ROOSEVELT TO CHURCHILL
SEPTEMBER 1939 - DECEMBER 1940
INDEX

1. 11 September 1939. Letter from Roosevelt to Churchill.
2. 5 March 1940. Telegram #418 from Roosevelt to Churchill.
3. 16 May 1940. Telegram #872 from Roosevelt to Churchill.
4. 30 May 1940. Letter from Roosevelt to Churchill.
5. 13 June 1940. Telegrams from Roosevelt to Churchill and Reynaud.
6. 12 July 1940 (?). Undated letter from Roosevelt to Lord Lothian, British Embassy, requesting him to express appreciation to Churchill.
7. 19 August 1940. Letters from Roosevelt to Churchill and Mackenzie King.
8. 23 September 1940. Telegram #3166 from Roosevelt to Churchill.
11 September 1939

Letter from President Roosevelt to Winston Churchill, 11 September 1939.
September 11, 1939.

My dear Churchill:

It is because you and I occupied similar positions in the World War that I want you to know how glad I am that you are back again in the Admiralty. Your problems are, I realise, complicated by new factors but the essential is not very different. What I want you and the Prime Minister to know is that I shall at all times welcome it if you will keep me in touch personally with anything you want me to know about. You can always send sealed letters through your pouch or my pouch.

I am glad you did the hard work volumes before this thing started — and I much enjoyed reading them.

With my sincere regards,

Faithfully yours,

The Right Honorable
Winston Churchill, P.C., G.B.,
First Lord of the Admiralty,
London,
England.
5 March 1940

Copy of telegram #148 from Roosevelt to Churchill, dated 5 March 1940.

For exchange of letters between President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull concerning this telegram, see correspondence filed under date of 11 November 1941.
AMERICAN EMBASSY
LONDON

418

Your 490, February 28, 8 p.m.

Please convey following message to the Naval Person from the President.

QUOTE Upon my return to Washington, I received your message. I deeply appreciate your efforts. I am having the situation thoroughly studied and will communicate with you further as soon as possible. END QUOTE

Roosevelt.

HULL
(CWG)

Eu: JDH:DG PA/D A-B

REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED
3/5/40
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Adolf Berle asked me to give this to you this morning.

E. M. W.

(Pencil note)

"O.K.

F.D.R."
MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

Concerning the reply to the message from the "Naval Person", Secretary Hull asks me to suggest the attached cable. It merely buys us another forty-eight hours to work on the situation.

The principal point at issue is the Moore McCormick run to Bergen. If that line keeps its contract with Brazil, and turns over its ships to the Brazilian government, the Gorgon run probably would automatically cease. If it is retained, arrangements could be worked out covering the situation: but they will take a few days.

/s/ A. A. B., Jr.
March 5, 1940.

AMERICAN EMBASSY
LONDON

Your 490, February 28, 8 p.m.
Please convey following message to the Naval
person from the President:

QUOTE Upon my return to Washington, I
received your message. I deeply appreciate
your efforts. I am having the situation
thoroughly studied and will communicate with
you further as soon as possible. END QUOTE

(signed in pencil)
ROOSEVELT

REGRADED
UNCLASSIFIED
16 May 1940

Telegram Nr. 872 from Roosevelt to Churchill, dated 16 May 1940.

Answers Churchill's telegram Nr. 1216, 15 May 1940.

For exchange of letters between President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull concerning this telegram, see correspondence filed under date of 11 November 1941.
URGENT: FOR THE AMBASSADOR.

Your 1216, May 15, 6 p.m.

Please transmit the following message from the President to the former naval person:

QUOTE I have just received your message and I am sure it is unnecessary for me to say that I am most happy to continue our private correspondence as we have in the past.

I am, of course, giving every possible consideration to the suggestions made in your message. I shall take up your specific proposals one by one.

First, with regard to the possible loan of forty or fifty of our older destroyers. As you know a step of that kind could not be taken except with the specific authorization of the Congress and I am not certain that it would be wise for that suggestion to be made to the Congress at this moment. Furthermore, it seems to me doubtful, from the standpoint of our own defense requirements, which must inevitably be linked with the defense requirements of this hemisphere and with our obligations in the
in the Pacific, whether we could dispose even temporarily of
these destroyers. Furthermore, even if we were able to take
the step you suggest, it would be at least six or seven weeks
at a minimum, as I see it, before these vessels could undertake
active service under the British flag.

