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28 May 1941

Telegram #2165 from Churchill to Roosevelt, 28 May 1941.

0333

REB
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (SC)

LONDON

Dated May 28, 1941

Rec'd 6:40 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

**REGRADED
UNCLASSIFIED**

RUSH

2165, May 28, 11 p. m.

PERSONAL AND [REDACTED] FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM FORMER
NAVAL PERSON.

"We are uplifted and fortified by your memorable
declaration and by the far-reaching executive measures
involved in the state of emergency you have proclaimed.
Pray accept, Mr. President, my heartfelt thanks. It was
very kind of you to let me know before hand of the great
advance you found it possible to make.

I have now also received your message about the
impressive additional output you are sending to the
Middle East in United States ships. Winant will tell you
what I managed to send out there secretly and the hopes
I have of some good news coming to hand before long.

It seems most important to find the PRINZ EUGEN
before she cuts in to our convoys. The Admiralty and
Ghormley are in the closest touch. But this is a new,
very fast and powerful ship, and there is much danger
while

0334

-2- #2165, From London, May 28, 11 p. m.

while she is at large for any convoy unprotected by battleship escort.

I will send you later the inside story of the fighting with the BISMARCK. She was a terrific ship and a masterpiece of naval construction. Her removal eases our battleship situation as we should have had to keep KING GEORGE FIFTH, PRINCE OF WALES and the two NELSONS practically tied to Scapa Flow to guard against a sortie of BISMARCK and TIRPITZ as they could choose their moment and we should have to allow for one of our ships refitting. Now it is a different story. The effect upon the Japanese will be highly beneficial. I expect they are doing all their sums again."

JOHNSON

HPD

29 May 1941

Telegram #2200 from Churchill to Roosevelt, dated 29 May 1941.

104

**REGRADED
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WT

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

LONDON

Dated May 29, 1941

Rec'd 8:25 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

2200, May 29, midnight. (SECTION ONE)

PERSONAL AND [REDACTED] FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM THE
FORMER NAVAL PERSON:

"One. We cordially welcome your taking over Iceland at the earliest possible moment, and will hold ourselves and all our resources there at your disposal as may be found convenient. It would liberate a British division for defence against invasion or the Middle East. It would enable us to concentrate our flying boats now there on northwestern approaches. If it could be done in the next three weeks or less, or even begun, it would have a moral effect even beyond its military importance. You have only to say the word and our staffs can get to work at once.

Two. Spain and Portugal. At any time now Hitler may obtain air bases in southern Spain or in North Africa, Spanish or French, from which he can make Gibraltar harbour unuseable by our fleet. The moment this happens, or we are sure it is going to happen,

WE

0337

-2- #2200, May 29, midnight from London. (SECTION ONE)

we shall send our expeditions which have long been prepared and are waiting beside their ships, to occupy the Grand Canary, the Cape Verde Islands and one of the Azores. The code names for these three expeditions will be cabled in a separate message.

JOHNSON

LMS

0338

WT
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closely paraphrased be-
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LONDON

Dated May 29, 1941

Rec'd 10:17 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

2200, May 29, midnight. (SECTION TWO)

We cannot provide an army to defend Portugal on the mainland, and the same is true of Spain, though we would try to help a guerilla there. Meanwhile we were about to offer Portuguese antiaircraft and other equipment to defend Azores and Cape Verde Islands, and were encouraging them to withdraw their Government there if overrun by the Nazis. If Salazar accepts our help and protection in the islands we would of course welcome assistance of United States support. As we are already discussing with Salazar help to Portugal, had we not better go ahead and try to obtain his approval of the idea withdrawing to the Islands? It is a matter of approach and method. These could be discussed forthwith between State Department and Foreign Office. Whatever Salazar's decision we should in the event have to obtain control of the Islands for which United States cooperation would be invaluable.

JOHNSON

CSB

0339

WT
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closely paraphrased be-
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LONDON

Dated May 29, 1941

Rec'd 10 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

2200, May 29, midnight. (SECTION THREE)

We should welcome collaboration with an American
token force, before, during or after occupation of
Atlantic Islands and if you wish would turn them over
to you as a matter of mutual war convenience.

Four. We should naturally welcome United States
occupation of DaKar, and would afford all facilities
in our power. We have some rather costly experience
and knowledge of this place. Surest method by landing
tanks from specially constructed vessels on neighboring
beaches. I suggest that immediate consultation between
your officers and ours should be given to make a workable
plan, and have it ready in case circumstances should
require its use. (END MESSAGE)

JOHNSON

CSB

31 May 1941

Telegram #2233 from Churchill to Roosevelt, dated 31 May 1941.

Bot

JT
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LONDON

Dated May 31, 1941

Rec'd 12:17 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY

2233, May 31, 5 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

Department's 1858, May 29, noon.

PERSONAL AND [REDACTED] FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM THE
FORMER NAVAL PERSON.

