

Paper Prepared in the Department of State¹SECRET
TCT Memo 3b]

[WASHINGTON, December 21, 1951.]

APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE CHURCHILL TALKS

A. ANTICIPATED APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES OF MR. CHURCHILL

It is clear that the major objective of Mr. Churchill is to strengthen and to re-emphasize the partnership between the United States and the United Kingdom in world affairs. He has been critical of the Labor Government which he believes permitted this relationship to be impaired. Furthermore, he recalls the intimate personal relationship which he had with the late President Roosevelt and also the close working military relationships which existed during the war.

He may, therefore, desire to work out a new high level personal relationship with the President. He may, in the military field, advocate the creation of a body resembling the war-time combined Chiefs of Staff (although Ambassador Franks tells us this will not be raised). He will also almost certainly attempt, by institutional or public means, to make the US-UK relationship more obvious in the world. A corollary objective but one which he will no doubt stress strongly is to plead for US support in the difficult situations throughout the world in which British direct interests are threatened, specifically in the Near East. Mr. Churchill undoubtedly feels keenly the lessening world role of the UK and will attempt to make it a more positive one through this US-UK relationship and in so doing may make a strong attempt to exert more forcefully than did the Labor Government the UK's positions. The fourth quarter UK gold and dollar reserve figures will probably look very bad and thus financial considerations will be apt to color his thinking on many issues. For instance, in cases where we might ask the UK to do something his reply may well be, "What will this cost us?"

He will also probably attempt to obtain a closer working relationship on atomic energy and in this connection may bring up the problem of determining the circumstances under which the US airfields in the UK may be employed. Other specific questions which Churchill is bound to raise include Korea, China, Egypt and Iran.

Mr. Eden also told Secretary Acheson at Rome² that Mr. Churchill intended to raise the question of the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic. Last spring Mr. Churchill protested in Commons against the nomination of a US Admiral. While he may not ask that this post go to a Britisher he will probably seek greater recognition of the UK role in this area and particularly in Eastern Atlantic waters off the UK.

It should be borne in mind that Mr. Churchill thinks in terms of grand global strategy. He will not be interested in going into details or working out in these meetings specific and detailed solutions to problems. In the "grand" manner he can be expected to tour the world and make observations on a multitude of questions.

All of these random observations, however, are apt to have the objective of pointing towards the several specific requests he will make of us. It has been suggested, therefore, that after one or two initial general discussions at this level that there should be an interval in these talks so that on questions on which we would desire to have decisions reached officials would have an opportunity to work out details. It is probable, however, that very little in the way of decision should be attempted at these meetings. Mr. Churchill's message to the President³ indicates that he plans to lay the ground work for this in an address he will make before leaving the UK.

B. US POSITION ON MR. CHURCHILL'S MAJOR OBJECTIVE

The question of the US-UK relationship should be met "head on" and raised by us as a specific question in the unlikely event he does not do so.

Our position should be about as follows:

1) Reassure Mr. Churchill that the US-UK relationship is a cornerstone of US foreign policy.

2) Point out, however, the pitfalls of making this relationship too obvious.

(a) The adverse effect of such a course on other countries especially the continental countries and specifically France.

(b) Making the point that the US-UK relationship is of greatest constructive benefit when it underlies broader multilateral actions—in NATO, in the UN, in the developing Middle East arrangements, and in the general struggle to resist Soviet aggression.

(c) In the Middle East and Asia, there is the disadvantage of the US becoming "tarred with the Colonial brush" although we recognize at the same time that a reflection of division between us should be avoided in order to prevent states in the area from playing us off one against the other.

3) While the British Ambassador has told us that Mr. Churchill does not intend to suggest the reactivation of the wartime Combined Chiefs of Staff or the creation of bodies which would overtly symbolize the US-UK partnership; we cannot exclude the possibility that he may do so. In this case we should point out the special reliance and importance which the US places on the UK, its strongest and most dependable ally, but also point out the possible harmful effects of such moves. Our other allies, principally France might relax their efforts interpreting a Combined Chiefs of Staff or other such bodies, as proof that the US is basing its real defense plans exclusively in cooperation with the UK.

4) Advocate a continued and intensified close relationship including the following:

(a) Consultation between officials of the two governments directly handling problems, at the time they first arise.

(b) A continuance of the practice of periodic review by officials of the two sides on area or functional problems falling under their jurisdictions.

(c) Occasional official level reviews on a world-wide basis bearing in mind world-wide objectives and the US-UK relationship such as was done in the preparatory meetings in London in April 1950.⁴

(d) A continuation of politico-military talks on carefully selected subjects.⁵

(e) A continuation of the practice of ministerial meetings as often as the other means of consultation suggested indicate their desirability.

(f) Both countries, of course, require freedom of individual approach to third countries including the Commonwealth. In advance of consultation on the intimate bases proposed above, however, the two governments must decide whether the discussions are to be held on a confidential basis or, if not, the conditions under which they are to be reported to other governments, including the Dominions. We regard this as of great importance. Both countries have on occasion been delinquent in this respect. (...)

¹ The source text was attached to a cover sheet which indicated that this paper was being circulated as TCT Memo 3b and that it had been prepared as an overall statement of the objectives of the talks. Two previous drafts of this paper, TCT Memos 3 and 3a, dated Dec. 16 and 17, respectively, were prepared along similar lines, but lacked the detailed statements under various sections of Part C. Copies of these two drafts are in CFM files, lot M 88, box 160, "Steering Group Memoranda".

² Regarding Secretary Acheson's discussions with Foreign Secretary Eden at Rome in November, see the editorial note on the Foreign Ministers meetings at Rome and Paris, November 1951, in *Foreign Relations*, 1951, vol. III, Part I, p. 1312.

³ Document 320.

⁴ For documentation on the U.S.-U.K. preparatory talks at London in May 1950, see *Foreign Relations*, 1950, vol. III, pp. 828 ff.

⁵ For documentation on the U.S.-U.K. political-military talks during 1951, see *ibid.*, 1951, vol. IV, Part I, pp. 887 ff.