France
No. 357
16 July 1938

FRA CX - Feeling of unrest.

In conversation with the Ambassador, the Naval Attache was informed that several high-ranking French Army officers had recently mentioned that Germany was busy constructing a line of defenses from the North Sea to the Swiss border. This line, while not comparable in strength to the Maginot Line in France, is of sufficient strength that, as the Chief of the French Army General Staff expressed it, "one-third of the German army could, behind that line, prevent the whole French Army from invading Germany."

Besides the above there are numerous rumors that a new German coup is to be expected between the 15th and 30th of August. Just where the surprise coup is to come, no one seems sure. It may possibly be Czechoslovakia, which seems most likely, possibly Poland, or more remotely Hungary where the Nazi movement is growing daily by leaps and bounds.

In rever and whatever, if anything, may come to pass during the last two weeks of August, there is no question but what French officials are disturbed. This feeling includes such politicians as Daladier, the Prime Minister and Chautemps, the Asst. Prime Minister, as well as military officials. In discussing with the Chief of the Bonn Bureau (Director of Intelligence) of the Air Army, a recent trip he had made to Berlin, that officer repeated several times to the Naval Attaché, "Frankly, we are worried."

[Signature]

[Handwritten notes]

Date: MAY 21 1973
The following extracts, from a report submitted by the American Embassy, Paris, are transmitted as of interest:

"Mr. Knickerbocker, Hearst papers correspondent, has just returned from Czechoslovakia, where he has been since prior to May 11th. He travelled extensively, part of the time in company with his old friend, Jan Masaryk, was shown over the Skoda works, had interviews with Henlein party leaders, with high army officers, with Hodza, and Benes.

From his impressions I have selected the following as of interest. Knowing Knickerbocker well, you will know what reservations to make.

President Benes, whom he says he has known for six years, told him in confidence that Czechoslovakia would fight against German employment of force, whether or not France or Great Britain came in, but he wished Knickerbocker to help him inculcate the belief among the French and British that if they did not come to his country's assistance he would make terms with Germany whatever her terms might be.

Knickerbocker has not the slightest doubt that the Czechs will fight. They realize that they would suffer the fate of Serbia in 1914-1915, but they believe that, as with Serbia, out of the ashes of a general war will rise a greater Czechoslovakia.

The Czechs have great confidence in the power of resistance of their army. The standing army is being maintained at 300,000 men. The entire army is being kept on the alert ready to move into battle positions close to the frontier. Knickerbocker shares the general impression of the excellence of the Army's equipment. He said that its mechanization was more advanced than any army in Europe, and that the allotment of automatic rifles to infantry units is larger than in the German Army.

He was told by competent authorities that it could hold out alone against the German Army for two months.

Knickerbocker says that both the Sudeten and Czechs accept war as ultimately inevitable. He knew little of the nature of the Henein demands, or of the Government's offered concessions, taking little interest in them, because he considers the current negotiations as "eyewash," and of no decisive bearing on the situation. The really important point is whether Hitler decides to go to war or not."

Prepared and forwarded
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: Y
Date: 16 Aug., 1938
Serial No.: 405
File No.: 103

Source of information: Press
Subject: FRANCE - POLITICAL FORCES - INTERNATIONAL

Reference: (Nation reported on) (Index item or per index sheet) (Reduction)

Report No. 405 (103) of 16 August, 1938, is transmitted herewith.

Report prepared at

16 August, 1938.
PRESS EXTRACTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, PERIOD ENDING
16 August, 1938.

SPANISH SITUATION:

While the recent counter-attack on the part of the Republicans may be considered of major importance, the French press remains of the opinion that victory will eventually come to General Franco.

In view of the delay of the Burgos government in replying to the London note on the withdrawal of foreign troops, the French Socialist party is bringing pressure on the French Government to open the Spanish frontier to shipments of materials to Republican Spain. The Socialists claim that Franco has all the benefits of a blocked frontier on the Republican side, while he also enjoys free passage between Spain and the Balearics under Italian control.

It is the policy of Premier Daladier's Government to follow the lead of England (keeping out of Spanish trouble) in her endeavor to leave the Spanish trouble to the Spaniards. However, the political life of the Daladier Government would be seriously threatened if the French became convinced that a closed frontier gave General Franco all the benefits in the war, while he was not willing to cooperate with the British plan of withdrawal of volunteers. This is what is taking place at the present time; hence, the pressure from the Left to open the frontier.

GERMAN-CZECH-FRANCO RELATIONS:

The coming large scale German maneuvers, causing much comment in all European papers, are not taken too seriously by the French press. It is stated that the results of the Runieiman visit must be awaited prior to Hitler taking a definite stand on the Czechoslovakia question. The French doubt if Hitler will risk a European war, with its doubtful results, over a few million Czech-Germans the majority of whom care little about becoming part of a greater Germany. The French Government is advising the Czech Government to cede everything possible and make every effort towards a peaceful solution of the problem.

FRENCH-ENGLISH-ITALIAN RELATIONS:

The recent friendship between England and Italy, and French hopes of an Italian accord, have not given the results hoped for. The British pressure on General Franco for a reply to the note on withdrawal of volunteers, and the apparent lukewarmness of the English for the Italian accord, is again causing the Italian press to open a campaign against the London-Paris axis.

Visas for Italians visiting France have been curtailed (supposedly for economic reasons), and the French have retaliated by putting restrictions on visitors to Italy. Items in
in the French press indicate that the Italians are opening their campaign against the British on the ground that England is the protector of the "Jewish" race, and that "Anglo-French Jewry" (controlling the entire world) cannot have anything in common with Fascism.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: [Name]
Date: 2 Sept., 1928
Serial No.: 424
File No.: 103

Subject: FRANCE
POLITICAL FORCES - INTERNATIONAL

Reference:

Report No. 424 (103) of 2 September, 1928, is transmitted herewith.

[Signature]

[Stamp: DECLASSIFIED]

E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(D) and 5(D) or (20)
OSI Order, May 4, 1972

By SLR
Date: MAY 4, 1972

[Stamp: SEP 18 1938]
FRANCE - POLITICAL SITUATION.

This week, beginning on August 29th, has provided the greatest tension in Europe since the week-end of 21 May. While no one could, or would, say definitely what was impending, there was no doubt of the considerable unease and disturbed feeling of the French, both in official circles and in the minds of the average man in the street.

The feeling that war was imminent was so general that the widow of a former American Ambassador to France who had steamer reservations for both the 7th and the 27th of September was advised to leave on the 7th, and other foreign officials had made plans to get their families out of France, in case war actually did occur.

At the time of writing this, (September 2nd) the tension has greatly lessened, principally as a result of the British plan of dividing Czechoslovakia up into almost autonomous cantons after the manner of the Swiss Federation. It is felt that this plan or a modification of it, has an excellent chance of being accepted by both the Sudeten and the Czech Government. Even if not accepted, the plan, at least, will allow discussions and will postpone the fateful hour. Any time gained is helpful to avert a war. The General Staffs of the Army, Navy, and Air all are agreed that if peace can be maintained until 1 October, then the danger of an outbreak of war is averted for some months.

During this period, the Naval Attache and the Assistant Naval Attache, by reason of prior engagements, were fortunate in being able to have long informal conversations with officers of the Intelligence Sections of the Air Army, and the Navy, in spite of the fact that those officers were working overtime continually. The French Chief of Staff of Defense, General Gamelin, had informed the American Ambassador, and this information was confirmed by the Ministries of Air and the Navy, that if war occurred, the immediate French plan is to send a covering force to the border, in Africa, of Tunisia and Libya to prevent the two Italian Corps in Libya from bothering French North African possessions. With the remainder of the French troops in North Africa, a drive through Spanish Morocco (already almost denuded of man-power by Franco) and thence across the Straits of Gibraltar into Spain to catch Franco in the rear.

As one French Intelligence officer phrased it, "The Spanish question will be settled in two weeks. In case of war, we could never allow the German and Italian allies of Franco to have any bases or troops in Spain at our banks." The situation in Spain at present is so delicately balanced that the French say the intervention of only two divisions in the rear of Franco would mean the immediate collapse of the whole Nationalist side.
The Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires informed the Naval Attache concerning Admiral Horthy's visit to Germany. Although admitting that Hungary was pro-German, he kept insisting that it was not yet pro-Nazi. Hungary was robbed of so much territory after the World War, that only by a close union with Germany could she ever regain any of the lost territory. But he repeated very indignantly that stories had been circulated in Germany that Admiral Horthy's wife was a Jewess, which was false. He also said that the chief of the Nazi party in Hungary had been jailed, and that Horthy's visit to Germany was made only on condition that Hitler did not return the visit.

The French Naval Intelligence officer said that the morale in Government Spain was very high, which corroborated the Naval Attache's opinion as expressed in Report Y-104, Serial No. 106, of 22 August. He also said that a note in reply to the British plan for withdrawal of volunteers in Spain had been prepared by Franco and his Spanish advisers which was most conciliatory, and might have paved the way for an armistice. However, when the German and Italian advisers of Franco saw the note, they made him withdraw it under threat of immediate cessation of Italian and German assistance, and then composed the note that was actually sent to the British Government - a distinctly unaccommodating reply.

The French officer also said that the French would show the Japanese Naval Attache nothing, no factories, ships or yards; that the Italian was shown things on a strictly exchange basis, even comma for comma, but that they would have no hesitation in showing us all we wanted to see. And as for the British Naval Attache, relations were now so good with England, that he, the British Attache was looked on not as an Attache but as an adviser.

It was also reported that the French made a policy of selling artillery and automatic weapons to the small nations surrounding Germany (Poland, Yugoslavia, Roumania, etc.) but along with the guns, only a very small number of shells. Then, if such countries went against France, by closing the supply of shells, it would in many considerable time before those countries would make or obtain shells to use against the French. That was much better than if those countries bought German guns and German shells.

The Naval Attache had a private conversation with the head of the Deuxième Bureau of the Air Army, and had an interesting discussion of various things.

Among other statements it was reported that the British now were much more nervous and disturbed about conditions than the French. When the present British Air Attache arrived in Paris somewhat over a year ago he was indifferent and even contemptuous of any developments that might lead to war, and would not cooperate with the French Air Army at all. About January 1938, this state had changed and the British
British Attaché began to be a little worried and after the Austrian Anschluss, he became frankly alarmed and since then has worked energetically in getting cooperation between the French and British Air Services.

The Italian Air Attaché, Erocole, who was brought up in England, is distinctly pessimistic. He said that Italy could go along all right until finally England would get thoroughly angry, and then that would be the end of Italy.

Margottini, the Italian Naval Attaché, has an inferiority complex, and is most excitable, and looks for trouble. He has a bad reputation with the French.

Von der Marwitz, the German Naval Attaché, is respected sincerely by the French, and they regard him as the opposite of the Italian Attaché, in being very calm and radiating an idea of assurance.

England is getting stronger and stronger, and by early 1940 will be completely rearmed. Every month that passes weakens Italy against England.

This French officer said that the French were disturbed and inquiet, but are not so frightened or worried as they were at the time of the Anschluss.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: Y. Date: 6 Sept., 1936
Serial No. 328
Source of information: Press
Subject: France

Reference:

PRESS EXTRACTS, POLITICAL EVENTS, PERIOD ENDIN: September 6, 1936.

Y. No. 425 (103), 6 September, 1936, is transmitted herewith.
From: J. O.  
Date: 9 Sept., 1938  
Serial No. 434  
File No. 103  
Source of information: Reliable

Subject: France  
Polician  
(Intelligence)  
Reference:

Report: The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O. N. I. will be greatly expedited if a informal summary of the contents is entered in this system. Mention leading geographic, personal, or political names, and the gist of the report.

General Ambassadors (Paris) View of Current Situation and Anti-Nazi Feeling in United States

Y. No. 434 (103), 9 September, 1938, is transmitted herewith.
GERMAN AMBASSADOR'S (PARIS) VIEW OF CZECH SITUATION AND ANTI-NAZIS FEELING IN UNITED STATES

The following extract, taken from an Embassy Despatch, is transmitted as of interest:

German Ambassador's Views: In an interview, with the Hungarian Charge d'Affaires, the German ambassador in Paris stated that he was greatly concerned over the Czech situation; that he was convinced that if trouble broke out there and German troops crossed the Czech frontier, France would at once march to the aid of the Czechs, and that he had reported frequently of late to his government, and was continuing to report to it in this sense. What added to the Ambassador's concern, as he said, was the fact that in Germany there are people of influence who do not believe that France would march and believe that France and England are, in last analysis, bluffing.

Count von Welckzeck (German Ambassador) went on to say that his government was greatly worried over the extent of anti-nazis sentiment in the United States. If the extent and depth of anti-nazis feeling in foreign countries could be represented by figures, said the Ambassador, and the figure 1 were taken for France, in Great Britain the figure would be 2, and in the United States 4.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From:     Y          Date:     15 Oct 38    Serial No. 427    File No. 103
Source of information:    PERSONAL OBSERVATION AND CONSENT
Subject:    FRANCE (EUROPE)    POLITICAL FORCES    INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Reference:

Notes:—The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O.I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is entered in the space. Mention leading geographical, personal, or political names, and the gist of the report.

FRANCE - POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN

Report No. 427 is transmitted herewith.

By SLR    Date:    May 2, 1973
FRANCE - POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN

After the Hitler speech of last night, the general feeling in France is one of relief, not so much from what was said, as for so much that was left unsaid. On the morning before the speech was delivered, there were many Frenchmen who were depressed and convinced that the worst was just about upon them. The purchasing manager of the Matford Company (French Ford Co.) told the H.A. that he thought general mobilization would be ordered in the evening. The former French commander of the Lafayette Escadrille said that he was about to cable his American wife to remain in the States.

Today, Tuesday, the feeling has changed. Although it is realized the question has not been settled, at least it has been postponed and Hitler did not shut the door to continuing negotiations. Among French officers of the Deuxieme Bureau of the Navy, the impression exists that this is one more example of the intelligence of Hitler. He has given the part of the people who say "why should we fight for Chechoslovakia?" undoubted strength; he can say once more that Germany wants peace, and has increased his prestige vic a vic the pacifists in both England and France. Among military circles the opinion still remains, however, that these are but pauses in the situation of the problem. They feel that Hitler's next move will come when, perhaps France and England have drifted a bit apart, or there is a change of government in either England or France, or on any one of a dozen similar crises. They feel that the next move, maybe in a week, maybe in a year, will be a sudden (24 hours or less) ultimatum (when the French or the British or both are embarrassed) to Chechoslovakia regarding the Sudetens. The French Navy, although reluctantly, admits Hitler's artfulness and sense of timing.

Yesterday, there was exceptional excitement. The European manager of the United States Lines asked the H.A., what would be the most logical thing to do with the U.S. Lines steamers, whether they could get into Bordeaux, or whether they would have to be sent to England and not call on French ports. Today, things have calmed down exceedingly.

The feeling now is that the danger has been averted for the present, although no one will or can say for how long. But the fact that no mention was made by Hitler of a plebiscite or the use of force, and fact that the danger of war has been avoided for the moment is of great importance.

