

Akaki Tsereteli State University

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**The Second Front Question in the Correspondence and
Meetings of the Leaders of the Anti-Hitler Coalition**

ABSTRACT

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the Doctor of History**

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Description of the work

Actuality of the topic – More than 60 year has passed since the end of the Second World War, which has no analogue in the human history with its scales, military and political results. There is lots of literature on the Second World War. Among them are collections of documents, official issues, memoirs of political and military figures, collective works of scientists, journalists' publications and so on. It's hard to find an analogue in world history. Yet despite this, its annals are not duly studied, that should be done in future. Then thinking of war one of the main problems that is worthy of meditating is to find out whether it was possible to out down on its duration, unprecedented scales, victims and ruins. In this regard we become especially interested in the problems connected with the opening of the Second Front. Namely: the problem of its preparation and execution in the correspondence and meetings of anti-Hitler coalition leaders, which is one of the key issues of in the history of the Second World War diplomacy. There is hardly any serious research on the Second World War, namely, on the international relations and military operations of that period, where there you can't find more or less interest to this question. Notwithstanding numerous published literature and its separate moments which deal with the history of the Second Front, there is still great interest to this question. We should note that this topic is not thoroughly studied in the historiography. There is still scientific argument on the preparation of the second Front, the time and place of its execution, military and political reasons for its hampering. Though a great number of literatures dealing with this problem enables us to analyses the essence of the basic events of the military-political history of the Second World War thoroughly and other important questions related to it.

One of the important and distinguished problems of the Second World War was the very close relationship among Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States. This cooperation began from the very day when Germany attacked the USSR and despite the diversity of ideas and conflicts continued till the end of the war. It may be stated, that the allies had never reached such a great success in the history in the sphere of unity their resources, military and diplomatic efforts and executing them, as it was managed by the leader states of anti-Hitler coalition during the whole war. We should note, that such a close relationship among these countries was conditioned by their leaders' cooperation, who were at the head of the government at the most critical moment in the world history. In this regard one becomes especially, interested in intensive correspondence and meetings among "The Great Triad", that made a profitable ground for fighting against the Nazi tyranny, despite their different political opinions besides private writings, intensive meetings among the anti-Hitler coalition leaders were also

of great importance, as well as their relations with the high-rank representatives of diplomatic corps and military headquarters. These meetings played an important role in deciding the problems related to organizing the Second Front, which dealt with planning and preparing the operation and the time and place of its realization.

Sources – The dissertation work is based on the documents related to this question. First of all, this are correspondence among the leaders of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States, the secret correspondence among the leaders of the United States and Great Britain, documents depicting relations between the USSR-England and the USSR-USA, materials on the conferences of the Second World War, Memoirs of military and political figures of the Second World War are also widely used as a historical source.

Chronological frames - The chronological frames of the work are the years of 1941-1944: From June of 1914, when consultations on opening the Second Front began, up to June-August of 1944, when in North and Southern France operations „Overlord“ and „Dragon“ were put into effect.

The subject, goals and objectives of the research – In the presented research we tried to study and evaluate the role that the leaders of anti-Hitler coalition – Great Britain, the USSR and the US played in preparing and executing the opening of the Second Front in Western Europe. The goal of the research is to show how the question of creating the Second Front was raised in the correspondence and meetings of „the Great Triad“, what obstacles the allies met in the questions of European strategy, namely on forcing La Manche, what were the main reasons that hampered intruding in Europe and was it really possible to open the Second Front until 1944.

Scientific novelty and practical importance - The work is one of the first attempts in Georgia to study an important problem of the Second World War. In this work a great attention is paid to the diplomatic activities of Great Britain, the USSR and the US leaders and governments to prepare and open the Second Front. In the presented research a special study is devoted to the so called „Balkan Project“ of the second Front, the aspects of its realization and those politically important losses that were conditioned by the allies' decision to introduce in Western Europe. Except this, there is stated in the work, that only by executing „Trans La Manche Strategy“ and ignoring Churchill's „Balkan Project“, the Western allies made a rough political mistake, that favored setting the Soviet control on Eastern Europe and springing up other communist regimes in the world, that became the reason

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of starting up „The Cold War“ in future; it is emphasized, that executing „The Mediterranean Strategy“, which foresaw including Turkey in the war, opening the Second Front in the Balkans and occupying southern and Southern-Eastern Europe by English-American troops, could hinder the soviet army from intruding upon this territories, and to some extent affect the war terms; in addition, for the first time, many facts or events on anti-Hitler coalition leaders' correspondence and meetings are showed in the Georgian language; several exceptional opinions on opening the second front are expressed.

The work has certain scientific and practical values. The ideas expressed in it and its conclusions may be helpful for persons interested in the modern history of European and American countries, namely: for students studying the period of the Second World War and for a particular part of readers.

Approbation of the work – The dissertation topic was probated at the scientific session of Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University on April 29, 2005 (Minutes N9). The work was discussed and recommended at the session of Akaki Tsereteli State University Department of Historical Sciences on December 14, 2005 (Minutes N3) and at the meeting of International Relations Studies Scientific Research Center on February 4, 2010 (Minutes N9). Separate fragments of the dissertation work have been read as reports at Akaki Tsereteli State University and Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University scientific conferences at different periods. 5 publications about the work have been published.

