ISAIAH BERLIN ONLINE

Gavriel Cohen's Conversations with Isaiah Berlin: No. 28

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Selected topics

IB's heroes (contd)
Heroes and geniuses (Nijinsky, Freud, Stravinsky; not E. M. Forster); greatness (Schnabel, Weizmann, Stalin, Hitler, Lenin, Napoleon)
Sainthood: Herbert Hart up to a point
Sakharov, Herzen
Dislike of Churchill (too brutal); lunch with Churchill; Tukhachevsky; the Astors
Other meetings with Churchill; Edward Halifax
Honorarium from Churchill; Churchill saved us and gave us Palestine
Roosevelt; Alice Longworth
The war viewed from Washington
Writing to his parents
'Please suggest synonyms for "Flourishing"'
IB falls ill in Ireland on return to US; *Evening Standard* article
IB in New York hospital; recuperation with Weizmann
Churchill and Eden on IB's dispatches
Dick Law
Partition of Palestine; Robin Hankey
Halifax's character
Ronald Campbell; F. R. Hoyer Millar; John Foster; Michael Wright; William Hayter; J. P. Summerscale; Paul Gore-Booth; John Russell; Chip Bohlen; George Kennan
Gladwyn Jebb requests report on Walter Lippmann

Lippmann's character; hated being a Jew; IB's report on him; IB refuses Halifax's instruction to alter report; a matter of emphasis

Side A

GC January the 21st or the 22nd. Saturday the 20th, actually. Now let's start. All right. Now, last time …

IB Something much worse is happening, let me tell you. This was 6 June, which is my real birthday. A dinner had been given, here, by the University. A nightmare.

GC You said that you were a hero-worshipper.

IB I did. I forgot … Did I add …? Who did I not add? I added …

GC We'll come to the list again (IB All right), but do you distinguish between those whom you met and those whom you didn't meet? Because the list that you gave me, the majority of [?] of whom you met.

IB That is correct. But I began worshipping them before I met them, sometimes. Toscanini I met for ten minutes.

GC Roosevelt you haven't …?

IB Never. Never seen.

GC But all the others – Virginia Woolf, did you …?

IB Yes. No, I didn't know her well. I met her, certainly. But my feelings were there before I met …. When I met her, I was – trembled when I met her, for that reason.

GC What's hero-worship, when you use the term, in your case?

IB It's difficult to say. It's something to do with – my approach on the whole, for better or for worse, is moral. Comes from Russia, perhaps. In that category Russian Jews in general have a certain tendency to use moral categories, even when they are scoundrels. Therefore, the people who I admire have a combination of unimpeachable integrity, although not always, as I shall point out in a second, with capacity for doing something, for causing – no, for creating something which in some sense indicates that they possess powers beyond those of even gifted people, in such a way that it is impossible to understand how they achieve it, although the actual achievement is always extremely simple, not complicated. I don't know if I told you that, but I have a definition of genius which I once used. I used it in a letter[1] to Leonard Woolf, about his wife, long after she was dead. Nijinsky, the Russian ballet dancer, was once asked how he managed to leap so high. He said, 'Oh, that's relatively simple. You see, most people, when they jump, come down immediately. But why shouldn't one linger a little?' The point is, we none of us know how one lingers – what one does. It's like people who can't move their ears. Some people can move their ears, some people can't. Those who can't don't know what it is that they fail to do, how to do it. It's not a question of being too difficult. It's a question of not knowing how to begin – what the method is; they can't understand the method. It can't

[1] In fact in **a contribution to 'Books of the Year'**, on Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary*, ed. Leonard Woolf (London, 1953), *Sunday Times*, 20 December 1953, 6. Leonard Woolf expressed his appreciation, and in a letter of 29 December IB wrote to LW of his meetings with VW: 'I met her three times in all, and have never had any experience to compare with it – I thought her the most beautiful and the most divinely endowed human being I had ever met in my life, and I think so still. And while, of course, I never knew her – these meetings did, in fact, alter my ideas about things and persons for good.' See E 416.

be explained to them. That is genius. Greatness is something different. My heroes come in both categories, that's the point. Greatness, in public life, means the capacity to cause events to happen in some important field of human endeavour which would have been rightly judged to be improbable if these people had not deliberately tried to produce it. [?] In my case, they have to have a combination of a – I'll tell you: integrity is not absolutely essential. In Toscanini's case, yes. Virginia Woolf, yes. Edmund Wilson, yes.

GC Edmund Wilson [?].

IB Although he talked terrible nonsense, he attacked people he didn't like, praised people he liked. But still, in the end, he told the truth as he saw it. And he had these great gifts. I thought he was a marvellous critic, and he had genius. Let me see, who else did I mention to you? Who else among …? Schnabel, perhaps, up to a point, yes. Integrity was total. I'm trying to think. Men of action. Churchill, Weizmann. The integrity not perfect. Why then are they heroes as well as great men? Stalin is also a great man according to me. Great men can be appalling scoundrels. (GC Evil) Evil, yes. Total evil. Hitler was a great man, for me. It's a curious definition. I can't keep it out, because I really mean that. I mean people who change history in unpredictable ways, with deliberate action. That's not what most people call great. But I do. Such as historical personages.

GC Lenin.

IB Certainly. Napoleon, certainly. Not attractive. Why them? Because what they did, in this case, was, in my opinion, spiritually and morally desirable. Highly desirable. The alternative …

GC If I [?] as against the other [?]…

IB Yes. In other words, the end is good. Good and even great. When the end is good, even though the means may not have reflected perfect integrity. But in the case of the others, in the case of the artists and people, their absolute integrity is a *sine qua non* as far as I'm concerned. Plus – Nijinsky test – plus the fact that they rise above ground, in ways in which people who try to imitate cannot do. It's not a difference of degree, but of kind. There aren't many people like that. E. M. Forster, not a genius.

GC Yes.

IB Freud has a [?] genius.

GC And him you didn't admire.

IB No, I didn't really like him.

GC That's why I ask …

IB I feel drawn to them personally. There must be something about their work which engages me morally and aesthetically. And in Weizmann and Churchill's case, morally and politically. But always morally. I can't hero-worship people whom I regard as amoral, let alone immoral.

GC Can you – have you got any example of somebody whom you admired and then, because of being immoral, you cease to admire?

IB Stravinsky for example, morally – not very moral, [?], that's just integrity, yes. And personally, not. But as a genius, certainly. I think I admire genius as such, in the arts. I don't know where else it obtains. In life I don't know. I have never met a saint.

GC Pardon?

IB I never met somebody whom I regarded as a real saint.

GC Though sometimes you call Herbert saint.

IB Saintly.

GC Saintly, yes; saintly, sure.

IB He has his defects.

GC I'm sure.

IB When he became upset about his reputation being completely destroyed by Jenifer's goings-on, it was natural and human and absolutely right, but not saintly. Saints don't care about their reputations. Herbert is not vain, but still he feels he is somebody, and he is.

GC Generally speaking, when you met people whom you admired or you worshipped after you worshipped [them], what was the atmosphere?