While the door is still left open to negotiation, it is more the less open to the use of force, and if negotiations fail, the employment of force may be decided upon at any favorable moment.
ISSUED BY THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, NAVY DEPARTMENT

ATTACHE'S REPORT 15373 - H C-10-I

Forward seven copies (original and six duplicates) this number is necessary because the limited personnel in O. N. I. and because of the frequency for quickly disseminating information from attache. These copies will be distributed by O. N. I. as per footnotes or otherwise, according to subject matter.

From Y Date 18 Sept. 1938 Serial No. 438 File No. 800
(Compress new series within January four)

Source of information Personal information

Subject FRANCE

File No

Reference

*Reference—(The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O. N. I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is entered in this space. Mention leading geographical, personal, or political names, and the gist of the report.)

FRANCE, ARMY - PREPARATION

Report No. 438 is transmitted herewith.

By SLR

MAY 21, 1973

[Codes and markings]

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FRANCE - ARMY - Preparation.

At an Attaché dinner on the evening of the 9th of Sept., the Italian naval attaché had calmed down and apologized for his excitement of a few days ago, in stating that he considered war very possible.

The Germans were very annoyed at the attitude of the U.S. in sympathizing with England and France, but made the statement that there could never be another war between Germany and the U.S., as the only way it could occur was by the U.S. sending an army to Europe, and they were sure we would never do that again, implying that they could act as they wished in Europe regardless of the opinion of the U.S.

Captain Harris, U.S.M.C., a student officer, has just returned from a curtailed "stage" of instruction in artillery in Clermont-Ferrand. All of the French students, reserves and active officers, were sent back to their regiments and the foreign officers were told to go back to Paris as there would be no more schools. The French officers were very pleasant to Harris throughout all of his stay, and when the school was discontinued, the colonel of the regiment said that they were all ready to go and that this time the German bluff would be called.

On Sunday, 11 September, while enroute to accompany the Ambassador to a dedication of a monument, the Naval Attaché observed military detachments in several cities to the north of Paris. In Senlis, bridges and railroad culverts were guarded by several batteries of .50 caliber A.A. machine guns. At Compiegne were seen eight light armored cars, each carrying a .37 mm. cannon, and machine guns; also eight .50 caliber A.A. machine guns were seen. These armored cars and A.A. machine guns were all ready for action, and were placed in various parts of the town, all ready to go.

As a further example of the readiness of the French Army for action, the lieutenant colonel commanding the parade battalion at the dedication ceremonies informed the N.A. that he had received word, only at 1050, Sunday morning, that his battalion would have to leave at 1150. At 1150, the entire battalion in heavy marching equipment, full packs and all, were ready to leave for the parade.

Reservists are still being called up to take their places in the French army, but the process is being done so quietly that there is no alarm or excitement. The result, however, is that what corresponds to a partial mobilization of the Army is being carried out, but all very quietly and with no stir or fuss. On Monday morning, 12 September, these full trains of reserves going to active duty left the Gare St. Lazare in Paris, for various Army posts in the north of France.
ATTACHE'S REPORT

Forward seven copies (original and six carbon); this number is necessary because of the limited personnel in O.N.I. and because of the urgency for quick dissemination of information from attachés. These copies will be distributed by O.N.I. as per instructions or elsewhere, according to subject matter.

From... Y Date... 22 Sept., 19..., 38 Serial No... 451 File No... 103

Source of information... Personal observation, contact, the French press

Subject... FRANCE

POLITICAL FORCES

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

(Nation reported on)

Reference

France. The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O.N.I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is entered in this space. Mention leading geographical, personal, or political names, and the gist of the report.

France - Political Events

Report No. 451 is transmitted herewith.

REFERENCES

E.O. 11652, Sec. 2(a) and 50 U.S.C. 401
OSD letter, May 3, 1961

SLR Date... MAY 21 , 1973
The past week in France has produced all the sensations from extreme uneasiness to absolute relief. The first part of the week, feelings became more and more tense, particularly on Monday and Tuesday following Hitler's Nuremberg speech. War was felt to be unavoidable except by a miracle. There was some slackening in the tension following Mr. Chamberlain's announcement of a visit to Hitler, but when he returned to London early Friday morning, and reported nothing to the French until Sunday, more uneasiness was created. It was not until Monday afternoon after a Council of Ministers in Paris, followed by an announcement of the Franco-British program, that there came the general feeling of relief that war had once more been averted.

So great was the thought that war was imminent on the 12th, 13th and 14th that many Americans (especially Jewish-Americans) booked westbound passages. All the trans-Atlantic steamship companies reported capacity westbound bookings. Also, a representative of the United States Lines conferred with the Naval Attaché on the advisability and possibility of shifting the French terminus of the steamer line to Bordeaux, or even omitting France altogether.

Many Americans, including the directors of the American Hospital, imported the Embassy and the Naval Attaché for gas masks and demanded to know what could be done in case of gas attack.

The French, themselves, began to take extreme precautions. Many more reservists were called back to active duty. So many were called, in fact, that the French military forces were mobilized in so far as possible without the consent of the Chamber of Deputies. The authorities of the city of Paris delivered a quarter of a cubic yard of sand to every house in Paris with instructions that the sand should be placed on the topmost floor or in the attic of each house to be used to put out fires in case of bombings. Numbers of people in Paris, especially families of Army and Naval Officers, received cards instructing them where to go in the smaller cities and suburbs of Paris for evacuation in case of bombings. Also many inhabitants near the northern and eastern borders were told to be ready in case of war to be evacuated to districts in central and southern France. In cities and towns between the German border and Paris, anti-aircraft guns and searchlights were placed in position, and anti-aircraft machine guns were mounted on the roofs of houses. The French army was on the alert and ready to move on practically a moment's notice.

On Thursday, the 15th, when Chamberlain announced his intention, favorably received, of flying to confer with Hitler, one could almost hear the feeling of relief. It was felt that the longer discussions were held, there was much less chance of war occurring. Almost all dissenting opinions from the columns of praise of Chamberlain's action were that of the British Naval Attaché, and a very few number of influential Frenchmen. The British Naval Attaché was rather indignant that a British Prime Minister had to go or less begging to Hitler, while several leading Frenchmen, although applauding the personal courage of Chamberlain, felt that British prestige was sinking to a new low.

Chamberlain returned to London Friday noon, after his interview with Hitler, but gave no intimation of what had occurred to the French government. Uneasiness increased at the failure to hear anything from the British until by Saturday noon there was general indignation among the French government officials that they were to be confronted with a "fait accompli," and accord between the British and Germans. This is exactly what happened.
On Saturday afternoon (the 17th) M. Daladier and Bonnet were invited by the British government to come to get the results of the Chamberlain-Hitler agreement. All day Sunday was spent in conferences and on Monday morning, Deladier and Bonnet returned to Paris, and immediately attended a conference of Ministers at the Presidential palace. The conference lasted from ten-thirty a.m. to three p.m., and reliable sources advised that the conference was an extremely stormy one, that at least three ministers threatened to resign. Differences were patched up somehow, and at three o'clock, an official communiqué stated that the cabinet approved unanimously the accord.

The agreement, as announced, consisted of three main sections:

First, the annexus with Germany of all Czecho-Slovakian districts in which the Sudetens formed seventy percent or more of the population. The rectifications of the frontier are to be made by direct negotiation under international control.
Second, autonomy within the Czecho-Slovak state of all cantons where Sudetens form less than seventy percent of the population, this autonomy to be fixed not by a plebiscite (which might bring up embarrassing demands for plebiscites from Polish and Hungarian minorities) but by an international control commission. Eventually an exchange of populations between German and Czecho-Slovak localities is envisaged. Third, the independence of Czecho-Slovakia, as thus changed and neutralized, is to be guaranteed by its border states, i.e., Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania, with a super-guaranty of such neutrality by England, France and Italy.

The above agreement was then dispatched to the Czecho-Slovak government for its consent. However much the Czechos may dislike the agreement, it is felt that they cannot but accept it, or else face Germany alone, which would be most disastrous for the Czechos. Undoubtedly, though, it will be a difficult pill to swallow. The troubles are not yet over because even before the terms of the accord were announced, Poland and Hungary began asserting that any autonomy given to the Germans which was not given to the Hungarian and Polish minorities would be unthinkable and could not be tolerated by the two governments.

The first and most general reaction in France to the accord was one of relief that there will not be a war now, for, at least, several months. At the same time, however, there exists a minor feeling that once more Hitler has won, and that war has not been averted but only postponed. Besides, the fact that Hitler has secured all his aims without going to war, by a diplomatic victory, it is felt that in a few months he will be demanding even more and then the whole process will have to be lived through again. Also, since Czecho-Slovakia is to be neutralized, its treaties with France and Russia will be annulled, and perhaps even the Franco-Russian treaty may become a dead letter. The Naval Attaché believes that this latter feeling will grow among the French, and undoubtedly, when the Chamber of Deputies is reconvened, there will be bitter debate on this foreign policy, so bitter that Daladier's government may fall as a result. The Communist and other left newspapers are already saying that Czecho-Slovakia has been betrayed. Once the dismemberment of that country is begun, it is hard to see where and how it can be stopped.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: Y
Date: 27 Sept., 1936
Serial No.: 470
File No.: 105

Source of information: Personal observation and press

Subject: FRANCE

POLITICAL SITUATION

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Report No. 470, 27 Sept., 1936, is transmitted herewith.

FRANCE - POLITICAL SITUATION - WEEK ENDING 27 Sept., 1936

By S.L.H.
Date: MAY 21, 1937
This week started, as so many others recently, with a great let-down in tension and much brighter prospects of peace on Wednesday, September 26. On that day, after sitting in council session for twenty hours continuously, the Czech government accepted the proposals brought back by Mr. Chamberlain after his first visit to Berchtesgaden. This acceptance was obtained only after great pressure had been brought by the representatives of England and France, including one last call and warning to Hess at four a.m.

At the same time, Polish and Hungarian leaders had conferences with Hitler, and began to assert more vigorously their claims for a discussion and settlement of their respective minorities in Czechoslovakia.

As the feeling that the outbreak of war was a matter of a few hours or so, decreased, the French became increasingly indignant over the "voyage to Genoa" of Chamberlain, and more and more articles appeared regarding the "humiliation" France had suffered in being dragged along on England's coat-tails in the results of Chamberlain's trip to Berchtesgaden. This feeling of indignation increased until Friday when the government of Mr. Hodza in Czechoslovakia fell, and the new government of General Syrovoy ordered a complete mobilization of the Czech army. The Czech mobilization was followed on Saturday morning by the calling of two echelons of French reserves, about three hundred thousand men, to the French army. Then there was no more talk of "humiliation" or "indignation" but only an extreme worry about the once-more imminent possibilities of war.

The first reports of Chamberlain's second visit to Hitler at Godesberg was that the British and French were in complete accord as to what was to be ceded to Germany and the only difference to be regulated was the time when the session was to take place. When the accord was published, the Czechs immediately claimed that Hitler's demands were now more than had been agreed to in the first session after Berchtesgaden. The French, egged on by the Left press, also had a stiffening of feeling, although, in reality, the two proposals were almost identical in what places were to be ceded. The difference between them is that in one case, the German forces start moving in to the Sudeten parts of Czechoslovakia on 1 October, with a corresponding withdrawal of Czech troops, and a plebiscite for the regions where the Sudetens are under fifty percent of the population, to be held not later than 24 November. The details of this proposal are to be regulated by a German-Czech commission.

The opposing British suggestion to which the Czechs stated their acceptance is that an international commission must, fix the definite boundaries of the territory to be ceded to Germany (this territory is almost the same as that named in the German proposal) then proceed to hold the plebiscite in the other disputed regions. The German objection to this is that with the appointment of an international commission, and the time it has always required for such a commission to function, entirely too long a period would elapse before the Sudetens were finally turned over to Germany.

On Saturday morning, Sept., 26, the French partial mobilization of 300,000 men was announced, and at the same time the Army requisitioned trucks, some motor cars, and horses. Fifty large garages were taken over in Paris to provide issuing depots to the reservists called to active duty, to receive their uniforms and equipment. At the same time, all gasoline stations were notified of a certain minimum amount of gasoline and lubricating oil that must be carried at all times. The gas stations can sell freely down to the minimum limit but when that limit is reached there can be no more sales until a new supply is delivered to the station.
Saturday and Sunday were most tense, passive defense measures were being taken, such as placing blue lamps in the street lights, orders for automobilists about dimming lights, what to do in case of air raids, etc. On Monday, before Hitler's speech, the tension and excitement increased to a great extent. Many French civilians left Paris for points in the country, and the trans-Atlantic steamer companies were besieged with Americans trying to get back. The cross-Channel boats were crowded to capacity with English tourists returning to England, and the English, French and American steamer companies, on advice of the Embassy, waived lifeboat requirements in order to accommodate more passengers. The American Embassy issued a circular advising all Americans who had no compelling reasons to for remaining in France to leave as soon as possible. Extra volunteer help, obtained from among the wives of American officers, were put to work assisting in handling the crowds of American tourists who frequented the Embassy, seeking advice, aid and information.

On Monday, the 26th, war seemed a matter of hours.

Monday night, Hitler's speech from Berlin was listened to almost unanimously with great interest. The speech was placatory toward England and France, but particularly violent toward Czechoslovakia and Mr. Beneš who was accused of dilatoriness and intrigue in trying to delay and hold up the applications of the agreement regarding the cession of the Sudeten territories. On Monday, also, K. Deladier permitted a statement to be issued under his name saying that if Germany invaded Czechoslovakia, France would go to war. This has been the most definite and most direct statement issued yet by the French.

At the time of writing this report (Tuesday afternoon, 27 Sept.), the French are continuing quietly their mobilization, more measures for passive defence are being taken, and both French and foreign civilians are leaving Paris in increasing numbers. However, the general feeling seems to be much easier, and among various diplomats and members of diplomatic missions in Paris, the general feeling is that a compromise of some sort will be reached before Saturday, 1 October. It is on that day that Hitler threatened to march into Czechoslovakia, provided his demands are not met before. But the general feeling is that somehow (no one is as yet certain of the means) an agreement will be reached before that limiting date whereby war will be avoided.

Poland and Hungary who, at first, demanded equal treatment of their nationals in Czechoslovakia with that accorded the Sudeten Germans have backed down considerably and after receiving assurances from the Czech government that the question of the Polish and Hungarian minorities would be treated in negotiations between the respective states, seemed to have withdrawn their demands. However, in spite of Poland's direct statement that she would not move into the Tschech district, if a localized conflict occurs in Czechoslovakia, it is believed that Poland will attempt to take this district, by negotiations if possible, otherwise by force of arms.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: 
Date: 5 Oct., 1938
Serial No.: 479
File No.: 103

Subject: FRANCE

Source of information: Personal observation

Report No. 479 is transmitted herewith.

FRANCE - POLITICAL SITUATION, 5 OCTOBER 1938.

E.O. 11652, Sec. 360 and 362 of OR
CON letter, May 1, 1932

by SLR

Date: MAY 2 1938
FRANCE - POLITICAL SITUATION, OCTOBER 4 & OCTOBER, 1938

During the week occurred the greatest outburst of feeling since August, 1938. On Wednesday, the 30th of September, the hope that war could be avoided had dwindled away to almost non-existence. Both French and foreigners were leaving Paris by any and all means: train, airplane, and private car. Additional troops were being called up hastily; the steamer "SHERPA" was recalled to Hamburg while in mid-route to Cherbourg for a west-bound crossing; the United States Lines' steamer "WASHINGTON" was held at Le Havre and its scheduled visit to Hamburg cancelled. At noon on that day the Ambassador ordered the families of all Embassy personnel to leave Paris and go into the country for greater safety. Then at 3:30 p.m., like the sun breaking through the obsidian clouds, came the announcement of a conference at Munich on Mussolini's invitation. The sensation of relief was so great that it was almost audible.

