Britain in WW2. 1941-1942 : The turning of the tide.

❶ Speech made in the House of Commons by Isaac Leslie Hore-Belisha (Liberal MP) on 8 December 1941.

The setting of the world war is now complete. The United States – for it is only, I imagine, a question of hours now —Russia, China and the British Empire are now ranged against the totalitarian powers. It is noticeable that we have an enormous preponderance of man-power, not only in sum but in each separate Continent. We also have an enormous superiority of resources. We have all the raw materials, oil, rubber, and tin in which Japan is chiefly lacking, except to the extent to which she has accumulated stocks. If, however, we have these advantages, the Axis has the greater striking power. The Germans have taught the world a new method of waging war. It is total war; it is not war by military means alone. We have to put into practice that lesson ourselves.[...]

It is a coincidence that the Government are just asking for the National Service Bill to demand further exertion from the man-power of the nation. There must follow an intensification of our industrial organisation. Two detrimental effects follow from the act of Japan, apart from the operations which will be involved. Ourselves and Russia will be deprived of some of those munitions on which we had counted.[...] Another detrimental consequence is the effect upon our shipping, upon our lifeline, because plainly America will not be able to give the same sustenance to us in that particular as she did before. Therefore, if we have to curtail still further the goods we consume and which involve the use of shipping, we shall do what is required.

❷ A rally for Russia at Trafalgar square on 25 October 1942 : factory workers and unionists, people on the left and beyond came to support the alliance with the Soviet Union in the war against Nazi Germany while the battle of Stalingrad was raging.



➪ **Using the documents and your knowledge, explain how the situation of the war changed between 1941 and 1942 and assess the consequences for Britain.**