

PPF 4021
Ryan, Bishop James

From Fr. [REDACTED] FROM HOLDINGS AT THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

the Pres. - Bishop James Ryan of Omaha to confer with the Pres. and Sumner Welles about the Nazi influence.

*Under Secy of State
to Pres. [unclear]*

December 9, 1938

4021

Dear Bishop Ryan:

x 187-4996
x 187-150
x 87

I have learned that it is probable that you will soon be leaving on a mission with ~~Dr. Sheehy~~ of the Catholic University which will take you to many of the important capitals of the other American republics. I have received this information with the greatest pleasure because I believe that much good will result from such a trip at this time. The Department of State will notify our missions in the American republics which you will visit of your trip and our ambassadors and ministers will be glad to do what they can to facilitate your journey.

If you are planning to visit Washington before you leave for South America, I shall hope to have the opportunity of seeing you.

Believe me

Yours very sincerely,

x 76-21

The Most Reverend
James H. Ryan, #
Bishop of Omaha,
630 Dodge Street,
Omaha, Nebraska.

x 187-18

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

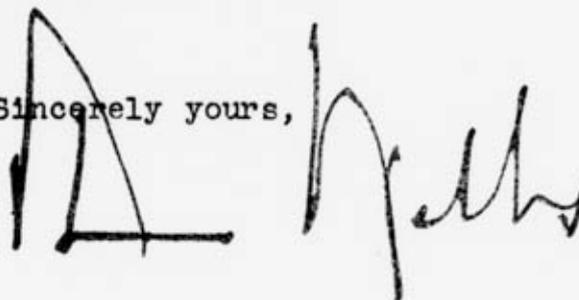
December 9, 1938.

My dear Miss LeHand:

As a result of my conversation with the President on December 6, I sent to him yesterday a suggested letter for him to send directly to Bishop Ryan. If the President found this letter satisfactory and sent it, you may wish to let Dr. Sheehy know that the President has suggested in his letter to Bishop Ryan that he would be glad to see him if he came to Washington before he left on his trip to South America.

Believe me

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. H. H. H.", written in dark ink.

Miss Marguerite A. LeHand,
Secretary to the President,
The White House.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

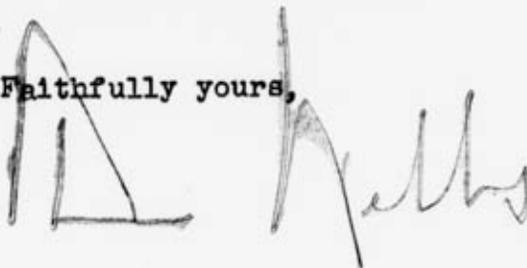
December 8, 1938

My dear Mr. President:

In accordance with our conversation of yesterday I am enclosing a suggested letter for you to send Bishop Ryan. I think this draft follows the lines you had in mind.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Kelly'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping tail.

Enclosure:
To Bishop Ryan.

The President,
The White House.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 8, 1938

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MEMORANDUM FOR

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE, ²⁰

FOR PREPARATION OF REPLY FOR MY
SIGNATURE.

F. D. R.

Letter from Father Maurice S. Sheehy, Head of the Department of Religious Education, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., 12/3/38 to Miss Lehman, with enclosed letter to the President. Suggests as a solution to the persecution of the Jews in Germany that a special commission, composed of Bishop Ryan, Father Sheehy, and possibly a prominent Catholic layman familiar with the conditions prevailing in South America, to the capitals of the eight leading republic of South America. There they would first call on the American diplomats to pay their respects and then contact the heads of the Catholic Church in those states in order to cement the fine relationships which have always existed between the Church in the U.S. and South America and to inform these
(over)

ecclesiastic of the commission's alarm at the growth of ~~xx~~ totalitarianism in the world. If President is in sympathy with this plan, Father Sheeny will wire Bishop Ryan to come to Washington for conference with the President and Mr. Welles. Encloses newspaper clipping "The Nazi and the Church" by Most. Rev. James H. Ryan, Bishop of Omaha.