However, even while the conference was going on, French preparations for war continued: blue bills were placed in street lamps, shelter trenches were dug in the Bois de Boulogne, and troops kept on being called to active service. It was not until definite news of the signing of the accord reached Paris that these preparations were halted.

The general terms of the accord can be summed up under eight headings as follows:

1. Evacuation. The evacuation of the Sudeten territory commences on 1 October and is to be completed on 10 October. During the evacuation, no installations, factories, forts, etc., are to be damaged, but are to be turned over intact.

2. Occupation. The progressive occupation of the Czechoslovak territory by the German troops is to be carried out as follows: zone 1, October first and second; zone 2, October second and third; zone 3, October fourth and fifth; zone 4, October ninth. An international commission, composed of a representative of the German Foreign Office, the French and British Ambassadors at Berlin, and the Czech Minister at Berlin, will determine before 10 October, other predominantly German zones that should be occupied by that date.

3. Plebiscite. This international commission will determine what territories are to be subject to a plebiscite, and will fix the time and the regulations for such a plebiscite, the time in any case not to be later than the end of November.

4. Fixation of the New Frontier. This same commission will fix the new frontiers, making, if necessary, slight modifications.

5. Credits and Exchanges. A German-Czech commission (composition not yet decided) will settle the details of the option of citizenship and exchange of populations. This option and exchange must be fixed during a six-month period.

6. Liberation of Germans. Within four weeks, all Sudeten Germans are to be released from all Czech military and police formations, and all German political prisoners are to be released.

7. International Guarantee. France and England will guarantee the new frontiers of the Czech state, and Germany and Italy will also join as guarantor powers when the Polish and Hungarian minorities questions are settled.

CONFIDENTIAL
E. Minorities. If the Polish and Hungarian minorities problems are not settled before, the Heads of the government of the four states (England, France, Germany and Italy) will meet on these questions at the end of three months.

From the above terms, it is obvious that the accord was a complete capitulation to Hitler, even to the date of entering Czecho-Slovakia on 1 October as he announced in his speech at Berlin. The accord further provides for an automatic cancellation of the Russian-Czecho-Slovak and French-Czecho-Slovak treaties, as well as in all probability the Franco-Russian treaty of mutual assistance.

Taken as a whole, the agreement is a complete diplomatic victory of the Rome-Berlin Axis and a "diplomatic Sedan" for France and England. At the last round of this gigantic poker game, England and France threw in their hands after becoming certain that Hitler would fight.

Example is contagious, and Poland presented Prague with an ultimatum regarding the Polish minorities, which was immediately accepted and, on Sunday, the second, Hungary likewise demanded immediate settlement of its minorities, which was also granted.

There are may reasons that Mussolini's last minute offer of mediation was motivated by a British plan, fortified by the promise of a British loan to Italy. It will be interesting to see if a British loan is granted to Italy in the next few weeks. If so, the truth of these reasons will be established. During all this crisis, the Italians did not mobilize or make any unusual preparations for war, and the French general staff states that the reason for such non-preparation was simply that Italy did not have the necessary money. The Italian adventure in Abyssinia and Spain have been too costly.

In the few days that have elapsed since the signing of the Munich agreement, there has already been a definite change in feeling. The first days were filled with joy and relief that war had been averted, but by now, Tuesday, as the danger of war is in part and also a more thorough realization of just what a victory the agreement was for Hitler, an element, increasing in numbers and vociferousness, is rising to demand why a firmer attitude was not taken. The British First Lord of the Admiralty, Duff-Cooper, resigned from the British Cabinet on Sunday in protest over the capitulation to Hitler, and although no French ministers have as yet resigned, Daladier is due for much explaining to the Chamber of Deputies which reassembles this, Tuesday, afternoon.

The immediate result of these interpellations may be the factor that will break the already weakened "Front Populaire" of the Left parties. If that Front is ruptured, the Daladier ministry will probably be succeeded by a ministry, possibly a coalition one, much further to the right than the present. Another result of greater import than a change in cabinet is the lessened prestige and influence of France in the smaller European states as Poland, Roumania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. As an illustration of this feeling, a rather bitter joke served as an excellent example: "In the middle of his troubles, Mr. Stalin received the following telegram, 'Keep Calm. Retain your utmost faith in England and France' signed Emile Bocassa."
ATTACHE'S REPORT

From .............................  Date ..................  Serial No. 492  File No. 105

Subject ............................ (Indicate series

Reference ..........................................................

Report No. 492 is transmitted herewith.

POLITICAL SITUATION, WEEK ENDING 11 OCTOBER, 1938

OCT 19 1938
This week opened with a special session of the Assembly, called to hear the reasons and the results of the Munich accord and the events leading up to it. Unlike the English House of Commons, which gave Chamberlain a vote of confidence only after some notable striclures on his policy by Winston Churchill, Major Atlas, Admiral Sir Roger Keyes and others, the French Chamber of Deputies gave Daladier a vote of confidence with only the Communists opposing. The few speeches against the policy of Chamberlain and Daladier are best summed up by Major Atlas's criticism: "If the Munich accord is a good thing and if we shall have peace in our time, why is it necessary to keep on reasoning?"

After giving Daladier a vote of confidence on his foreign policy, the Chamber of Deputies lent attention to the Premier's request for full powers to make decree laws, for the financial and economic rehabilitation of the country. After some difficulty the Premier was voted full powers by a vote of 331 to 78 with 200 abstentions. The Communists voted against this bill and the Socialists abstained. With the vote on the foreign situation and the full powers granted as it was, the definite rupture of the "Front Populaire" is obvious. When the Chamber reconvenes on 16 November, unless the split between the Socialists and Communists is healed before, it is most probable that the Daladier Cabinet will fall. A regrouping of parties in the Chamber then will probably supply a Cabinet more to the right than this present one.

Indignation over the Munich accord is still widespread. The French regular army officers at the Ecole de Guerre are particularly disgusted at the Munich peace, as they, in common with many others, believe that the present truce cannot last more than six months. An artillery general there told one of the officers that he (the general) doubted if the course would be finished without the interruption of a war. Other French officers there wondered "if the dirty Poles would have the effrontery to come back to the Ecole." These officers also were most enthusiastic about President Roosevelt's speech and stated that the peace that Chamberlain made was not the peace that Roosevelt had asked France and England to make. It was also learned that, in addition to the advance through Spanish Morocco and Spain, the French army plans, in case war had come, were to push through the Siegfried Line and attack through Germany.

The resignation of Benes is considered as virtually necessary in order to have any harmonious dealings with Germany. Such dealings now have become an absolute necessity for Czechoslovakia, especially as the Germans in marching into the fifth zone have occupied practically all the territory demanded at Goteborg. The International Commission of Ambassadors sitting in Berlin did not approve of this step, but as the German Army marched into those regions, nothing could be done about it.

The Italian Naval Attaché informed the Naval Attaché that France and England were now being paid for twenty years of mismanagement, and that it was now up to France to make a direct turn in her foreign affairs and come to terms with Mussolini, if France was not to be a third-rate power. He added that he had informed the Chief of the Second Bureau (GII) of the French Navy, that Italy would not leave Spain, after sinking so much money and men in that country, until France was definitely and completely the victor; also that the Italians were insisting that Djibouti in French Somaliland be made a free port. Unless these two things were realized, it would be of no use in sending an Ambassador to Rome. Further, that if the French did not agree soon, the price would go up.
It is reported that Mr. Francois-Poncet, the present French Ambassador to Berlin is to be appointed the new Ambassador to Rome where France has not been represented by an Ambassador for two years. Monsieur Noël, now Ambassador to Poland, is slated to relieve Francois-Poncet in Berlin, and Monsieur Pietri, a former Minister of Marine is rumored as Monsieur Noël’s successor in Warsaw.

The information that England had granted a loan to Mussolini as as part of the influence to get him to exert on Hitler to agree to the Munich accord is now accepted. In some circles, the amount even ($30,000,000) has been stated, although as yet there have been no official announcements on the subject.

In Spain, conditions have changed very little. The government, while not making any gains, have so stubbornly resisted the Nationalists that the latter are not gaining either. The withdrawal of volunteers by Mussolini, as announced in the press during the week, have turned out to be no more than the withdrawal of sick and wounded and those who have served more than eighteen months service in Spain.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the U.R.S.S., Litvinov, passed through Paris the early part of the week, on his way to Moscow from Geneva. Contrary to custom, he made no official calls on any of the French politicians. It is reliably reported that, while in Paris, Litvinov was very discouraged and fearful of returning to Moscow. Since his arrival in that city, it has been stated that he will resign soon, and that his secretary has already been arrested. The official Russian News Agency has already announced that Litvinov is ill and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Petenskine, has taken over the functions of the office.

A reliable source of information from Moscow has confirmed the reports that Litvinov is in more or less disgrace with the powers that be, but exactly what has happened to him could not be stated with exactness. It was reported however that “I would not like to be in Marx’s shoes.” This same person said that it was definite that Marshall Blucher had been sent to prison and was about to meet the minister “Comrade Purge”. The reason for Blucher’s descent from the favored heights was said to be his suspected rivalry of Stalin, the power he held in the Far Eastern Army, which was not conducive to efficient subdivision to Stalin.

The final stroke, however, that caused the downfall of Blucher was the miserable showing made by the Russian military forces against the Japanese in the miniature war over Chang-kufeng Hill.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: T
Date: 17 Oct., 1956
Serial No.: 507
File No.: 800

Source of information:
FRANCE

Subject:
Army
(Nation reported on)

Reference:

Report No. 507 is transmitted herewith. (Filed in microfilm.)

FRANCE - Military Situation

RECLASSIFIED

E.O. 11652, Sec. 3 (b) and 507 (c) (3)
Confidential, May 4, 1972
By SLR
Date: MAY 21, 1973

RESTRICTED
FRANCE - Military Situation.

That the French, in spite of an earnest desire for peace, are becoming more and more aware of the consequences of the Munich accord is made evident in the following article of General de Guingan.

The great General Staff of Germany, charged with the handling of their military forces, knew that a way on two fronts in a risky and delicate enterprise, as was demonstrated in the last war. And in 1914, the Russian Army was poorly equipped and its offensive in East Prussia did not menace any vital parts of Germany. Several army corps could be opened to the Russians, and the larger part of the German army concentrated in the west.

In 1938, conditions were entirely different. The Czechoslovakian Army was solid, well organized, and had been instructed for twenty years by a French military mission. Moreover, it was concentrated almost in the center of Germany, at a distance of less than two hundred kilometers from Berlin. It would have been necessary for a good part of the German Army to hold the Czech Army, and the entire German Army to conquer it quickly. A German offensive against France could not have been made at the same time, and such a war on two fronts would have been very unsuitable for leading Germany into a disaster.

The leaders of the German Army, in order to force this conclusion, developed the plan of setting on the defensive forces in France, with a smaller number of troops, supported by a system of fortifications several kilometers in depth, and attacking Czechoslovakia with the forces by two, part of their forces. The German General Staff thus divided up their plan into two phases: one to be completed before the other was begun. This was a sound and prudent plan, but still difficult in that a war on two fronts had to be envisaged.

German diplomacy then came to the assistance of the military, with the end of keeping France neutral while Czechoslovakia was conquered. By promises, and by saying loudly to the world that Germany, already half-winched, would fight over the armistice to the end, the German diplomacy succeeded far better than it had imagined. Not only did France, and England, not expect Czechoslovakia, but the two allied countries practically promised themselves, the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia.

By this unprecedented diplomatic victory, the German General Staff was the first of their two battles, without even firing a shot. There are no longer any German occupying troops on the North and on the East, Poland, after a few recessions, will be found on the plains side. The nightmare of a war on two fronts has been obliterated. The whole weight of the German Army can now be directed to the West.

This German Army is now further reinforced by contingents from the Sudeten. The three and a half million additional inhabitants of the Sudeten will be able to furnish at least four active divisions, the 12th and 20th Army Corps, and at least six divisions of reservists. The fusion of these new elements will only be a matter of a few months. The example of the two Army Corps already incorporated from among the Austrian frontier is proof enough of that statement.
At the beginning of 1939, the German Army will have forty-five active divisions, as compared to forty active divisions in the French Army. The numerical inferiority of the French Army was compensated, in the beginning of 1939, by the aid of the Czechoslovakian forces, and by the two fronts. Now, that compensation has completely disappeared and the French are left with a very disturbing inferiority.

The above are facts, and it is no use discussing whether or not French diplomacy was skillful or not. Perhaps, it was necessary, to avoid war, to sue everything, to give what did not belong to us, to lose our ally and to reinforce our enemy of tomorrow. We thought we were averting war when we were only postponing it. We can very well ask whether we should cheer the 10th of September and whether it is le plus beau mot de 3000 ans of victory.
CONFIDENTIAL

ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: Y
Date: 29 Dec., 19 38
Serial No. 664
File No. 103

Source of information: Member of Italian Embassy Staff

Subject: FRANCE (ITALY) POLITICAL FORCES INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Report No. 664 is transmitted herewith.

FRANCO-ITALIAN TENSION

JAN 9 1939

RELEASED

E. O. 11472, Sec. 3(E) and 2(D)
Ord. letter, May 1, 1962
By SLR Date: MAY 21 1973
The following information was received from a member of the Italian Embassy Staff:

The recent Franco-Italian tension, culminating in the repudiation of the 1935 Agreement, was instigated by the Italians at this time in order to clear up all outstanding diplomatic questions with the French, in the immediate future. The reason for the haste is that the Italians expect Germany, within the next few months, to obtain satisfaction for her desire for European expansion, after which the Rome-Berlin Axis will be greatly weakened and Mussolini can no longer count on Hitler's support except in matters of mutual concern. The Italians feel that they are still of great potential value to Germany, and that therefore Hitler must back Italy's claims.

My informant frankly stated that Italy does not want the cession of Corsica or Nice, or even the cession of French Somaliland. The demand for these areas was broadcast in order to be able to make seemingly great concessions to the French in the event of Franco-Italian conversations. What Italy really wants is:

(a) A large measure of autonomy for the Italians in Tunisia.

(b) A free port at Djibuti, for the transfer of goods between Italian ships and the Djibuti railroad.

It was stated that the Italians are perfectly ready to admit that, so far as the Spanish War is concerned, Italian troops can be withdrawn from Spain and the Balearic Islands, but that they are retaining armed forces in these areas on account of their nuisance-value against the French and British, and will withdraw them only as part of the liquidation of all diplomatic questions with the British and French.

It was further implied that the Franco offensive in Spain was taking place at this time on account of Italian insistence, a Franco gain being greatly desirable before any diplomatic conversations with the French are undertaken, and especially before the arrival of Mr. Chamberlain in Rome, next month. It was stated that there are 30,000 to 50,000 Italian troops in Spain, which coincides with the press reports that an Italian Corps of 4 divisions (each division having approximately 10,000 men), the personnel of which is partly Spanish, is operating on the southern end of the Franco advance into Catalonia. The Corps commander is General Gambard, an Italian.

