

President's Secretary's File  
Confidential File

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State Dept 1944-45 (1) 12

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*C.F.*

*file*

*State*

February 7, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR

ADMIRAL LEAHY: *x 4189*

Will you speak to me about  
this tomorrow?

F.D.R.

JAN 27 1944

In reply refer to  
WE 740.00112 European War  
1939/9562

My dear Admiral Leahy:

Proposals for relief feeding of the populations, particularly women and children, in certain of the European occupied areas continue to be put forward and certain of the sponsors of these various plans continue to press me for favorable consideration of their plans. Last fall most of these individuals and agencies laid their programs before a subcommittee of the Committee of Foreign Relations of the Senate. The testimony of these various people was presented in support of Senate Resolution 100. One of the outstanding arguments used in this connection is that relating to the relief feeding now going on in Greece, it being pointed out that this relief is in fact being distributed to the Greek people and is not contributing to the war effort of our enemies. I believe this statement on the part of the various interested people is correct. If a similar distribution could be carried out in other German-occupied areas without benefit to the enemy I am inclined to feel that some revision of the present blockade policy might be considered. In this connection I have in mind the deplorable conditions which are likely to exist in these areas at the time of liberation and I also have in mind the magnitude of the job which will confront us in shipping adequate relief and food supplies into these areas immediately after their liberation. I might add that the type of relief goods which I would have in mind is different from those envisaged in the proposal recently made by Lord Selborne.

In this connection I have received your letter of January 12, 1944 and agree with you that we should not take the risk of increasing the enemy's powers of

resistance

Admiral William D. Leahy,  
Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief  
of the Army and Navy,  
The White House.

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resistance by sending in seeds and equipment designed to increase production within the areas in question. There could presumably be no control over such a program, while on the basis of the Greek experiment it would appear possible to exercise adequate control.

I would appreciate having the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the military aspects of the situation were a program along the lines of that in operation in Greece to be adopted for use in Belgium, France and possibly Norway where need for relief to women and children seems to be especially acute.

Sincerely yours,

Cordell Hull

A true copy of  
the signed original  
JBA

REPTO:ML  
2/10/44

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

January 26, 1944

~~SECRET~~ ||

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

The Department has recently reviewed in detail the question of feeding certain groups of the population of Axis-occupied Europe, especially children in countries such as Belgium, northern France and possibly Norway. We feel the need is so great that the blockade policy should be amended to permit such an operation properly controlled so that the enemy will not benefit. Further, we think, under present conditions, the case might be based on military grounds and that if it could be based on military grounds the British would be more apt to concur.

x892  
x14  
x203  
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Hence, I have addressed a letter to Admiral Leahy, raising the issue in that light, for consideration by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A copy is enclosed for your information. Our thought is that if they should approve the question could then be presented to the

x5014

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. letter, 1-11-73.  
By RHP Date FEB 11 1972

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Combined Chiefs of Staff and finally be directed to the British through that military channel.

I wanted you to have this information in view of the Resolution on this subject now pending in Congress.

CH  
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Enclosure:

To Admiral Leahy.

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. letter, 1-11-72

By RHP Date FEB 11 1972

*J.H.P.*  
Confidential

Feb. 1, 1944

CONCERNING AID FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN

Report of the Executive Secretary of Food For Freedom, Inc.

*5306*

At the suggestion of the Chairman, Mrs. Dwight W. Morrow, late in December, 1943, inquiries were begun by Food For Freedom to determine what position Food For Freedom should take about the sending of food to Europe's children through the blockade. *PP72*

The following are among the persons who were consulted:

Paul H. Appleby, Under-Secretary of Agriculture  
Dewey Anderson, Director of Operations, UNRRA  
Dr. Murray R. Benedict, Food Advisor, Lend-Lease  
Dr. John Canning, Assistant to Director, War Food Distribution  
Dr. Margaret Mead, National Research Council  
Dr. E. M. Nelson, (Vitamin Expert of American Medical Association)  
Chief of Food and Drug Division of Dept. Agri.  
Dr. William Schmidt, Consultant for UNRRA (Child Feeding and Health)  
Mr. Arthur Ringland, Consultant, the President's War Relief Control Board.  
Mr. Roy Veach, Department of State, attached to UNRRA  
Mrs. Grace Lowry, former member of American Friends' Service Committee in France and Spain  
Col. Harold E. Rounds, Representative of Chief of Staff on Policy, Civilian Supplies, U. S. Army  
Miss Mary Craig McGeachey, Representative of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare  
Mr. Guy Thorold, Councillor of the British Embassy  
Mr. J. H. Gorvin, Representative of Sir Leith-Ross of UNRRA  
Mr. Frank L. McDougall, of Australia  
Dr. Mohn, of Sweden, who supervised arrangements for relief in Greece for the International Red Cross  
Dr. Carl Evang, Surgeon General of Norway  
Dr. E. J. Bigwood, of Belgium (formerly League of Nations Secretariat)

Hon. Robert Woods Bliss, Consultant, Department of State, was informed of this inquiry.