APP
1021



The Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE BEGAN OCTOBER 12, 1938

1889
SEMICENTENNIAL
1939

December 3, 1938.

Miss Marguerite LeHand,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Miss LeHand:

Reluctant though I am to impose upon your friendship, there is so much at stake for our country in the suggestion of a special mission to South America to be headed by Bishop Ryan to combat Nazi influence that I am hoping you may see fit to call it to the President's attention. I have talked this matter over at some length with Sumner Welles.

In case the President is in sympathy with this plan, I shall wire Bishop Ryan to come to Washington for conference with the President and Mr. Welles at the convenience. I think the Catholic Church can render a great service to the cause of democratic government by immediate action to support the splendid work the President and Secretary Hull have done in South America.

Yours sincerely,

Maurice J. Sheehy
Head of the Department
of Religious Education

x198-A
x198



The Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE BEGAN OCTOBER 12, 1938

1889
SEMICENTENNIAL
1939

December 3rd, 1938

Honorable Franklin Delano Roosevelt,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

After the national broadcast sponsored by the Catholic Church in protest against the persecution of the Jews in Germany, a group of Catholic leaders met to determine what we could do, quietly and without undue publicity, toward solving the problem of Hitler influence in South America. At first we were inclined to conduct a research project to determine the extent of this influence, but upon investigation we found that the facts were so obvious that such a research project would be a waste of money.

The present plan is to send a special commission, composed of Bishop Ryan, myself, and possibly a prominent Catholic layman familiar with the conditions prevailing in South America, to the capitols of the eight leading republics of South America. There we would first call on the American diplomats to pay our respects and then contact the heads of the Catholic Church in those states in order to cement the fine relationships which have always existed between the Church in the United States and South America and to inform these ecclesiastics of our alarm at the growth of totalitarianism in the world.

For Bishop Ryan to absent himself from his diocese, a letter from you would be necessary. I do not know the diplomatic technicalities which would be involved. I mentioned this matter to Secretary Hull shortly before his departure, but I did not seek his approval because I met him on a train under circumstances which prevented me from explaining this matter in detail. I have since then talked to Sumner Welles, who appears to be quite favorable to such a mission. If this attempt meets with your approval, I think it would be well to call Bishop Ryan to Washington for a conference. Fortunately, His Excellency speaks Spanish and, during his years in Washington, became acquainted with many of the South American diplomats. I am enclosing a copy of an article by Bishop Ryan which appeared in the *Observatore Romano* which elicited much favorable comment among Roman ecclesiastics.

December 3, 1938

If there are further details which I can give you, I shall be available at your convenience. I think the Catholic Church can render valuable assistance at this moment in world history in preserving the ideals of democratic government.

Sincerely yours,

Maurice S. Sheehy

Rev. Dr. Maurice S. Sheehy,
Head of the Department of Religious
Education.

The Nazi and The Church

THE TRUE VOICE (Omaha, Nebr.) 10-28-38

By MOST REV. JAMES H. RYAN, Ph. D., S. T. D.
Bishop of Omaha

The American public has followed the painful course of recent events in Austria with sentiments almost of horror mixed with pity. We realize that, due to the strict press censorship, the whole story has not been told. Enough information has come through to permit us to appreciate the sordidness, even the cruelty of the attacks on the Church and its representatives, which have taken place in that unfortunate and distracted country. That an infuriated mob of ruthless hoodlums should be allowed to invade the palace of the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna, destroy its furnishings, burn sacred objects, and even menace the life of the Cardinal himself is a series of happenings which could not occur in a country where law and order reign, unless, as in the Austria of today, the police work hand in glove with the mob, and the public authorities, instead of suppressing, are in fact instigating attacks on religion and its representatives. The inhabitants of a great city like Vienna should hang their heads in shame (we feel that the great majority do) at the barbarous attacks which have been made on the consecrated person of a Prince of the Church. It was indeed a sad day for poor Austria, and all the world realizes it, when the janizaries of Hitler took possession of its greatest city.