My informant stated that he expected Germany to move against Soviet Russia in the spring, probably by way of separation of the Ukraine with its subsequent domination, and that this action of Germany would be carried out with no interference from either Great Britain or France. There is, of course, the possibility that the present Italian disaffection with France was ordered by Mussolini in order to distract French attention from German moves in Eastern Europe.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT 1666-8 (C-10.39)

From: [Blank]
Date: 10 Jan., 1939
Serial No.: 16
File No.: 105

Source of information: newspaper

Subject: France (Italy)
POLITICAL
INTERNATIONAL

Reference:

Report No. 16 is transmitted herewith.

MOSSOLINI'S ODIOUS METHODS OF INTIMIDATION

JAN 18 1939
Mussolini's Obious Methods of Intimidation

The following article on the Franco-Italian question appeared recently in "Humanité":

"France must submit to Italian demands or there will be war," writes the Relazioni Internazionali. The Italians have gone mad on the eve of the British Minister's visit. Knowing no limits, the anti-French propaganda claims the French army cannot offer any resistance to Fascist troops. In every way, an effort is being made to establish an atmosphere of a war menace. The newspapers are provocative, insolent and insulting, printing fabricious lies to influence the British statesmen. "Italy does not fear France" appeared in large letters in one magazine. According to the Relazioni Internazionali, in case of war, the axis (Rome-Berlin) will act immediately and this axis does not permit a division of tasks, opinions or risks. Thus Mussolini tests the German backing. This magazine further states that for a balanced Europe, there is need for a new France, a France considerate of others' demands, more adapted to European climate. Thus must France decide her destiny.

"Humanité" adds that no Frenchman can possibly support such insane talk and that the wild press propaganda will only serve to strengthen the union of the French people against any and every concession to Fascism.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: Y
Date: 10 Jan., 1939
Serial No.: 17
File No.: 105

Source of information: Press

Subject: FRANCE
POLITICAL FORCES
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Reference:

Report No. 17 is transmitted herewith.

RECEIVED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 206 and 208 Sec. 206
OSD Letter, May 4, 1922
By SLR Date: MAY 2, 1973

RESTRICTED
The French Foreign Minister, Mr. Baladmir, returned to Paris from a week's political visit to Spain, Morocco and Algeria on 8 January. According to his itinerary he was received with much enthusiasm in the ports of the various localities. In each one of his appearances Baladmir restated his statements that "not one inch, not even one square of French territory" would be alienated from French rule, either by force or force, by direct or indirect attempt.

France's position as regards Italy has been greatly strengthened by the spirit in which Baladmir was received, and his authority is谈话 against any acts of aggression has been increased. In this context, former Italian Prime Minister De Gasperi and President Sperotto are bound to talk about the situation in the wake of the Italian Foreign Minister's visit to France where there is little left for Mussolini and Chamberlain to talk about.

The Italian claim that their "natural aspirations" must be considered, and that they are to be maintained in spite of Baladmir's "provocative" voyage to North Africa. Chamberlain, though, has been definitely warned by France that she must not act as "meddler" between France and Italy, and that any action by Italy against France must be taken up in direct negotiations between the two countries.

The first session of Parliament for 1939 convened today. The first few weeks will be taken up in the elections of officers of the Senate and House. A Committee, headed by Mr. De Gasperi, Foreign Soncier, has been Vice-President of the Chamber, but since the creation of the French Republic, he is scheduled to be dropped from that office. The contest for the Vice-Presidency will be the first of several stormy sessions.

Also, this afternoon a Council of Ministers at the Elysee Palace where President Lebrun will preside. At this Council of Ministers, Mr. Baladmir will present his report of his Spanish and North African, with particular emphasis to be laid upon the defence of that region. The Foreign Minister, M. Mauzeta, will also give an account of the external situation, and an advance indication of the French position to be taken later in the afternoon before the two British Ministers.

The Cabinet is due for some embarrassing moments in the next few days, as in the Chamber two interpellations on foreign policy, national defense, social unrest, and agricultural problems. These are interpellations which, on the Government's request, were held over from the December meetings of Parliament when the budget was rushed through. The absence of Baladmir in this political maneuver, as, since the successful African trip, he is in a far stronger political position than he was in December, when he obtained one vote of confidence by a majority of only seven votes.

Mussolini's visit to Hitler has caused much concern in French circles, and the fear is openly expressed that Poland is sliding more and more into the German orbit. One correspondent states that one thing desired by Mussolini is the establishment of the Polish-Soviet rapprochement.

Although the tension over the Hungarian-Czech border incident at Munich has subsided somewhat, the situation is extremely confused and the Carpathian-Czechoslovak sector has become the most dangerous point today in Europe.
HITLER seems determined to keep open his desired gateway to the East while Poland and Germany are trying to shut it, while at the same time professing lip-service to the German idea.

The French press has reacted largely and unfavorably on the German proposal for an increased tonnage in submarines. The chief comment is that if Germany actually increases the increased submarine tonnage, that will be the beginning of a new arms race. One writer says that the German naval position in British eyes is exactly as it was before 1914. Any considerable naval movement of Germany implied a threat to peace on the continent. This new threat of Germany's was much more ominous to England in that England will be obliged to distribute her naval forces all over the world to protect a widely-separated empire; while Germany, having no colonies, will be able to concentrate her forces in the North Sea.
POLITICAL EVENTS WEEK ENDING 17 January, 1939

Report No. 31 is transmitted herewith.
POLITICAL NEWS - WEEK ENDING 19 JANUARY, 1939.

The most important event of the week was the visit to Rome of Chamberlain and Lord Halifax. On the way, they passed through Paris and conferred for two hours with Daladier and Musset. During this conference, the French position was reafirmed that Chamberlain must not serve any offer to serve as mediator between France and Italy, and that France-Italian solutions were not to be the subject of any four-power conference, but were to be settled between the two powers directly concerned.

After being received with much flourish and fanfare in Rome, the English and Italians settled down for conversations. It was reported beforehand that Mussolini had intended to formulate the Italian accords as follows:

**Riforcio:** minimum, a free port; minimum, legalisation.

**Railway:** minimum, cessation of additional shares; maximum, total coercion.

**Soma:** minimum, Italian administrative posts; maximum, revision of status opening door to a large cooperation of Italy and Germany.

**Italian position in French Colonies and Protectorates:** minimum, maintenance of the 1926 status; maximum, general facilities for Italian exploitation in the French Empire with special privileges.

**Navy territorial claims:** Apparently abandoned.

In Rome, the Italo-British conversations were entirely negative as far as can be learned, except that the France-British solidarity was reafirmed. Chamberlain refused to discuss Spain until the withdrawal of the Italian troops was completed, and the French had already forbidden any discussions of the French-Ionian problems. Consequently, the conversations were described as cordial but negative. It is said that Chamberlain asked the Fuee to put a step to the Italian anti-French press campaign and to enter into direct discussions with the French, stating that if the above were seen London might support certain of the Italian claims providing territorial concessions were not demanded.

However, because of the negative results of the Italo-British conversations, the French fear that Italy will be morally forced to intensity her action in Spain and to maintain or even enlarge her claims against France. It is feared that an Italian note, almost in the nature of an ultimatum, is to be presented to France very shortly. As a result of the lack of results, there is a feeling that all Europe is now entering another period of tension similar to that of last September. The German press has strongly supported the Italian claims and there has been no weakening of the ties of the Rome-Berlin axis.

The Parliament reconvened on the 10th, and after pressing with the election of its officers and organisation, on Friday the 12th, announced the series of interpellations held over from December. The interpellations on foreign affairs were the first to be considered and will last until Thursday, the 19th, at which time interpellations on other subjects will be taken up. The prestige of the Daladier government, as the
present time, after the Premier's African trip, and the unsuccessful Italian attempts to promote discord, it is considered quite strong and there is very little danger that the Cabinet will be overthrown as a result of these interpretations.

The new officers of the Chamber, elected, were:

President: Michel Charlot (Radical Socialist)
Vice Presidents: Hippolyte Dass ( )
               Albert Maffin (Socialist)
               Fauconne Bois ( )
               Louis Dupet (Alliance of Left Republicans)
               Jacques Busies (Communist).

Busies was elected only after a second ballot, and his success was totally unexpected. Several papers call it a scandal, and say that it has symbolic purpose only, in that it will be exploited by the Communists as a pretext that the Popular Front is still not dead.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Demot, lately has been the subject of scathing attacks from the Communist and Socialist press and it has long been known that no good feeling exists between him and Maynard, the Minister of Finance. Several rumors have recently been afloat concerning Demot's imminent resignation. These rumors were particularly prevalent on the dource during the sessions of the 10th and 11th.

As predicted in Report No. 1 of 5 January, the Government in Hungary have openly joined the anti-Czechoslovak pact, and have ranged themselves as definite partners of the Rome-Berlin axis. Along this same line, rumors are current that the number of partners of the anti-Czechoslovak pact is shortly to be increased by the admission of Poland to the accord. The strength and influence of the Fascist powers are still increasing.
ATTACHTÉ’S REPORT

Forward secret copies (original and all copies) of this report to the Chief of Naval Intelligence, and to the Secretary of the Navy, or any representative of either, as instructed by the Chief of Naval Intelligence. These copies will be destroyed by the Chief of Naval Intelligence according to schedule.

From Y Date 26 Jan., 1939 Serial No. 68 File No. 105

Subject FRANCE

POLITICAL

REF. RELATIONS

Refer to—The written, tabulated, and distribution of reports by C. N. I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is entered in this space. This enables obtaining permission, in the case of classified or political reports, and the date of the report.

POLITICAL EVENTS WEEK ENDED JUNE 4, 1939

RESTRICTED

Report No. 68 is transmitted herewith.

E. O. 11825, Sec. 3(b) and 5(b) of (D)

OnD letter, May 4, 1939

By SLR

RESTRICTED
POLITICAL EVENTS, WEEK ENDING JANUARY 26, 1939.

SPAIN: The recent successes of General Franco, coupled with Mussolini's threats to emit a Franco victory before disclosing his demands on France, has once again aroused the Left elements in France to demand the opening of the French-Spanish frontier to furnish materials to the Spanish Republicans.

Practically the entire discussion in the Chamber during the past week was on the question of whether or not it was in France's interest to aid the Spanish Republicans and thus give France a better bargaining hand with Mussolini.

The Left members of the Chamber naturally favored opening the frontier; the Right members advised caution and to keep out of the Spanish mess, especially now that the end is in sight.

While great pressure is being brought to bear on Premier Daladier to take steps to insure freedom of communications between France and North Africa in the event that Italy will not move out of Spain prior to a settlement with France, it is not expected that the Government will go so far as to open the frontier, nor to send troops into Spain, as such a drastic move would certainly not meet with the approval of England. The Socialist Party, and some of the Radicals (Daladier's Party) are advocating the French moving into Spanish Morocco, or taking over Moresco, in a guarantee that Mussolini will move Italian troops out of Spain upon completion of the Civil War.

The debate, now going on in the Chamber, may not be completed until Thursday, the 28th. At present writing it is, therefore, not possible to state what the action of the Chamber will be on this question. It is very probable that the issue will not call for a vote of confidence in the Government, which would only arouse political passions, but that the Government will simply vote on the technical question of the frontier. Such a vote, so it is expected, would favor the Government in its efforts to remain neutral and keep the frontier closed.

Between now and Thursday, should the pressure increase on Premier Daladier due to Italian press comments on France, it is probable that a go-between stand may be taken by the Government in a motion somewhat as follows:

The Government intends to remain strictly neutral in accordance with the terms of the London Agreement, but is keeping a close watch on events in Spain so as to assure France's interests in case an emergency arises.

A statement of this sort, so claims the press, would appease the radical Left elements.

Foreign Minister BONNET, who is disliked by the Left and has many enemies even within the Cabinet, was singled out in the debate for an attack by the opposition who endeavored to diminish Bonnet's prestige by an attempt to show that no positive French foreign policy existed at the Foreign Office. Bonnet, more than any other French Cabinet Officer, is blamed for the Munich retreat before the Dictators.
The general opinion in France, at present, that General Franco is within striking distance of Barcelona, is that victory must be ascribed to the Spanish Nationalists, and that all last minute help to the Republicans will be of no avail. In fact, preparations are being made at the Spanish frontier to receive, temporarily, nearly 1,000,000 Spanish refugees: political, troops, etc. Troops will be disarmed and put in camp awaiting disposal after completion of hostilities; the politicians (especially those on Franco's black list) will no doubt receive asylum in France.

FRANCO-ITALIAN RELATIONS: This topic was one of the main features of the Paris press during the past week. The caustic remarks, both in French and Italian press, have not tended towards better relations between the two countries.

The entire French press doubts Mussolini's promise to Chamberlain regarding the evacuation of Italian troops from Spain. However, as Chamberlain has guaranteed Mussolini's promise Premier Daladier can do nothing more than wait and see. This "wait and see" attitude is not any too pleasing to the "Patriots" members of the Chamber, but France being tied to the British policy of appeasement there is really nothing to be done but await the demands of Italy which are to be presented when General Franco's victory is assured.

The Left members of the Chamber are trying to force Premier Daladier to make a statement in the Chamber to the effect that France's colonial territory is to be considered inviolate and not the subject of discussion with any foreign power. Premier Daladier may very probably make such a statement to appease the "Patriotic" and Left members of the Chamber.

The trip of inspection to North Africa of General Cemal, Chief of General Staff, and Admiral Darlan, Chief of Navy General Staff, has been cancelled. Rumors are to the effect that partial mobilization of French troops may be expected around the middle of February when it is expected Mussolini or Hitler may make known Italy's aspirations in the Mediterranean.

Léon Blum's paper, LE POPULAIRE, demands the opening and public exposure of the Level-Massalia dossier during the Ethiopian campaign, particularly the exchange of "secret letters" which should confirm the Duce's claims on Djibouti, Tunis and Spain, to say nothing of Corsica and Nice.
The Italian Naval Attaché on Sunday, 30 January, talked frankly of conditions in Europe. He said they did not wish war but with the fall of Barcelona now was the time to settle reasonably their differences with France, admitting it should be done while the Rome-Berlin Axis was still strong.

When the subject was brought up of hostilities commencing in the Mediterranean between Italy and France, he said that everyone knew that the French and Italian fleets were approximately equal on paper but with the help of shore-based aviation the middle of the Mediterranean was closed to all navies that tried to force it. If the French Fleet entered the Mediterranean to open up communications with Southern France and Africa, the advantage was on the side of Italy as the old Italian battleships had been completely modernized whereas the French had not, and also Italy would have aviation bases in that area (including the Balearics and Spain), also that the Italian submarine force was numerically superior.

He said that a France victory was very important for Italy as it was necessary to have an ally bordering the Atlantic. He repeated what he had told me before, that the worst thing that could happen to Italy was to have no enemy Fleet enter the Mediterranean and only have aviation, submarine and small-craft activity. Then eventually Italy would be starved out as the supplies Germany could send her would not equal what England and the U.S. could send to France.
The Naval Attaché and the Assistant Naval Attaché had a conversation of a little more than an hour with Captain de Villains, the Head Bureau of the Ministry of Marine. On asking about the comparative strengths of the French and Italian Navies in case of a war between those two countries alone, Captain de Villains stated that the navies were about equal, but that he finally believed the French Navy was the better of the two and would be the victor. The lines of communication between France and Algeria would be temporarily cut, but the French Fleet would soon reconnoiter them. Also, if the Italians used bases in Morocco or on the mainland of Spain, they would be pushed out of such bases very promptly.