IB I think Sakharov comes into that category. I had just managed to persuade the University to give him an honorary degree.

GC Yes, that I know. But when you describe your meeting …

IB No. Nothing about a meeting. Well, he was very – of course I realised who he was. What he said was not very interesting, and he is not very intelligent.

GC That's what you told me.

IB That is true, but …

GC [?].

IB Combination of courage and nobility. Not just courage. [?] courage. Courage and integrity, nobility. That he has to the highest possible degree. He's the voice of – Herzen, of course, I worship. Unfortunately I never met him. But Sakharov is the voice of Herzen in the present day.

GC [?].

IB It is that voice. Courage, integrity and being right. I can't deny that being right as opposed to being wrong makes a difference. Not just sincerity, but getting things right.

GC [?] Does it happen that retrospectively it proves that people you thought were right were not right?

IB Well, it depends what about. Edmund Wilson talked a lot of rot. A great deal of nonsense. He was also very malicious, resentful, bore people grudges. Unjust, unfair, drunken, embarrassing to [?]. Coarse. Yet when he wrote about literature, I felt that he was a complete man speaking, he was saying what he felt, what he knew. He had the sort of vision of life, which entered into his criticism of literature, which was entirely authentic and noble and to be admired and extremely penetrating.

GC Let's come back for a moment to politicians, men of action.

IB I only mentioned two.

GC You said that you decided to write about Churchill in 1949 because you felt that his [?].

IB I knew. No, he was being done down. He was being deflated.

GC And that was one of the causes for your …

IB I have no doubt my Zionism was not irrelevant to it.

GC How do you judge him now? Now that he doesn't need this defence.

IB Oh, I [?] exactly the same way. Of course he made – he was brutal. When I met him I didn't like him. (GC [?].) No, I'm going to tell you. I just didn't like him. Bill Deakin took me to lunch (GC [?]) – yes, took me to lunch in Chartwell, where he lived, because Bill told him that I knew about the Moscow trials. He was writing about them in volume one of his reminiscences. That's how I came to read them. I don't know that I would have read them – that's why I reviewed them. That's what the piece on Churchill originally was – a review of volume one of the memoirs.[2] Bill brought me to see him. He sat me down, greeted me and said, 'I want you to read something I've written', and propped it up on a vase. Then he thought it wasn't very polite doing that during lunch, so he took it away. We had an ordinary lunch. We chatted about this and that.

GC Only the three of you?

IB No. Mary Churchill was there, his daughter, I think. I don't think anybody else. Maybe his secretary, but I don't think so. He had no small talk, Winston. What he did was, he told me that he thought that – we talked about Russia. He was convinced, he told me even before even I read it – that [Mikhail] Tukhachevsky was a

[2] In fact vol. 2 of *The Second World War*, entitled *Their Finest Hour* (London, 1949).

traitor, and all these generals were. Stalin acted quite correctly in executing them. I asked him why he thought that, because I did not think it. And he said because [Edvard] Beneš told him so. What happened was the anti- – the NKVD, forgeries and things, were laundered through Prague, and Beneš probably might have been taken in. His intelligence people would no doubt collaborate with the Russians in some way. Must have deceived him, and he in turn probably said this to Churchill in quite good faith. I tried to persuade him that since in the German documents captured in Berlin there's not a word about cooperation with Tukhachevsky, it couldn't be true. He rejected it. Then he was very interesting – he denounced the Astor family, violently. The whole lot. He was in opposition. The Labour Government was in power, so it must have been 1947?

GC He was then so interested in the trials?

IB He was writing the memoirs, and in these memoirs it chronologically came in.

GC And that was your first meeting with Churchill?

IB No. I met him without meeting him.

GC Ah, yes, that's another [?].

IB Before. I met him once in the White House, I met him once by chance, I met him at dinner with Oliver Lyttelton, and I met him with – at dinner with the Cecils. I spoke to him, but it wasn't [?]. (GC [?].) No.

GC That was the only main meeting that you really spoke to him.

IB I think that's [?]. I was invited specially[?]. Certainly. He and I spoke, and nobody else did. Bill was completely silent. And then we talked about the Astors. He said they did nothing but damage. To England. The whole lot. Both the Lords Astor, and of course Nancy Astor very much, and her husband certainly, and David Astor, and the whole damn lot. If there was some[?] I didn't know. Broadly speaking, a disastrous family, from the point of view of the history of England. He went on about it very passionately, and then he sang a song, the refrain of which was, 'We'll hang the Astors from the Mulberry tree.' [*laughs*] Then he said to me, 'Who did you serve under in Washington?' I said, 'Lord Halifax.' 'Ah,' he said, 'Edward. Edward was a man compounded of charm. In his presence, I melt.'

GC That Churchill said?

IB 'But there is something that goes through him like a yellow streak. Grovel, grovel, grovel. Grovel …' – you know what 'grovelling' means? (GC *shakes his head?*) Oh I see. 'Grovel' means [?], it means bowing, crawling …

GC Crawling.

IB Crawling. 'Grovel' means to crawl. That's why Greville Janner is called Grovel Janner, because people don't like him. 'Don't grovel.' Means you bow down and kiss a man's feet. 'Grovel, grovel, grovel. Grovelled to the Americans, grovel to the Germans, grovel to the Indians, grovel to everybody.' I said – I didn't know what to say – I said, 'Don't you think he's had a rather' – what did I say? [?] what was the word I used? 'limited upbringing, a rather narrow education?' He said, 'If you can believe that, you can believe anything.' Then – that was all – then he went on talking about, I don't know, I can't remember now. It was all very interesting. Nothing very terrible. And then, when I was going

away, he said, 'How much do you want for your honorarium [*sounding the 'h'*]?'

GC Really?

IB Well, he gave me the volume. I was to write to him about it. So I said no, I didn't want to be paid anything, it was a great honour and privilege, and I was proud, and so on. 'Now, now, that's very monkish of you,' he said. 'How much?' I said, 'No, I'm not going to tell you. Certainly not.' In the end, I received a cheque.[3] I didn't know what to do with it. I thought, can I give it to a charity? I thought no, well, if he pays me he pays me; he'll subtract it from his expenses. So I wrote a letter to the accountant and paid it in. Then I was suddenly summoned before the special commissioners, who are the people who have to judge the complaints of the tax collector. I had to appear with a tiny little lawyer and so on, and – somewhere here in Oxford – about whether I was – nobody said I concealed anything, but I refused to pay taxes on it, because it was a gift. The question arose, was it done as part of my profession? If it's a tip, then I have to pay. If it's not, [?] something totally different from what I normally do, then not. It was a wonderful argument, and I – when we went out to wait for the verdict, I said to the tax collector, 'Look, you're quite right. There's no difference between this and some fee from the BBC, after all, so I don't know why I did it. It's only because I was badly advised and they didn't want to antagonise him[?].' We came back. I won. After that, he resigned from being a tax collector and became a tax advisor.

GC [*laughs*]

[3] For 200 guineas. See E 48; also E+, 15 November 1947 to 3 March 1950 and appendix.