The violent persecution of religion, and, in particular, of the Catholic Church, which is taking place at this hour in Nazi Germany has caused universal surprise, to put it mildly, in the United States. Unaccustomed as we are to such outbursts of official bigotry and of downright persecution on the part of the government, we view the latest sequence of events with horror, not unmingled with indignation. The question which constantly turns up in the American mind, as we view events in Germany, is: How is it possible for a State to persecute, and in such unmeasured and bitter ways, a Church whose roots are so deeply set in the national life and whose history has been so intimately intertwined with the very history of the nation itself? An intelligible and acceptable answer, I am frank to confess, escapes us. That the Catholic Church in Germany is, in any just sense of the word, political, as the Nazi claim, or that its principles or activities are a menace to Nazi hegemony, simply can not be believed by a sane-minded person. From the first day of the rise to

ings of a hatred whose source can only be diabolical. When the responsible organ of a government sinks so low as to attack, in the very language of the gutter, the August and Sacred Person of the Pope Himself, then, at last, we have sounded depths of human perfidy almost unknown in the annals of the human race. Coupled with these campaigns of hatred, there has gone hand in hand a system of espionage, the most odious and hateful imaginable. The very sacredness and privacy of the family fireside has been invaded by Nazi spies, and, on trumped-up charges, thousands of priests and devoted laymen have been arrested and spirited away, many without trial, to concentration camps which are a disgrace to civilized society.

The religious picture in Germany today is much darker even than I have drawn it. One has but to read the Joint Pastoral Letter of the German Hierarchy, a solemn, calm, and moving document, to appreciate how grave the situation really is. The German Bishops are convinced that the Nazi persecution of religion will continue and will reach unexampled heights. They have prepared both clergy and people to live as the first Christians were compelled to live, the life of the Catacombs. And if the attacks on the Church in Germany proper are grave, what must we say of the much more vicious and hostile attempts to uproot Christianity in Austria, at which the whole world today stands aghast?

It is with a profound sense of pity that we in America read of the recent happenings in the German Reich. Hatred can only beget more hatred. There is no hatred of the Nazi in the hearts of the American people, but there does exist a nation-wide condemnation of the religious persecution and a nation-wide feeling of solidarity with the suffering Church in Germany. The American people can only view with sorrow the deep disgrace which the contemporary leaders of Germany bring upon the fair name of a nation once honored the world over. Our hearts beat in union with the suffering Catholics of Germany; we offer them every assistance within our power, and, in particular, we promise them the suffrage of our united prayers.

I can not speak officially for the American Hierarchy, though I know that I voice the sentiments of the American Bishops when I assert that we condemn in un-

...mission, were able to accept the all-embracing political and religious claims of the Nazi State. To demand, as the Nazis admittedly do, the final word in every field affecting the welfare of man, is to make demands which the Church can not accept. Particularly obnoxious to the Church was the Nazi insistence on its exclusive right to legislate for education and for marriage. Such presumptions run counter to the very constitution of the Church, and could only be accepted if the Church were willing to abdicate its supremacy in a realm which is religious and is, moreover, of divine origin. No such betrayal of principle is thinkable on the part of a Church which holds that its founder is Christ Himself.

Despite the fundamental contradictions which exist between Nazi ideology and Christian faith, a *modus vivendi* could have been established if the Nazi State were willing to moderate some of its outrageous claims to universal supremacy. As a matter of fact, a Concordat was signed between the Holy See and the Reich. But, in spite of their pledged word, the sorrowful history of the past few years proves that neither Hitler nor his intimate advisers were willing really to concede an inch. On the contrary, instead of seeking a way out, they began a campaign of intimidation against the Church, followed this by a campaign of lies, and have now reached the point where, by every means within their power, they seek to destroy that which they can not frighten or conquer.