Historiography – Scientific research on the Second Front problem began immediately after the end of the Second World War a large part of historical literature which deals upon preparing and realizing the Second Front is published in the United States and Great Britain. Accordingly, the first researchers of the above mentioned problem were those American and British political or military figures, who directly participated in the organizing the Second Front. Among them the first mention should be given to the British Prime Minister W. Churchill, whose monograph, which consists of 6 volumes, deals with many interesting and important questions of the Second World War. In the work a great importance is given to separate aspects of the Second World War diplomatic history. English premier's correspondence and meetings with the US and the USSR leaders are extensively described, as well as with the heads of British military headquarters and representatives of the diplomatic corps. The problem of

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opening the Second Front was first described in the works of D. Eisenhower, H. Stimson, R. Sherwood, W. Leahy, G. Harrison and others. It's interesting to note that the work of an American historian Gordon Harrison „Cross-Channel Attack“, published in 1951, is the first scientific research which describes the problems of preparing and executing the second Front. We should note, that the above-mentioned authors considered the lack of the allies' powers and transportation to be the main reason of hampering opening the second Front in Europe.

The works of W. McNeill and H. Feis deal upon preparing the operation of intruding in Europe, which explain hindering the process of opening the second Front by the lack of the landing forces. The monograph of R. Beitzell is also devoted to diplomatic preparation of creating the Second Front, by which the main reason of forcing La Manche was contradictions in the policies of the US-Great Britain.

The reasons of hampering intrusion in Western Europe are discussed in the works of American researchers R. Ingersoll, M. Metloff and E. Snell, who explain lengthening the problem of opening the Second Front by the contradictions between the US-Great Britain and blame the English for that. Other American authors, e.g. R. Leighton and R. Coakley, blame the very British Prime Minister W. Churchill for lengthening the second Front opening in their book „Global Logistics and strategy, 1949-1945“. British authors M. Howard and J. Fuller try to justify English politicians' attitude towards the question of the Second Front in their works, „Grand Strategy, August 1942-September 1943“ and „The Second World War 1939-1945“, and blame Americans for having no strategically thinking.

The so called „Balkan Project“ of the Second Front is discussed in the works of historians H. Baldwin, J. Pratt and Ch. Wilmot. These researchers severely criticize F. Roosevelt's policy, praise W. Churchill's strategy and regret that they could not deploy the US-British troops in the Balkan, that would enable the allies to occupy southern and southern-Eastern Europe. An American historian M. Stoler pays attention to the political reasons of hindering intrusion in Western Europe. To his mind, the question of the second Front was being discussed in Washington as an important political problem, that was conditioned by the US ruling circles' desire to widen the scope of influence in Europe, and hence, they tried to find a strategies moment for opening the Second Front. The reasons of intruding in Europe by the allies are also discussed in the work of R. Dallek „Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign policy in 1932-1945“, which was published in 1979. The researcher thinks that it is groundless to raise the question of opening the Second Front at an early stage. According to his opinion, intruding in Europe by Americans at an early stage would be followed by a great sacrifice. And Roosevelt was interested in winning over Germany and Japan easily, and

joining the Soviet army for this reason. Besides the above mentioned authors the question of the Second Front was surveyed in the works of J. Erman, B. Liddel Hart, T. Higgins, A. Bryant, O. Bradley, H. Butcher and others.

As for the soviet historiography, here dominates the opinion that opening the Second Front was quite possible in 1942-1943, and one of the reasons of hampering the allies' intrusion in Europe was political factors. To the history of diplomatic preparation of the Second Front are devoted monographs of Soviet historians I. Undasinov, V. Kulish and I. Zemskov, in which the authors blame the knelling circles of the US and Great Britain, for lengthening intrusion in Western Europe on purpose. All other Soviet researchers hold nearly the same opinion on the Second Front in their works. Among them are M. Tolchenov, N. Jakovlev, V. Israefian, I. Maisky, O. Rzheshchevsky, V. Sekistov, and others.

We would like to pay a special attention to the monograph of a Georgian historian T. Papaskiri „The Problems of Preparing and Opening of the Second Front in the US-British Diplomacy. 1941-1943“ published in 2002. It must be noted, that this research is, in fact, the first try in Georgia to study one of the important questions of the diplomatic history of the Second World War. In the work there are expressed opinions on separate problems of the research question. Namely: when discussing the military importance of the operation „Torch“ passed by the allies in Northern Africa, the authors remarks, that in case of successful and of this operation, the allies would have more chance to continue struggle even in case if the Soviet Union were defeated and the author explains lengthening the opening of the Second Front by the low level of military preparedness of the US-English troops.

So we have reviewed aspects connected with diplomatic preparation and realization of the Second Front. On the background of diverse literature dealing with military political history of intruding the allies in Europe, we deem it interesting to raise this question once more, analyze and appreciate its separate moments.

Structure and Contents of the Work

The dissertation work consists of a preface, three chapters and a conclusion. The work is followed by the list of references and sources used in the work. In the **preface** there is given actuality of the topic, chronological frames of the work, and its goals and objectives. On the background of historical review there is emphasized the novelty that the dissertation theme brings in the survey of preparing and opening of the Second Front.

In the first chapter – „Attack of Germany on the Soviet Union and the Question of the Second Front in 1941“ there is discussed the question of

raising the problem of opening the Second Front, which became actual for the USSR from the very day of Germany's attack; there is showed the efforts of Great Britain, the USSR and the US to form an anti-Hitler coalition, that would be a favorable ground for fighting against the common enemy Germany.

After Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, the most important task that was set for the Soviet countries being under aggression, was searching for the allies and making them participate in the war against Germany, so that in the shorter term they surpass the strategic advantage that the fascist block had gained in the first days of the war. In this regard statements made by the British Prime Minister W. Churchill and the US President F. Roosevelt on helping the Soviet Union were of great importance, as they made a good ground for close operation among these states and fighting against the fascist block in future.

