

OF 463
Poland Govt of
1940-1942

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

463

file

March 10, 1941

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

Attached is a piece by Raymond Clapper
about the German tactics in Poland.

x463-A
x463-C

x198-A

This covers much of the ground which
was reported to Myron Taylor from Vatican
sources, in a comment which you recently
passed on to Mr. Welles.

x76-D

x3865
x177423

A. A. B. , Jr.
A. A. B. , Jr. x20

Attachment.

x144-A
x4193-77pis.

Washington Daily News

THE WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 1941

Going Too Far By Raymond Clapper



IT IS hard to understand those opponents of the Administration who at this late date continue to obstruct and delay and to whip up public mistrust of efforts to help England fight off the Nazi hand of terror.

Everyone has had full opportunity to speak. The majority, no less than the minority, has insisted that all should be heard.

The lend-lease bill was introduced in the House Jan. 10. Full hearings have been held in both houses. Opponents were given full opportunity to state their views. Senate debate has been going on since Feb. 17. No one has been prevented from speaking. But

every effort to extend working hours in the Senate in order to bring about a vote has been opposed by the handful of opponents with threats that they would talk indefinitely. They have put democratic methods to a severe test. It is to the high credit of the majority that it has insisted upon the right of the minority to full debate. But the minority is taking advantage of that loyalty to democratic methods, to delay a decision.

While they go on talking in the Senate, Hitler goes on pulling more countries under his blanket of night. The minority talks a good deal about its love of democracy yet it fiddles unmoved by the sight of terrorism rolling on in Europe. It is not showing the least interest in helping to put war materials quickly in the hands of the only people in Europe that is standing up in defense of its own freedom.

PRESS dispatches report that German authorities have forbidden the American Minister to Romania, Franklin Mott Gunther, to leave Bucharest altho Romanian authorities granted such permission. Restrictions have been placed upon American diplomatic representatives in Italy. Those are only samples. The Nazi regime has refused to permit American diplomatic officials to go into Poland. The "new order" in Europe is being inflicted upon helpless peoples by methods so shameful that they must be kept secret.

However, thru certain channels, officials here have received information that they consider to be correct as to frightful methods used in the destruction of Poland. One official here describes it as the "murder of a nation."

MORE than 1,500,000 Poles have been deported from western Poland, including the Danzig area, to make room for Germans brought out of the Baltic countries. The uprooted Poles have been dumped into central Poland, in the Warsaw area, making of it a vast ghetto. From the single town of Poznan, with a total population of about 200,000, half the people have been deported. From one small district of less than 200,000 population, 132,000 persons were taken. Poles left behind have had their houses and property taken from them.

Germans undertook a program of deporting 1,000,000 Polish laborers to Germany. These men and boys were forced into labor battalions and shipped to Germany. Many were ill, aged or otherwise incapacitated for work. This is regarded by officials here as slavery of the most brutal, medieval type.

Germans also have undertaken to exterminate the intellectual classes of Poland. Catholic bishops and priests have been the particular objects of this treatment. Churches have been closed, either completely or for all except two or three hours a week. Germans have issued orders prohibiting confessions in the Polish language. They have introduced the "absent treatment" by German priests who grant mass blanket absolution without hearing confessions. In western Poland 3000 Polish priests were either imprisoned or deported.

Reports of physical atrocities have been received but officials discount them in the absence of reliable eye-witness verification. They are interested in the greater atrocity, the deliberate murder of a nation and the transformation of the people into a mass of slaves.

THIS is the ki-

st one nation
to resist it.
that the
supply-

75/19/42

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X

May 13, 1942

Sw.
A. O. K.
J. B. W.
5/16/42

My dear Mr. President:

When the Polish Ambassador called recently he left with me a memorandum which contained in part a request for our assistance in expediting the evacuation from the Soviet Union of Polish military and civilian prisoners and deportees. The Ambassador added in this connection that General Sikorski had asked that this matter be brought to your attention.

x 220
x 4708
x 3/86

There is attached, for your consideration and possible approval, a draft telegram to Admiral Standley. The substance of the pertinent portions of the memorandum of the Polish Ambassador appears in the draft telegram.

x 4770

Faithfully yours,

Sumner Welles x 20

Enclosure:

Draft telegram.

The President,
The White House.

A true copy of
the signed orig.
inal.

C O P Y

TELEGRAM SENT

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON,

May 12, 1942.

AMERICAN EMBASSY,

KUIBYSHEV.

