firmly to the existing position obtained or being obtained by our armies in Yugoslavia, in Austria, in Czechoslovakia, on the main central United States front and on the British front reaching up to Lübeck including Denmark. There will be plenty to

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1 Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels. Text communicated to the Secretary of State by Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, in a memorandum of May 9 (file No. 800e.01/5–945).

2 Not printed.

3 See Winston S. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy (vol. vi of The Second World War) (Boston, 1953), p. 499; Stalin’s Correspondence With Churchill, Atlee, Roosevelt and Truman, 1941–45 (New York, 1958), vol. i, p. 346. The short title Stalin’s Correspondence is hereafter used to refer to the last-cited publication, which constitutes a reissue (including the original title pages and with the original pagination but bound in one volume) of the two volumes of Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents of the U.S.A. and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945 (Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1957; Ministry of Foreign Affairs publication). For a citation to the Russian text of this compilation, see document No. 21, footnote 4.

4 Uncle Joe, i.e., Stalin.


6 Not printed. Truman’s telegram No. 25 to Churchill quoted for the latter’s information the text of Truman’s message of May 4 to Stalin concerning Poland. See Harry S. Truman, Year of Decisions (vol. i of Memoirs by Harry S. Truman) (Garden City, 1955), pp. 254–255; Stalin’s Correspondence, vol. ii, p. 228.

7 With respect to the “matters” which Churchill presumably had in mind, see document No. 4.
occupy both armies in collecting the prisoners during the next few days, and we may hope that the VE celebration will also occupy the public mind at home. Thereafter I feel that we must most earnestly consider our attitude towards the Soviets and show them how much we have to offer or withhold.

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No. 2

Truman Papers: Telegram

President Truman to Prime Minister Churchill

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] 9 May 1945.

31. Your messages 34 and 35.

I am in agreement with your opinion that a meeting of the three heads of government would be desirable in order to get action on the questions of interest to the three governments upon which either a decision or a common understanding have not been reached.

I very much prefer to have the request for such a tripartite meeting originate from Marshal Stalin and not from either one of us. Perhaps you have means of some kind with which to endeavor to induce Stalin to suggest or request such a meeting.

In the meantime it is my present intention to adhere to our interpretation of the Yalta agreements, and to stand firmly on our present announced attitude toward all the questions at issue.

In order to prepare for a possible tripartite meeting in the not distant future, I would be very pleased to have from you a list of the questions that you consider it necessary or desirable for us to bring up for discussion, and also suggestions as to meeting places.

There should now be no valid excuse for Stalin's refusing to come west toward us.

In regard to timing, it will be extremely difficult for me to absent myself from Washington before the end of the fiscal year (30 June), but I probably will be able to get away after that date.

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1 Presumably sent to the United States Naval Attaché, London, via Navy channels. Text communicated to the Secretary of State by Leahy in a memorandum of May 9 (file No. 860c.01/5-945).
2 Document No. 1.
4 See vol. ii, documents Nos. 1416 and 1417.
TOP SECRET

Prime Minister Churchhill to President Truman

Prime Minister to President Truman. Personal and top secret. Number 40.

1. Your 31. I think we should offer an invitation jointly or severally at the same moment to Stalin to meet us at some agreed unshattered town in Germany for a tripartite meeting in July. We should not rendezvous at any place within the present Russian military zone. Twice running we have come to meet him. They are concerned about us on account of our civilization and various instrumentalities. But this will be greatly diminished when our armies are dispersed.

2. I do not know at the moment when our general election will be, but I do not see any reason why it should influence your movements or mine where public duty calls. If you will entertain the idea of coming over here in the early days of July, His Majesty will send you the most cordial invitation and you will have a great reception from the British Nation.

I would have suggested the middle of June but for your reference to your fiscal year (30 June) because I feel that every minute counts. Thereafter we might move to the rendezvous fixed in Germany and have the grave discussions on which the immediate future of the world depends.

I should of course bring with me representatives of both parties in our state and both would use exactly the same language about foreign affairs as we are closely agreed. Therefore I urge your coming here in the earliest days of July and that we leave together to meet U. J. at wherever is the best point outside Russian-occupied territory to which he can be induced to come. Meanwhile I earnestly hope that the American front will not recede from the now agreed tactical lines.

3. I doubt very much whether any enticements will get a proposal for a tripartite meeting out of Stalin. But I think he would respond to an invitation. If not what are we to do?