"One. Am deeply grateful to you for your proposals
of May 29 which we at once accept in principle.

"Two. I must, of course, consult the Canadian
Government, but I have no doubt about their response.
The Air Ministry has been instructed to plan the reorgani-
zation of the ferrying service in accordance with your
views. A senior officer will be sent out at once to
study the problem on the spot and to consult your Navy
and War Departments.

"Three. We are bent on speeding the flow of aircraft
from your factories to our squadrons, and the Royal
Air Force will welcome the opportunity of working with
officers of the United States services on this task.

"Four. We have already withdrawn the bulk of our
troops from Crete, and I am hopeful about the others.

it

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-2- 2233, May 31, 5 p.m. (SECTION ONE) from London

It was impossible to continue the defence of this outpost without jeopardizing the naval superiority in the eastern basin upon which the rest of the Nile campaign depends.

JOHNSON

NPL

JT
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closely paraphrased be-
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to anyone. (SO)

London

Dated May 31, 1941

Rec'd 12:18 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

2233, May 31, 5 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

The force and fury of the air attack was beyond anything known or expected, and as we had no airfields which could be held within fighter range the enemy's air power could work virtually unrestricted, both against the ships holding off seaborne attacks and against our troops and anti-aircraft guns ashore. The enemy has suffered very heavy losses to his high-grade personnel, in aircraft, and above all in troop carrying machines. We must expect increasing strain upon our defence of Egypt and our communications with Malta and Gibraltar. Valuable time has, however, been gained and it remains to be seen what use we can make of it.

"Five. The capture of Crete will, of course, be exploited to the full of enemy propaganda, and any open move by you like sending even a brigade to Iceland could not come at a more timely moment. See also second epistle to the Corinthians Chapter Six, Verse Two."

End Message

JOHNSON

NPL

3 June 1941

Telegram #2252 from Churchill to Roosevelt, dated 3 June 1941.

PRE.
Port.

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GMW
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London

Dated June 3, 1941

Rec'd 9:33 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

2252, June 3, 2 p.m.

PERSONAL AND [REDACTED] FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM THE
FORMER NAVAL PERSON.

"I am finding it necessary to build up a much
stronger organization of the rear ward services in the
Middle East to sustain the large forces now gathering
in and about the Nile Valley and an important mission
is going out by air, comprising high military and civil-
ian experts. We must consider the formation of a well
equipped base, either at Port Sudan (as your son sug-
gested) or/and at Massawa near which lies the town of
Asmara with its fine buildings in order to arrange for
the reception of American materials which you are send-
ing to us in increasing quantities. American tanks and
American aircraft require a good sprinkling of American
civilian volunteer personnel to instruct us in their
use and help keep them serviceable. I should be grate-
ful if you would allow Averill Harriman to go out with
the

0346

-2- 2252, June 3, 2 p.m. from London

the mission as independent observer, taking with him one or two of his own assistants. He would then be able to advise upon the best measures to be taken to ensure the most efficient use of all that you are sending. He is quite willing to go; indeed, he would like it. The trip might take him six weeks but it would be well worth it."

JOHNSON

RR

7 June 1941

Telegram #2331 from Churchill to Roosevelt, dated 7 June 1941.

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DES
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to anyone. (SC)

LONDON

Dated June 7, 1941

Rec'd 2:06 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

2331, June 7, 6 p.m.

PERSONAL AND [REDACTED] FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM THE
FORMER NAVAL PERSON

"One. We enter Syria in some force tomorrow morning in order to prevent further German penetration. Success depends largely upon attitude of local French troops. De Gaulle's Free French outfit will be prominent but not in the van. He is issuing a proclamation to the Arabs offering in the name of France complete independence and opportunity to form either three or one or three in one free Arab states. Relations of these states with France will be fixed by treaty, safe guarding established interest somewhat on the Anglo-Egyptian model. General Catroux is not to be called High Commissioner but French Delegate and Plenipotentiary.

Two. I cannot tell how Vichy will react to what may happen. I do not, myself, think they will do much worse than they are now doing, but of course they may

retaliate

0349

-2- 2331, June 7, 1941 from London

retaliate on Gibraltar or Freetown. I should be most grateful if you would keep your pressure upon them. We have no political interests at all in Syria, except to win the war.

Three. Thank you so much for letting Harriman go to the Middle East. He is seeing your son tomorrow before leaving, and I shall see him myself, I hope, at luncheon Monday."

JOHNSON

PEG

11 June 1941

Telegram #2376 from Churchill to Roosevelt, dated 11 June 1941.

Answered by Roosevelt in a telegram to Churchill dated 17 June 1941,
filed herein.

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JT
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closely paraphrased be-
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to anyone. (SO)

London

Dated June 11, 1941

Rec'd 7:50 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

2376, June 11, 2 p.m.