IB That's just by the way. But I didn't like Win… – Churchill: too brutal.

GC In the meeting too?

IB Yes, that, exactly then. More then than anywhere else. I suddenly – not the man I could talk to in any – too – great man, certainly, and that's what I wrote about him, made of much simpler material. Large, much bigger pieces than anybody else – fewer of them.

GC But …

IB Gigantic figure.

GC But the …

IB But personally too, yes, in some way heartless. Trampled on people.

GC But the disappointment of meeting him didn't change your general attitude towards him?

IB No, not at all. No. He saved our lives. That's all there is to it. That was enough. And he gave us Palestine as much as anyone could. Remember his famous telegram? When he was asked to send a message to the Declaration of the State of Israel. He said, 'I have supported Zionism all my life. I am not the man to abandon the Zionists in their moment of triumph.'[4]

[4] I have found no evidence of such a telegram, which would certainly have left a mark in the historical record. But Kay Halle, a friend of both Churchill and IB, reports that on 24 March 1949 in New York, before 'a Jewish audience', Churchill was asked what he thought of the Israeli victory in 'their "war of

GC Yes, I know.

IB Joke.[5] [*laughter*]. Quite funny. He made very good jokes.

GC And Roosevelt?

IB I never saw.

GC I know.

independence" ', and responded, 'Remember, I was for a free and independent Israel all through the dark years when many of my most distinguished countrymen took a different view. So do not imagine for a moment that I have the slightest idea of deserting you now in your hour of glory.' Kay Halle (ed.), *Irrepressible Churchill: A Treasury of Winston Churchill's Wit* (Cleveland and New York, 1966), 90. She gives no source, which may indicate that she was present in person. Her account is then repeated by others, including Robert H. Pilpel in *Churchill in America 1895–1961: An Affectionate Portrait* (New York and London, 1976), 235, where 'a Jewish audience' becomes 'American Zionist leaders'; and Martin Gilbert (widely accepted as the authority on Churchill) in *Churchill and the Jews* (London etc, 2007), 280. But neither author cites an independent primary source, and I have not found one. Halle wrote to IB on 20 July 1949 enclosing a 'collection of Churchill asides' which he had agreed to check for authenticity, and this may have been one of them, though the enclosure is no longer with the letter.

Less than a month after the occasion Halle reports, and before Halle's July letter was sent, IB gave an account of the circumstances in which a similar remark was made: in a postcard to his father dated 23 April 1949 he wrote, 'W. Churchill said to Boothby, when B. pleaded with him for Zionism a year ago: after growling about being betrayed, terrorists etc. "After all I am a v. old friend of Zionism & I am not ready to desert it in its hour of triumph" ' (E 83–4). Again I can find no other source for this anecdote: it does not appear in Boothby's 'An Afternoon with Churchill' (August 1948), published in his *My Yesterday, Your Tomorrow* (London, 1962). Thanks to John Shedden for forcing me to investigate this persistent conundrum more thoroughly than I did at first, and to Mark Pottle for sage advice on a draft of this note.

[5] How so?

IB Well, he was New Deal, and I was in favour of that. And he was a leader of democracy. Let me explain that to you. He became my hero before I went to America. If you look what Europe looked like in, let us say, 1937. In Russia, Stalin. In Germany, Hitler. In Poland, Colonels. In Italy, Mussolini. In the Balkans, semi-Fascist dictators. Latvia and Lithuania, semi-Fascist dictators, even there. In Spain, Franco. Maybe it's a little later, Franco: not sure it's – 1938 maybe; 1939 he won, d[id he?]. Well, take Europe in early 1939.

GC But he was already in 1938 …

IB He already – winning? (GC Yes.) But let me assume – I mean that time.

GC In France?

IB Daladier.

GC That's Daladier.

IB In England, Chamberlain. Where can one look? Scandinavia, New Zealand. In America, the light was bright. There was Roosevelt, there was the New Deal, something fresh, liberal and forward-looking. And powerful. And that was where one looked. He was the natural leader of democracy. And nobody else was.

GC Even before the war?

IB Before the war. Exactly so. I mean from the mid 1930s onwards. The [?] – I didn't know anything about it personally, but it was clear that the American government stood for principles which went to my heart. Which I believed in. And the other governments did not. And he was a personally sort of forward figure. I realised about

him that he was a man who was not afraid of the future, which I read about him. Let it all come. He was frivolous in many ways. He was dishonest in some ways. But he was marching forward in the right direction. Always left-wing princes are popular, like Mountbatten.

GC Now, when you were in this [?] in the States …

IB Nehru I did not have that feeling about. I met him in India when he was Prime Minister. His vanity was colossal.

GC And in Western terms he was an [?], I mean self-righteousness, hypocrisy – in our terms. Maybe in the moral framework of the Hindus he was not, but … When you were in New York and Washington, and you made friends with people there, Americans, and you spoke about Roosevelt, did you come across people who criticised him or didn't agree with him [?].

IB I did not know any Republicans. I was a Democrat, and moved among Democrats. I was supposed to be neutral. Everybody in the British Embassy had to be neutral in thought and act – in thoughts and sentiments and acts. But I was not, as you can imagine. And did I meet any anti-Roosevelt after…? Afterwards, yes.

GC I thought that on personal terms, not …

IB That's what I mean, but did I know any? No. I knew only – let's see, who did I know? I knew people in the State Department, who were professionally pro-him. Maybe some of them – Bohlen was very pro. I met Frankfurter and his friends. I met people like – well, I met, Mr Eugene Meyer, who was a Republican, but he didn't speak against him. I didn't meet – yes, certainly, I met one person. Mrs Longworth, who was a very, very famous New York hostess. She was the daughter of Theodore Roosevelt. She was extremely

handsome and brilliantly witty. She was a grande dame of the first order. Very malicious, very amusing, and she had a salon. And I was not supposed to belong to it, because it was extremely right-wing. She was pro-Lindbergh, she was a great friend of Senator Borah before the war. And she hated her cousin Franklin, and she hated Eleanor even more. She was delightful to know. Frankfurter knew her, Joe Alsop knew her. She was so amusing, and politically so unimportant, that although her views were comically reactionary, not a serious person – she said to me, 'You admire Franklin, I suppose?' I said, 'Yes.' 'Well, I'll tell you about him,' she said. 'You know he's in a frame. You know he suffers from polio. Well, all he's done is to put this country into a frame. He thought it was suffering from some kind of polio in 1932, and now we can't get out of the frame. We limp along. That's all he's done.' That's quite funny. She was a very brilliant and amusing woman. She really was. She was critical, but critical to such a degree. Wait, I'll tell you who else. Who else did I see? I met Bullitt, who hated Roosevelt, because he was a rejected mistress, in favour of someone else. But he was a Democrat. I'm trying to think: serious critics, right-wing Americans. I wish I could think of someone. I don't think I knew any. In Washington it was not very easy; I never knew any Senators. I'm trying to think who could there have been?

GC All right. Now, when you came back from America to England after the war, back to Oxford, you met many of your old friends, you met new friends and colleagues. All of them served either in London, or somewhere in the, let's say, in Cairo.