4. I rejoice that your present intention is to adhere to our rightful interpretation of the Yalta agreements and to stand firmly on our present announced attitude towards all the questions at issue.

Mr. President, in these next two months the gravest matters in the world will be decided. May I add that I have derived a great feeling of confidence from the correspondence we have interchanged.

1 Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels.
2 Document No. 2.
5. We are drawing up as you desire a list of subjects for discussion amongst us three which will take a few days but will be forwarded to you immediately.

6. I also send you in my immediately following a copy of a telegram I sent on the 4th to Eden.

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2 See document No. 144 and the enclosure to document No. 145.

4 Document No. 4.

5 Eden was at San Francisco acting as chairman of the British Delegation to the United Nations Conference on International Organization.

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No. 4

Leahy Papers: Telegram

Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman

TOP SECRET

LONDON, 11 May 1945.

Prime Minister to President Truman. Personal and top secret. Number 41.

Following is text of telegram referred to in my immediately preceding telegram.

1. I consider that the Polish deadlock can now probably only be resolved at a conference between the three heads of governments in some unshattered town in Germany, if such can be found. This should take place at latest at the beginning of July. I propose to telegraph a suggestion to President Truman about his visit here and the further indispensable meeting of the three major powers.

2. The Polish problem may be easier to settle when set in relation to the now numerous outstanding questions of the utmost gravity which require urgent settlement with the Russians. I fear terrible things have happened during the Russian advance through Germany to the Elbe. The proposed withdrawal of the United States Army to the occupational lines which were arranged with the Russians and Americans in Quebec and which were marked in yellow on the maps we studied there, would mean the tide of Russian domination sweeping forward 120 miles on a front of 300 or 400 miles. This would be an event which, if it occurred, would be one of the most melancholy in history. After it was over and the territory occupied

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1 Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels.

2 Document No. 3. The text of the message which follows was communicated to the Secretary of State by Leahy in a memorandum of May 11 (file No. 800c.01/5-1145).

3 The records of the Second Quebec Conference are scheduled for publication in a subsequent volume in this series. Soviet representatives were not present at the Quebec Conference. Following Anglo-American agreement at Quebec with respect to zones of occupation in Germany, an agreement on the subject was signed at London on November 14, 1944, by the United States, British, and Soviet representatives on the European Advisory Commission (Department of State, Treaties and Other International Acts Series No. 3071; Department of State, United States Treaties and Other International Agreements, vol. 5, pt. 2, p. 2087).
by the Russians, Poland would be completely engulfed and buried deep in Russian-occupied lands. What would in fact be the Russian frontier would run from the North Cape in Norway along the Finnish-Swedish frontier, across the Baltic to a point just east of Lübeck along the at present agreed line of occupation and along the frontier between Bavaria to Czechoslovakia to the frontiers of Austria which is nominally to be in quadruple occupation, and half-way across that country to the Isonzo River behind which Tito and Russia will claim everything to the east. Thus the territories under Russian control would include the Baltic provinces, all of Germany to the occupational line, all Czechoslovakia, a large part of Austria, the whole of Yugoslavia, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria until Greece in her present tottering condition is reached. It would include all the great capitals of middle Europe including Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia. The position of Turkey and Constantinople will certainly come immediately into discussion.

3. This constitutes an event in the history of Europe to which there has been no parallel, and which has not been faced by the Allies in their long and hazardous struggle. The Russian demands on Germany for reparations alone will be such as to enable her to prolong the occupation almost indefinitely, at any rate for many years during which time Poland will sink with many other states into the vast zone of Russian-controlled Europe, not necessarily economically Sovietised but police-governed.

4. It is just about time that these formidable issues were examined between the principal powers as a whole. We have several powerful bargaining counters on our side, the use of which might make for a peaceful agreement. First, the Allies ought not to retreat from their present positions to the occupational line until we are satisfied about Poland and also about the temporary character of the Russian occupation of Germany, and the conditions to be established in the Russianised or Russian-controlled countries in the Danube valley particularly Hungary, Austria and Czechoslovakia and the Balkans. Secondly, we may be able to please them about the exits from the Black Sea and the Baltic as part of a general settlement. All these matters can only be settled before the United States armies in Europe are weakened. If they are not settled before the United States armies withdraw from Europe and the Western world folds up its war machines, there are no prospects of a satisfactory solution and very little of preventing a third world war. It is to this early and speedy showdown and settlement with Russia that we must now turn our hopes. Meanwhile I am against weakening our claim against Russia on behalf of Poland in any way. I think it should stand where it was put in the telegrams from the President and me.  

