

Summer Welles Papers
Box 151 Folder 3
Major Correspondents
Roosevelt, Franklin March, 1941

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Done
March 20
Henry H. Belau
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March 19, 1941.

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

Referring to Weddell's letter of March 2nd, to you, I wish you would find some method of letting Henry Luce know that when Cudahy was in Madrid he showed to Weddell his entire lack of sympathy with the policies of this Government, remarking that the President had done English 100%, and showing a wholly unintelligent understanding of what is going on in the whole of civilization.

Cudahy will undoubtedly write an amazingly unintelligent series of articles -- which will be taken by the public to be pro-German and contrary to American policy. He will get enormous acclaim for them in Germany.

I think that Henry Luce ought to know this probability beforehand -- in such a way that we can prove that Luce knew about it beforehand -- if we have to prove it.

F. D. R.

March 17, 1941.

My dear Mr. President:

I am sending you a copy of a letter I have received under date of March 2 from Ambassador Weddell. I believe you will be interested in the fourth and fifth paragraphs. You will remember that in accordance with your request, I sent instructions to our missions in Bern, Berlin, and Vichy regarding John Cudahy's trip.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

Eno.

The President,

The White House.

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Madrid, March 2, 1941.

My dear Mr. Welles:

The American Chamber of Commerce in Spain will hold its Annual Meeting in Barcelona on Wednesday next and I expect to leave tomorrow by motor car for the city named in order to be present and to deliver what I believe is an innocuous speech.

Also, as my wife and I are a little tired, I am remaining in the neighborhood of Barcelona for two or three days.

1/ Within the past few days we have had a visit from Colonel Donovan and ere this you have before you my telegram reporting a conversation with the Foreign Minister. While stating nothing new, certainly the Minister spoke with a frankness that was astonishing. Donovan was my house-guest and proved a very agreeable one. In the course of his stay he saw the British and Portuguese Ambassadors, the Greek and Turkish Ministers, the Minister of Air, and the Chief of Staff of the Spanish Army, but was effectively balked in his desire to meet the Caudillo; the Foreign Minister simply did not let this come about. It is astonishing that this Mayor of the Palace should have his Chief live in an ivory tower and prevent him from learning the realities of the situation. The attached memorandum of Donovan's talk with Hoare may have some slight interest for you.

Yesterday former Ambassador Cudahy came to town. At luncheon yesterday he told me that he was representing Life and Time and was very desirous of securing figures concerning living costs here, etc. These public statistics I am arranging to give him.

In the

The Honorable
Sumner Welles,
Under Secretary of State,
Washington.

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In the course of his conversation, the ex-Ambassador showed very plainly his entire lack of sympathy with the policies of our Administration, remarking, among other things, that "the President has gone English 100%." I contented myself with remarking that there was no man living that had a keener recognition of the realities of the present situation. By tradition and by residence in Eire, Cudahy appears to have absorbed all the venom of the un-intellegentia of that unhappy land.

The death of King Alfonso has profoundly moved public opinion here and elaborate preparations are being made for the solemn requiem Mass to be sung tomorrow. As I telegraphed the Department, Montellano, who is high in the councils of the association formed of the grandes, told me that no attempt would be made to bring the remains here for interment in the Escorial until some far-off day when the Government entirely approved; this will never come about under the present crowd. People generally believe that the Germans are violently opposed to the re-establishment of the Monarchy, and that it is being urged by the British.

Meanwhile, the tension grows here and of course Bulgaria's folding up with its inevitable effect on Greece, is increasing uneasiness with a general trend of sympathy toward Great Britain and away from the Boches.

I venture to slip in here a paragraph to express the hope that the Department may be studying the personnel needs of this Mission. The bald facts are that I am understaffed and overworked, and that the importance of this Peninsula in the general picture is increasing daily. Furthermore, if things blow up, officials from all over Europe will be pouring through here in enormously increased volume and a bottleneck seems inevitable.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas W. Wood

American Embassy, Madrid.

February 26, 1941.

Memorandum for Colonel Donovan

Today I accompanied Colonel Donovan on his visit to the British Ambassador where a conversation lasting more than an hour and a half was held. There were also present at the discussion Minister-Counselor A. F. Yencken, Brigadier General W. W. T. Torr and Colonel Vivian Dykes.

Ambassador Hoare opened the discussion with a long statement giving his estimate of the situation in Spain, frequently consulting notes which he had prepared. He pointed out the poverty of Spain which, in alliance with pride, made a bad combination. He referred to what he thought to be the desire of Franco and of the Generals to maintain Spain's present attitude of neutrality or non-belligerency. He spoke of the preponderating influence in the Government here of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and of the Minister's sympathy for Fascist political ideologies and his probable conviction of eventual German victory.

The Ambassador then referred to the interior condition of Spain, its desperate straits for lack of foodstuffs, of the complete breakdown in the transportation system, of the discontent of the people with the Government, of the vast number of political prisoners now lying in the jails, of the change in public opinion and in an adverse sense toward Germany, and of the poor estimate of the Spaniards of the Italians.

Continuing,

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Continuing, the Ambassador pointed out that in his very positive opinion Spain and Portugal, which for all practical political and military purposes were one, and Northern Africa, were points of the highest importance in the present conflict. Secondly, he felt that every effort should be made to maintain in an "Atlantic solidarity" the territories named; that they must not be permitted to get into, or form a part of, the Axis bloc. He emphasized in the third place the enormous importance of the Peninsula as a foot-hold and landing place from which operations might some day be begun against Germany. (The Ambassador has recently borrowed my Napier's Peninsula War!)

The Foregoing all led up to a statement by the Ambassador of the necessity of lending economic aid to Franco and in doing so he pointed out how different was Franco's position from that of Italy in economic, political, and military ways, and again emphasized the strategic importance of this Peninsula arising from its geographical position.

The Ambassador seemed to feel that in anything that might be put up to our Government in the way of looking to economic relief that the disaster at Santander and other parts of the country should be clearly made known.

In conclusion, Hoare said that the policy of his Government was to do all in their power to prevent the DeGaulle forces from becoming involved in any hostilities with the Spaniards, and felt equally that the cardinal point to be kept in mind was, as stated above, the need
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for coming to the economic aid of the Spanish Government. Otherwise, and here he seemed to accept my own declaration of opinion, Spain might embark on some mad military adventure toward the South with deplorable consequences. The Ambassador mentioned that in his opinion neither the American nor his own diplomatic representatives in the recent past in Portugal had been up to the level of their task; they had failed entirely to keep in close touch with Salazar, but that in the case of his own representation the situation had been corrected and he seemed to hear with satisfaction what Colonel Donovan said concerning our Minister-elect to Portugal.

A.W.W.