PERSONAL AND [REDACTED] FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM
FORMER NAVAL PERSON:

"I am looking forward to welcoming your son here. I have been told that he has a plan to take over, equip and defend an air base at Bathurst in Gambia as a staging and servicing point for heavy United States bombers to be flown across the Atlantic to the Middle East. His idea is that United States of America should lease base and install naval, military and air defenses. Bombers would be flown from United States of America via Pernambuco to be serviced Bathurst, then flown on by American ferry pilot organization to Egypt. Bathurst base all American. We are wholeheartedly in favor of this proposal and would be prepared to give you a lease at Bathurst on similar terms to those already given for bases in the Western Atlantic. I had intended to postpone putting this proposal to you until I had talked it over with your son, but he has been delayed

and

0352

-2- 2376, June 11, 2 p.m., from London

and the matter is so urgent that I wanted to put it to you at once. If the proposal commends itself to you in principle, our staffs over here could work out the details."

JOHNSON

ALC

14 June 1941

Telegram from Churchill to Roosevelt, dated 14 June 1941.

Following is text of message for the President from
the Prime Minister, dated June 14th, 1941.

██████████ AND PERSONAL.

I am much encouraged by Ghormley's letter about your marines taking over that cold place and I hope that once the first instalment have arrived you will give full publicity to it. It would give us hope to face the long haul that lies ahead. It would also produce the best effects in Spain, Vichy France and Turkey.

2. I had hoped for quicker progress in Syria but Vichy is so far putting up with what we are doing to them without taking warlike action elsewhere and I think it will be all right.

3. Winant will no doubt have told you about what I sent out to Egypt secretly to restore the balance there. This will be used to-morrow (Sunday) and as it will be the first occasion when we hope to have definite superiority in tackle both on the ground and above it, I naturally attach the very greatest importance to this venture. The above is for your own eye alone.

4. From every source at my disposal including some most trustworthy it looks as if a vast German onslaught on the Russian frontier is imminent. Not only are the main German armies deployed from Finland to Roumania but the final arrivals of air and armoured forces are being completed. The pocket battleship "Lutzow", which put her nose out of Skaggerak yesterday and was promptly torpedoed by our coastal aircraft was very likely going

North/



-2-

North to give naval strength on the Arctic flank. Should this new war break out we shall of course give all encouragement and any help we can spare to the Russians, following the principle that Hitler is the foe we have to beat. I do not expect any class political reactions here and trust that a German-Russian conflict will not cause you any embarrassment.

5. We must also take full advantage of a possible breather in the Middle East to get things in good shape there. I am looking forward to Harriman's report. Kindest regards and every wish that your indisposition may soon pass.

0356

26 June 1941

Telegram #2673 from Churchill to Roosevelt, dated 26 June 1941.

Answered by Roosevelt in a telegram to Churchill dated 6 July 1941,
filed herein.

0357

REGRADED
UNCLASSIFIED

WT

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

LONDON

Dated June 26, 1941

Rec'd 9:50 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

2673, June 26, 11 p.m.

██████████ AND PERSONAL FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM THE FORMER NAVAL PERSON.

"I am concerned at the result which may follow from British and American tank design for the future proceeding on independent lines. Already the M-3 American medium tank is being produced in three types to American, British and Canadian orders. These types although basically identical vary in several respects particularly as regards main armament. You have retained the seventy five mm gun whereas we and the Canadians are going for the six--pdr gun with seventy five mm and two--pdr weapons as interim steps.

It is obvious that nothing must be done to disturb production now in hand here or in North America. We want all the tanks we can get as soon as possible.

At the same time I am impressed with the importance of strengthening the liaison between the United States of America and the British and I suggest we should evolve machinery

0358

-2- #2673, June 26, 11 p.m. from London.

machinery which will ensure that future designs in each class of tank are as similar as possible thus eliminating unnecessary maintenance difficulties.

At the present moment tank design in the States is controlled by the United States Ordnance Board while in England it is controlled by our Tank Board.

I would strongly suggest for your consideration that a joint Anglo-American Tank Board should be set up in America to include Canadian as well as British representation for the purpose of controlling and coordinating tank design and production as regards new types. You will remember that Baruch and I set up an organization on similar lines to look after production at Chateau Roux in 1917.

The Tank Board in England will of course still be necessary to deal with current modifications and proposals for new types and here also I suggest that American representation should be included or a board formed similar to that suggested above. The boards here and in America would have to work in close liaison.

Our common aim you will agree must be to design much better tanks than the Nazis to be ahead in the race guns versus armour and to produce them quicker than they can. This I feel sure can only be achieved by the

closest

•3• #2673, June 26, 11 p.m. from London.

closest cooperation in design as well as in production and I think there is already ample evidence that we can learn a lot from your technicians on the mechanical side while we can possibly give you valuable advice obtained by newly bought experience as to the fighting requirements.

If you agree I would suggest that the detailed composition of the board and your representation on our board here might be discussed by your representatives with the British Army Staff and British Supply Council."

WINANT

EMB

0360