It became clear at once that the propaganda of the Temporary Council for Food for Europe's Children contained misleading and apparently intentionally distorted statements, that this was arousing unjustified antagonism towards England, that it was creating a situation which would benefit the German Government and embarrass our Government in any possible subsequent negotiations, that it might well be leading to false hopes on the part of the governments-in-Exile, that it was discrediting plans for relief to which our government is committed, and finally, that this situation cannot be improved by a public statement by any outside agency such as Food For Freedom but only by an authoritative statement by our Government.

To that end, Food For Freedom requested an appointment for Mrs. Morrow and Mrs. Leach to bring this matter to the attention of the Secretary of State. Mr. Cordell Hull, due to pressure of other duties, suggested that they should explain the matter to his assistant, Mr. Adolph Berle. The attached statement was therefore prepared and was submitted by Mrs. Morrow and Mrs. Leach on Jan-

- 2 -

uary 31st. Mr. Berle seemed very glad that Food For Freedom took the stand therein expressed requesting a considered opinion from our Government.

Public feeling has been worked up on this subject by highly emotional appeals on behalf of these children. Some of the people backing this drive are well known for their non-cooperative attitude towards the Administration, for isolationism and for anti-British sentiment. A great number of those supporting this plan, however, are only impelled by genuine sympathy for the serious under-nourishment of children in Europe. The Executive Council of the A. F. of L. adopted a declaration on January 27th urging the Government to approve of sending food to the children in Nazi-occupied countries. We were informed that SR-100 unanimously approved by the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, will be moved on the floor of the Senate this coming week. If the reasons for withholding relief as given by various authorities consulted are valid, then the American public should be so informed without delay.

To illustrate the complexity of this problem, the following detail comments are given:

a) Concerning the blockade:

The blockade was Great Britain's only offensive weapon during the darkest period of the war. Some people in the United States seem to believe that this economic blockade is now not very important in helping to win the war. The fact that eleven German destroyers were recently sent out to try to protect one blockade runner at the very time that the "Scharnhorst" was risked without destroyer escort, which might well have saved her, is proof of the seriousness to the Germans of the blockade. This applies to special materials needed by German industry more than to food supplies.

Some representatives of the governments-in-Exile have expressed the opinion that, while total blockade was necessary earlier, the strength of the Allies is now such that greater advantages might accrue by more deft and varied use of this weapon and consequently favor controlled or limited breaking of the blockade to bring food to undernourished children. In the first World War the blockade of food helped to defeat Germany. In this war, that part of the blockade may well be hurting our friends more than our enemies. We are informed by reliable sources that the leaders of the underground (speaking for the rank and file whose children are the most affected) in Holland, Belgium and France, do not favor this relaxation. Distribution would have to be made through those local organizations which the Nazi authorities approved. The International Red Cross would only provide personnel for supervision (in Greece about fifteen Swiss and Swedish officials supervise the work of a Greek staff of 12,000 for this relief distribution). Therefore a system to set up distribution of food for these children might well strengthen elements in those countries which are hostile to the liberation movement.

b) Concerning the second front:

It is most unlikely that these negotiations and the actual arrangements for purchasing supplies and shipping this food could possibly be completed before the anticipated opening of the second front. If they could be, the presence of any of these international relief

ships at that time in any of the ports likely to be attacked would be an embarrassment to the Allied military command and would thereby interfere with the prosecution of the war.

c) Concerning negotiations with Germany:

Any arrangements for this feeding would necessitate negotiations on the part of the American and British Governments through a neutral power with the present Nazi regime. In this process the German Government is likely to insist on arrangements to their advantage to the extent that they feel the American and British Governments are acting in this matter due to widespread public pressure. For instance, when one more Swedish ship was allowed out of the Baltic by the Germans for Greek relief this month, the Allied Governments were obliged to turn over one of our very much needed merchant vessels to the International Red Cross. It is improbable that the German Government would permit several Swedish ships to leave the Baltic and thereby be released from German control unless the Allies gave up a similar number of ships for this purpose. The German Government, if it feels American public pressure is strong enough, is also likely to insist on the provision of transportation facilities (trucks, rolling stock and gasoline) for the distribution of these supplies to the children. The German Government insisted that the automobiles, trucks and gasoline needed for supervision by the International Red Cross for Greek relief be provided by the Allies. Canadian gasoline is sent to Greece each month for this use. The extent of the propaganda drive in the United States for feeding these children therefore strengthens the bargaining position of the German Government in any such negotiations.