4 For the messages referred to, see Truman, Year of Decisions, p. 254; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, p. 499; Stalin's Correspondence, vol. i, p. 333, and vol. ii, p. 228.
No. 5

Leaby Papers: Telegram

President Truman to Prime Minister Churchill

TOP SECRET [WASHINGTON,] 11 May 1945.

36. Your Number 40.2

I would much prefer to have Stalin propose the meeting and believe it is worth while to endeavor, through our Ambassadors,3 to induce him to propose the meeting. If such an effort fails, we can then consider our issuing an invitation jointly or severally.

When and if such a meeting is arranged, it appears to me that in order to avoid any suspicion of our “ganging up” it would be advantageous for us to proceed to the meeting place separately.

When the conference ends, if my duties here do not make it impossible, I shall be very pleased to make a visit to England where you and I may discuss fully our common interests and problems.

I am fully in agreement that the next few months will decide questions of the greatest consequence to the whole world.

1 Presumably sent to the United States Naval Attaché, London, via Navy channels.
2 Document No. 3.
3 W. Averell Harriman and Sir Archibald Clark Kerr were, respectively, the American and British Ambassadors to the Soviet Union.

No. 6

Leaby Papers: Telegram

Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman

TOP SECRET LONDON, 12th May 1945.

Prime Minister to President Truman. Personal and top secret. Number 44.

1. I am profoundly concerned about the European situation as outlined in my number 41.2 I learn that half the American air force in Europe has already begun to move to the Pacific Theatre. The newspapers are full of the great movements of the American armies out of Europe. Our armies also are under previous arrangements likely to undergo a marked reduction. The Canadian Army will certainly leave. The French are weak and difficult to deal with. Anyone can see that in a very short space of time our armed power on the Continent will have vanished except for moderate forces to hold down Germany.

1 Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels.
2 Document No. 4.
2. Meanwhile what is to happen about Russia? I have always worked for friendship with Russia, but like you, I feel deep anxiety because of their misinterpretation of the Yalta decisions, their attitude towards Poland, their overwhelming influence in the Balkans excepting Greece, the difficulties they make about Vienna, the combination of Russian power and the territories under their control or occupied, coupled with the Communist technique in so many other countries, and above all their power to maintain very large armies in the field for a long time. What will be the position in a year or two, when the British and American armies have melted and the French has not yet been formed on any major scale, when we may have a handful of divisions mostly French, and when Russia may choose to keep two or three hundred on active service?

3. An iron curtain is drawn down upon their front. We do not know what is going on behind. There seems little doubt that the whole of the regions east of the line Lübeck–Trieste–Corfu will soon be completely in their hands. To this must be added the further enormous area conquered by the American armies between Eisenach and [the] Elbe, which will I suppose in a few weeks be occupied, when the Americans retreat, by the Russian power. All kinds of arrangements will have to be made by General Eisenhower to prevent another immense flight of the German population westward as this enormous Muscovite advance into the centre of Europe takes place. And then the curtain will descend again to a very large extent if not entirely. Thus a broad band of many hundreds of miles of Russian-occupied territory will isolate us from Poland.

4. Meanwhile the attention of our peoples will be occupied in inflicting severities upon Germany, which is ruined and prostrate, and it would be open to the Russians in a very short time to advance if they chose to the waters of the North Sea and the Atlantic.

5. Surely it is vital now to come to an understanding with Russia, or see where we are with her, before we weaken our armies mortally or retire to the zones of occupation. This can only be done by a personal meeting. I should be most grateful for your opinion and advice. Of course we may take the view that Russia will behave impeccably and no doubt that offers the most convenient solution. To sum up, this issue of a settlement with Russia before our strength has gone seems to me to dwarf all others.

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* See vol. ii, documents Nos. 1416 and 1417.
* i.e., Prime Minister.
No. 7

Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman

TOP SECRET


Prime Minister to President Truman. Personal and top secret.
Number 46. Your number 36.²

1. F. D. R.³ promised me he would visit England before he went to
France or, as it has now become, Germany. We should feel dis-
appointed if you did not come to us. But having regard to the gravity
of the next few months, no question of ceremonial should intervene
with the organized sequence of events. Therefore I am for the
conference of the three as soon as possible and wherever possible.