IB You mean diplomats.

GC That's, no, your friends in the war effort.

IB Oh, you're talking about the war? I'm sorry, I thought you said after the war.

GC No, I mean when you came back after the war (IB Yes), to resume your work in Oxford. (IB Yes.) Your friends were – came back from other places (IB Yes), either from serving in London (IB Yes, or wherever it was), or in the army or anywhere. (IB Yes.) Did you find out that – I mean the very fact that you were during the war in Washington, in a certain vantage-point, you had actually developed a different personal history of the war. You see, the experiences of the war depends to some extent in where are you, I mean if you [?].

IB Obviously, yes.

IB No, of course not. One has the perspective one has. My perspective was a man in Washington, and occasionally in London. They were somewhere else, and they saw the war through different spectacles. But they didn't talk very much about it. I never had a conversation with somebody who in a way impressed or surprised me by producing a completely different picture of the war from something which I had. No. Maybe I didn't discuss the war enough. People didn't, you know, very much. Immediately, perhaps, after it, though one didn't sit in the evening and said, 'I remember the war looked like this.' At least not here. And not in London. No.

GC I'm not asking about details, but events that for somebody who was in Cairo or here meant a lot …

IB Looked different.

GC And for you less, like El Alamein, possibly, or I don't know what.

IB That's true, yes. But I never met anybody who went on and on about El Alamein. I mean that. But I was trying to think. Exactly, supposing you were in – if you were a naval officer or something, or you were in the American Pacific or something. No. The war did look different, no doubt, from different vantage points. But I don't think I can claim that I suddenly realised how different it must have seemed to somebody in Burma, or somebody in somewhere else.

GC Or even in London?

IB In London I had no difficulty. I came to London frequently enough in 1940 and 1942, in 1944, in 1945, to be part of the – to be aware of what was felt and thought in London. It wasn't all that different, either. You can exaggerate. The war from London and the war from Washington wasn't that different. The Blitz, the sufferings, the Tube stations in London, that was a particularly – but one knew about that in Washington too. One may not have gone through it, but one knew exactly what it would be like to go through it.

GC People came from London to Washington.

IB Not only that, but I was here in 1940 during the Blitz, I went to the air-raid shelters. I knew what it was like. Once was enough.

GC Did you correspond with your parents when you were in Washington?

IB Not very much. It was difficult to, the post didn't work really normally during wartime. But I can tell you a funny story about that. I used to – they were very worried about me, of course, they thought about nothing but me. It was one of my misfortunes. And the certain – about once in two months I would send them a

telegram through the Embassy I suppose, or somehow, saying 'Flourishing. Berlin.' Because you couldn't use Christian names in wartime. This went on for a year. In about 1942, maybe 1943, it might have been 1943, I got bored with saying, 'Flourishing. Berlin.' So I sent a telegram saying, 'Please suggest synonym for flourishing. Berlin.' That telegram did not get to them.[6] Of course, synonym, censorship, spies, Berlin. So I realised. They sent *me* a very worried telegram, which *was* allowed, saying, 'Why are there no telegrams?' Why is there nothing from him, because that one didn't go through. A policeman called on them, in Hampstead, to find out who they were, what's going on. They couldn't understand what was going on. It so happened, that a man called Herbert, who was the chief censor in Bermuda, was in the Embassy one day, and I said this to him. I said, 'Look, the following has happened; if you don't let my telegrams through to my parents immediately, I shall tell the story to Mr Drew Pearson' – who was a specialist in anti-British gossip in seventy newspapers in the United States. 'It'll amuse the whole of America.' He saw that and said he would put it right. After [?], I went on saying, 'Flourishing [?]' as before. But it is true that they were very worried. In 1942 I came to London, on so-called leave, and saw various Government officials [?]. Foreign Office, Ministry of Information etc. I met I don't know who, Dick Law, I don't think I met Eden. Yes I met Eden then too. And the Ministry of Information, and so on. I was circulated. Because by that time my telegrams were already – well, beginning of 1942 it was: I came in summer. By that time three or four months had passed and my telegrams evidently made some kind of impression. Then I went back. I went back via Ireland. The plane went off from somewhere on the south coast. It went to Limerick, and there we stopped because the weather wasn't good, or something. And I went to hotels with the rest of them.[7] On the

[6] A telegram of 2 December 1941 reading 'PLEASE SUGGEST SYNONYMS FOR FLOURISHING = BERLIN' did get through: see F 385.

[7] The Shannon Hotel according to Mendel: F 405.

same plane were Lippmann and Crossman. They had a tremendous row, almost immediately. Lippmann was the kind of man Crossman detested. Careful, liberal, everything he hated. And American [?]. Not really. Anyway …

GC And what did Crossman [?].

IB He was going to Washington for PWE.[8]

GC [?] He went to Washington?

IB In 1942, late 1942, September, late September 1942, for a week or something. Some kind of business to do with …

GC Propaganda.

IB Yes, with…

GC [?] propaganda.

IB Yes with the American thing, with Donovan, with …

GC SIS.

IB No. SIS is British Intelligence.

GC The counterpart of SOE.

IB Exactly.

GC The Donovan organisation.

[8] Political Warfare Executive (a branch of British Intelligence).

IB What was it called?

GC Yes, I know what you mean. It *is* SIS?

IB SIS is Secret Intelligence Service. An entirely British term. SOE is Special Operation[s] Executive. Again English.

GC The American counterpart of SOE.

IB It was called something quite different

GC But I know what you mean.

IB The thing which became …

GC Became a CIA …

IB CIA. The pre-CIA …

GC I know.

IB Still, one can't forget things like that. What was it called?

GC SOS. No, OSS.

IB OSS. Correct. Office of Special [sc. Strategic] Services, or something. He had some mission to Donovan. Some coordination. Well, we arrived in Limerick, and there I went to spend the night, because the plane wasn't going for some reason. I spent the night with a perfectly nice American architect who coughed all night, so I caught a cold. Then we got on to the plane, and I coughed and coughed and coughed, and then the plane – the engine went wrong, and we came back after six hours. And went back to the same hotel. The windows by this time were open, they couldn't be

closed, and my cold became worse. I remember Crossman said to me, 'Look, you can't go on, blowing your nose and coughing. Either get better – go back, or' – he didn't quite say 'die', but that's what it meant. 'You can't go on in the middle. You're either one thing or another.' [?]. I remember that. Very typical of him. When we arrived in New York, he was met by Wheeler-Bennett. Nobody met me. They quarrelled later. I went to the hotel. I developed a temperature, and I had pneumonia on the next day. Double pneumonia. I was on the whole told I would probably die. Not quite that, but it was a virus, M & B,[9] which was all they had in those days, didn't work. Even penicillin wouldn't have done. I went to New York Hospital. I was taken by a person called [Sidney] Bernstein, who kindly accompanied me to the hospital. And then – nothing was known. But the *Evening Standard* published a paragraph saying I was nearly dead. Very ill. My father naturally read that, got into a state, went to my mother, who was obviously – they couldn't breathe, I'm sure. And so they – I don't know how I knew. Oh no, I discovered that the *Evening Standard* – some journalist – had discovered this, so I realised that something had to happen. So I got hold of somebody in my office, to cable Herbert Nicholas, who was the American end of my New York office,[10] to whom you could send an official telegram, to tell my parents that I was alive and recovering. I remember that. When you ask, did I communicate? – in that sense, yes.