The story of Nazi persecution, as it has come to us from unquestionable German sources, reads more like the history of the doings of the inmates of a psychopathic hospital than the actions of sane men. The activities of Nazi agents against the Church seem imbued with a spirit of hatred, of cruelty, and of inhumanity that has few parallels since the days of the French Revolution. Catholic organizations of all kinds have been banned, schools and seminaries closed, newspapers proscribed, and property confiscated. A virulent and vicious campaign is even now in progress to corrupt youth, morally and religiously, to steal from them their most precious heritage, belief in God. Every opportunity, public and private, is seized to pour scorn on the Church and her ministers. Even the most exalted personages are continually subjected, especially in the press, to the bitter outpour-

ing of tyrannical power. I know, too, that I echo the sentiments of the entire American people when I condemn publicly and without reservation this irrational campaign of hatred against the Church, the responsibility for which falls squarely on the shoulders of the leaders of modern Germany. That God in His mercy may touch their hearts and enlighten their minds to the grievousness of their sins is the prayer of every American, no matter what his religious beliefs may be.

Pope Leads in Prayer as All Italy Thanks God for Europe Peace

Vatican. (NC)—The enthusiasm which has greeted the peace which has resulted from the Conference of Munich has been manifested in Italy by a number of religious ceremonies of thanksgiving to Divine Providence, in which was evident the influence of the Papal appeal to the faithful to pray.

Prayers of thanksgiving took place chiefly on the first Sunday of October, the Month of the Holy Rosary, and the first to fulfill this rite was the Sovereign Pontiff himself. This year he desired to give it greater prominence to an annual custom, inviting high personalities who that morning had gathered in the Papal apartment, among whom were Cardinal Pizzardo, Nuncio to Italy; Archbishop Borgogini Duca, Archbishop Migone, Secret Almoner of His Holiness, and the Governor of the Vatican City, Marchese Serafini, to join him. The ceremony, instead of being held in the private chapel of the Pope, took place in the official apartment of His Holiness.

At the same time, the same ceremony, followed by the singing of the *Te Deum*, was celebrated in the parochial church of Castel Gandolfo.

Similar ceremonies were held in Rome. In the Vatican Basilica the entire Chapter of Canons after the solemn Mass and the procession to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, chanted a *Te Deum*. In the evening, in the Church of the Gesu, where reposes the body of St. Ignatius Loyola, the Rev. Luigi Masetti, S. J., delivered a fervent exhortation asking the congregation to thank God and to raise a thought of filial gratitude to the Pope who had offered his life for peace.

REPRODUCED FROM HOLDINGS AT THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

December 10, 1938

Respectfully referred to the Under
Secretary of State for his information.

M. H. McINTYRE
Secretary to the President

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Copy of President's letter of 12/9/38 to The Most Reverend James
H. Ryan, Bishop of Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska, in re his mission to
South America.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 12, 1938

MEMO FOR G.G.T.

Let Dr. Sheehy know this morning.

F.D.R.

*I attended to this
file
G.G.T.*

The Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.



1869
SEMICENTENNIAL
1939

7/14/39

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December 17th, 1938

Colonel Marvin McIntyre
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Colonel McIntyre:

In the letter sent to Bishop Ryan on December 9th the President invited the Bishop to call on him before going to South America. Bishop Ryan will be in the city December 27th and 28th, and he would like to have an appointment at the President's convenience on the 28th.

If it is possible for me to do so, I should like to see the President for five minutes before this South America trip, which, I believe, means a great deal for Pan-American relationships. I shall call you on Monday or Tuesday to see if you can get me in between more weighty appointments.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Maurice S. Sheehy

Rev. Dr. Maurice S. Sheehy,
Head of the Department of Religious
Education

TELEGRAM

JND321WU AB 16 N.L. *The White House*

Washington

Coral Gables, Flo., Jan. 25, 1939.

file
4021

THE PRESIDENT:

All South America sends its love to our President. Where
do we fish?

Bishop Ryan and Father Sheehy, Amateur Diplomats.

#

PP74996

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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4021

February 6, 1939.

MEMO FOR THE P. S.

Dr. Sheehy will be in
on Wednesday morning between
10.30 and 11.00 o'clock.

G. G. T.