Immediately on starting up the war the question of opening the Second Front on European territory became of upper-most importance for the Soviet Union that would threaten strategically important centers of Germany and make its enemy redistribute its powers and resources among several fronts. Despite the fact that the idea of opening the Second Front in Europe, that meant forcing English troops in France, officially came from the British side, namely, from Lord W. Beaverbrook, the demand of the real of the Soviet government to create Second Front in Europe in 1941 with the preparation of England, was unreal, because of the poor military-material sources of this country. This was justly noted by the British premier in the correspondence with J. Stalin.

On July 12, 1941 signing the agreement on cooperation and military help between the Soviet Union and Great Britain was the first serious step forward for creating anti-Hitler coalition. Signing parts of the agreement took it as their duty to: 1) help each other; 2) not having negotiations, putting an agreement, or peace treaties without each others' consent.

The visit of the US President's private representative H. Hopkins in Moscow at the end of July 1941 was also of great importance, which had meetings with J. Stalin and high-rank officials of the Soviet government. This visit made the American diplomat, who had been assigned to find out what provisions the USSR needed to fight a war, obviously believe in fighting efficiency of the last. In spite of the fact that no concrete decisions were made on helping the Soviet Union at the meetings with the President's representative in Moscow, it may be said that H. Hopkins' visit was a completely new stage in the relations of the US, Great Britain and the USSR.

On the way of obviating an anti-Hitler coalition, the meeting between the US President F. Roosevelt and England's Prime Minister W. Churchill in Argentina, was one more step forward, which took part in August 1941. At the

conference the so called „Atlantic Charter“ was made, which stated the US and Great Britain's common goals in the Second World War. „The Atlantic Charter“ was mainly of declarative character and juridical made no obligations for formally neutral country the United States of America. Though it was clear from the sixth paragraph of the document on final annihilation of the Nazi tyranny, that the United States would not take the duty of only being a watchdog of the events taking place in Europe and if needed would interfere in the war against Germany together with other anti-Hitler powers.

On December 7, 1941 when Japan attacked on the United States, a new stage in the Second World War began. Drawing the US into the war completely changed the balance of powers. Immediately after announcing war against Japan the strategies of the White House demanded from F. Roosevelt to take the same decisions concerning Germany and Italy. Though Roosevelt did not share their idea. The president preferred to wait until Hitler and Mussolini would announce the war with the US themselves. Such kind of an action from Roosevelt was conditioned by the President's doubt that announcing war with these countries from the Congress would have no perspectives. One more reason, defining Roosevelt's policy, was that according to the information that president was aware of, if Japan started military activities against the USA, Germany would immediately declare war to the USA. On the same day Roosevelt asked the Congress to announce war with these countries, his request was satisfied.

After Pearl Harbor, in the US leaders there rose a new question, who was to be taken as the first enemy, Germany or Japan. For President Roosevelt and his team the main goal was to defeat Germany and after that rearrange all their forces against Japan. Against the US official policy, there was a serious opposition which regarded Japan as the US' first enemy. Among them were the US marine militaries with admiral E. King in head of them. We have to take into account that the main part of the US population shared the same political position. Despite the fact, that among the US leaders most of them were against Germany than against Japan, it was clearly shown that „Anti Japans“ was serious political part and Roosevelt was made to take them into account. Also as Germany declared war against the US it gave Roosevelt opportunity to act independently which helped him to adopt right strategies for Europe.

US involvement into the war basically changed England's hopeless position and made it rearrange its forces for new war strategies. In the middle of December 1941 Great Britain's Prime Minister W. Churchill had formed new plans of war making in memorandum. This memorandum has three parts: the first was about war action in Atlantic Front, the second was about war action in the Pacific Ocean, and the third one was about war action in

1943. In the first part Great Britain's Prime Minister mentioned main plans for US and Great Britain's to occupy whole France colonies in North-West Africa and make control on it by 1942. Also whole North Africa was intended to be under control of Great Britain, Churchill thought it would give English opportunity to have outlets from Mediterranean Sea to Levant and Suez channel. This strategy made the US protect Great Britain from Mediterranean Sea attack from Germany and not take into account USSR self protection, for which effective assistance would be only if the West began wide range of war operations. The second part of the memorandum was about the problem of regaining US-British influence on seas. To reach these goals and main strategy Great Britain's Prime Minister intended to create efficient navy in Pacific Ocean for 1942, which must be more powerful than its rivals. As for the third part of memorandum it was about invasions in Europe in 1943, but it would be possible only if 1) 1942 years operations in Pacific and Atlantic Ocean would be successful; 2) USA and Great Britain would achieve whole superiority in Pacific Ocean and regained their lost territories; 3) British Islands would be extremely protected from enemies possible invasion; 4) Whole coasts of West and North Africa from Dakar to Suez Channel, also Levant coasts till Turkey's border would be under USA and Great Britain's control; 5) USSR condition would be stronger; 6) Great Britain and USA would have better control over Italy and Sicily. But all those in Churchill's opinion, was not the end of war. War in Europe had to finish Germany's army destruction or there must have been crash inside Germany's policy. As Great Britain's Prime Minister made remarks, for all those allies had to be prepared for liberation of Germany's conquered West and South Europe, to stroke army in profitable places, to organize enslaved people make rebel. If allied forces arranged continuous or simultaneous transferring of soldiers, for example in Norway, Denmark, Holland and in Belgium, also in France La Manche and in Atlantic coasts, also in Italy and The Balkans, German garrisons would not make oppose against rebelled people, in Churchill's opinion.

