January 9, 1939.

Letter to the President from Sumner Welles transmitting the original of a communication to the President from His Majesty Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, King of Saudi Arabia.

Re-Jewish situation and Palestine

See: Palestine folder-Drawer 1-1939
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 31, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR
MRS. ROOSEVELT

TO READ AND RETURN

F. D. R.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
January 25, 1939

My dear Mr. President:

With reference to the telegram from Barcelona signed by a group of Spanish ladies, alleging the murder by the Rebel forces in Spain of two hundred women, which you sent over to me on January 21, I am enclosing herewith two telegrams received this morning from our Chargé d'Affaires in Barcelona which refer to the charges contained in the cable you sent me.

It seems to be clear in the two telegrams I enclose that none of the foreign correspondents have as yet had an opportunity to verify the charges made. Under existing circumstances, of course, this would be almost impossible. Personally, I have no doubt whatever that the reports may be entirely accurate. However, I think you may agree with me that it would be undesirable for the White House to make any comment on the report unless we had some more positive evidence.

The President,

The White House.
than that as yet presented.
Believe me

Faithfully yours,

[Signature]
REB

A portion of this telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (A)

(MADRID)
Barcelona via N. R.
Dated January 24, 1939
Rec'd 6:50 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1187, January 24, 7 p. m. (GRAY)

CONFIDENTIAL

Your 515, January 23, 3 p. m.

The story regarding the alleged slaughter of old men, women and children by troops of the Littorio Division following their occupation of Santa Coloma de Queralt first appeared in the Barcelona newspapers on January 17. It was attributed to the commander of the Eleventh Division, who stated that when his forces evacuated that village they took positions on the heights surrounding it from which, a few hours later, they observed, without the use of field glasses, that all the old men, women and children who had taken refuge in Santa Coloma de Queralt from the surrounding territory had been assembled in a group. They were then slaughtered by machine gun fire. It was estimated that some 225 to 250 persons were killed. This report
report was carried in the press for several days, together with an appeal to world opinion signed by the President of the Cortes, heads of political parties, deputies, writers, and others. (END GRAY)

The propaganda section of the Ministry of State to whose censorship all foreign correspondents are subject handed this story to them and some of them carried it. The Associated Press correspondent informed me at the time that he mistrusted it and did not carry it.

I shall make such efforts as are possible under present conditions to verify the report.

THURSTON
Secretary of State,
Washington,

1189, January 24, 10 p.m.
My 1187, January 24, 7 p.m.

Robert Allen, an American who came to Spain as an ambulance driver with the International Brigade, but who for some time has been assistant correspondent for the Associated Press and Reuters is tonight stopping in the Embassy awaiting evacuation.

Allen informs me that while neither the Associated Press nor Reuters carried the atrocity story at first they did so later after becoming reasonably convinced of its truth. He says the Government offered to take foreign correspondents to the front to interview eyewitnesses but this plan could not be carried out.

THURSTON

EMB
HTM
once more spanish people shudder in horror and indignation at cruel deed without precedent in history stop in catalan village santa coloma de queralt two hundred women were shot in cold blood after being gathered together in village threshingfloor stop this horrible crime committed
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WN104CL

MRS

2/50

ON DEFENCELESS WOMEN SHOWED UP INVASIONS TREACHERY AND HORROR FOR
MURDERERS FORMED PART ITALIAN LITTORIO DIVISION STOP WE WANT ALL WOMEN
TO KNOW OF THIS DEED WHICH ADDS ONE MORE CRIME TO THOSE COMMITTED BY
INVADEERA STOP MAY WOMEN'S CONSCIENCE WORLD OVER AS MOTHERS WIVES DAUGHTERS
RISE UP IN WAY
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WN104CL

MRS

3/50

PASSIONATE PROTEST UNMASKING THOSE COVETING OUR LAND AND OPENING HUMANITY'S EYES TO THIS DEED INHUMANITY WHICH TEARS AT OUR HEARTS AS WOMEN

LUISA ALVAREZ DEL VAYO WIFE MINISTER FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ISABLE OYORZABAL PALENCIA SPANISH MINISTER STOCKHOLM

MARGARITA NELKEN DEPUTY ETSECRETARY RUP MATILDE DE LA TORRE

DEPUTY JULIA ALVAREZ RESANO DEPUTY

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MRS

4/50

JOSEFA RUIZ GENERAL DIRECTOR EVACUATION
MATILDE CANTOS GENERAL INSPECTOR PRISONS
MATILDE HUISE SPANISH DELEGATE LEAGUE NATIONS SOCIAL PROBLEMS COMMITTEE DOLORES PIERA MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR
TRINIDAD ARROYO DE MARQUEZ DOCTOR MARGARITA COMAS
PROFESOR GENERALITAT NORMAL SCHOOL EMILIA ELIAS
DIRECTOR MADRID NORMAL SCHOOL JUANA ONTANON PROFESSORS
MADRID NORMAL SCHOOL ROSA ROIG DOLORES NOGUES

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MRS

5/50

DOLORES CABALLERO LUISA ESTEVEZ ALL PROFESSORS BARCELONA NORMAL
SCHOOL MARIA TERESA MARTINEZ BUJANDA INSPECTOR PRIMARY EDUCATION
MERCEDES USUA PROFESSOR BARCELONA NORMAL SCHOOL MARIA ZAMBRANO
WRITER MATILDE MUNOZ WRITER DOLORES IBARRURI CALLED PASIONARIA
VICEPRESIDENT OF CORTES IRENE FALCON WRITER TRINI TORRIJOS
CONSUELO ALVAREZ WRITER JOSEFA LOPEZ GARRIDO GLORIA MORELL
CONSTANCIA ETORA

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6/31

CHIEF FOREIGN PRESS OFFICE BELEN SARRAGA_WRITER AURORA ARNAIZ
VICTORIA KENT DEPUTY ADVOCATE ROBERTA RAMON PEPITA MELIA ACTRESS
ROBERTA CARMENLAGAR ACTRESS MAGDA DONATO WRITER NATALIA ELASUA
VICE PRESIDENT BASQUE CATHOLIC WOMEN
Letter to President
From Sumner Welles

June 28, 1939

In re-Presidents desire to hold meeting of
Executive Committee of the Inter-governemental
Committee on Refugees which he took up with
Myron Taylor as the President wished. Attaches
Taylor's reaction on meeting to him for the
Pres. information.

See Palestine folder-Foreign file-Drawer 1-1939