

Treasury Chambers,
Whitehall, S.W.

R. F. Harrod Esq.,
Christchurch,
Oxford.

May 8, 1942

Dear Roy,

If you are to be in town next Thursday, I will keep a free time for a talk about your paper of May 4th and associated topics. I cannot manage the morning, and would prefer to keep the early afternoon free, though I could manage that if necessary. Would 5 o'clock on the 14th suit you?

On the merits of the case, and above all from the standpoint of practical convenience, I think there is everything to be said for the lay-out you advocate and the distinction between the two types of topics. I do not think that anything has happened seriously to prejudice this, if later on the arrangement seems to be the right one. The reference introduced by the Cabinet to Russia is to be regarded, I think, more as an attempt to prevent the matter being prejudiced the other way than as a positive injunction that Russia must be brought in on the ground-floor.

But how far in practice things will work out that way can only be discovered ambulando.

I do not know how far the Americans will welcome special Anglo-American relations as distinct from a more international set-up. We do not know, even if those with whom we first discussed the matter incline that way, whether it lies within the
/power

power of anyone to commit U.S. so deeply.

On the other side we are equally in the dark about the possibilities of collaboration with Russia.

Moreover, even if the Americans were to be of one mind with ourselves, it is a question whether it would be wise to present the rest of the world with what looked like an Anglo-American bloc. If there is anyone more unpopular than ourselves, it is the United States; and if there is anyone more unpopular than the United States, it is Russia; and if there is anyone more unpopular than Russia, it is ourselves.

So I think it is altogether too early to take up a definite stand as between a predominantly Anglo-American set-up and one which, from the start, has a more international character.

Where I unreservedly agree with you is that the actual constitution ^{of the plan} must be agreed and established by as few cooks as possible, with others invited to the dinner table after they have smelt the broth.

I submit to what you say in your two last paragraphs. I agree that that is how we ought to behave. But in the matter of post-war relief I remain sceptical how far we can get away with it when in fact it becomes clear that we shall not be providers of any significant part of the funds. However, that is no reason why we should not put a brave face on it.

Yours, JMK *gms*