Those landing operations had to take part armored and mechanized formations, which would be landed not in ports but in coasts, from specially made landing barges or from Ocean ships. For operation to be successful air and sea advantage was main to achieve, also USA and Great Britain have to bomb Germany's territory intensively. This operation would need one million six hundred thousand people from which 40 armored division.

Washington Conference (December 22, 1941-January 14, 1942) played a vital role in the formation of anti-Hitler Coalition, based on the main theses concerning military campaign presented in W. Churchill memorandum on December 1941. The main question discussed at the conference was to work out the strategy for military activities by the USA and Great Britain.

Despite the difficulties taking place in the Pacific Ocean, the leaders of the two countries realized the true picture of the current events and considered them to be less important compared with the European ones. This kind of policy by Roosevelt and Churchill greatly affected one of the most important decisions made at the conference. It referred to declaring Germany as the principal opponent. One more important event having taken place at the Washington conference was „the United Nations Declaration“ passed by 26 countries on January 1, 1942. The document played a vital role in strengthening internal relations within Anti-Hitler forces and in working out further strategy against fascist block.

In the second chapter – „1942 Year: Diplomatic Affairs Made in Order to Strengthen Anti-Hitler Coalition“ refers to Washington Conference II, with its main task to work out a joint strategic plan for England and the USA about war campaign. The same chapter comprises some data about V. Molotov, the head of the Soviet Union Foreign Office, visiting Great Britain and W. Churchill, the Prime Minister of Great Britain visiting Moscow, which assisted greatly to strengthen anti-Hitler Coalition.

At the beginning of 1942 the question of creating own military strategy for Europe was being discussed in Washington. The Americans were well aware of the fact that in case the Soviet Union had been defeated, English and American troops would have had to go through hard struggle in Europe. On March 1942 the leaders of the USA Army Headquarters began to prepare for the main plan, concerning military activities to be carried out in Europe. Possible attacks from Norway, Spain, the Mediterranean Sea and France on Germany were discussed. Finally the United Committee of the USA Army Headquarters made a decision to gather its military forces on the British Isles. President Roosevelt approved this decision and gen. G. Marshall and H. Hopkins were sent to London to discuss this matter.

On April 1942 G. Marshall and H. Hopkins had been negotiating with their British colleagues about their joint English-American plan concerning military activities for a week. The Americans managed to make England approve their plan. The British supported the idea of carrying out a big operation in West Europe in 1943 by the English-American troops (The operation „Roundup“), though they had some fears about another operation „Sledgehammer“ at first, which was to be made in 1942. The British didn't want to take much responsibility on them as the operation was to be implemented mainly by them. However W. Churchill had to agree on the American plan fearing that the USA might consider the Pacific Ocean more important. At the meeting held on April 14, the British Prime minister publicly approved the American plan defining it as the classical model of military acts. By this statement W. Churchill mint to concentrate forces

against the principle enemy which would have been maintained only in case the USA admitted the European military activities being of a major importance.

V. Molotov's, the head of the Soviet Union Foreign Affairs, Visits to the USA and England were very important for strengthening anti-Hitler Coalition. During Negotiations with W. Churchill in London the Soviet Delegation raised the question of the allied forces entering Europe in 1942. In return to this proposal the English Prime Minister informed the Soviet representatives that not having enough landing means would make it difficult to carry out this plan. Eventually the two sides agreed on discussing this question after Molotov's returning from Washington to London. On May 26 during Molotov's stay in London on alliance treaty was signed between the Soviet Union and Great Britain. The treaty stated that the two countries would have to assist each other during the war time and they were not allowed to have talks with enemies without making the other be aware of it.

V. Molotov raised the question of opening the Second Front while visiting the USA President too. Roosevelt informed the head of the Soviet Foreign Office that lackage of tonnage would make it impossible to enter Europe. In addition he also stated that the USA was working on producing special landing ships. According to his calculations all this preparations had to be finished by 1943. As far as Roosevelt was concerned this would become possible only in case the USA stopped assisting the Soviet Union witching Lend-Lease agreement and thus to use additional tonnage for throwing American forces to the British Isles.

At the end of Molotov's visit the two countries agreed on urgent talks to be held for the purpose of opening the second front in Europe by 1942. This agreement was recorded in the joint communiqué between the Soviet Union and the USA. It must also be mentioned that by this Roosevelt caused some difficulties to the English Prime Minister as they had to issue two identical documents in London and Washington on the same day. V. Molotov made the English corrects several items in it. However, this step had its advantages too. Churchill thought that this public confession might have helped them to play a trick on Germany and make the Germans leave as many troops in the west as possible in order to resist the possible attack from the allied forces. However the English Prime Minister found it reasonable to warn the Soviet Union that it would be impossible to implement this operation by 1942.