When the Polish Ambassador called on the Under Secretary on May 5 he left a memorandum, the substance of which is in part as follows:

As the Soviet Government has delayed further in giving effect to clauses which the Polish and Soviet Governments agreed upon concerning (1) Polish military and civilian evacuation to Iran from Russia, (2) additional means for recruiting by Polish military authorities of Polish soldiers in Soviet Russia, (3) delays in effecting the release of both civilian deportees and prisoners of war, the Government of Poland has instructed the Ambassador of Poland at Kuibyshev to present to the Soviet Government a note requesting the fulfillment of obligations undertaken with respect to these three points.

It is added in the memorandum that in view of the importance at this time of completing the evacuation, particularly of the Polish military to Iran, and in order to hasten the reconditioning and equipping of these Polish forces for active service in the Near East, the Polish Ambassador in Washington is instructed to ask the Secretary of State if the Government of the United States could support the efforts of the Government of Poland at Kuibyshev in this matter.

You may in your discretion, whenever suitable opportunities present themselves, express the hope of the American Government that the Soviet authorities make as liberal interpretation as circumstances will permit of its various agreements with the Polish Government. It is believed that in expressing such hopes you will find it possible to make it clear that we have no desire to intervene in differences which are sure to arise from time to time between the two Governments in the carrying out of these agreements or to take sides in disputes with regard to the citizenship of individuals, but that it is our conviction that the display of a generous attitude on the part of the Soviet authorities would materially further the joint war effort by promoting a greater spirit of confidence between two of the most important United Nations of Eastern Europe.

LAH: LWH
Eu:WJG:AMR

~~SECRET~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~TOP SECRET~~
~~SECRET~~

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x134

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FOR THE PRESS

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 21, 1942

2367

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The Secretary of State recently forwarded to me a communication signed by the Ambassador of the Netherlands and the Ministers of Yugoslavia and Luxembourg on behalf of the Governments of Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the French National Committee in London, calling attention to the barbaric crimes against civilian populations which are being committed in occupied countries, particularly on the continent of Europe.

In this communication, attention was invited to the declaration signed in London on January 13, 1942 by the representatives of nine governments whose countries are under German occupation. This declaration affirmed that acts of violence thus perpetrated against the civilian populations are at variance with accepted ideas concerning acts of war and political offenses as these are understood by civilized nations; stated that the punishment, through the channel of organized justice of those guilty and responsible for these crimes, is one of the principal war aims of the contracting governments; and recorded the determination of the contracting governments in a spirit of international solidarity to see to it that those guilty and responsible, whatever their nationality, are handed over to justice and tried and that the sentences pronounced are carried out.

The communication which I have just received from the chiefs of mission of the Netherlands, Yugoslavia and Luxembourg states that these acts of oppression and terror have taken proportions and forms giving rise to the fear that as the defeat of the enemy countries approaches, the barbaric and unrelenting character of the occupational regime will become more marked and may even lead to the extermination of certain populations.

As I stated on October 25, 1941:

"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."

The Government of the United States has been aware for some time of these crimes. Our Government is constantly receiving additional information from dependable sources and it welcomes reports from any trustworthy source which would assist in keeping our growing fund of information and evidence up to date and reliable.

The United Nations are going to win this war. When victory has been achieved, it is the purpose of the Government of the United

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States, as I know it is the purpose of each of the United Nations, to make appropriate use of the information and evidence in respect to these barbaric crimes of the invaders, in Europe and in Asia. It seems only fair that they should have this warning that the time will come when they shall have to stand in courts of law in the very countries which they are now oppressing and answer for their acts.

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WELLES, Sumner
State Department
Washington, D. C.
May 19, 1942.

Letter to the President saying that by instruction of General Sikorski the Polish Ambassador handed him a letter addressed to the Pres. (signed by Jan Ciechanowsky) which he encloses, re the fate of the children of Polish deportees in Russia. Mr. Welles says the American Red Cross has rec'd reports recently which show that the condition of these Polish children in the Soviet Union is desperate - he feels that since food supplies are ample in most eastern parts of the Union of South Africa, it would be a splendid plan to try to evacuate the children and their mothers there - feels that the Government of the U. of So. Africa would give its consent, provided the American Red Cross agreed to provide for the care and maintenance of these refugees until the end of the war. Says he has discussed the problem with Norman Davis and he agrees that this is the most practical suggestion and asks if the Pres. approves in principle will he let him know and he (Sumner Welles) will then discuss the matter further with the Polish Ambassador and others concerned. Pencil notation says - S.W. - O.K. - F.D.R., 5/20/42.

See P.P.F. 7543

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