2. In this case I consider that we should try to bring the meeting
off some time in June, and I hope your fiscal year will not delay it.
We greatly hope you will come to England later.

3. I agree that our Ambassadors should do their utmost to induce
Stalin to propose the meeting, and instructions will be given accord-
ingly by us. I doubt very much whether he will accede. Time is on
his side if he digs in while we melt away.

4. I look forward to your meeting with Eden[.]

¹ Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels.
² Document No. 5.
³ i.e., Roosevelt.

No. 8

Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State

[Extracts ⁴]

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] May 14, 1945.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Subject: Conference with the President, 2:30 p. m.

Participants: The President, Mr. Anthony Eden, Mr. Attlee, Mr.
John Balfour, and Admiral Leahy;
Acting Secretary, Mr. Grew

At the President’s expressed wish, I attended the conference this
afternoon between the President, Mr. Anthony Eden, Mr. Attlee,
Mr. John Balfour, and Admiral Leahy.

¹ For another extract from this memorandum of conversation, see Joseph C.
Grew, Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904–1945 (Boston,
(2) Polish problem, and Big-Three meeting.

There was some discussion of the Polish problem but Mr. Eden felt that no solution of the problem could be expected until there could be a meeting between the President, the Prime Minister and Stalin, which the Prime Minister hoped could take place as early as possible. The President said that, having been brought unexpectedly into this, he had many difficulties to contend with and he could not leave Washington before the end of the fiscal year on June 30, especially as he would have to be in touch with the Congress with regard to the budget. He said that he hoped a meeting could be arranged as soon as possible thereafter, perhaps early in July.

J[OSEPH] C. G[REEW]

No. 9

Leary Papers: Telegram

President Truman to Prime Minister Churchill

[WASHINGTON,] 14 May 1945.

39. Your numbers 44 and 46.\(^2\)

Thank you for your estimate of the future situation in Europe as outlined in your No. 44. From the present point of view it is impossible to make a conjecture as to what the Soviet may do when Germany is under the small forces of occupation and the great part of such armies as we can maintain are fighting in the Orient against Japan.

I am in full agreement with you that an early tripartite meeting is necessary to come to an understanding with Russia.

A report from our Embassies in Moscow seems necessary before we can approach a decision on the time or place for the meeting.

I have talked with Mr. Eden today\(^3\) and I shall make every practicable effort to so arrange my affairs here as to permit an early meeting somewhere.

\(^1\) Presumably sent to the United States Naval Attaché, London, via Navy channels.

\(^2\) Documents Nos. 6 and 7, respectively.

\(^3\) See document No. 8.
No. 10

Leaby Papers: Telegram

Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman

TOP SECRET

LONDON, 15 May 1945.

Prime Minister to President Truman. Personal and top secret. Number 50.

1. Your number 39 has just arrived. I agree with what you say. I will take a chance of getting a snub from Stalin by sending him a telegram urging a friendly tripartite meeting.

\[\text{Footnotes:}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels.
\item Document No. 9.
\item Churchill had already had one rebuff from Stalin on the subject of a Heads-of-Government meeting: On March 21 he had concluded a message to Stalin with an expression of confidence that all the difficulties which had arisen since the Yalta Conference "would soon be swept away if only we could meet together", and Stalin, in his reply, had ignored this statement. See Stalin’s Correspondence, vol. 1, p. 308. This official Soviet compilation of Churchill-Stalin correspondence contains no evidence of a further initiative on Churchill’s part until May 26, when Churchill sent a message to Stalin suggesting that the question of the German fleet "should form part of the general discussions which ought to take place between us and President Truman at the earliest possible date". See document No. 141. By this time, however, Truman had sent Harry Hopkins to Moscow for conversations with Stalin, and on the evening of May 28 Hopkins raised the question of a Heads-of-Government meeting directly with Stalin. See document No. 24 and footnote 1 to document No. 35.
\end{enumerate}\]

No. 11

740.00119 Control (Italy)/5-1545

Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 15, 1945.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Participants: The President, the Acting Secretary of State, Ambassador Harriman, and Mr. Bohlen.