From June 19-25 1942 a meeting was held in Washington between the American and British leaders. During the meeting with Roosevelt, Churchill doubted about a possible failure in entering Europe by September 1942 and the Cabinet confirmed his doubts. Above all, the British Government feared that conducting the operation „Sledgehammer“ in 1942 would make it

difficult to implement the operation planned for 1943. In this situation the only wise solution to be found would be an operation in North Africa. (The operation „Gymnast“) though the Americans would possibly object to it. They thought that it would interfere with the success of the operation to be made in 1943. This was confirmed by the statement made by the united committee of the leaders of the USA Army Headquarters disapproving the operation „Gymnast“. However the news about England's failure in Libya made them look through the statement once again. Tobruk Catastrophe, when 33000 English soldiers were captured by the Germans, made Churchill even more fearful about entering France. After this fact the USA had to change its opinion and to take African question more seriously as it was evident the Germans would try to occupy Egypt too. Finally the decision was made about making urgent plans concerning the „Gymnast“. In spite of it the British Prime Minister couldn't manage to make the Americans agree on entering the North Africa. On the other hand it was also obvious that the USA would possibly fail in making the British support the operation „Sledgehammer“ in 1942. All these made Churchill hope that they would soon make the operation „Gymnast“. The final decision, concerning where to carry out military activities in 1942, was made at the meeting of the USA and English delegations in London at the end of July. It must also be mentioned that owing to deep difference of opinion between the two: sides couldn't manage to agree and the talks ended in deadlock. The American delegation asked for further instructions from President Roosevelt. The President demanded to omit the „Sledgehammer“ from the agenda and thus to maintain the possibility to take part in military actions against Germany in 1942. At the meeting, held on July 24 between the leaders of the two countries military headquarters, the Americans suggested a new plan. According to it the operation „Roundup“ had to be under preparatory work until the possibility of carrying it out existed. All these facts were dependent of the situation on the front between the Soviet Union and Germany. In case the Soviet Union had suffered from the attacks from Germany, the USA and Great Britain would have to throw their landing forces to the North-West of Africa as the operation of entering Europe in 1943 would have become unrealizable. Both to Churchill and the leaders of the English military headquarters accepted this proposal. After making the final agreement on July 24 President Roosevelt asked the USA Army Headquarters to prepare the operation „Torch“, (Former the „Gymnast“), in spite of the situation on the East front.

After making this decision British Prime Minister W. Churchill visited Moscow in order to consider details of the operations to be made in 1942. During the meeting with I. Stalin he used to emphasize the unreason ability of this forcing La Manche in 1942 and tried to persuade him in advantages of the operation in the North Africa. Stalin approved this plan from its strategic

side but doubted about its political aspects. Finally the Soviet Leader had to agree on Churchill's suggestion to postpone opening the second front. On the other hand, Churchill became confident of the Soviet Union being capable of carrying out military activities and thus hoped to succeed in realization of the African project.

In the third Chapter – „The European Strategy of the USA and Great Britain before Opening the Second Front“, consisting of two units: „From Casablanca to Tehran“ and „The Final success of Trans La Manche Strategy – the operations „Overlord“ and „Dragoon“, refer to Casablanca, Washington III, Quebec, Moscow and Tehran conferences. In the same chapters you can also find reviews of military actions in the North Africa, between the Soviet Union and Germany and on the Mediterranean fronts.

After the successful operation in the North Africa the leaders of the USA and Great Britain had to consider their future joint military strategy. For this purpose a meeting was held between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill in Casablanca. At Casablanca Conference (January 14-24, 1943) after a ten-day discussion the leaders of the united headquarters presented their decision about the war campaign to be conducted in 1943. This statement referred to the military activities to be carried out in the Mediterranean. It was decided to occupy Sicily and thus to provide safety of communications in the Region and thus to cause more pressure on Italy. Above all, implementing this operation intended to create the surroundings preventing Turkey from keeping itself neutral. The next part of the report was about the operations planned to be made from Britain. It referred to air attacks on German military centers, to concentration of allied forces on the British Isles in readiness for penetrating the continent at any time in case Germany's failure. Judging by the fact that in 1943 the military failure of Germany was hard to predict, it is reasonable to consider this statement as made in order to please the Soviet Union.

In Spring 1943, the armed forces of the USA and Great Britain began to attack German-Italian troops in the North Africa and the latter's were badly defeated in the middle of May; after the Germans lost control over the North Africa they now began to face another threat from the West Europe as well as from the south, while their major ally was suffering from the attacks from England and the USA. This made the USA and Great Britain work out further prospective together. For this purpose a meeting was held between Churchill and Roosevelt in Washington on May 12, 1943. At the conference (May 12-15) W. Churchill announced about their intention to implement military actions in Italy and thus to keep the allied forces active until the operation in La Manche. As for the plan of entering Europe, the Prime Minister considered it more reasonable to postpone until 1944. President

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Roosevelt approved this proposal. Instead he considered it unrealistic the extension of the hostilities from the USA and Great Britain side after occupation of Sicily. He also intended to widen military actions in the Mediterranean Sea after occupying Sicily. According to Roosevelt calculation this should assist to keep German troops busy and thus to allow them fight on other fronts. Finally the two sides could come to an agreement. Forcing La Manche was considered to be of the major importance and it was to have been carried out by May 1, 1944.

As for the military action held in the Mediterranean – the Commander-in-chief General D. Eisenhower of the allies was charged with the order to work out a more large scale plan than occupying Sicily for the case if executing the above mentioned operation would not be followed by capitulation of Italy.

The President of the USA F. Roosevelt announced J. Stalin about the decision of Washington. Stalin, being dissatisfied by the decision made by the leaders of the allies expressed his protest in letters to Roosevelt and Churchill. Besides this the Soviet commander made the diplomatic demarche and deported the soviet ambassadors from the US and Great Britain. It should be noted that not keeping the promise of opening the Second Front in 1942-1943 from the leaders of the US and England caused a serious disagreement among the allies and even jeopardized the unity of anti-Hitler Coalition.