De Villains then went on to say that he could not envisage a war between France and Italy alone, but that if such a thing occurred, when one took in all factors, — Army, Navy, Aviation, and the spirit and capabilities of the peoples, — then the French would win decisively. However, even if victorious in such a war, the French would be the losers because they would end up somewhat weakened, that they would then be an easy prey for Germany.

It was further stated that the French Navy did not believe that France would allow the use of bases in the Malagasy or Spain to the Italians, as he knew that many French officers hated the Italians. If that was done, the problem would be more serious, but in that case the first thing necessary would be to kick the Italians out of the Spanish base and the French could do that. Of course, with Italian occupation of such bases, communications with Algeria would be practically cut at an end, and even the outside route from Casablanca to France would be severed. It was absolutely necessary for France to have a neutral Spain; if that neutrality did not exist, then Spain would have to be captured first. Of course, that much more effort would be required by the French but even so, he believed the French could do it.

Without using bases in Spain, Italy, with her submarines and aviation could at times interrupt the flow of communications between Africa and France, but he believed the French Fleet was capable in a short period of securing communications against the Italian Fleet. He repeated again that in a war between two navies about equal, but that he believed the French Fleet to be the better of the two.

In case Germany aided Italy unconditionally, as in the Spanish Civil War, they would have to send much more help, to be effective, both in material and men, than was furnished to France. In that case, undoubtedly a general war would develop.
ATTACHE'S REPORT 21555-0 (C-9-4)

From Y Date 14 February 1959 Serial No. 110 File No. 105

Source of information Press

Subject FRANCE

POLITICAL EVENTS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Reference

Note.—The sending, index, and distribution of reports by C. N. I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is enclosed in this space. Material leading (triplication, presence, or political stance, and the gist of the report.)

CONFIDENTIAL

POLITICAL EVENTS — WEEK ENDING 14 FEBRUARY, 1959.

Report No. 110 is transmitted herewith.

M. O. 11672, Sec. 3(E) and 2(D) of 69.

CSD letter, May 1, 1973

By SIR Date: MAY 9, 1973

E. O. 11672, Sec. 3(E) and 2(D) of 69.
POLITICAL EVENTS - WEEK ENDING 14 FEBRUARY, 1939.

After being preoccupied during the early part of the week with the Spanish and the refugee question, French official circles received a rude shock on Friday when the news of the occupation of Hankow by the Japanese became known. Representatives of both the Navy and the Quai d'Orsay have stated that the situation in the Far East was very grave, and that France and England were going to despatch similar notes to Japan demanding explanations. However, as one French naval officer remarked, "We can only send notes, and the British can do no more. The situation in Europe will permit of nothing else. How is when the United States should come to our aid."

It has been stated that if the occupation was only temporary, nothing need be done, but if a permanent occupation were envisaged, the London and Paris Cabins would have to go into consultation and would be forced to revise their positions concerning happenings in the Far East. The system of defense of Indo-China will have to be changed. Particular displeasure was demonstrated over the adroit timing of the incident, when France and England were occupied with Spain and when the United States Fleet had left the Pacific. Japan's action was palpably one of the famous steps of the triangular axis and demonstrated again the solidarity existing between Rome, Berlin and Tokyo. This was considered particularly obvious in view of the Japanese declaration that Germany and Italy were informed of the move while Britain and France were not.

Several papers, especially among the Left, are demanding military precautions for the future, and not any despatch of notes. However, under the circumstances, nothing else but a note can be employed. The Japanese action was a very timely return to the surrender of Minorca, by virtue of British mediation, and also because the French Government had recently refused its agreement to the appointment of Mr. Tanai as Japanese Ambassador to France.

The Spanish question also continued to bother the French. The number of refugees that have crossed the border now amounts to about 250,000 persons and the French are hard put to find means of caring for this number of unfortunate. Many have now been sent to various parts of France distant from the Spanish border, but all available sites in the frontier departments are still overcrowded with refugees.

After having entered France, and remained for several days, the various members of the Spanish Government have flown back to Valencia and have announced that they would continue the war. It is reliably reported that the French Ambassador and the British Chargé d'Affaires to Governmental Spain are attempting to conclude some sort of a mediation plan. Negria holds out for three points, (1) Spain for the Spanish; all foreign intervention on both sides ceases; (2) a plebiscite to determine how Spain will be governed in the future and (3) a general amnesty. Franco's answer to the above proposals, however, refused all of them and demanded a complete surrender. The British Chargé, Mr. Stephenson, left Marseille for Valencia and Madrid on 12 February, presumably in an effort to keep the mediation negotiations going.
FRANCE
No. 110
14 February, 1939

In the meantime, strong pressure was being put on the French Government by Rightist groups asking a recognition of the Franco regime in Spain. The British Cabinet is also considering such a proposal, but up till the present, nothing has been either decided or announced. The French have a Council of Ministers scheduled for this afternoon (14 February) at which the recognition question will be settled. It is most probable, however, that recognition will be delayed until there is a more definite response as to just when the Italian and German troops and aid will be withdrawn.

A French Senator, M. Henri Béjéard, was despatched by Bonnet to the Burgos Government to sound out the possibilities of sending an ambassador and granting recognition to Franco. His reception by the Spanish Nationalists was correct but not cordial, in that Franco demanded a de jure recognition prior to any other negotiations. The French wanted an assurance that once the war is ended, Franco will not permit any foreign military element to remain on any territory under the Spanish flag. Senator Béjéard is expected to return to Burgos shortly to continue the talks, as well as to emphasize a strong French trump - the possession of the gold supply of the Bank of Spain which is now being held by the Bank of France.

As a commentary on what Franco's future actions may be, as one deputy (Socialist) stated in the French Chamber, "The Italians and the Germans have made heavy sacrifices to aid Franco, and they will hold him unless forced by constraint to release him."

The French political press, confirmed by the Navy, also has stated that a secret Japanese mission is enroute to Berlin, to take part in a conference of all Japanese Ambassadors and Ministers in Europe for the object of transforming the anti-Comintern pact into an official military triple alliance between Japan, Germany and Italy.
ATTACHE'S REPORT 21555-0 (C-9-1)

From: Y Date: 29 Feb., 19. 59 Serial No: 140 File No: 103

Source of information: Press

Subject: FRANCE POLITICAL FORCES INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Reference:

POLITICAL EVENTS - WEEK ENDING 26 FEBRUARY, 1939

Report No. 140 is transmitted herewith.

RELATION

R.O. 11652, Sec. 3(D) and 5(D) or (36)

O.S.D. letter, May 9, 1939

By: SIR Date: MAY 21, 1973
This week brought to a successful completion, the recognition of Franco Spain by both France and England. On the afternoon of the 27th Chamberlain announced in the House of Commons, at the same time as Daladier in the Chamber of Deputies, the de jure recognition of Franco's government, and the corresponding withdrawal of recognition from the Loyalist government. The President of Spain, Azana, who had been living in the Spanish Embassy at Paris since the fall of Catalonia, announced his resignation from the Presidency and went to live, as a private citizen, at his brother-in-law's chalet in Savoy near the Swiss border.

The recognition of Franco came after a week of negotiations by Senator Édard, and was without any conditions. Originally, Édard had gone to Burgos in the hope of making a trade, and in exchange for French recognition, to obtain from Franco a promise of the prompt withdrawal of foreign (German and Italian) troops and a declaration of amnesty. Édard was very coldly received in Burgos and Franco, in the flush of victory after winning Catalonia, refused to make any sort of concessions. In the end, to avoid being completely out-distanced by the totalitarian powers' influence in Spain, France and England had to jump on the Franco bandwagon without obtaining any quid pro quo.

The entire week in the Chamber of Deputies has been taken up with the problem of Franco recognition, the extreme Left opposing, and most of the other parties favoring it. On Friday, the 26th, Daladier announced that he would recognize Franco on the 27th, giving as the basis for his actions that there was a four-hundred mile frontier between France and Spain and that certainly no one wanted the French to have a third frontier to defend. He continued that this year there would undoubtedly be further crises for France and the safety of the nation demanded that she not be isolated from Spain. The pro-government group in the Chamber demanded an interpolation, on the vote of which Daladier put the question of confidence. The government won by a vote of 328 to 261, the smallest majority on a question of foreign policy that had been obtained in months.

It is now felt that with the chance of obtaining French assistance gone the Loyalist government will very shortly capitulate. The British have announced that if any of the Loyalists feel that it is unsafe for them to remain in Franco Spain, asylum for these persons will be provided in England. The number of such people desiring of obtaining refuge in England has, in one estimate, reached the figure of 10,000.

Considerable uneasiness is felt in French circles about what Mussolini intends to claim and when he will do it. One very prevalent rumor has it that Italian claims will be presented early in March, shortly after the new Pope is chosen. It has been soundly substantiated that during the month of February Italy has called a large number of reservists back to active duty for "training," and the Italian forces in Libya have been greatly increased. Numbers of Italians living in France and Corsica have received orders to return to Italy and several thousand have left within the past week. The feeling that tense days are very closely ahead, in the near future, is so profound that Slim, the former Premier and the leader of the Socialist Party, who was to leave for the United States for an extended visit early in March, has cancelled his visit and will remain in Paris.
FRANCE 100
No. 140 103
28 February, 1939

The Ciano-Beck conversations in Warsaw are being watched
with much interest by the French, and strong press encouragement
is given Poland not to adhere to the Rome-Berlin Axis. If Ciano
fails in his mission and returns to Rome with the conviction that
aggression against France will be the signal for a general conflagration,
Mussolini may soften his claims decidedly. In any case, it is not
believed that any new accord, no matter how limited, will be concluded
between Italy and Poland.

The Hainan question is still much to the forefront, but outside
of sending notes demanding explanations of the occupation of the island,
the French can do nothing. Japanese reports quoted in the French
press state that Japan will occupy the whole of southwest China if
necessary; as long as England and France continue aiding China. There
are also several reports that Japan is now buying arms from Czechoslovakia.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT 21555-0 (C-9-e)

From: [Redacted]  
Date: 21 March, 1939  
Serial No.: 185  
File No.: 108

Source of information: Press, personal observation and contacts

Subject: FRANCE
POLITICAL FORCES
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
(Nation reported on)
(Index title as per index sheet)

Reference:

Note: (The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O. N. I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the material is entered in this space. Mention leading geographic, personal, or political names, and the gist of the report.)

POLITICAL EVENTS, WEEK ENDING 21 MARCH, 1939

Report No. 185 is transmitted herewith.
FRANCE
No. 185
21 March, 1959

POLITICAL EVENTS, WEEK ENDING 21 MARCH, 1959.

Of course, the outstanding political event of the week was
the thunderbolt occupation of what was Czechooslovakia by
Germany. The lack of previous information and the rapidity of
the occupation shocked all of Europe. The British and French
Cabinets were convoked in emergency sessions, and protests
were sent to the German Minister of Foreign
Affairs over this violation of the Munich Accords. M. Daladier
had some very unhappy moments in the Chamber of Deputies, as
did also the Foreign
Minister, M. Bonnet, in trying to explain the failure of his Munich
policy. The German
Government, in answering the notes of protest of England and
France, simply announced that "it would not consider such protests
since they were lacking any basis, political, legal or moral."

M. Daladier demanded from the Chamber a law giving him full
powers to govern by decree until November 30, 1959. This was, after
a noisy debate, granted by a vote of 281 to 170. While not defining
precisely what decree-laws would be issued, Daladier stated that he planned
to lengthen the working week, and to take additional military measures, but
not to use any decrees to limit the democratic functioning of the
government. There may also be changes among two or three of the ministers, as it has
been public knowledge for some time that there have been disagreements
between Daladier and some of the other members of the Council of Ministers.
In this connection, it is unofficially reported that immediately on hearing
of the invasion of Czechooslovakia, Daladier wanted to mobilize ten divisions
of the French Army as a counter-gesture, but was restrained by Bonnet.

The Italian Naval Attaché, in a conversation after the occupation,
gave one definitely to understand that, this time, the Italians themselves
were not informed of the demarche until after it occurred. He seemed
certain that another step would occur soon but could not, who would not,
anywhere it would be. Many rumors place the next move of the Axis
to be the Italian occupation of Albania, and look for such a step to
occur before the end of March.

That this may be a possibility seems plausible in view of the
fact that the Council of Defense in Madrid has directed a direct request
to Franco to commence negotiations for peace. With peace in Spain,
Mussolini would be liberated from any cares in that region, and the
occupancy of Albania should produce no particular difficulties.

Meanwhile the rest of Southeastern Europe is a prey to fear and
nervousness. A German Commercial Mission is now in Bucharest endeavoring
to sign a commercial Treaty. Undoubtedly considerable pressure will be
brought to bear on Romania in view of the Czechooslovakian solution, and
an accord favoring Germany will probably be arranged.

The first of the decree-laws authorized by the full-powers bill
appeared on Monday, the 20th of March, and are as follows:

(1) Military measures to increase the time of service or to recall
reserves to active duty, principally of a certain number of technicians
and specialists. In accordance with this, about 10,000 men have received
the mobilization order. These are principally troops for the Maginot Line,
anti-aircraft personnel, and other special ratings.

(2) Economic measures in which orders for the Army, Navy and Air
Army will have priority and the working-week increased from 48 to 48 hours
in plants working on materials for the national defense.
FRANCE
No. 185
21 March, 1939

(5) Immediate steps are to be taken to accumulate a reserve of raw materials and food.

The French are strongly urging the British to institute a law for universal conscription, both for the prestige such a step would give as a warning to the totalitarian countries, and as the French say, "It is not right for one party of the alliance to furnish money and supplies while the other furnishes men." The nineteen British divisions eventually promised to France by the English War Minister More-Gelishe would not be available to France until long after the start of a war, and even then the number is insufficient. Undoubtedly, this question will be further stressed during the visit of the President of France and Mme. LeBrum to the King of England, which commences today and lasts until 24 March.

The Spanish situation has been driven off the front pages by the gloom of the events in Eastern Europe, but Franco's spokesmen in announcing that the Nationalists will only accept a victorious peace, point to an early resumption of the offensive against the remaining territory held by the Loyalists. It is reported that Franco is gathering 600,000 men on the various sides of the Government territory, and when these are fully assembled, the offensive will begin at four different places simultaneously. This will probably be in the near future, at which time the food shortage in Franco Spain should be somewhat alleviated. Once the offensive commences, the Government resistance should be quickly overcome.
From  
Date 11 April, 1939 
Serial No. 238 
File No. 103 

Source of information: French publication "CHOC"

Subject: FRANCE (GERMANY) 
POLITICAL FORCES 
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Reference:

THE REICH'S INTRIGUES - AN EXPATRIATED GERMAN'S APPEAL TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN GERMANY AND ITS GOVERNMENT

Report No. 238 is transmitted herewith.
FRANCE (GERMANY)
No. 288
11 April, 1939.

THE REICH'S INTRIGUES - AN EXPATRIATED GERMANY'S APPEAL TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN GERMANY AND ITS GOVERNMENT.