The Acting Secretary then said there was another matter which he would ask Ambassador Harriman to explain in detail, namely, that we all felt in the Department of State that it was of the utmost importance that the Big Three meeting should take place as soon as possible and not be postponed until July.

\[\text{Footnote:}
\begin{enumerate}
\item For another portion of this memorandum, see Grew, Turbulent Era, vol. II, p. 1482.
\end{enumerate}\]
Ambassador Harriman said that the problem of our relations with Russia is the number one problem affecting the future of the world and the fact was that at the present moment we were getting farther and farther apart. In addition to the general picture there were the specific and immediate questions such as the treatment of Germany on a tripartite basis, setting up of the Control Council, etc. on which no progress had been made with the Russians. There was, of course, the Polish question and many others. He said he felt that the establishment of a basis for future relations with Russia and the settlement of these immediate issues could only be done at a tripartite meeting, that the longer the meeting was delayed the worse the situation would get, and that while he assumed of course that we were not prepared to use our troops in Europe for political bargaining nevertheless if the meeting could take place before we were in a large measure out of Europe he felt the atmosphere of the meeting would be more favorable and the chances of success increased. He said he felt that Stalin was not getting accurate reports from Molotov or any of his people and as a result had grown deeply and unjustifiably suspicious as to our motives which he probably thought were designed to deprive him of the fruits of victory.

The President said that he agreed with that and felt that a meeting as soon as possible was most desirable. He added that he agreed with what the Ambassador said but that his difficulty was that he had a number of pressing domestic questions particularly the preparation of a budget message before the end of the fiscal year which made it difficult for him to leave before then. Ambassador Harriman said that he felt the President would be confronted with a much more difficult situation two months from now than he would if the meeting could be arranged within the next few weeks. The President said that he did not favor a meeting in Germany since he thought this time that Stalin should come over to meet us and he had in mind Alaska as a possible meeting place, and he was not favorably inclined to a prior meeting with the British which would give the Russians the impression that we were “ganging up” on them. He asked Mr. Bohlen’s opinion on these two points.

Mr. Bohlen replied that he felt that somewhere nearer Moscow whether it be Germany or somewhere else would be preferable since it was of great importance that Stalin be able to communicate quickly and securely with Moscow; otherwise there might be delay or at least greater difficulty in having any agreements reached stick once Stalin had returned to Moscow. He added that even at Yalta we all had felt that the Soviet failure to carry out the agreement reached there had been due in large part to opposition inside the Soviet Government which Stalin had encountered on his return. In regard to the second
point Mr. Bohlen said that he did not feel that the fear of an impression of "ganging up" was very dangerous since he believed that the Russians considered it in the logic of things that Great Britain and America would be very close together and that a prior meeting with the British on the way to the Big Three meeting or in any other manner that could be arranged might on the contrary have a salutary effect and make Stalin more reasonable.

The Acting Secretary then asked the President what he thought of Vienna as a meeting place. The President did not appear to be unfavorably impressed with this idea and added that while these pressing domestic matters made it difficult for him, if the foreign situation really required he would of course be prepared to go very soon. He added that he had just had a message from the Prime Minister 2 saying that the latter had taken up with Stalin the question of a meeting. Ambassador Harriman asked then would the President consider having the meeting in the early part of June to which The President replied that he would certainly consider it if the other two wanted it then.

The President asked Ambassador Harriman when he was going back 3 and said that he felt someone should be in Moscow who could talk to Stalin. The Ambassador said he would of course go back whenever the President wanted him to but that he thought he should have a clear idea of what he was to say to Stalin and also some definite information as to the time and place of meeting. He added furthermore that in connection with the Yalta agreement on the Far East 4 as the President knew Mr. Grew had been having meetings with the Secretaries of War and Navy 5 as to the Yalta agreement and other questions affecting the Soviet Union in the Far East. He added that there were two subjects which had been discussed only orally at Yalta which should be clarified, namely, the question of Chinese unity and the question of a trusteeship for Korea. 6 The President said that he thought provided the Ambassador was not delayed too long it would be wise for him to go back to Moscow with clarity on those subjects.

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2 Document No. 10.
3 To his post at Moscow.
4 Signed at Yalta, February 11, 1945. For text, see Department of State, Executive Agreement Series No. 498; 59 Stat. (2) 1823; Foreign Relations, The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945, p. 984.
In conclusion The President said that he would await word from Churchill as to Stalin’s reply before we would decide definitely in regard to the meeting.