On July 10, 1943 the US and Great Britain began to deploy their troops in Sicily. (The operation „Husky“) The allies' attacks were quick and successful. After a month's fights English-American troops gained a complete control over Sicily. Simultaneously more large-scale military actions were being conducted at the German-Soviet front than in the operation conducted in the Mediterranean district. As a result of effective and successful attacks from the Soviet troops Germans were severely defeated in the sites of Kursk. After winning the fights in Kursk the strategic initiative was in the hands of the Soviet Army at the Eastern Front, which successfully continued to demolish the German military machine.

In order to determine further military actions of the allies it became necessary to arrange one more meeting between F. Roosevelt and W. Churchill. The conference was going in Quebec from August 14- 24, in 1943. It is noteworthy, that at the conference the English tried to convince Americans in the preference of their so called „Italian-Balkan“ project, which foresaw moving military actions in the Balkans after occupying Italy. In difference with English, Americans believed that the most effective way of defeating Germans was to intrude in France; in addition, coming from the strategic interest of the US, it was more important for them to occupy the regions of Ruhr and Saar of Germany, than occupying the Balkans.

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Finally, at the Quebec conference, President Roosevelt managed to defend „Overlord“ (A new code naming of intruding the allied troops in North France) and resist moving military actions in the Balkans. Besides, at Quebec the US president convinced Churchill to intrude English-American forces in Southern France (The operation „Anvil“). Great Britain's Prime Minister couldn't ensure Roosevelt in his plans advantages, but decisions made at the conference about the war actions in Italy filled him with a hope to realize the „Balkan Project“. On August 24, the conference approved allies' headquarters leaders' decision to announce about 1943-1944 strategies to be taken into action. According to this announcement in Western Europe another type of actions were planned: 1) Air attack and bombing Germany; 2) To realize operation „Overlord“ as an allies' main military action on May 1, 1944; 3) If La Manche forcing would be impossible, to change „Overlord“ with its alternative operation named „Jupiter“ (coded name of military invasion to Norway); 4) Prepare and make a three step war action in Italy, the first step – to disconnect Italy from war and make military bases in Rome region, the second step – to invade Sardinia and Corsica, and the third step – to make pressure on German army based in northern Italy; 5) Allies' military invasion in Southern France; 6) If Germans crashed, to land army in continent (The operation „Rankin“) and 7) To make minor actions in the Balkans which were considered as little divers-landing groups actions, guerillas supply from air and from sea and bombing main strategic places.

After the end of conference, US President and Great Britain's Prime Minister announced to USSR heads their decisions made in Quebec. Allies leaders in their joint letter, about 1943-1944 war taking actions, announced that they would continue German bombing to force La Manche and would make American military concentration in Great Britain's islands. Also arrest Italy, Corsica and Sardinia which were used as an allies' bases against Germany. But in the Balkans they would make limited operations. It must be announced that in this letter nothing was said about exact time of the Second Front opening in Europe. USSR leader left this letter without response.

At that time at the beginning of September 1943 the US and Great Britain made wide range of attacks on Mediterranean Sea region. After September 3, when the peace treaty was signed with Italy, allied armies invaded southern Italy and began moving to Naples direction. Italy announced capitulation on September 8. Such development of situation gave stimulus to Churchill to think once more about realizing the Balkan Strategy plan. At that time his attention was attracted to Dodecanese Islands (Rhodes, Leros, Cos, Simi, Stampalia etc.). To his mind, if they invaded those islands, which had their air and sea military bases and had strategic meaning, allies would control Aegean Sea's whole territory. All these, in Churchill's opinion

would made serious effect to Turkey whose position was crucial for Great Britain's Prime Minister to carry out the „Balkan Project“.

At the beginning of September Great Britain's Prime Minister visited Washington to share his opinion with Roosevelt. US president agreed and liked the plan to invade Dodecanese Islands, this plan was also supported by allies joint headquarters. After that England began war action in Aegean Sea on September 10. At first they invaded some Islands, exactly Leros, and Cos, but Germans powerful opposition defeated them to occupy Rhodes. If they couldn't occupy this island their success had no meaning. For this reason Great Britain's Prime Minister asked for additional forces to D. Eisenhower on September 25, he asked the same to President Roosevelt on October 7. In the letter to US President Churchill expressed his feeling about hard situation in Aegean Sea which caused islands counter-attacks from Germany. If the situation would go on like this it would affect the success of Italian plan. Because Apennine and Balkan peninsulas were connected very close to each other both from military and political viewpoints and made the same war making strategies. In Churchill's opinion it was reason for Germans to avoid possible unwanted events in the Balkans, they had to keep Dodecanese islands. As the thought if allies went on the war making in the region, it could cause chain reaction to the Balkan countries, in Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and in Yugoslavia. It was not excluded that such development of events would involve Turkey into War, all these would make it easier for allies to make war actions in Italy. As for war actions in the Balkan Peninsula, Churchill announced that he was going to do this not with allied forces, but with „Commandos“ troops and agents, so that to support guerilla attacks there. Great Britain's Prime Minister hoped that such types of actions would give allies' possibility to succeed. With all these he wanted to invade Rhodes and Dodecanese other islands, which had to be taken into action if La Manche forcing demanded landing ships.