Hitler's absorption of the Czech provinces, writes Dr. Otto Stroessner, a former Reich propaganda chief now living in Switzerland, is a direct consequence of the Munich Accord and only blindness could prevent one's seeing that the Sudeten movement was but a lever to demolish the Czech fortifications that hindered the German plans and which therefore had to be destroyed. The details outlined in "Wein Emp" are to be executed, perhaps not in order mentioned, but definitely to be attempted at the proper moment.

The immediate causes for this latest action, already on the slate for a long time were: to obtain Czech gold; to incorporate the munitions factories; to destroy the Czech army which Hitler feared. There is no doubt that the Fuhrer obtained all these objectives, giving him a temporary increase in power which even surpasses the advantages of the Anglo-French increased armaments.

Hitler refuses to wait for a pacific arrangement that England would probably give him for establishing German domination in Europe. The Hitlerian system cannot support such long delays. Goering recently is supposed to have declared: "We will have war towards the end of summer with England and France; then the British Empire will be broken up and France will be as flat as a field."

This objective is confirmed by the next step: insuring the Romanian oil supply and the Hungarian cereals for the German army and including Spain in the Rome-Berlin Axis. The near future will show us a victory against Romania either by the latter's own capitulation, or a direct attack (in which case, the Hungarian and Bulgarian forces would play important roles). We will also see how Hungary will become a dependent of Germany probably thru a change in government.

Italy is establishing a government in Spain on which it can count while France will become a Spanish Horthy (Regent of Hungary). At the same time, this axis will increase its colonial demands, its propaganda for the Arabs' freedom and its antisemitic campaign throughout the world.

With such ground preparations, the end of the summer takes on a particularly dangerous look. Hitler likes historic dates - and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the beginning of the World War comes soon. It is the duty of us liberated Germans to demonstrate that the German people are in no way identified with the present regime in Germany. We want to aid the Czech people so that the wrongs they have suffered be corrected. We do not want Chamberlain's words to be realized: "That, in the end, Germany will repent bitterly what its government has done." Make war on Hitler - not on Germany.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: Y  Date: 19 April, 1939  Serial No: 241

Source of information: Personal observation, press, contacts

Subject: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Report No. 241 is transmitted herewith.

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POLITICAL EVENTS - WEEK ENDING 18 APRIL, 1939

[Handwritten notes]

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[Handwritten dates and numbers]
This week has witnessed a most intense diplomatic activity, which great as it was however only slightly overshadowed the military and naval activities. The international situation after the seizure of Albania looked most disturbing; in spite of Italian promises not to commit any aggression toward Greece, the British, fearful of the occupation of Corfu by the Italians, concentrated the British Mediterranean Fleet at Malta, and then later in the direction of Alexandria. The French Toulon Squadron hastily left that port to cruise in the vicinity of Bizerta, while the French Brest Squadron left Brest under orders for Toulon, which were changed enroute to Tangier, where the Brest Squadron was on 17 April.

A concealed, although serious, disagreement arose at this time between the British and French governments, the French accusing the British of paying more attention in their dispositions to safeguarding the British Empire as a whole rather than supporting France in obtaining security in Europe. Another source of difference between the two countries was, and remains, the British reluctance to institute some form of military service. As one French Army officer expressed it, "The British are going wild guaranteeing the frontiers of Poland, Greece, Rumania, but they don't say with whose soldiers. They have none of their own to send, and certainly France can't spare any - not with three frontiers to defend."

By the end of the week, the differences had been somewhat smoothed over and Daladier and Chamberlain issued simultaneous statements offering bilateral security pacts to Greece and Rumania, similar to the agreement concluded between England and Poland. Negotiations were also being carried on to include Turkey in the "understanding", as well as to find some method whereby the objections of Poland and Rumania to Russian assistance could be overcome. This last hurdle was got over by the end of the week, by Russia agreeing to furnish supplies to the neighboring countries and by the conclusion of an air pact, in which Russian aviation, but no other Russian forces, would come to the aid of Poland and Rumania in case of an aggression toward those countries.

The French are continuing military preparations and have called to active duty about two hundred thousand reservists, consisting principally of fortification troops, radio, armored-car and other specialists. There has been no public mobilization order, but the reservists are informed directly and individually by gendarmes or military messengers. In addition, anti-aircraft machine guns have been placed on many of the public buildings in Paris, and other anti-aircraft detachments have been placed in various towns toward the frontiers.

The Germans, meanwhile, caused considerable concern when they announced the despatch of a squadron to Spanish waters ostensibly "for maneuvers". Besides demonstrating the closeness of Spain to the axis powers, it is felt that in case of hostilities, the German Fleet would not remain bottled up in the North Sea, but being already in Spanish bases could immediately set out on commerce raiding. In this connection, it has been definitely confirmed that new and additional defenses are being constructed in the Canary Islands and are well on the way to completion. Consequently, more bases will be available to the fleets of the axis powers.
FRANCE 100
No. 261 105
16 April, 1939

 Marshal Pétain, the French Ambassador to Spain, returned to Paris for a consultation, and confirmed the reports of additional Italian troops landing in Spain, and estimated that seven thousand had arrived within the past week. He has no doubts as to the solidarity of Spain with the totalitarian powers, and confided that although he, personally, had been treated with the utmost courtesy and politeness, as far as attempting any conversations or negotiations went, he had been given the "run-around". Along this same line, the ex-Government fleet of three cruisers and eight destroyers which had been interned in Bizerta by the French on the fall of the Loyalist government, were delivered back to Franco by the French. Franco immediately despatched the force to Italian yards for repairs and overhaul, to all intents and purposes increasing the Italian navy by just so many units.

President Roosevelt's telegram to Hitler and Mussolini published here Saturday evening, 16 April, caused much favorable comment in all French circles. The majority of the declarations are that this message has put the dictators' backs to the wall and obliges them to answer "yes" or "no", and, dependent on the answer, war or peace will ensue. Mixed with French praise of the message, however, are some regrets that an announcement of the abrogation of the Neutrality Act did not accompany the message. The feeling is unanimous, though, that while awaiting the Italian and German replies to the message, the production of armaments must continue to be pushed.

The German and Italian answers, according to all reports, will not be immediately forthcoming. The date given for the answer is now, April 28th, and the general impression is that the response will be negative; a negative, qualified perhaps, to make it better-sounding but none the less a negative.

Numerous reports, which cannot be verified, are current to the effect that a "démarche" for the incorporation of Danzig into the Reich will occur shortly. At the other end of Europe, there is unquestioned activity around Gibraltar. The British have placed boom and net-defenses before the entrance through the breakwater and have doubled the garrison there. On the Spanish side, a heavy concentration of troops and artillery is quartered very close to the British territory, and the German guns placed on the African Coast opposite Gibraltar during the Spanish Civil War, are reported fully manned. In addition, many Moorish troops who made the Spanish campaign with Franco have been returned to Spanish Morocco.

In general, during the present crisis, in marked contradiction to the feeling last September, the feeling among French army and naval officers at this time is one hundred percent to the effect that war in the very near future is inevitable. This is developed to such an extent that most feel that having a war now and getting it over with would be preferable to living under these continual crises. On these lines, French military schools, the Ecole de Guerre, the Ecole du Genie Maritime, are graduating their senior students now, in April, instead of waiting for the usual graduation dates in July.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: Y  Date: 2 May, 1939  Serial No. 267  File No. 103

Source of information: Press, personal observation, and contacts.

Subject: FRANCE

Reference:

Bearing in mind that the review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O.N.I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the matters reported is inserted in this space. Mention leading geographical, personal, or political names, and the gist of the report.

POLITICAL EVENTS - WEEK ENDING 2 MAY, 1939

Report No. 267 is transmitted herewith.
POLITICAL EVENTS - WEEK ENDING 2 MAY, 1939

The most outstanding political event of the week was, of course, Hitler's speech delivered on 28 April. The text of the discourse itself was so widely disseminated that it will not be reproduced in this report. The oral reports of the press, in general, were to the effect that nothing had been improved in general conditions, but that the door was still left open for negotiations. Most of the arguments used by Hitler were extremely obvious, to justify German expansion. The two decisions announced - a denunciation of the naval agreement with England, and the denunciation of the German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact - nevertheless had much of the sting removed by the statement that Germany was willing to enter into negotiations for new treaties.

While Hitler's response cannot be considered as welcoming peace, yet its tenor had been more or less expected by the French, and for that reason there was not so great a disappointment at the actual lack of any constructive ideas for other than a German peace. On 1 May, Colonel Beck, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced that he would reply to the Polish references in Hitler's speech on 4 May. The Polish answer also is expected to be a negative as far as regards any cession of Danzig or any rights to construct a road, having extra-territorial privileges, across the Corridor.

Meanwhile the "battle of nerves" and the hunt for alliances continue, with whatever slight advantages may be accruing to the totalitarian powers. Yugoslavia gracefully avoided joining France and England in any combination against the axis, and according to rumors even went so far as to conclude a working agreement with the axis powers, whereby Hungary agreed to seek her lost territory from Rumania and make no claims on Yugoslavia. Also, on 29 April, the Hungarian Prime Minister and the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs arrived in Berlin and, in statements issued to the press, made warm declarations of loyalty to the German cause and the unity of action between Hungary and the Axis powers.

At the same time, General von Branchitsch, the German Chief of Staff, arrived in Rome where he had conversations with the Italian Military Staff. It was announced that von Branchitsch would also make an inspection trip to Libya and Tripoli, returning back to Rome on 7 May. M. Gaffarco, the Rumanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited Paris, coming from Berlin and London, and left for Rome. The French admitted, privately, that there had been no positive results from Gaffarco's visit, except kind words, and that Rumania was, at present, too close to Germany to take any chances on openly flouting her.

The one advantage gained by the democratic powers was that, after the denunciation of the Polish-German Non-Aggression treaty, Poland had become disturbed enough to agree to accept, if necessary, Russian assistance in all forms, not merely aircraft. Thus, it appears that shortly the U.S.S.R. will join England and France in giving guarantees to Poland, Greece, and other near-Eastern states that may request it. The Russian proposals moreover offered to join in guarantees for all the Baltic States, except Finland. These proposals, however, have not yet been accepted by either France, England or the Baltic States.

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There has been considerable opposition, both verbally and in all sections of the press, to the return of the French and British Ambassadors to Berlin. This unsatisfactory impression was aggravated by the fact that on his return to Berlin, Sir Neville Henderson was not able to have himself received by either von Ribbentrop or Hitler, and only after a two-day wait was he able to see one of the under-secretaries, von Weizsaecker.

British conscription, which was finally adopted this week, was hailed delightedly by the French, although the French Army declared that while it was a very encouraging gesture it was still only a gesture. The conscription plans to call 300,000 men between 20 and 31 years of age for a six-months' tour of active training duty with the British army. A French general remarked that the idea was fine, but with traditional British slowness it would be at least a year before the first 300,000 had completed their training, and that, what with British tea each afternoon, and British week-ends, even at the end of six months the conscript army would in no sense be able to be called trained soldiers. At least, though, the British were doing something, which was a step in the right direction, from the French viewpoint, and if enough time could be obtained before the storm broke, they might be of some value.

The feeling among French army officers remains very pessimistic. They say that Germany is now beginning the same old tune as regards Poland, and that even with British conscription and whatever Hitler might mean by his speech, war might still be regarded as very imminent.
In the international field the event of the week was the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish accord, which added to the ring about the totalitarian states, by the terms of this agreement, Turkey and England assume reciprocal obligations in regard to the defense of any Balkan State against aggressors, and the Suez Canal and the Dardanelles and the Bosporus are opened to the passage of British men-of-war into and out of the Black Sea. The opening of the Straits to British battleships and the fact that by signing the Anglo-Turkish accord Turkey definitely ranges herself on the side of the democratic powers and shuns any community of interests with Germany are of much greater importance than the military strength that accrues now to the democratic powers.

The German press has been particularly violent in denouncing this Turkish agreement as another evidence of the British plan to encircle Germany and the bitter tirades that have been printed amply demonstrate the chagrin felt by the totalitarian powers over the failure of Ambassador von Papan to prevent the signing of the accord. It is expected that, following the British lead, France and Turkey will conclude a similar pact aimed at "aggressors" within a week or ten days.

While the Anglo-Turkish negotiations came to a successful termination, the British-Soviet talks are still continuing and at the present writing show no sign of coming to any definite conclusions, as the viewpoints of the respective parties are still far apart. For Great Britain, even in this year, Russian friendship can only be a more or less temporary expedient. England desires from Russia just the amount of assistance that may be necessary but not any more than that. Any more Russian help would unnecessarily disturb European affairs. A too rigid alliance with Russia might seriously compromise British relations with Portugal, Spain, some of the Latin-American States and Japan.

On the other side, the Russians want just as much and more than they possibly could get. They desire an Anglo-Franco-Russian Alliance in a strict sense, not only for the guarantee of Poland and Rumania, but also, in addition, for the guarantee of the Baltic States and for a guarantee against Japanese attacks in the Far East. The Russians also feared that an eventual war might come whereby England, while allowing Russia to be drawn into a war, would remain neutral, or would simply sit down behind the Exino Line and let Russia bear the brunt of the attacks. Besides, the Japanese government informed the British Ambassador to Japan that in the event of an Anglo-Russian alliance including Far-Eastern affairs, Japan would inevitably have to conclude immediately a formal and strict military alliance with Germany and Italy. Between the conflicting desires of Russia and Japan, England is striving to follow a middle course, pleasing to both and displeasing to neither — the difficulties of which are obvious. At the date of writing this report, the latest English counter-proposal is being considered in Moscow. This is to the effect that if, because of the engagements assumed between Great Britain and France toward Poland and Rumania, the former two countries found themselves engaged in a conflict, the Soviet Union
would, on request, lend such assistance as might be demanded. The conversations are still going on, and since both parties seem really to desire an agreement, an accord will undoubtedly be reached in time.

On 11 May, Mussolini made a speech in Turin which was very well received in France. In general, it was considered as a "warning" speech which, while it did not serve to better the general situation, certainly did nothing to make it worse. All French newspaper people who reported the speech observed reluctantly that it was a great popular success and they were impressed with the opinion that the Italian people still have every confidence in the Duke and are ready to follow him to the bitter end. Whatever the Duke pretended, however, the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish accord has caused serious reflection in Rome. In some circles there were rumors that as a counter-attack, Mussolini would denounce the Anglo-Italian agreement as well as renouncing his promise to withdraw troops from Spain.

The Spanish "Victory March" is now scheduled for 20 May, and it is shortly after that date that the Italian troops should begin to leave Spain. Whether they do or not will be a sign as to just how far Mussolini intends to go, to show his displeasure at the Anglo-Turkish accord.

In internal politics, President Lebrun began his second term on 10 May and his inauguration provided the opportunity for the Prime Minister, Daladier, to make a speech reaffirming the solidarity of France with England, and an equal firmness in stating the French position with regard to peace, their anti-aggression pact, and their stand with regard to any future seizures by the axis powers. On 11 May, the Chamber of Deputies met, and after a brief interrogation on foreign affairs only, gave the present Cabinet a vote of confidence by a majority of 123. The government was aided in this vote by a rift developing within the Socialist party between the partisans of Leon Blum on one side and those of Paul Faure on the other. The "fouristes" represent the conservative wing of the Socialist party, but although numerous do not have a majority within the party councils.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: 
Date: 6 June, 1939 
Serial No. 347 
File No. 103 

Source of information: Personal observation, contacts.