Second. We are now doing everything within our power to
make it possible for the Allied Governments to obtain the
latest types of aircraft in the United States.

Third. If Mr. Purvis may receive immediate instructions
to discuss the question of anti-aircraft equipment and ammunition
with the appropriate authorities here in Washington, the most
favorable consideration will be given to the request made in the
light of our own defense needs and requirements.

Fourth. Mr. Purvis has already taken up with the appropriate
authorities here the purchase of steel in the United States and
I understand that satisfactory arrangements have been made.

Fifth. I shall give further consideration to your suggestion
with regard to the visit of the United States Squadron to Irish
ports.

Sixth. As you know, the American Fleet is now concentrated at
Hawaii where it will remain at least for the time being.

I shall communicate with you again as soon as I feel able
to make a final decision with regard to some of the other
matters dealt with in your message and I hope you will feel free
to communicate with me in this way at any time.
- 3 -

The best of luck to you. UNQUOTE

Franklin Roosevelt.

Hull
(SW)

U:SW:1J
30 May 1940

Letter from Roosevelt to Churchill, dated 30 May 1940.

Answers Churchill's letter of 7 May 1940, enclosing a report "The Battle of the River Plate."
May 30, 1940.

My dear Churchill—

Ever so many thanks for that remarkably interesting story of the Battle of the River Plate — a grand job by your three cruisers.

You are much in my thoughts.

I need not tell you that.

As ever yours,

13 June 1940

Telegrams from the President to Prime Minister Churchill and Prime Minister Reynaud, dated 13 June 1940.
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 13, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

In accordance with your request, I am returning to you herewith the original drafts of the telegrams sent this morning after our conference.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

Enos.

The President,

The White House.
Send B

Kemmelby

Get following by P.M. as quickly as possible but with full secrecy.

What I have sent following to

Regard substitutes etc.

If I cannot send squadron

Peninsula as we have squadron off Portugal and another West Coast South America Atlantic Patrol from N. Australia to N. Brazil is in my judgment important as it continues to provide steady defense guns. Furthermore I think you will agree that maintenance message fits in here also.
For Raymond personally,
I was particularly impressed by your
declaration that France will
continue the fight on behalf of
liberty. Even if it means we
withdrawal from North Africa and
the Mediterranean. It is most important
to remember that the French and British
ships continue mastery of the Mediterranean
and other areas. Also to remember
that vital materials from the Atlantic
world are necessary to maintain our
forces.

I am also greatly heartened by what
Prime Minister Churchill said a few days ago
about the continuing resistance of the British Empire and the United
States, which seem to apply equally to the
great French Empire all over the
world. Naval power in world affairs
still carries the lessons of history, as
Admiral Doenitz well knew.
AMERICAN EMBASSY
PARIS

FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM THE PRESIDENT.

Please do whatever may be possible to communicate the following message immediately to the Prime Minister:

QUOTE Your message has moved me very deeply. As I have already stated to you and to Mr. Churchill, this Government is doing everything in its power to make available to the Allied Governments the material they so urgently require and our efforts to do still more are being redoubled. This is so because of our faith in and our support of the ideals for which the Allies are fighting.

The magnificent resistance of the French armies has profoundly impressed the American people. They hope and they believe that the efforts of the Allied Governments to overcome the powers which are seeking to impose on the entire world the policies of force and tyranny can and must be successful in order that the cause of human liberty and
democracy may triumph and thereby real peace may once again be established. I have the firm conviction that however desperate or dark the situation may now seem, if the conflict is continued with the magnificent courage so far displayed, the forces of evil cannot at the end prevail.

UNQUOTE

When this message is delivered please make it entirely clear that it is personal and private and not for publication.
Undated
(12 July 1940)

Undated letter from Roosevelt to Lord Lothian, British Embassy, requesting him to express appreciation to Churchill.

Answers Lord Lothian's letter of 9 July 1940, transmitting a message to the President from Churchill.
By Deaa Lord Lothian

Thank you for your letter of July 6th in which you were good enough to inform us of the appointment of the Duke of Thibeaux as Governor of the Scheme. Will you express our appreciation to the Prime Minister for his thoughtfulness in deciding so to have advance information in this matter.