GC But in 1942 were you that known for the *Evening Standard* to publish that you were very ill?

IB You mean, was I known enough? Evidently.

[9] May & Baker's antibacterial medication sulphapyridine.

[10] Herbert Nicholas was in the American Division of the Ministry of Information in London, where he was IB's main contact and the channel of (mis)information from IB to his parents.

GC Because of?

IB I don't know.

GC [?] you tried to underrate your position.

IB Yes, no, but I was … in some way I must have been talked about.

GC Because of the cables?

IB No, because I was then – the end of 1942, yes; 1942 was the cables already. But I went to a hospital in New York, not in Washington. Wait! In 1942 … – I'm getting my chronology wrong. It's perfectly true. I ceased to be in New York at the beginning of 1942, and I was transferred to Washington about the summer of 1942,[11] so the cables can't have been very many. I then went to England. (GC So …) But still, some cables had already gone out, yes. Evidently, I don't know why, I acquired some kind of notoriety in British government circles. I went to hospital [for] about six weeks, in – New York Hospital, and then went to recuperate with Weizmann in – somewhere in the Borscht Belt in the Catskills. That's where Weizmann made the very nasty joke to me about – what's he called? – about Mizrachi.

GC HaRav Berlin.

IB HaRav Berlin. I said to him, 'Are you on good terms with the Mizrachi?' He said, 'Yes, I am. I don't terribly like sitting on platforms with the Rabbis, particularly in the summer.' [*laughter*] Very typical. Weizmann. Mmm.

[11] IB was appointed Head of the Political Survey section at the British Embassy in Washington in the spring of 1942. Until July he divided his week between New York and Washington.

GC The whole story of your meeting with Churchill because of your cables is just a legend?

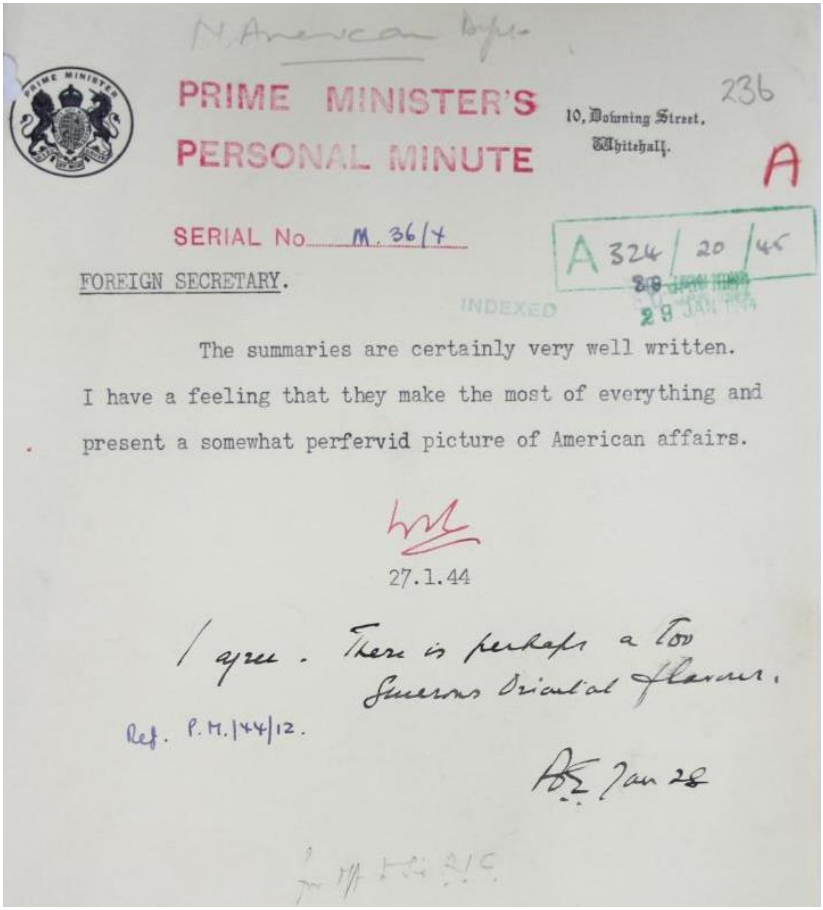
IB Pure – absolutely false. He did send me a telegram, Churchill, saying 'Kindly –' or the Embassy – 'kindly inform Mr Berlin that he seems to me to make too much of everything.'[12]

GC Too much of …

IB Of everything.

GC [*laughs*]

[12] On 27 January 1944 Churchill wrote to Eden, whom he had asked about the authorship of the cables sent out under Halifax's name: 'The summaries are certainly very well written. I have a feeling that they make the most of everything and present a somewhat perfervid picture of American affairs.'



N. American Dpt.

PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL MINUTE

10, Downing Street, Whitehall.

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29 JAN 1944

FOREIGN SECRETARY.

The summaries are certainly very well written. I have a feeling that they make the most of everything and present a somewhat perfervid picture of American affairs.

27.1.44

I agree. There is perhaps a Too Generous Oriental flavour.

Ref. P.M.|44|12.

Jan 28

National Archives, FO 371/38537

IB And then 'too fervid'. Too overdone. I exaggerated it – dramatised everything. That's why they were liked. The secret of the telegram *was* the dramatic quality. Eden didn't like my telegrams at all. Didn't like me. But – in no degree. Didn't like Jews [?]. Didn't like intellectuals, and didn't like me. All these things are separately true. And he, from – when Winston said, 'I think his

telegrams are rather fervid', Eden against that said, 'Yes, there is something oriental about them.'[13]

GC Eden said it?

IB Yep. There's a minute, in the Public Record Office. That's where I read it. My trouble with Eden was that at San Francisco, first of all we didn't get on; then I went to see him in the Foreign Office, in 1942, which I was made to do; it was all right, but we – he wasn't interested in what I said. Dick Law, his no. 2, became a great friend. Eden not.

GC He was very intelligent, Dick.

IB Intelligent and quite liberal, and then became terribly right-wing. Nice man. Thoroughly nice man. I stayed with him once or twice, in the country. Then he had an unfortunate later career. Eden did him in, out of jealousy. Destroyed him, really. [?].

GC I am very impressed by Dick Law's minutes [?].

IB He was against us, as far as partition …

GC [?].

IB On partition?

GC I told you once..

IB I thought he was the voice of the Foreign Office

[13] By 'against that' he means alongside it, in the margin. Eden annotated Churchill's note, 'I agree. There is perhaps a too generous Oriental flavour.'

GC He represented the Foreign Office in the Committee, but he supported the committee – the majority of the committee's opinion – then allowed the Foreign Office official opinion to appear before the committee. Which means he had his differences …

IB You mean, 'My office thinks, but I do not'?