Subject: Various, Political News, International Relations.

Report No. 342 is transmitted herewith.

Reference:

Basis: The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O. N. I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is entered in this space. Mention leading geographical, personal, or political names, and the gist of the report.

COURIER NOTES - Lieutenant Paul L. H. Weaver, U.S. Navy

E.O. 11051, Box 891 and (G) 1 or (B) 
Old Letter, May 4, 1973

By S.L.R. Date: May 21, 1973
COURIER NOTES

Lieutenant Paul L. F. Weaver, U.S.M.C.

PRAGUE, 26 May, 1939.

The Czech people are still dolefully obeying the German regulations outwardly and thus avoid giving any excuse for a tighter control. Open expression of opinion is out of the question as everyone fears the Gestapo, whose members contrary to the usual policy, are obviously identified in the city's gathering places. This would imply that, rather than desiring to apprehend anti-Nazi agents quietly, they wish to prevent any such talk at all and at the same time convince the Germans of their cowardly spirit. Nevertheless, there have sprung up, according to both official and unofficial opinion, many nationalist groups which even now talk of a new republic. As yet, nothing drastic has been done to indicate their existence but anti-German propaganda is being distributed both by hand and thru the mails.

A bomb last night was exploded in an apartment house in the Jewish quarter. This was attributed to the Nazi party members. These have been driving constantly for enlisting Czechs but with no success at all. Moral and financial support of course comes from Berlin. It is believed that conditions as they exist now in Bohemia cannot continue more than another month and some officials (foreign) feel that Hitler will use this pretext for annexing the Protectorate and incorporating the two provinces in the Reich.

WARSAW, 27 May, 1939.

The Poles, by their determined efforts to resist any German encroachment on their rights, decidedly successful up to the present, appear to have become more sure of their position. This naturally followed the assured support from France and Great Britain. From a neutral state, Poland has changed almost into an aggressor inasmuch as, appreciating the results of her bold stand, she is now attempting to force the issue with Germany. While negotiations are still being pressed between the two countries, the writer learned from a reliable source that twenty young Polish officers dressed as poor peasants with little money and false papers have been sent into the Free City for the express purpose of spotting Donizetti and good localities to hold riots later on. This survey is supposed to require a month. After that, guns are to be smuggled in to the selected places and outbursts of shooting and violence will begin. The object of such tactics would seem to be to provoke intervention; if Germany marched in, it would be aggression and war would be precipitated. This, from many contacts, is exactly what a very great number of Poles would like.

Outside the sphere of these people, it is difficult to believe such a statement but the writer talked to many Poles of diverse levels and, without exception, they all wanted to end the tension and their only solution was war. A captain of cavalry told me "Poland has nothing to lose, so let's fight!" a doctor of philosophy stated that since there were no large cities in his country, bombing would not be so bad, "Let them bomb the cities; after the war, we'll build new ones that will be completely modern;" a lumber merchant, admitting his country was in no position financially to continue the mobilization of a million men indefinitely, shrugged it off with the remark that England had plenty of gold and saw where it was put to good use. From taxi drivers, fruit vendors, newsdealers (women) and hotel employees the tenor of the remarks was the same. Poland hes much to gain and nothing to lose by a war. The horrors and deaths seem not to enter into their considerations.
Kurjer Poranny writes "The third month of preparedness has just begun and what is our position? Our normal life continues and we have no fear of the nerve campaign or another sort of campaign which may be forced upon us. We are not hungry, we work, we increase production and we sleep quietly. Can our western neighbor say as much?" Kurjer Warszawski reports several cases of German soldiers deserting and fleeing into Poland.

DANZIG, 28 May, 1939.

The frontier incidents of the past week have further increased the tension between Poland and the Free City, though in Danzig itself today nothing would be more peaceful. All the fighting is believed to have been begun by the Danzig Nazis; however, all Danzig papers (Nazl controlled) describe the incidents as "inspired and accomplished by Warsaw." One writes that "the authors of the murder at Balthof should be lynched but Danzig citizens are disciplined and they await the Führer's decision." Some circles believe that the object of the original attack on the Polish customs office was to permit the undetected passage of 40 motor trucks from East Prussia into the Free City carrying arms. It is reported that smuggling of arms on a large scale is being done even across the Corridor, from Germany. They are said to be equipment for the 22,000 Brownshirts now in Danzig.

With the ostentatious ceremonies held at the funeral of the slain Nazi and the fiery speeches of the Senate President Grzesz and Party leader Forster afterwards, little hope can be held for any peaceful settlement in the near future.

At Czaw, the frontier station for Poland, Danzig and East Prussia, two squads of Polish soldiers were posted at the gate entrance on the Polish side. The habitual conversations between the different custom officers were lacking.

Our Consul, in agreement with the opinion of the British Consul, states that a plebescite for the Free City is out of the question since such a move would cause the Poles to march in and start the fireworks. Berlin knows this and therefore walks warily, thus putting himself on the defensive. Decisely Poland holds the whiphand at present.

Dr. Burckhardt, the League High Commissioner, returned this morning but with no open arms to receive him. He is called a second Hindenburg and appears to be unsanctified by all hands.

COLOGNE, 1 June, 1939.

The non-aggression pact with Germany, forced down the Danish threats for purely German reasons, has today been submitted for ratification. The addition, surprisingly insisted upon by Denmark is to her credit and is probably the most important part. This reserves her right to continue trade with third parties even if Germany is at war with one of them.

BERLIN, 3 June, 1939.

Despite the fact that negotiations with Poland are being pressed, no settlement of the issue is in sight. Nevertheless, the general outlook as voiced by diplomatic circles is for an undisturbed summer. The same internal hardships exist as ever but the writer observed a seemingly
happier attitude in the people. When I remarked this to various Germans and Americans, I received the same astonishing reply - the sun had been out three days.

In a conversation with the chief of the Nazi foreign news bureau, he emphasized Hitler's method of building up a process for six months and striking suddenly. Later on he referred to the Führer's generous solution offered to Poland and asked me if I thought the corridor across the corridor would be obtained. When I replied "not without a fight," he laughed and pointed out that Germany in her conquests of the past five years had not found it necessary to fight. I answered with a reference to Poland's far better position than the previous victims, at which he showed some anger but allowed that this was known and as a result the Führer did actually appear hesitant. He called Beck an unintelligent person only pulling down trouble on his country. He claimed Polish economic difficulties could be solved by playing ball with the Reich. That amused me - make her two sea outlets (Danzig and Gdynia) dependent on Berlin's whims and her economic situation was solved. So I told him to forget his role of writing for outside consumption and talk sense. To my amusement, he gave an answer to that that I could expect a most important event in September. Pressed for details, he shut up like a clam and appeared to regret the statement.

It is rumored in foreign circles here that in recent weeks a concentration of the greater part of Germany's army has been accomplished on the eastern frontier in a slow and quiet manner. This could not be verified. However, later in The Hague, the writer did hear that the military activity on the Reich side of the frontier seemed to be decreased.
The parade of the German veterans of the Spanish revolution was held June 6th and consisted of about 2000 sailors and 15000 soldiers. The sailors were from the DEUTSCHLAND, several destroyers and submarines which took part in the war. According to the German press, the DEUTSCHLAND was attacked by Red air forces and suffered several casualties. Small boys carried three hundred plaques bearing the names of those who lost their lives in this campaign, apparently to symbolize the fact that there are plenty of German youths growing up to take the place of those who have made the supreme sacrifice for their country.

A German lady opined that this was a beautiful thought. According to a very reliable source the design of these plaques was made by Hitler himself.

On June 6th, the writer attended a dinner for six, two of the guests being a German colonel and his wife. The conversation soon turned to the international situation and remained there for two hours. The Germans, echoing Hitler, blamed the present situation upon the failure of the democracies to rectify the mistakes of the Versailles Treaty. Other pertinent remarks by the Germans were as follows: that their remarkable recovery since the world war has definitely established them as a superior race and that they cannot see why as such they should not have their fair share of territory and colonies and that they were definitely going to get them; that Czecho-Slovakia was annexed because they could not tolerate the treatment of the German minority there nor could they stand by and see that country made into a military and air base of Russia and France; that Germany had no interest in France and that they would not take back Alsace-Lorraine as a gift; that the treatment of Germans in Poland was becoming worse every day and that something would have to be done about it very soon. They admitted that the economic structure of Germany was very weak and that no one knew how long they could continue without additional resources and territory. They stated that no one in Germany wanted war but when asked if they were willing to risk a war in order to get what they considered essential new territory, they stated they did not know. They would also not commit themselves upon how much territory they thought Germany would require for its needs. When asked why the German Government encouraged an increased birthrate they changed the subject. (The writer has put this question to numerous Germans and Italians and has received only one reply which was from the Italian Naval Attaché in Paris and was somewhat as follows: "Just as the United States excels in the
production of automobiles, Italy excels in the production of babies. It is our main industry."

I advised the Colonel that I had heard in France that the Germans in their effort to train pilots to keep up with production of planes were averaging about 40 fatal casualties a month. He replied that these figures were much too high but that he would estimate about 15 per month.

The consensus of opinion in the Embassy was that war was not likely to break out this summer. It was reported that the Germans have issued an order for the use of the army in assisting of the harvesting of the crops. It is therefore considered very unlikely that they are planning any military moves until after the harvests.

The following experiences which may or may not be indicative of the anti-American feeling in Germany are included as a matter of interest. On entering Germany the customs officers insisted that I open my baggage for inspection. It is realized that the courtesy of the customs is a courtesy and not a privilege but this is the first time in crossing a border in Europe that I have been asked to open my baggage. On the return trip two officers came through the train and entered the compartment in which we were the only passengers, and asked us to step out into the passage way. They then made a very minute inspection of the entire compartment apparently in search of money or narcotics. Pictures were removed from the walls, ash trays and curtains examined and wire hooks run through the edges of the upholstery. They did not, however, make any request to inspect my baggage. On leaving our compartment they walked on through the car and got off the train. Apparently the compartment was the only one which was searched on the car and possibly on the train. Unlike the customs officer who had inspected my luggage on entry into Germany, these officers were very polite and seemed somewhat embarrassed with their task.

In Berlin, the Naval Attaché made an appointment with Admiral Raeder to receive me and to deliver a letter from our Secretary of the Navy. Upon arrival at the Navy Department I was asked to remain in the reception room while the Admiral received the Naval Attaché. After about twenty minutes I was received by the Chief of Staff. The Naval Attaché advised me that Admiral Raeder had refused to see Assistant Attachés on previous occasions.
The war of nerves has again been started during the past week with an increased imetus. Polish atrocities, in the press, are ostensibly increasing, and the poor, unfortunate German citizens living in Poland and Danzig are theoretically the prey of gangsters and criminals. Such new-items have been overworked, though, and their efficacy is now much less than it was during the Czechoslovak crisis last September.

More and more signs, however, are pointing to a conference on the Danzig question. The visit of M. Burokhart, the League of Nations High Commissioner to Danzig, to Hitler and Ribbentrop, combined with the series of visits between Ciano, Hitler and Ribbentrop, all seem to lead to the belief that a conference might be welcome. Although the results of the talks between Ciano and Hitler were not published, the general consensus in France is that they were a warning from Italy to Germany to go slow; that Italian public opinion was not yet ready to follow Germany implicitly in a general war over Danzig, and that Italy preferred that the Central European and Balkan situations be cleaned up first. At all events, no matter what occurs, it appears that Mussolini is again in a position to offer a compromise at the last minute, a compromise which may be eagerly and willingly accepted by all parties to the dispute.

Meanwhile, the game goes merrily on with Germany announcing that the Danzig and Corridor questions must be settled favorably to Germany; the Poles then replying that Danzig, a necessity to Poland, will never be given up; and the British calling a special meeting of the Cabinet to assure themselves and everyone else once again that Britain will support Poland (an assurance, incidentally, on which no one places any under amount of confidence). Meanwhile, German troops on maneuvers move toward the Polish-German frontier in all its length. The makings of a number one crisis are all assembled, but it is not thought that the next step, either backward or forward, will develop with the speech Hitler is scheduled to give at the Tannenberg Celebration on Sunday, 27 August. In that speech it is supposed to occur the information regarding the next steps in the Danzig crisis.

Information received just before mailing this report is to the effect that following the publication of the German-Russian non-aggression pact, Hitler may make a démarche against Poland around 25 August. It is felt, however, that while positive movements looking to the incorporation of Danzig into the Reich will be made, the date of 25 August is a little too soon.

The attempt of Hitler to draw Hungary unreservedly into the realm of the axis powers seems to have met a check. The Hungarians are undoubtedly willing to play with anyone who will help them, but not at the sacrifice of any Hungarian independence, and not merely for the sake of playing along. The Hungarian Minister of Agriculture, M. Kekhardt, stated that Hungary wishes to pursue her courses in a friendly collaboration with all her traditional sympathies: Germany, Italy and Poland. This is, admittedly, a difficult thing.
to do, and the visit of Count Csaky, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, to Rome was probably to obtain Italian support in carrying out such plans.

In Moscow, both the political negotiations for the Anglo-Russian accord and the staff talks between the French, British, and Soviet representatives came to another temporary halt. Neither of the parties could agree, and neither would, for the present, concede anything. Meanwhile, to add to the complexities of the situation, Germany and Russia announced the completion, on 20 August, of a trade treaty. By the terms of this agreement Germany furnished a credit of two hundred million marks to the Soviets, for the purchase, within the next two years, of machines and manufactured articles. In exchange, during the same time, Russia agrees to supply 180 millions of marks of raw materials to Germany.

Coming directly on the heels of the trade treaty, came the announcement of a German-Russian non-aggression pact. With the completion of this accord, the chances for an Anglo-French-Soviet accord have dwindled to the vanishing point. The probabilities of the conclusion of a Russo-German pact have been previously reported, and with this public announcement it seems that Stalin and his helpers have simply been toying with the British and French for months. The successful conclusion of this accord, however, avoids for Germany, the possibility of a war against major opponents on two fronts simultaneously, Herr von Ribbentrop is to leave for Moscow on 23 August to sign the accord, and undoubtedly after the signature more details will be made public.

In the Japanese discussions, the stiffening of the British attitude has caused favorable reactions in France. Several French sources have published that it was the denunciation by the United States of the commercial treaty with Japan that enabled the British to act firmly. Whatever may have been the cause, the talks in Tokyo were discontinued "by mutual consent." Immediately afterwards it was stated that the Japanese military commanders in Tien-Tsin will have full authority regarding the blockade of the British concession in that place. At the same time, the Japanese army announced that a blockade on the land borders of Hong-Kong would be instituted to prevent "war supplies from being delivered to the Chinese."
**ATTACHE’S REPORT**

**From:** Y  
**Date:** 27 Sept., 19  
**Serial No.:** 821  
**Source of Information:** As noted  
**Subject:** WAR MOBILIZATION

**Notes:**  
- Navy mobilization; Channel Patrol Boats; Shortage of Clothing; Food Supplies; Ammunition supplies; Spies; British help; Gas masks; Anti-aircraft guns; Unemployment; French hopes of America joining war; The Daladier cabinet.