It can be said that Roosevelt's answer was unexpected for English Prime Minister, as he had almost declared that he wouldn't help English. In the letter to Prime Minister US President announced that he didn't want to plan such operations which would oppose Italian war campaigns' fast and successful development. Besides, such kind of replacement in allies militaries and ammunition was inadmissible. Such point of view of president was supported by US headquarters. This answer from US president had troubled English Prime Minister. Great Britain's Prime Minister was resented because the plan to invade Dodecanese Islands, which was approved by US government and headquarters, had to be done by himself without any help from the US. Also he took US President's arguments as inconvincible as these operations would oppose „Overlord“ s' realization. Churchill once more applied to Roosevelt to invade Rhodes on October 8. In the Answering

letter he announced that the operation to invade Rhodes and Dodecanese Islands needed a lot of recourses from allies' side. All these would cause forces to detach from Italy front or cancel forcing La Manche, and it was unacceptable. Besides, US President's mind they would be more successful if they took war attacks in the north of Rome and threatened Balkan rather than by risky landing operations in Dodecanese islands. At last England didn't get any help from the USA to keep Rhodes and Dodecanese islands and German air and landing forces gained control. Such development of events troubled Churchill's Balkan Plans realization. To Great Britain's Prime Minister's mind exactly Aegean Sea failure was the main reason for Turkey's position, which had refused to give possibility to allies to use his airports and to involve into war against Germany in Autumn of 1943. But despite all these Churchill was going to fight to realize his Balkan Plan.

At Moscow Conference of October 19-30, 1943 three countries' foreign departments leaders, were present: from USSR - M. Molotov, from USA - C. Hull and from Great Britain - A. Eden. Great Britain's Prime Minister tried to learn USSR's point of view about Balkan region from his foreign minister. He was interested if USSR would be backed by allies in war attacks in Aegean Sea, also Turkey's involvement into war and opening Dardanelle and Bosphorus strait opening to give possibility to English army to help USSR army with their naval and mercantile marine ships.

Great Britain's Prime Minister was also keen to know how far was the USSR interested in letting the USA and English ships freedom to sail to Black Sea to supply allies' other members such as Turkey. Also he wanted to clear up if would be acceptable for USSR to take such kind of activity from allies or would they still prefer to invade France. It must be noted that USSR leaders, who were interested in opening the Second Front in the Balkans at the beginning of the war, now refused such kind of action and said that it was inexpedient and said that only acceptable war operation would be La Manche forcing. Besides at Moscow conference the USSR side asked for confirmation from the US and Great Britain to invade North France in Spring 1944. In answer to this, General H. Ismay announced with the name of allies that La Manche forcing would be possible only if climate would be suitable at the moment of invasion in North France, it would cause to limit German air activity and wouldn't place more than 12 divisions in continent and when US and Great Britain's joint army would cross the canal at first 2 months Germans should not have opportunity to place more 15 divisions in this region. At this conference H. Ismay and US delegate J. Din also didn't said the exact time of opening the Second Front. On October 27, Great Britain's Foreign Minister A. Eden at the meeting with Soviet Government said that it would never realize forcing La Manche in 1944. He said that the reason for that was that Italian front had troubled situation and by Churchill's request he

gave H. Alexander's announcement to Stalin, which said that if allied militaries failed to succeed in Apennine, it would endanger the invasion of North France. It is interesting to note that with the point of view of Great Britain's Prime Minister, the amount of English-American troops on Italian front didn't gave them opportunity to fulfill their aims. For this reason, in the letter of foreign ministry in Moscow, Great Britain's Prime Minister wrote that he took operation "Overlord" as an inexpedient and said that it could hinder the war actions in Italy and threaten allies' Balkan plan. Besides to his mind US and Great Britain's joint army had to make La Manche forcing only in case of German crash. In other cases forces intended for "Overlord" would not be enough to make opposition to rivals. English Prime Minister said that it wasn't refusal of "Overlord" which had to be the main operation for the 1944, he thought it necessary to postpone La Manche forcing till July, to have allies' forces possibility to invade the capital of Italy. At the end of Moscow conference, where a lot of issues were discussed, US and Great Britain's foreign leaders confirmed to USSR decisions made by F. Roosevelt and W. Churchill on opening the Second Front in Spring 1944. But as C. Hull and A. Eden announced at the moment of forcing La Manche they had to foresee General H. Ismay's terms. It is noticeable that decisions made at this conference brought new approaches to anti-Hitler coalition to join, which created good precondition for the three countries' leaders to make summit meeting, and at last the place was taken for this meeting and it was Tehran.

To define the time and place of opening the Second front in Europe Tehran Conference (November 28-December 1, 1943) was of great importance, in which besides the heads of the USA, Great Britain and the USSR, the leaders of foreign office, political and military counselors of three countries participated. The agreements reached at Tehran Conference by the leaders of the US, Great Britain and the USSR governments, finally determined the time and place of opening the Second Front in Europe. By the decision of the summit, May of 1944 was announced as the date of beginning "Overlord". Besides, in parallel with La Manche forcing, it was planned to conduct landing operations in southern France. We should note that despite his attempts at Tehran Conference Churchill could not convince F. Roosevelt in realizing the so called "Balkan Strategy", who preferred to support La Manche forcing operation because of the strategic interests of the USA. It should be said that such kind of a position from Roosevelt was conditioned by the weak influence of the USA in the Balkans. Just for that the US President was less interested in this region and preferred to occupy the regions of Ruhr and Saar, and it would be possible by intruding in Europe. In addition, participating of the Soviet Union in the war against Japan was very important for the US President, without the help of which, as he believed, it would be impossible to gain quick and easy victory over Japan. After

the USA President F. Roosevelt to back the USSR played a great role. In our opinion this made a good basis to fight against the common rival – Germany, and for close collaboration in future.

