

OF 198  
Germany, Govt of  
1941-43

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October 24, 1941

AMERICAN EMBASSY

LONDON.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

CONFIDENTIAL

Your 5040, October 22, 5 p.m.

You may inform the Foreign Office that the President will make a public statement along the following lines as soon as word is received that the contemplated Allied declaration has been issued or at 12 noon, E.S.T. October 25 if the declaration has not then been issued in London.

QUOTE The practice of executing scores of innocent hostages in reprisal for isolated attacks on Germans in countries temporarily under the Nazi heel revolts a world already inured to suffering and brutality. Civilized peoples long ago adopted the basic principle that no man should be punished for the deed of another. Unable to apprehend the persons involved in these attacks the Nazis characteristically slaughter fifty or a hundred innocent persons. Those who would INNER QUOTE collaborate

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END INNER QUOTE with Hitler or try to appease him cannot ignore this ghastly warning.

The Nazis might have learned from the last war the impossibility of breaking men's spirit by terrorism. Instead they develop their INNER QUOTE lebensraum END INNER QUOTE and INNER QUOTE new order END INNER QUOTE by depths of frightfulness which even they have never approached before. These are the acts of desperate men who know in their hearts that they cannot win. Frightfulness can never bring peace to Europe. It only sows the seeds of hatred which will one day bring fearful retribution END QUOTE.

EU:TCA:BSM

HOLD FOR RELEASE

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OCTOBER 25, 1941

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

CAUTION: The following statement by the President **MUST BE**  
HELD IN CONFIDENCE ~~UNTIL~~ until released.

Release is automatic, for the press and radio,  
for 12:00 noon, E.S.T., today.

STEPHEN EARLY  
Secretary to the President

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10-25-41

FOR THE PRESS

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The practice of executing scores of innocent hostages in reprisal for isolated attacks on Germans in countries temporarily under the Nazi heel revolts a world already inured to suffering and brutality. Civilized peoples long ago adopted the basic principle that no man should be punished for the deed of another. Unable to apprehend the persons involved in these attacks the Nazis characteristically slaughter fifty or a hundred innocent persons. Those who would "collaborate" with Hitler or try to appease him cannot ignore this ghastly warning.

The Nazis might have learned from the last war the impossibility of breaking men's spirit by terrorism. Instead they develop their "lebensraum" and "new order" by depths of frightfulness which even they have never approached before. These are the acts of desperate men who know in their hearts that they cannot win. Frightfulness can never bring peace to Europe. It only sows the seeds of hatred which will one day bring fearful retribution.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  

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THE SECRETARY

October 24, 1941

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

x48  
The British and the Allied Governments contemplate issuing a declaration similar to that quoted in the attached telegram concerning the shooting of hostages by the German authorities. While practical effects of such a declaration may be slight, I believe that this Government should also forcefully declare its revulsion at this practice. There is accordingly attached a statement which, if you approve, you may wish to make to the press either concurrently with the issuance of the Allied declaration or at a fixed time. I suggest tomorrow noon.

x20

12 noon E.S.T., Oct 25  
notes previously furnished  
in London.

DRAFT STATEMENTS CONCERNING EXECUTION  
OF HOSTAGES

The practice of executing scores of innocent hostages in reprisal for isolated attacks on Germans in countries temporarily under the Nazi heel revolts a world already inured to suffering and brutality. Civilized peoples long ago adopted the basic principle that no man should be punished for the deed of another. Unable to apprehend the persons involved in these attacks the Nazis characteristically slaughter fifty or a hundred innocent persons. Those who would "collaborate" with Hitler or try to appease him cannot ignore this ghastly warning.

The Nazis might have learned from the last war the impossibility of breaking men's spirit by terrorism. Instead they attempt to develop their "lebensraum" and "new order" by depths of frightfulness which even they have never approached before. These are the acts of desperate men who know in their hearts that they cannot win. Frightfulness can never bring peace to Europe. It only sows the seeds of hatred which will one day bring fearful retribution.

BERLE, Adolf  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
1-8-42

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Wrote to the President saying he has suggested that State and Justice jointly appoint (Nathan) Straus as inspector of German and Italian internment camps, with jurisdiction likewise to report on condition of German and Italian civilians not interned. Says he has talked to Straus but that Straus is not really interested in this job, since he would really like to be a member of the new Labor Board. Mr. Berle thinks Straus would probably take the job if the President asked him.

See 2694

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WELLES, Hon. Sumner  
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,  
8-1-42

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Wrote to President saying that the Sec. of State yesterday received the Ambassador of the Netherlands, the Minister of Yugoslavia, and the Minister of Luxembourg, who had requested an appointment in order to present a joint communication by instruction of their Governments, with request that the Secretary lay this matter before the President. It is an appeal, on behalf of the nine Governments signatory to the Declaration made at St. James' Palace on Jan. 13, 1942, condemning acts of violence against civilians. Said he understands that a similar appeal is being made to the Governments of Great Britain and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Enclosed a copy of the Declaration of January 13, signed by representatives of nine allied Governments whose countries are now under German occupation, also a copy of letter to Mr. Hull, July 30, 1942, asking that the President of the United States address a last warning to the culprits and make them understand that the determination and power of the United States of America are to be considered as a guarantee that the warning previously given will be carried into effect. The Dept. of State memorandum of conversation is dated July 31, 1942 and is on subject: German Atrocities Against Occupied Countries.

---- Originals returned (copies retained) with President's memorandum for the Under Secretary of State, Aug. 12, 1942 - "Do you think the enclosed calls for a reply on my part? If so, please prepare one -- otherwise return for my files".

SEE 4675

KNIBELDER, Dr. Oscar F.  
 Pastor, Lutheran Church of the Reformation,  
 Washington, D.C.,  
 Nov. 8, 1945.

Dear Mr. Knibelder: This is a follow-up to a telephone call with Mr. Hassett's secretary of that date. Asks that President send word of greeting which could be published on Sunday, Nov. 14th, in connection with the service and then to be published in the Lutheran Church papers over the country, as well as in many other journals. Encloses the letter to be addressed to the Rev. Dr. Frederick H. Knobel, President, United Lutheran Church in America, The Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Washington, D.C.---The President, Nov. 9th, wrote to Dr. Knobel extending greetings to all who participate in the Church of the Reformation in the solemn service commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Lutheran Church in America. The President said it was interesting to note that the United Lutheran Church is a merger of two former groups of the Lutherans in this country, the oldest dating back to the year 1619 when the first Lutherans came to America. Through all the generations since that faraway year, Lutherans have borne an honorable part in American life. The President said now, happily, three once-separate bodies are unified in one strong body to common cause against the forces of irreligion and materialism. The President said this solemn service of commemoration, Dr. Knobel would remember also his co-religionist who have been the victims of such a cruel persecution in Germany. The President said from the bitter experience of oppressed Christians in other lands, we shall learn deeper appreciation of the blessing of civil and religious liberty which is ours through the wisdom and foresight of the Fathers of the Constitution. The President said a anniversary message to them was -- To work and pray for an enlightened understanding of the nations of the world in which freedom of conscience shall be a cornerstone and everywhere shall have the blessed privilege of worshipping God without interference on any earthly power.

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