J[oseph] C. G[rew]

No. 12

740.00119 Control (Italy)/5-1545

Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State

[Extract 1]

[WASHINGTON,] May 15, 1945.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Subject: . . . ; meeting of Big Three

Participants: Mr. Anthony Eden
Mr. Balfour
Ambassador Harriman
Mr. William Phillips
Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Grew

Reference was made to a recent communication from the President to Stalin [Churchill] 2 with regard to the meeting of the Big Three and to the suggestion that Stalin might take the initiative in calling the Conference. Mr. Eden asked whether the President had any suggestion as to how Stalin might be induced to take the initiative. Mr. Harriman thought that this might readily be done by Clark Kerr if he should arrive in Moscow before him, Harriman, by turning the conversation in such a way as to reveal whether Stalin would in fact take the initiative. Discussion followed as to the best place for the meeting and it was decided that Berlin or Vienna, preferably the latter, would be the most suitable places. In any event the Soviets would insist that the meeting would take place in an area policed by the Soviet Army. Berlin and Vienna seemed suitable since by that time it was hoped that they would be under a tripartite military control.

J[oseph] C. G[rew]

1 For another extract from this memorandum of conversation, see Grew, Turbulent Era, vol. ii, p. 1481.
2 Presumably document No. 2 or document No. 5.
The Acting Secretary of State to the President

TOP SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: M. Bidault’s Visit to Washington

Secretary Stettinius requested me to convey to you the information contained in his telegram No. 6 of May 16, in which he states that the French Foreign Minister, M. Bidault, who is arriving in Washington tomorrow, expects to make a strong plea to you to have General de Gaulle included in the proposed meeting between Mr. Churchill, Marshal Stalin and yourself. A copy of the Secretary’s above-mentioned telegram is enclosed.

When you receive M. Bidault, it is suggested that you might care to open the subject of de Gaulle by referring to the question which you were asked at the press conference yesterday; that is as to whether a meeting of the Big Five would take place at San Francisco and to your reply, which was interpreted by the correspondent as excluding de Gaulle from the forthcoming meeting. This might give you the opportunity of saying that you yourself would be very glad to have de Gaulle invited to the forthcoming meeting, which would then be a meeting of the Big Four, but that in as much as it had to be acted upon by common agreement, you would put the matter up to Mr. Churchill and Stalin.

JOSEPH C. GREW

[Enclosure]

The Secretary of State to the Acting Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

SAN FRANCISCO, MAY 16, 1945.


Please inform the President that M. Bidault, who left here 10:00 a. m. this morning for Washington, told me today he expects to make a strong plea to President Truman to include de Gaulle in proposed meeting of the President, Churchill and Stalin and said that France if included in such meetings could be helpful in European questions and might cause difficulties if excluded. Bidault left here well pleased with inclusion in big-power group and has been fully cooperative.

1 Not attached to the file copy of Grew’s memorandum; printed from the file copy of Stettinius’ telegram (file No. 740.00119 EW/5-1645).
I feel we have been successful in measurably improving relations with the French during his stay here.

Please tell Bidault of my appreciation of his collaboration and my conviction that our two countries must work closely together in these difficult times ahead.

No. 14

711.51/6-1845

Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State

[Extract]

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] May 18, 1945.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Subject: French Position
Participants: President Truman;
M. Bidault, French Foreign Minister;
Admiral William D. Leahy;
Acting Secretary Grew

At 12:15 I met Mr. Bidault and the French Ambassador\(^1\) at the White House and introduced the French Foreign Minister to the President. Admiral Leahy was also present at the conference. The President welcomed Mr. Bidault and told him how he desired to strengthen the friendship between the United States and France which had commenced with the founding of our nation. The President also thanked Mr. Bidault for his cooperation and helpfulness in San Francisco and his gratification at the contribution of the French Delegation to the work of the Conference.\(^2\)

Mr. Bidault expressed pleasure at the President's remarks and said that France had once been great and hoped for the support of the United States in enabling France to return to her former position. He said that Europe could not get along with Soviet Russia and Great Britain as the only two great European powers, and that a strong France was needed in the interests of all.

Mr. Bidault said that a good many European matters had been decided at meetings at which France had not been present and he hoped that she would be included in such meetings in future. The President said that there had been a good deal of talk about a forthcoming meeting of Stalin, the Prime Minister and himself but no such meeting had yet been arranged and none of the three heads of govern-

\(^1\) Henri Bonnet.
\(^2\) i.e., the United Nations Conference on International Organization.