2. From the very beginning of the war it was very actual for the USSR to create the Second Front which would threaten German strategic centres and make the rivals split their forces and resources among different fronts. Despite the fact that the idea of creating the Second Front in Europe, which meant moving the English troops into France, officially came from Great Britain, namely, from Lord W. Beaverbrook, the Soviet Union's leader's request to create the Second Front in Europe with the help of England by the year of 1941 was unreal due to poor material and military resources of this country. It was justly noted by British Prime-Minister W. Churchill in his correspondence with J. Stalin.

3. The main theses of memorandum presented by W. Churchill in December 1941 about the plans of executing military campaigns, became the basis of the issues to be discussed at the conference between the USA and Great Britain in Washington. The main task was working out joint strategic plan of executing English-American military actions. It should be noticed that despite the tense situation in the Pacific region, the leaders of both countries were realistic about the existing situation and appreciated this military spectacle as second rate in comparison with Europe. In our opinion, F. Roosevelt's and W. Churchill's such position conditioned the most important decision made at the conference – declaring Germany as the main rival. One more significant event at Washington conference on January 1st, 1942, where 26 countries took part, was adopting the called „Declaration of the United Nations“. This declaration was of great value for strengthening relationships among anti-Hitler forces and fighting the Fascist block.

4. During the visit of the Soviet Union's Commissar for Foreign Affairs V. Molotov to Washington, in May, 1942, President F. Roosevelt promised him that he would open the Second Front by 1942, which was proved by the Communiqué between the USA and the USSR. Similar agreement was made with Great Britain as well during V. Molotov's visit to London. Coming out from the fact that by 1942 it was impossible to intrude into Europe successfully due to a number of reasons, we may think that F. Roosevelt's and W. Churchill's promise was conditioned by their wish to support the Soviet Union.

5. Despite the promises of British Prime-Minister and USA President made to the Soviet Leader on opening the Second Front in Europe by 1943, the leaders of allies considered it advisable to postpone forcing La Manche until 1944. This decision became familiar to J. Stalin after Washington Conference by F. Roosevelt's letter. Displeased by this fact J. Stalin appealed to the leaders of allies by protesting letters. Besides the Soviet leader applied

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to diplomatic demarche and called away Soviet ambassadors M. Litvinov and I. Maisky from the USA and Great Britain. F. Roosevelt's and W. Churchill's failure to keep their promise on opening the Second Front in 1942-1943, caused a serious disagreement among the allies and threatened the unity of anti-Hitler coalition.

6. Decisions made at Quebec Conference by F. Roosevelt and W. Churchill about opening the Second Front in Western Europe by the spring of 1944 were of great importance. These were proved at the three-sided meeting in Tehran. At this conference the heads of the USA, Great Britain and the Soviet Union finally agreed on the date and place of opening the Second Front in Europe. Though he tried hard, W. Churchill could not persuade F. Roosevelt on realizing the so called Balkan Strategy. At last, coming out from the interest of the USA, the later supported forcing La Manche. It should be noticed that F. Roosevelt's such position was conditioned by the weak influence of the USA President showed little interest in the above-mentioned region and preferred to occupy the districts of Ruhr and Saar. Which would be possible by intruding into Western Europe. Besides, it was very important for F. Roosevelt to draw the Soviet Union into the war against Japan. Otherwise, as he thought, it was impossible to defeat Japan quickly and easily. After receiving a guarantee from J. Stalin to participate in the war against Japan, F. Roosevelt fixed on „Overlord“. To our mind, it was a rude political mistake that the USA President supported only „Trans La Manche Strategy“ and ignoring W. Churchill's „Balkan Project“, as it enabled the Soviet Union to „redden“ the Eastern Europe and have an influence on the above-mentioned region. We think that if F. Roosevelt had supported W. Churchill's plan at the Tehran Conference, it could have been possible to hinder the Soviet troops from invading the Balkans and reduce the terms of war.

7. Realizing the operations of „Overlord“ and „Dragoon“ in Northern and Southern France on June 6 and August 15, 1944, was the proof of the victory of American strategy of military actions. Intruding into Western Europe successfully made Germany's condition worse and finally hastened its crash. Although, realizing only these operations and ignoring the so called „Mediterranean Strategy“, which meant drawing Turkey into the war, opening the Second Front and occupying the southern and eastern parts of Europe by English-American troops, was not considerate to our mind, neither from the strategic nor from the political point of view.

8. In our opinion postponing the operation of intruding into Western Europe until 1944, was conditioned by a number of reasons. Among them was lack of landing forces, that was conditioned by their improper dissemination on different fronts; by the military state of Germany, which was still firm by 1943; by disagreement between the USA and Great Britain.

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In relation with hindering the opening of the Second Front, political factors should also be given a notice, which, as we think, often determined the British strategy of war.

The main theses of the dissertation are issued in the following publication:

1. The Problem of the Second Front from Casablanca to „Overlord“ (1943-1944). Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University. The Works of Young Scientists association at II Republican scientific conference, Kutaisi, 2004, p., 271-274;
2. USA-Great Britain Relations and the Political Military Reasons for the Delay in Opening the Second Front, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *Journal of American Studies* III, Tbilisi, 2005, p., 152-158, 625;
3. The Problems of Second Front in 1941 and First Steps on the Way to Anti-Hitler Coalition. Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University. The series of Social and Economic sciences. Works. V. 3(37), Kutaisi, 2005, p., 36-43;
4. Molotov Visiting the U.S.A. in 1942. Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. *Journal of American Studies* IV, Tbilisi, 2006, p., 79-83, 500;
5. The Visit of Great Britain Prime Minister W. Churchill in the Soviet Union in 1942. Periodical scientific journal „Intellect“ №3 (26), Tbilisi, 2006, p., 53-55.