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AS HE SAW IT

With a Foreword by Eleanor Roosevelt

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to build up stockpiles. Nor could we afford, of course, to forget our own defense needs, what was required to build up our own Army and Navy.

Admiral Pound, General Dill, Air Chief Marshal Freeman—these three rang every change on the argument that the stockpiles, in the long run, would prove of more value to the overall Allied war effort. They hammered at the concept that war matériel to the Soviets was destined just to be war matériel captured by the Nazis, that American self-interest dictated a channeling of the bulk of supplies into England. Fortunately, the American spokesmen saw America's self-interest—and the broad interests of the war effort—in a different light. For myself, I was wondering whether it was the British Empire's purpose to see the Nazis and the Russians cancel each other out, while Britain grew strong.

Meantime, Father was going over a draft of some notes with Sumner Welles. At this stage, we weren't sure what it was about: actually, of course, what they were working on was the Atlantic Charter, and the note to Stalin expressing our common determination for a common, mutual victory over Hitlerism.

The P.M. returned to the *Augusta* for dinner that night. This occasion was more intimate: the brass and the braid had departed. It was Father and the P.M., their immediate aides, and Franklin Junior and I. And therefore it was much more of an opportunity to get to know Churchill.

Once again, he was in fine form. The cigars were burned to ashes, the brandy disappeared steadily. But there was no marked change. If anything, his mind

seemed to work more clearly, and his tongue more easily.

But there *was* a change, from the talk of a night before. Last night, Churchill had talked without interruption, except for questions. Tonight, there were other men's thoughts being tossed into the kettle, and the kettle correspondingly began to bubble up and—once or twice—nearly over. You sensed that two men accustomed to leadership had sparred, had felt each other out, and were now readying themselves for outright challenge, each of the other. It must be remembered that at this time Churchill was the war leader, Father only the president of a state which had indicated its sympathies in a tangible fashion. Thus, Churchill still arrogated the conversational lead, still dominated the after-dinner hours. But the difference was beginning to be felt.

And it was evidenced first, sharply, over Empire.

Father started it.

"Of course," he remarked, with a sly sort of assurance, "of course, after the war, one of the preconditions of any lasting peace will have to be the greatest possible freedom of trade."

He paused. The P.M.'s head was lowered; he was watching Father steadily, from under one eyebrow.

"No artificial barriers," Father pursued. "As few favored economic agreements as possible. Opportunities for expansion. Markets open for healthy competition." His eye wandered innocently around the room.

Churchill shifted in his armchair. "The British Empire trade agreements," he began heavily, "are—"

Father broke in. "Yes. Those Empire trade agree-

ments are a case in point. It's because of them that the people of India and Africa, of all the colonial Near East and Far East, are still as backward as they are."

Churchill's neck reddened and he crouched forward. "Mr. President, England does not propose for a moment to lose its favored position among the British Dominions. The trade that has made England great shall continue, and under conditions prescribed by England's ministers."

"You see," said Father slowly, "it is along in here somewhere that there is likely to be some disagreement between you, Winston, and me.

"I am firmly of the belief that if we are to arrive at a stable peace it must involve the development of backward countries. Backward peoples. How can this be done? It can't be done, obviously, by eighteenth-century methods. Now—"

"Who's talking eighteenth-century methods?"

"Whichever of your ministers recommends a policy which takes wealth in raw materials out of a colonial country, but which returns nothing to the people of that country in consideration. *Twentieth*-century methods involve bringing industry to these colonies. *Twentieth*-century methods include increasing the wealth of a people by increasing their standard of living, by educating them, by bringing them sanitation—by making sure that they get a return for the raw wealth of their community."

Around the room, all of us were leaning forward attentively. Hopkins was grinning. Commander Thompson, Churchill's aide, was looking glum and alarmed. The P.M. himself was beginning to look apoplectic.

"You mentioned India," he growled.

"Yes. I can't believe that we can fight a war against fascist slavery, and at the same time not work to free people all over the world from a backward colonial policy."

"What about the Philippines?"

"I'm glad you mentioned them. They get their independence, you know, in 1946. And they've gotten modern sanitation, modern education; their rate of illiteracy has gone steadily down. . . ."

"There can be no tampering with the Empire's economic agreements."

"They're artificial. . . ."

"They're the foundation of our greatness."

"The peace," said Father firmly, "cannot include any continued despotism. The structure of the peace demands and will get equality of peoples. Equality of peoples involves the utmost freedom of competitive trade. Will anyone suggest that Germany's attempt to dominate trade in central Europe was not a major contributing factor to war?"

It was an argument that could have no resolution between these two men. The words went on, but the P.M. began again to get a tighter grip on the conversation. He no longer spoke sentences, he spoke paragraphs, and Commander Thompson's worried, glum look began to clear. The P.M. gathered confidence as his voice continued to fill the room, but there was a question un-

answered here, and it would remain unanswered through the next conference these men would join in, and the next after that. India, Burma—these were reproaches. Father, having once mentioned them aloud, would keep reminding his British hearers of them, sticking his strong finger into sore consciences, prodding, needling. And it was not from perversity, either; it was from conviction. Churchill knew that; that was what worried him most.

Smoothly he changed the course of the conversation, smoothly he involved Harry Hopkins, my brother, me—anyone to keep the subject away from Father and his mention of the colonial question and his nagging insistence on the inequalities of the Empire's favored trade agreements.

It was after two in the morning when finally the British party said their good nights. I helped Father into his cabin, and sat down to smoke a last cigarette with him.

Father grunted. "A real old Tory, isn't he? A real old Tory, of the old school."

"I thought for a minute he was going to bust, Pop."

"Oh," he smiled, "I'll be able to work with him. Don't worry about that. We'll get along famously."

"So long as you keep off the subject of India."

"Mmm, I don't know. I think we'll even talk some more about India, before we're through. *And* Burma. *And* Java. *And* Indo-China. *And* Indonesia. *And* all the African colonies. *And* Egypt and Palestine. We'll talk about 'em all. Don't forget one thing. Winnie has one supreme mission in life, but only one. He's a perfect wartime prime minister. His one big job is to see that Britain survives this war."

"I must say he sure gives the impression he's going to do just that."

"Yes. But you notice the way he changes the subject away from anything postwar?"

"It's embarrassing, the things you were talking about. Embarrassing to him."

"There's another reason. It's because his mind is perfect for that of a war leader. But Winston Churchill lead England after the war? It'd never work."

As it turned out, the British people agreed with Pop on that one.

Around eleven the next morning, the P.M. came to the captain's cabin on the *Augusta* again. He was with Father for two hours, and his business was the Charter. He and Cadogan and Sumner Welles and Harry Hopkins and Father were huddled over the most recent draft until lunchtime. I was in and out of the cabin during those two hours, just hearing bits and ends of conversation and wondering all the time how Churchill was going to square the sentiments in the Charter with the things he'd been saying the night before. I guess he was wondering too.

It ought to be set down that Sumner Welles was the man who worked hardest on the Charter, and who contributed most. It was his baby, from the time it was first considered, back in Washington; he'd flown from Washington with a working draft of the final agreement in his briefcase; and all the world knows how important a statement it was and is. It certainly isn't his fault, nor Father's either, that it hasn't been better lived up to.