GC Yes.

IB I'm very glad.

GC Yes, you can be gratified. He would argue with Amery about the boundaries.

IB Well, when …

GC But he was – oh, he did [?]; he was much more favourable than you think.

IB So there were no votes against. Can't have been. The only people against were the Foreign Office.

GC Yes, but the Foreign Office opinion was recorded.

IB No, I understand what you mean, but what I'm telling you – the people there – look …

GC In the committee there was nobody against partition.

IB That's what I mean, it's exactly what I mean. Unanimous.

GC It's [?] those – it's fantastic.

IB About details, yes.

GC The committee versus the Foreign Office.

IB Quite. Well that's enough for Winston, who loathed the Foreign Office.

GC Very interesting.

IB One of the few Offices he had never held.

GC That's why the Foreign Office applied tactics of procrastination.

IB [?] as before.

GC [?].

IB Of course.

GC And they managed eventually – they didn't destroy partition, the Foreign Office, but they managed to rally the support of the Chiefs of Staff.

IB Yes.

GC And together to recommend a smaller state.

IB And that kind of thing.

GC And then [?] Lord Moyne was assassinated and they lost interest [?].

IB Yes, that's right. So they did as much sabotage as they could. Who was the head of the Foreign Office? Cadogan?

GC Cadogan didn't deal with this at all.

IB I see. So who were they?

GC The ringleader was Peterson, Sir Maurice Peterson.

IB Sir Maurice Peterson.

GC He was the [?].

IB He was in Cairo?

GC No, not, he was [?].

IB Come back from Cairo. He came back from Cairo.

GC Yes.

Side B

IB He was Ambassador in Cairo in the 1930s, late 1930s.

GC And he was for a while the deputy of Cadogan, in a special …

IB I understand, yes.

GC [?] And he was in charge of the Middle East – Cadogan didn't do [?].

IB But he had certainly been in Cairo.

GC And Peterson was the …

IB The enemy.

GC Yes, he was, and then there …

IB All the others, too.

GC [?] department. Maurice[?] Baxter, and others, minor people [?].

IB I'll tell you, was what's his name there? I remember a minute by him. [R. M. A.] Hankey.

GC Hankey.

IB Was he in the Eastern Department?

GC He was – at a certain period, he was.

IB Well, I'll tell you the story.

GC He was not [?].

IB No, I know. But you know the story about Nahum Goldmann and Weizmann and the [?] partition? I'll tell you. Look, since we are talking about partition, and relevance is not important in this series: when Nahum came to see me, he told me about partition. I then proceeded to write a minute about Nahum's visit in which I was not very respectful about Nahum; I wasn't hostile, but I said, 'You know, in his usual bustling manner, usual [?] – that sort of thing – I was glad not to have it published. William Fraenkel managed to suppress it in the *Jewish Chronicle*, because they saw it in the end in the papers. Because William Hayter wrote a minute;

then I wrote a minute to Hayter, who was the next man, who was not at all anti-Zionist, Hayter then. Later [?] a little more. And so then I reported, and I put in my telegram, even, or dispatch [?], 'I am told that there is this partition scheme.' I don't know whether[?] I [?]. Nahum told me I might have done. Wouldn't have done any harm if I had. And now I found in the Public Record Office a minute by Hankey, saying, 'This is terrible. Mr Berlin's telegram, paragraph 4, reports that the things which we tell Weizmann in confidence, that he talks[?] [?] about this to his friends in Washington. This may get to the Arabs, in which case we'll be done for.' That sort of thing. No, it's all right. There's nothing improper about that.

GC I think [?].

IB There are two Hankeys.

GC Yes, Robin and – [?].

IB There might even be three. There is the young Hankey, who has just retired, who was private secretary to Heath, about ten years ago.

GC Now, the one we are speaking about is Robin Hankey.

IB Who was Ambassador in Bucharest.

GC I think that's the one.

IB That's the elder brother. The younger brother just retired.

GC Robin Hankey's minutes are decent.

IB He was – they are a very decent – both the brothers are decent. [?] My father, who had dealings with him in Bucharest – when timber was wanted, he was sent by the government to Bucharest, and it was no good, it had failed, but he dealt with Hankey, who he said was a very nice man.

GC As we came by chance to the Washington [?], whom did you really appreciate there in the Embassy, whom did you [?].

IB [?]. First of all there was Halifax, who behaved like a viceroy. Didn't care for the officials. Of course I went to see him, but he behaved liked a viceroy. He was an Etonian viceroy, and they were all Wykehamist pen-pushers. He looked on them as a collection of clerks. They couldn't bear him for that reason. He was very grand and aloof. I was occasionally asked to lunch, when they were not, because he had known me at All Souls. That was very bad, too. And – I respected him: he was very clever. And very quick and very idle. He didn't really like Americans very much, but he found that when he switched on his charm, they fell for it. So in the end, he did rather like them, in the way in which …

GC [?] charm [?].

IB Oh, it's very considerable. Very great. I knew him well before and after. Oh, he was a delightful storyteller, he was very – he had a nice voice, and he told stories in an ironical, charming and very – in a sort of crazy way, yes. He was very unpompous.

GC Now, his political acumen …

IB … was very considerable.

GC Did he like the reports?

IB Which, mine?

GC Yours.

IB Oh, he hardly read them. But I did get into trouble with him once, about them. All right, it was done by the Chancery; it was done by, first of all, whoever heads the Chancery. The first head of Chancery was [Frederick Robert] Hoyer Millar, who afterwards became Ambassador somewhere – Bonn. And then at the Foreign Office.[14] I remember very well, when Ben-Gurion came, and wanted to see Halifax, he [Hoyer Millar] said, 'We wouldn't have seen him in the residency in Cairo: why should we see him here?' He was a very bureaucratic – still alive.[15] Lord Inchyra he is called. He [?] passed my telegrams. Occasionally he would say, 'Your fourth paragraph will cost the British government £74 in cipher charges. Is it worth it?'

GC Who said [?]? Halifax?

IB Hoyer Millar. Halifax didn't read them at all.

GC Why didn't he read them?

IB Because he was idle. He probably did, but very casually and quickly. No, I will tell you. Sometimes they put things in, [the] telegrams, they were not all mine. He said, 'I saw Harry Hopkins last night', that was not me. And other people did too. I wasn't – my drafts were …

GC I know.

[14] Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office 1957–62.
[15] He died on 16 October 1989.

IB … altered *en route*.

GC I know. I saw the introduction[16] to …

IB Well, I exaggerate a bit in the introduction.

GC [*laughs*] That's why I am asking you.