[No.14]
ment had yet taken the initiative in arranging such a meeting. The President indicated that in the event of such a meeting the participation of France might be given consideration by the three heads of government.

J[OSEPH] C. G[REW]

No. 15

The Acting Secretary of State to the President

TOP SECRET [WASHINGTON,] May 19, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: M. Bidault’s request for a further interview.

Although in his conversation with you on May 18¹ M. Bidault did not directly bring up the subject of General de Gaulle’s attendance at a proposed meeting of the Big Three, it is extremely likely that he will when he next sees you. Even if he does not do so, I should like to suggest that you seriously consider the possibility of raising the question yourself.

As you know, this Government has in the past been held largely responsible by the French Government and people—and by large sections of the American people—for the absence of General de Gaulle from the Big Three meetings. I feel certain that this Government could take no single step which would be more appreciated by the French nation and which would do more to improve our relations with the French than for you to eliminate from their minds the impression that it is the United States which is preventing their return to a status of full equality with the major Allied powers.

To this end, it occurs to me, that you might reiterate to M. Bidault that there is no definite assurance as yet of a meeting between you, Mr. Churchill and Marshal Stalin, and add that if this question is decided in the affirmative, you will be happy to express to them your entire willingness to have General de Gaulle participate.

JOSEPH C. GREW

¹ See document No. 14.
Leaky Papers: Telegram

**Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman**

[Extract]

**TOP SECRET**

LONDON, 21 May 1945

Prime Minister to President Truman. Personal and top secret.

Number 53.

Your Number 44.  

2. I think there is a very good chance that if our deployment is formidable, a solution may be reached [with respect to Venezia Giulia] without fighting. Our firm attitude in this matter will I believe be of value in our discussions with Stalin. It seems to me that the need for our triple meeting at the earliest moment is very great. There will probably be a general election campaign here during June, but as all parties are agreed on foreign policy it need not make any postponement necessary. Could you give me any idea of the date and place which would be suitable, so that we can make our several requests to Stalin? I have a fear he may play for time in order to remain all powerful in Europe when our forces have melted.

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1 Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels.

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Leaky Papers: Telegram

**President Truman to Prime Minister Churchill**

[Extract 2]

**TOP SECRET**

[WASHINGTON,] 21 May 1945.

45. Your number 53. . . .

I may, within the next two weeks, have more information bearing on a date and location for the proposed tripartite meeting if Stalin agrees to participate.

I hope he will agree to come west into Germany or further west, but I am advised that he is not likely to go beyond Soviet controlled territory.

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1 Presumably sent to the United States Naval Attaché, London, via Navy channels.
3 Document No. 16.
No. 18

740.00119 EW/5-2345 : Telegram

*The Ambassador to the Soviet Union (Harriman) to the President*¹

[Extract]

**TOP SECRET**

**US URGENT**

PARIS, May 23, 1945—11 p. m.

2913. Personal and top secret for the President from Harriman.

My daughter, Kathleen, and I dined last night alone with Mr. and Mrs. Churchill. He is greatly pleased with your decision to send Harry² with me.³ The resignation of his Govt today and the coming election in the first week of July are much in his mind. He is gravely concerned over the developments with Russia, feels that it is of the utmost importance to go through firmly with the situation in Venezia Giulia, but does not believe that the basic issues such as Poland can be settled until you and he meet with Stalin. He expressed the hope that this could be arranged as early as possible. He assured me that he would not take any position in regard to Russia which did not have your full support. He said further that he is ready to come and meet you anywhere at any time you are prepared to see him.

¹ Sent to the Acting Secretary of State over the signature of Jefferson Caffery, American Ambassador to France.
² i.e., Harry Hopkins.
³ To confer with Stalin. See post, p. 21.

No. 19

Leahy Papers : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant) to the President*¹

SECRET

LONDON, 24 May 1945.

2196. To the President from Winant.

This afternoon when I was talking with the Prime Minister he said he wanted me to let you know that the coming election here would in no way interfere with an early meeting with you and Marshal Stalin. He told me during our conversation that if arrangements could be made for a meeting by the middle of June or before July 5th he would probably take Attlee with him. He added that there were no differences between them insofar as international relations were concerned.

¹ Sent by the United States Military Attaché, London, via Army channels.