d) Concerning 'famine conditions':

As far as can be ascertained, the term 'famine conditions' only applies to Poland and (formerly) to Greece. It has just been reported from London that over-all food rations in France, Holland and Belgium are slightly below those of last winter, except for fats necessary to cold-weather health which are also in short supply in Germany. Meat is equally short on rations and equally difficult to obtain even with coupons. The Surgeon General of Norway reports that the school lunch program for the Norwegian children is almost as nourishing as it was pre-war. Conditions are without question serious in many urban centers in Europe, although the children in Spain (not included in this plan) may be as undernourished as those in any countries for which aid is sought (Norway, Holland, Belgium and France).

e) Concerning Vitamins:

Considerable inquiry was made about the suggestions that multi-vitamins be allowed through the blockade in concentrated capsule or tablet form. Dr. Bigwood, one of Europe's principal vitamin experts, and Dr. Evang, Surgeon General of Norway, did not feel these would be a suitable 'token' for aid. Doctors are not agreed as to the usefulness of vitamins unless ample food can also be provided. It is recognized that vitamins, as medically prescribed,

are essential in certain cases. Both Norway and Belgium seem to have sufficient stock for this purpose at present. On the other hand, although Vitamin C is now being produced in great quantities in this country, the Russian Government has recently requested all available supplies of Vitamin C for their war wounded. The Allied Governments have just placed orders for large quantities of multi-vitamin tablets for use in Russia and China as soon as help in feeding the civilians in these countries can be undertaken. Thus it is a question whether any large release of vitamins for children could be spared.

f) Concerning clothing:

The greatest need for clothing is for school-age children, not for infants. Shoes are also especially needed. There is a shortage in both these categories of new articles in the United States. The drives for worn clothing have resulted in obtaining very small quantities of worn clothing for school-age children. Whether sent now or after liberation it is highly important to accumulate more of this category of clothing.

All persons consulted expressed the hope that, if substantial aid cannot be sent to them now, some token of immediate aid for these children might be arranged. They also hoped that at the time of any announcement of blockade policy a statement would be made of the constructive ways in which Americans as individuals or as members of organizations can assist in accumulating supplies for relief which will be urgently needed as soon as these countries are liberated.

- a) Miss McGeachey and Mr. Guy Thorold had suggested that they would take the initiative to find out what token relaxations of the blockade might be acceptable to the British Government and whether arrangements for removal of some of these children from the path of invasion could be expedited. The American authorities would be kept informed by them of all developments.
- b) Food For Freedom has drafted the Proposed Recommendations which will be submitted to its Executive Committee. Publication of these would not be suitable until after the position of our Government has been clarified.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that Food For Freedom naturally is in favor of any possible relief for these innocent victims of the war which can be given without prolonging the war. As Mrs. Morrow states, "It is up to our Government to determine which is the lesser of two evils." Only those whose responsibility it is to decide major policies of the war have sufficient information on which to base a decision. It is assumed that the Secretary of State will consult with the Army, the Navy, the Foreign Economic Administration, the War Shipping Administration, and the War Food Administration before giving his considered judgment to the President on this matter. Food For Freedom's stand is against the kind of propaganda drive which is being conducted. It is not at all against sending food to these children if the highest authorities of our Government are convinced that this would be a practicable and strategic move in winning the war.

*file*

THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*C. F.  
State*

*2/13/4*

December 6, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR MISS TULLY

Subject: Palestine Resolution

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The attached memorandum was written before the wire which I sent you early this afternoon. It may be helpful as background information although it is out of date.

*E. A. Tamm*  
*x20*

~~SECRET~~DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

December 5, 1944

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Palestine Resolution

*Relet.*  
 Senator Wagner called upon me this morning with Dr. Abba H. Silver. Senator Wagner had received your note on not pressing for the passage of the Palestine Resolution at this time. The Senator still feels that no damage would be done by its passage now and that it does nothing more than endorse the statement you made to him on October 15 which I quote below:

*\* seen  
 \*PP34520*

"Efforts will be made to find appropriate ways and means of effectuating this policy as soon as practicable. I know how long and ardently the Jewish people have worked and prayed for the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth. I am convinced that the American people give their support to this aim and if reelected I shall help to bring about its realization."

In the afternoon I went to Senator Connally's office to review the matter and informed him of your letter to Senator Wagner which I termed official. It has, therefore, been made clear both to Senator Wagner and to Senator Connally that it is felt it would be a mistake to allow the Resolution to pass at the present time.

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The question will probably come up for discussion at a meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee tomorrow. My feeling is that Senator Wagner will still press for passage but that Senator Connally will be able to persuade the Committee not to take action at this time. He feels he has the situation in hand and that he will not have to ask me to testify. I shall advise you of the result.



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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date ~~JUN 2~~ 1972