IB And that's why I kept out the Israeli cables, the Zionist cables, [?] for that reason. [?] Anyway, now, there were a great many people in the Embassy. There were something like 3,000 British officials in Washington during the war. It was a Ministry. But the Embassy was not so big; the Embassy was probably about two hundred. One day it was a Minister, it was a man called Ronald Campbell. There were two ministers called Ronald Campbell. He was called Little Ronny. Big Ronny was Ambassador in Portugal. [?] He was an absolutely delightful man, charming. Conventional – he believed what he believed – but personally he couldn't have been nicer. To me, particularly. I liked him very much. He was civilised, he was amusing, he was agreeable. A great friend of Mrs Roosevelt in the 1930s, long before he was President – in the 1920s, when he served in the Embassy. And sweet Scotch diplomat, not very clever, very careful. Not very brave, but kind and amiable. Under him was head of Chancery [?] Hoyer Millar was simply a bureaucrat, managing director. Remembered every file by heart. Very boring. Rather nice wife, Dutch, who I knew. Then of course there was John Foster, who worked [?] in the Embassy, who was very amusing, and very [?]. (GC [?].) Yes. He's a chapter in himself. I could talk to you about him separately [?]. He played a part in my life. With him I went to Palestine in 1934. Then there was Michael Wright, who succeeded Hoyer Millar, with whom my relations

[16] IB's introduction to H. G. Nicholas (ed.), *Washington Despatches 1941–45: Weekly Political Reports from the British Embassy* (London, 1981).

were never easy. My Zionism was known. He was fun[?], a hundred per cent, and didn't like Jews [?]. Was fundamentally humourless, hard-working, fanatical and a man of some principle. Anti-appeasement, hated Chamberlain, hated Halifax.

GC He was the head of the Chancery?

IB Yes. Worked very hard, but was always tense. Always on the qui vive, whether – conversation with him was never easy. I once asked him why the English liked the Arabs so much. 'Because they have the same sense of humour,' he said. Typical British remark, which has no truth in it whatever. None. Besides which, the Arabs anyhow couldn't stand him, as it happens. He had an Arab servant, in his house in Washington, typical Arab servant in Washington. His wife was American. I never really got on with him. He was very polite and very correct with me, and tried to keep me in the Foreign Office, even that, although he knew perfectly well what my sympathies were. And he really denounced the Jews in Israel to me. He said, 'They're bad neighbours. If they were good neighbours, something would happen. They are just bad neighbours. They are bad with the Arabs. They hate them, they persecute them. You can't be bad neighbours in a territory like that.' That's what he more or less – that was his case. I am sure he tried not to be anti-Semitic, but of course – but he served in many Arab countries: he obviously loved them. Quite rich. And of course, we all know what he did in the Foreign Office, afterwards. But, as I say, he never circulated papers to do with the Middle East to me. I didn't need them, but I saw the general run of telegrams, as you know, from a secret [?], but if something came up, even over Zionism, I'm sure he didn't send it to me, because he knew what I would say; but in every other respect was totally correct; he rather admired my work, and at the end of the war offered me a job in the Foreign Office. It wasn't clear what: maybe a librarian, maybe in the diplomatic service. Probably not diplomatic service immediately. When I said

I didn't want to, I want to go back to Oxford, he said, 'I cannot understand you. If you can enter public service, how can you refuse?' He looked on me as a Zionist Englishman. He didn't look on me as an agent really, no. That I can't pretend. Then – that's where they …

GC Hayter was there?

IB Hayter was First Secretary. He was very nice, civilised, amiable, not anti-Zionist. Oh no, I made friends with him. Definite friends, him and his wife. He was a cultivated, New College Wykehamist. I felt at home. I taught a great deal of people like that in Oxford during the 1930s. Then, I remember talking – then there was a man called [John Percival] Summerscale, who was from Baghdad. He was a commercial counsellor, married to an American from Baghdad. She was in the American Embassy, and he was a straight hundred per cent pro-Arab. He dealt with economic affairs. In his house I met Arabs. Arabs [?]. And he was very nice to me. And I used to argue [?]. And I didn't convince him exactly, but he thought – I was the only Jew he'd ever spoken to who made a case which he could accept, and therefore was very friendly. His wife, who was a pure American, was very pro-Arab also, and then his son, I think, I saw in England sometimes – he went on living in Hampstead afterwards. I occasionally saw him. He was a decent, pro-Arab Englishman. Totally anti-Israel, and anti-Zionist. But somehow, not vicious, not nasty. He didn't come from upper-class riches[?]. He was lower middle class. Like all these consuls[?]. Who else in the Embassy did I come across? Gore-Booth, who afterwards became head of the Foreign Office. He was a Christian Scientist. Immensely earnest.

GC Immensely?

IB Earnest. Very humourless. Honourable, hard-working – he created work on a fantastic scale. Every time he had a conversation with an American, he wrote it down and circulated it. He was a friend of various Senators of a Democratic kind. Perfectly decent man, with an Australian wife who married him in Japan as a nurse, who I saw two days ago. But he was a – became – don't think he was ever at Chancery in my time. Then there was John Russell, who was an agreeable, gay, smart, upper-class sort of Foreign Office boy, who went to Moscow, who knew Russian, and [?] ever talk about that. He hated Gore-Booth. Gore-Booth was moralistic, humourless, earnest, high-minded. Russell was amusing, cynical, very good company, and people said about him that, if Churchill came to Washington, he arranged everything: where people[?] stayed, how long[?] they stayed. He got fifty rooms at a hotel. Nobody ever gave any – anybody else, but British prisoners of war remained at the bottom of his file. He afterwards became – he went to Poland, and then he went to Spain as Ambassador. He married a Miss Europe, who was Greek, who is still about. But he was a friend. With him I used to see the whole Russia-interested group of people in Washington. There was a man called John Wiley, whose wife was a Polish Jewess; there was Chip Bohlen, who I met otherwise too, who was a friend of Russell. There was a man called Freddie[sp?] Reinhardt, who was a State Department official. There was a man called [Elbridge] Durbrow, who was a State Department official. And then who else? George Kennan, of course. Him I met in Moscow, in 1945, and knew afterwards. He wasn't part of all that. But the Soviet part of the State Department became – I was part of that, I became an honorary member of that group. Their line about me was that I was the only man they had ever met who had never been in the Soviet Union, but understood everything as they did – the same point of view. My anti-Communism, my knowledge of Russia, exactly what they wanted. I didn't do business with them, because I had no executive post,

but I learned a lot from them, and sometimes they used to make me report things from London, which I very much liked doing.

GC You liked it?

IB Why not? Certainly. The real inside stuff. Then we were in the Embassy again, we went back to the Embassy.

GC Did you have arguments with colleagues about your reports and dispatches, either before or after?

IB Yes, occasionally, not very often. Never about their correctness. But if I put in a paragraph, somebody like Noel Hall, who dealt with economics, afterwards became Principal of Brasenose, would say, 'Look, I am trying to deal with Acheson on this particular thing. If you report that, it will queer my pitch. Nothing – that kind of thing. He asked to take it out because it would have been awkward for him. The trouble about Noel Hall was, he told terrible lies. That's why he was got rid of at the Embassy. He was Minister, but he reported imaginary conversations, to make himself more important. In the end this was uncovered, he had to leave. It was a kind of tiny scandal, internal kind. Now – nobody ever questioned, nobody ever said, 'This isn't true.' No. No, Eden didn't like it, because it used to spoil his policies. He complained that my reports went against things he wanted to want to believe.