Very sincerely yours,

His Excellency
The Right Honourable
The Duke of Lothian, G.B.E.,
British Ambassador.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 11, 1940

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

For preparation of reply
to Lothian.

F. D. R.

Enclosures

Secret letter to the President 7/9/40
from Lord Lothian, British Embassy,
enclosing a copy of a telegram to the
President from the Prime Minister re-
garding the appt. of the Duke of Windsor
as Governor of the Bahamas. It says
the Prime Minister was particularly
anxious that the P. should have advance
information of this appt. However due
to the receipt of the message in a
corrupt form and also due to leakage
it was necessary to arrange for the appt.
to be announced "this evening by the
British Broadcasting Company."
My dear Mr. President:

With reference to your memorandum of July 11, 1940, I am returning herewith Lord Lothian's letter, together with a draft of a reply which you may care to send to him.

Faithfully yours,

[Signature]

Enclosures:

1. From Lord Lothian, July 9, 1940.
2. Draft.

The President,

The White House.
My dear Mr. President:

With reference to your memorandum of July 11, 1940, I am returning herewith Lord Lothian’s letter, together with a draft of a reply which you may care to send to him.

Faithfully yours,

Cordell Hull

Enclosures:

1. From Lord Lothian, July 9, 1940.
2. Draft.

The President,
The White House.
19 August 1940

Letters from Roosevelt to Churchill (through Ambassador Kennedy) and Mackenzie King, dated 19 August 1940, enclosing copy of Alexander Kirk's letter of 29 July 1940 to the President.
Hyde Park, N. Y.,
August 18, 1940.

My dear Churchill:—

I think this will interest you. It was over two weeks on its way from Berlin and coming from an American, long a resident in Germany, it has especial value. The writer was, I think, inclined to be pro-Nazi up to the time of the Munich Conference.

We are getting excellent reports of the fine job your Air Force has done the past week.

As ever yours,

The Right Honorable Winston Churchill, R.C.,
Prime Minister,
London,
England.

(Enclosure) Copy of Alexander Kirk's letter of July 29, 1940.
Hyde Park, N. Y.,
August 12, 1940.

Dear MacKenzie:—

I think this will interest you.
It was over two weeks on its way from Berlin
and coming from an American, long a resident
in Germany, it has especial value. The
writer was, I think, inclined to be pro-Nazi
up to the time of the Munich Conference.

As ever yours,

The Right Honorable
William Lyon MacKenzie King, C.M.G.,
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa,
Ontario,
Canada.

(Enclosure) Copy of Alexander Kirk's letter of July 29, 1940.
Hyde Park, N. Y.,
August 19, 1940.

Dear Alex:

It is good, indeed, to get your letter — and your "evaluation" of the situation conforms to my own thinking.

You will have read of my meeting with Mackenzie King on Saturday. A complete meeting of the minds is always satisfactory and, incidentally, both the American and Canadian programs are doing well.

My best wishes to you,

Always sincerely,

Alexander Kirk, Esq.,
American Embassy,
Berlin,
Germany.
Berlin, July 29, 1940.

My dear Mr. President:

I fully realize that you are not to be importuned with lengthy or superfluous messages but there is a matter much on my mind and one which I dare not treat by telegraphic report.

It is perhaps anomalous that at a time when the entire world seems to be concentrated on the mechanics of war the main emphasis in rumor and report, at least insofar as Berlin is concerned, has lately been on the subject of peace between England and Germany. It is futile to argue about the possible origin of these rumors for it is as easy to find support for the opinion that they are inspired as it is to believe that they are the manifestation of a natural inclination on the

The President,

The White House.
the part of war-tired peoples. It is useless also to
test the sincerity of these expressions, for again it
is not only impossible to place the responsibility for
their utterance on any particular source, but also to
strike an accurate balance of the relative advantages
from the German standpoint of an immediate peace with
England. The fact remains that talk is insistent on
this subject and within the last few days three private
individuals, an American, a Hollander and a Swede, have
brought me stories of peace efforts allegedly sponsored
by high Nazi officials, but decidedly not by Hitler him-
self -- stories which I could not report in detail owing
to the certain danger involved to the individuals them-
selves.