GC I see, but …

IB But even he never complained, formally. I never got the slightest riposte from the Foreign Office.

GC And you sent letters from Halifax? But …

IB Once.

GC Yes, you said once.

IB Quite interesting, quite serious. Gladwyn Jebb arrived in Washington in 1944, and he wanted – he was something to do with post-war planning. Oh, I forgot to tell you about Crossman. Must just tell you this anecdote. He came to Washington, while I was in hospital, and he went to see Donovan. And he said to Donovan, 'I know you want us to get out of India. If we do, will you give us French North Africa?'

GC 'If we do …'?

IB 'Will you give us French North Africa?'

GC [*laughs*]

IB Donovan was very taken aback. He began making enquiries, [?] came [?] London, he made people in the Embassy [?] say, 'Is there really a plan to get out of India? Is there a plan? The British occupy North Africa?' Of course not. Pure invention. Crossman did it typically. Suddenly had an idea. Tried it on Donovan. Donovan couldn't conceive that a British official would talk to him without any authority.

GC [*laughs*]

IB *S'vara – s'vara t'hora*.[17] Now let's go back to Halifax. Gladwyn Jebb asked me to write a dispatch about Walter Lippmann.

GC [?].

IB What is it, a quarter past five[?]?

[17] 'סברה טהורה – סברה', 'Guesswork – pure guesswork.'

GC But if you *are* tired?

IB I'm getting a little tired, but still. I had three hours of talk before. [?] I'll tell you the story anyway.

GC This story and …

IB Certainly. Well, I wrote the dispatch. I saw Walter Lippmann sort of once a fortnight, and we used to do *tours d'horizon*. We'd start with Japan, we'd go on to China, we'd go on to Central Asia, maybe, India, well, Siam, India, Persia, Turkey. Then by a leap in Italy. Palestine could not be mentioned to him. Could not be mentioned.

GC Why?

IB Because he was complex about being a Jew. It was Felix Frankfurter who probably bullied him about it. They weren't friends by that time. But they were originally, in 1912 and so on. Because that was the last thing he wanted. He wasn't favourable, anyway. He was a man who hated being a Jew. Did not enjoy it. Couldn't deny it. Arthur Krock, who was a famous journalist, was a Jew and denied it. Except everybody knew. Walter didn't deny it, but was embarrassed, and hurt by it in a way. No, the last thing he wanted to talk about. It was a painful and embarrassing subject. He was fundamentally a rather peace-loving, shy, not very brave, middle-of-the-road, both-ways-looking man. He was a Republican, theoretically, by then. Roosevelt detested him. Now, what I wrote in my dispatch was as follows: I said, 'Mr Walter Lippmann is the most admired journalist in America. Everybody reads him, and he is more widely syndicated than any other commentator, and country editors, when they don't have enough of their own to say, look at his – files his dispatches, dilute them with water, and write

themselves. Like famous sermons, in the eighteenth century – clergymen used to keep collections for their own use.' I said that at the same time he is – I said he's temperate, he's moderate, sensible, wise – in some ways – liberal-minded, has good judgement, in a way, but he has peculiar – no, maybe I didn't say peculiar – he has a habit of changing his mind, somewhat dramatically, I said. His first book was called – first book about the war – was called *American* [sc. *U.S.*] *Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* – an American isolationist. America had no business in Europe – Pacific maybe; tried. In Europe they must keep out. They mustn't overextend their resources. They couldn't take on everybody. And Europe was too troubled. I knew that he would think that, because he was very pro-Munich and pro-Chamberlain – and that he was. I once met him at lunch with Kenneth Clark, which Chamberlain was supposed to come to. That was the first time I met Lippmann. Chamberlain was late because of a cabinet meeting, and went back early because he had to go back, and didn't talk to Lippmann. Lippmann was in a state of fury, so far as he was capable of it – specially flew over from Paris to meet him. Anyway, his second book, published about two years later, was called *The Atlantic Community*.[18] The thesis of that book was that both sides of the Atlantic had to mesh together: America, Brazil, Argentina, England, France, Dakkar, Portugal – they had to have interchangeable weapons, [?], they formed a single unit, and their interdependence, economically and in other ways. That was also a very good idea, but not compatible with the first idea. The third thing was a series of articles about Stalin and Churchill in which he said that obviously Stalin and Churchill couldn't get on, they were obviously enemies. America would mediate: Roosevelt. That was also an excellent idea, not compatible with A or B. So I said: fundamental-

[18] No such book appears to exist. 'The Atlantic Community' is chapter 7 of *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* (Boston, 1943). Lippmann's next book was *U.S. War Aims* (Boston, 1944), whose chapter 7 is also entitled 'The Atlantic Community'.

ly, he was not dependable politically. Quite a decent man, but he had this habit of abrupt changes of mind. And he was not too courageous. Halifax sent for me and said, 'Look, we show Walter some of our papers. We think he is a great friend, ally,' which he certainly was. 'You go and denigrate him in London. What will they think in London? They won't know what to think. You can't do it.' Well, I stood there, [?] I said, 'I'm very sorry, Sir, I don't think I can change my dispatch. But if you ask Mr Gore-Booth, he'll write a dispatch with quite a different sense. So you could use that. But I can't do anything about mine.' Then he thought he went a bit too far, so he said a wonderful thing. He said, 'I consider the duty of a British official abroad is to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth to the people at home. Any deviation or attempt to slant the truth in such a way as to meet with their wishes, or one's own, I would regard as the gravest dereliction of public duty.' He bowed, [?], then after a gap he said, 'But it is all a matter of emphasis.' If ever I wrote a history about him, I would call it *A Matter of Emphasis*. You can't deny it. With emphasis you can do anything. My dispatch was censored but sent off, and printed in Nicholas's book.[19] That was the only time I really had a collision.

GC So you see that he read them.

IB That he read. Dispatch. That wasn't a telegram; that was sent by post, by bag. That was submitted – well, he knew Walter Lippman, knew me, well …

GC Maybe the [?] the Chancery knew what to show him, and what would be of interest to him?

[19] I cannot find the piece on Lippmann in *Washington Despatches*. The date may be early October 1944, given this in a letter from Nicholas to IB, **11 October 1944**: 'I had suspected some funny business over Lippmann when I compared the Pol. Cable with your bootlegged draft. It is all uncommon disturbing & I agree, needless to say, with the whole burden of your song.'

IB That didn't go through Chancery. That I think was from Gladwyn Jebb, who told him I was doing it …

GC Why? Was it a matter for Gladwyn Jebb?

IB Entirely, I told you. It was commissioned by him.

GC Ah, it was commissioned.

IB He came to Washington, and asked me for a piece which he could show to the Cabinet and anybody else. About Walter Lippman, an essay.

GC Why? [?].

IB I have no idea. I had no interest. [?] interested because somebody asked, maybe, what his views were, I don't know. His motive I didn't ask. But as I was supposed to be the expert on Americans, I was asked to do it. I don't know why, I never asked why. It wasn't my business to say, 'What are you going to do with it? Who are you showing it to?' Let's stop.

GC Yes: go on.

IB Still connected?