The purpose of this letter, however, is not to
evaluate these rumored activities in relation to Nazi
aims or policies. My purpose is solely to register my
profound conviction that any concession on the part of
the British Government now would destroy forever the
chance of eradicating the forces which are threatening
our own civilization. In saying this I am not thinking
of England itself for, if I did, I might hesitate at the
thought of the terrific devastation which may well be
in prospect and of which the beginning is now being set

from

0031
from week to week. Hitler has always tried to attain his aims at the lowest possible cost to himself and has so far triumphed in that policy, but there has never been any doubt that in the last analysis he would and he must pay any price to attain his ends if they can not be otherwise achieved. There is every reason to believe that he wants to finish this particular phase of the war, whether for the purpose of turning his war machine in other directions or of indulging in expressing his colossal ego through rebuilding in his own way on the ruins of what he will have destroyed. A short war requires, in the first place, the speedy subjugation of England either through the peace he might be ready to negotiate now or through the same or worse methods than those which prevailed in France, and, in the second place, the certainty that with England silenced the forces of democracy would be annihilated. As regards the first requirement, the greatest triumph for Hitler would be a humiliating and unjust peace wrenched from England without a fight, for the hope is justified that even the conquest of the British Isles need not end resistance. As for the second requirement the greatest factor is our own country and, I firmly believe, the controlling factor. Hitler has never lost sight of the United States although there are times when
he believes that he can disregard our part on the ground of the time element involved. Within the last few weeks, however, I feel that his anxiety on our account has redoubled. He sees what we are doing and that we shall not stop, and he must know that we constitute a problem which even he cannot solve. It is natural to say that there is a limit to a one-man show and that in time Hitler must eradicate himself. That may be true but the rate of his progress reduces the saving grace of the time factor and the force which he has developed can be stopped only by force. The first stand in this struggle is for England to hold out against any peace efforts, and the second is for the British to exert all their material and moral equipment to resist an attack and continue the fight. The greatest part, however, I believe is ours. We must encourage in every way those who are in the first line of battle. We must prove our purpose in fact and example and we must prove it speedily and unflaggingly. We must hold to the principles which we know are right although their implementation may require newer methods and at the right moment we must be ready to say the word and do the deed that will save from destruction all that we know makes life a good and noble thing. It is the conviction
conviction of the significance of our part in the struggle, both for our own salvation as well as for the benefit of the world, that induces me to write and I hope that you will consider what I have said in that light.

I can not close without expressing to you my gratitude for the consideration which you showed me during my stay in Washington and I need not say how gratified I am that the continuity of your policies, of which we ourselves were always assured, has now been brought to the conviction of the governments and peoples abroad.

Very faithfully yours,

Alexander Kirk.
August 22, 1940.

Dear Joe:

The President has asked me to send you the enclosed letter for Mr. Churchill. Will you please be good enough to see that he gets it?

We are all thinking of you much these days.

With affectionate regards in which the President joins,

As ever,

Honorable Joseph P. Kennedy,
American Embassy,
London,
England.

(Enclosure)
23 September 1940

Telegram Nr. 3166 from Roosevelt to Churchill, dated 23 September 1940.

Answered by Churchill's telegram of 24 September 1940—filed herein.
My dear Mr. President:

I am submitting to you herewith a suggested answer to Mr. Churchill's message to you of September 22.

General Marshall has told me that the loading of these rifles is going on day and night and that the details for the transfer of the rifles to the British Purchasing Commission are being concluded through the U. S. Steel Corporation.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

Enc.

The President,

The White House.
September 23, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I am submitting to you herewith a suggested answer to Mr. Churchill's message to you of September 22.

General Marshall has told me that the loading of these rifles is going on day and night and that the details for the transfer of the rifles to the British Purchasing Commission are being concluded through the U. S. Steel Corporation.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

Sumner Welles

Enc.

The President,

The White House.

For original of this letter and copy reply to "Former National Park" of Dec. 3 1940 from H.C. See Welles, December 1 - 1940.
September 23, 1940

AMERICAN EMBASSY
LONDON

Your 5166, September 22, noon.

PERSONAL AND ☐ for former naval person from

the President.

"As soon as your message was received from

Lord Lothian arrangements were undertaken for the re-

lease of the 250,000 Enfield rifles to the Purchasing

Commission. I am informed that the rifles are already

under way to New York for shipment. UNQUOTE"

"Roosevelt"

REGRADED
UNCLASSIFIED

"OK
7:00 PM"

U:SW:MK

Original sent when Susan Niles

September 22