The following notes, compiled by a member of the staff of this office, are forwarded as submitted:

**Navy Mobilization (Fairly Reliable).** In addition to the 85,000 men on active duty (which includes about 9,000 already mobilized since 1936 crisis) it is estimated that the Navy has mobilized about 76,000 men, including all specialist ratings.

Ages of navy men mobilized are mostly in the younger brackets - 25-35.

Word from Brest indicates that Brest is being evacuated, due to fear of bombing raids on military objectives, but that the town is full of naval personnel loading around. In the coastal semaphore stations, where the war complement is about 6 men, there are 20 men on duty. A large number of the young navy men are transferred to aviation bases for training. Very few of the members of the merchant marine, or fishing industry, have been called to active service. Drawn for ship building have been ordered to the yards, though ships not near completion, to help out with materials.

**Channel Patrol Boats:** Trawlers which can be replaced by sail yaws, as well as other propulsion craft available, are being taken over by the navy for patrol work in the channel. It is expected to utilize the older men (35-50) on this job.

**Shortage of Clothing.** (Reliable). There is an acute shortage of blankets and bedding - one-half of hotel bedding and blankets have been requisitioned and advertisements are in the press offering to purchase blankets at prices of 60 to 160 francs, depending on size and quality. Word received from a soldier mobilized states that his company was sleeping on straw, using army overcoats for blankets, and that a good many of the troops caught cold.

Shoes and clothing factories are working day and night to catch up with shortage of supplies.

**Food Supplies** (Reliable). Word received from soldiers at the front states that the food is excellent and 100% better than that served to troops in the World War.

**Ammunition Supplies** (Fairly Reliable). A postal card received from a sergeant in the Maginot Line stated that as far as the eye can reach one can see ammunition piles and, contrary to the last war, the byword was “not to waste ammunition on the enemy.”

**Spies** (Rumors). A member of the American Legion informed a member of this office that his son witnessed the arrest of a German spy dressed in a French uniform (posing as an Alsatian), who is accused of spreading rumors of thousands of French dead and wounded coming in from the front. Note: The French

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### Table: Military Personnel Mobilization

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**Notes:** All information is subject to change. Dates and figures are subject to change. The above information is based on the latest available information. 

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**Footnote:** The figures are subject to change. The above information is based on the latest available information.
ATTACHE'S REPORT

British Help (Fairly Reliable). One hears quite frequently in cafes Frenchmen making remarks, more or less jokingly, that the British will do the fighting while the Frenchmen do the thinking. Note: An official notice was published to-day ordering the arrest of anyone criticizing the British or Polish in connection with their conduct of the war. The anti-Britishers, especially the fairly well-to-do, blame the "City" for England's help to the Poles in order to stave off German financial and economic penetration in the Balkans.

Gas Masks (Fairly Reliable). Rumors have it that only the large congested cities have gas masks. One man stated that in his village only the Mayor has a gas mask and that, on the steps of the village church last Sunday, he gave an exhibition on the use of the mask to the delight of the small village population.

Anti-Aircraft Guns (Rumors). It is stated that only towns and cities in the war region circles coming within the scope of anti-aircraft protection have A.A. guns. A man stated that he personally verified that the large city of Clermont-Ferrand did not have one anti-aircraft gun, and further remarked that the Germans could easily fly over the city of Clermont-Ferrand and bomb it at their leisure.

Unemployment (Fairly Reliable). Since the date of mobilization the shock to industry was so great that unemployment has increased, notwithstanding the fact that 3,000,000 were taken away from industry. Conversing with a manager of a small construction company on the reason for unemployment, it was stated:

(a) Since the last war, French industry is more or less "chain" and "machinery"; hence, the closing down of the entire plant when only a few key men leave. At the beginning of the last war, the French worker was still of the "hammer and chisel" type and no breakdown in heavy machinery took place.

(b) Large French plants, especially automobile plants, were not prepared for conversion to war work; hence, complete shut down for a short period prior to opening up for government work - trucks, tractors, ammunition, etc.

(c) Through fear of inflated rise in prices, many large stores willingly shut down to open up later with war prices marked up.

(d) Evacuation due to fear of possible air raids (something unknown in last war) has cleared the big cities out of women and children; hence, the stagnation of business in districts which were once flourishing centers. All this brought unemployment in many industries catering to congested districts.
French hopes of Americans joining war (Reliable). It is surprising to hear from many French people, some through ignorance and other through press propaganda, the question, "What is America going to do; when is she going to decide?"

A good many people mistook the President's address to Congress on the neutrality law for a clear-cut demand for American participation in the war. This was partly due to the headlines in the French press: "America Declares War - Tomorrow". A member of this office, who went to a nearby store the day prior to the President's message, was immediately accosted by the proprietor, who said, "When is America going to decide - now is the time before it is too late - I see Roosevelt has postponed his message until to-morrow." This man actually believed that the President's address was to be a demand for American participation in the war. When I explained that it was merely to remove an embargo so that we could sell war supplies, he nearly fainted over and remarked, "You're out for business."

Premier Daladier's Cabinet (Emergency). A member of this office listened to a conversation (a newspaper reporter, who just came from the Chamber of Deputies, did the talking) on discussion within the Daladier Cabinet. He stated that Daladier himself was known, by his close friends, as a "weakling" and that he never did anything without asking the advice of people weaker than himself - Bonnet, Sarraut, etc. It was stated that Daladier was criticized for not taking stringent war measures immediately upon mobilization, viz: issue of ration cards, gasoline cards, suppression of communist party, etc.

It was stated that the present war called for a "military" man in the form of a Dictator at the head of the government, and that such weaklings as Bonnet, Sarraut, etc., should be put aside. Daladier, being a Major in the Reserve, was even suggested for promotion to a high rank and, conjointly with General Gamelin, take over the government for the duration of the war.

The newspaper man stated that this plan was pending and that this was the real reason why the War Cabinet was not formed. It was also remarked that no one can agree on former Premier Flandin being in any cabinet.

It was stated that General Gamelin stated that France must find a Clemenceau as well as a General Foch and that pressure was being brought to bear on Daladier, by military men, to act before the fighting commences. It was remarked that the only candidate for Clemenceau's job was Andre Tardieu, who is at present near death in a hospital, but that Tardieu so despised the group of "weaklings" in the Chamber that he would not accept the job under any conditions.

Criticism was also made to Premier Daladier about men receiving wages of 100-150 francs per day in war industries when they could very easily be mobilized and receive army pay, thus saving the nation millions in high salaries.
not to mention the affect on morale of the troops.

It was stated that the French General Staff complained of the "sitting on the fence" of Italy as interfering with military operations and that a decision must be reached. It was remarked that the opinion of the Chamber was that Italy will remain strictly neutral and that General Franco has impressed upon Mussolini the importance of Spain of keeping the war out of the Mediterranean unless he was ready to see Spain return to a state of chaos.
ISSUED BY THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, NAVY DEPARTMENT

ATTACHE'S REPORT 22847 (F-6-6)

From: ... Date: 5 Nov., 1939 Serial No: 561 File No: 600-

Source of information: CURRENT GOSSETT.

Subject: (Nations reported on) - ARMY (General topics).

Reference: ... (Blank).

German invasion of Holland.
Probable invasion of Belgium.
German chances of success in military operations.
Execution of Spies.
German aviators using parachutes, dropping behind French lines.
Discipline in French Army.
Corsicans as Petty Officers.

The following notes compiled by a member of the staff of this office, in conversation with a newspaper editor and Army Captain, are forwarded as submitted:

German invasion of Holland: It was stated that a German invasion (peaceful if Holland submits) was accepted as a fact by the French Command. Reasons were defined as follows:

(a) Holland could defend herself but temporarily against a German attack;
(b) At a peace conference German occupation of Holland would be a trump card against England;
(c) In addition to giving Germany a near coast to England, it would tend to keep the battleground out of Germany;
(d) No immediate assistance could be brought to the aid of Holland, either from France or England.

It was remarked that the recent declaration of a Martial Law in Holland was due to the Germans informing the Dutch of the "absolute necessity of Germany invading Holland in order to preserve peace and maintain order on its borders.

The Dutch were supposed to have been informed that as it was impossible for them to remain strictly neutral (trade with England and helplessness to prevent enemy aircraft passing over their country), Germany was obliged in self defense to occupy strategic points of the country.

Probable Invasion of Belgium: The question of invasion of Belgium would depend on the success and military results obtained by occupation of Holland.

The French Military authorities were of the opinion regarding Belgium:

(a) Germany would not invade Belgium until the Spring of 1940, should invasion be finally decided upon;

(b) **
ATTACHE'S REPORT

Forward area reports (original and all copies) due to intelligence officers of the Military Attaché, C.O. N.I. 1, on or before 24th November, 1952, stating the approximate number of each class of人员 and the date on which they were reported.

From: (Name and Address)
Date: 24th November, 1952
Serial No: 561
File No: 600

Subject: (N.B. Subject should be per index sheet)

Reference: (N.B. A list of the reports submitted is also included.)

Restrictive

(b) The Germans are well aware of the fact that they will have to fight the entire French Army should they invade Belgium, but it is very probable that they would prefer to meet the French on open battlefields of Belgium rather than rush the Maginot Line.

d) The French General Staff would prefer (actually hoped) that the Germans will attempt to invade Belgium so as to establish a battlefield for the war. This fact was known to the Germans who would prefer not to add Belgium to a possible list of enemies but see no other alternative but the Maginot Line.

German chances of success in military operations: It was stated that information coming from Germany was to the effect that the probable chances of failure occupied the German High Command more than the chances of success, as was the case in the world war. The very young officers in the German Army, as well as the extreme Nazis, believed in the rapid success of the German forces as in Poland, but the High Command entertained no illusions as to what to expect from the Allied Armies.

It was stated that the French General Staff is still a little uncertain as to what to expect from German Aviation, but no doubt remains as to the excellent chances of an irreparable defeat for the German Army in any form of attack on France.

Execution of Spies: Reference was made to the execution of the German spy EIMOS (former Captain in German Army), and it was remarked that the military tribunals are in permanent session trying cases of espionage; that 9 spies were shot at Nancy, and 4 at Rennes since outbreak of war.

German Aviators, using parachutes, dropping behind French lines: It was stated that two cases of Germans dropping from parachutes, behind French lines, have occurred; two men were dropped in lower Alsace (both arrested), and two dropped in a forest near Lyons and still at large in the forest. It was remarked that similar cases occurred in Scotland, but were kept quiet by the British.
From all accounts the Germans are preparing for mass dropping of aviators from parachutes in Holland.

Discipline in French Army: It was stated that morale, and general discipline, was at a high pitch in the French Army. However, due to inaction of the troops there were mass cases of "jumping ship" every Saturday. Patrols have been increased at all stations to arrest men leaving by trains, but a good many escaped. Punishment for this offense was 10 days extra duty in the working squad. It was remarked, just as in the last war, that many false passes were obtained under assumed names (costing 3 or 10 francs) and one had just to fix it up with the Corporal at Sunday morning roll call to avoid detection; men generally returned by Monday morning.

Special military police are in the big cities and are authorized to demand from soldiers their passes. It was stated that you could give them any name, as "Jean Durante", as written on the false pass, and by the time investigation took place, with constant troop movements and changes in regiments, six months could easily elapse only to report the no "Durance" or a dozen "Jean Durantes" passed through the camp in the intervening period.

Corsicans as Petty Officers: Mention was made of the many Corsicans, mostly reenlisted men, holding non-commissioned posts in the regular French Army. It was stated that they were "hard boiled" and disliked by the French Troops. No Corsican petty officers were detailed to regiments of Frenchmen recalled to colors, but were usually retained with the men performing obligatory military service. It was stated that the Corsicans liked anything but work and that such professions as Pimps, White Slavers, Drug Dealers, Gangsters, and Robbers were monopolized by Corsicans. That many of the criminals, supposedly Italians due to the names, were Corsicans.

It was remarked that when Italy, early in 1939, demanded the return of Corsica, French Police headquarters expressed the opinion that France would be the gainer in the long run to turn Corsica over to Mussolini and let him handle the criminals.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: [Redacted]

Subject: FRANCE

Date: 15 November 1939

Source of information:
Press, personal observation, contacts

Political Forces - International Relations

General situation 4-10 Nov., 1939: Military activity remains practically nil - Air activity has increased among pursuit and reconnaissance planes, but no bombs dropped on France or Germany - German reconnaissance planes have flown over Paris recently, dropped tracts - In biggest air battle to date, 8 French Curtiss planes attacked 27 German Messerschmids and brought down 9 of them, with no French losses - German invasion of Holland and Belgium expected by French authorities - early snows in Switzerland lessen danger of rapid invasion through that country - new German guns of great caliber and range reputed under construction.

During this period, previously, military activity in the sense of combat and battle has been nil. Along the actual front, there has been only a slight movement of patrols on both sides. There have been no attacks but only a circulation in "no-man's land", and these patrols, from either side, have never been larger in numbers than a section (35 men). No great curiosity has been displayed by these forces; in most cases they have been content to remain at a considerable distance from the positions of the advance-guards of the two armies. The greatest of any of these local successes was obtained by a German patrol which after some artillery preparation occupied a hill, first-held by the French, eleven kilometers southwest of Pimpassen.

Air activity has increased somewhat but only among the pursuit and reconnaissance planes - the skill with which the bombs dropped either on France by the German planes or on Germany by French planes. German reconnaissance planes have flown over Paris with increased frequency during the last few days and have dropped tracts and pamphlets. In the largest air battle of the war to date, nine French pursuit planes (Curtiss) surprised a formation of twenty-seven Messerschmids and doomed nine of them, with no losses among the French.

The French Army reported that it believed that an invasion of Holland, and perhaps Belgium, would occur on either the 1th, 15th or 16th of November, and there were large movements of troops from the eastern frontier of France to the northern frontier. During a visit to Verdun on 10 November, a column of one hundred seventy-three trucks and armored cars, all heading toward the northern border, was observed. But, so far there have been no German movements either against Holland, Belgium or the Maginot Line, although the German Army is so concentrated an advance against either or all of these points can be launched at a moment's notice. Early snows in Switzerland now seem to preclude any large rapid movement through that country.

The sea front activities continue as they were with no great change noticeable on either side. Anti-submarine patrols have been apparently effective in keeping submarines down as the amount of merchant shipping sunk has fallen greatly.

The French Navy Second Bureau has informed this office that they have received reports that the Germans are now building types of two new huge guns in the Krupp plant at Essen. One of these guns is stated to be a 21-inch gun to be used against the Maginot Line fortifications. The other gun is to be an 8-inch gun, with a barrel 54 meters (177 feet) long and have a range of 160 kilometers (95 miles). The naval authorities continued that, reports of the guns mentioned above were very precise, they were inclined to disbelieve that any cannon of this size were under construction.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

Forward seven copies (original and six carbon) of this report to C. N. I. and because of the urgency for quickly disseminating information from abroad, these copies will be distributed by C. N. I. as per instructions or otherwise, according to subject matter.

From  
Date  15 November  
Serial No.  879  
File No.  108  

Subject  

Reference  

Forward seven copies (original and six carbon) of this report to C. N. I. and because of the urgency for quickly disseminating information from abroad, these copies will be distributed by C. N. I. as per instructions or otherwise, according to subject matter.

Russo—(The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by C. N. I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is inserted in this space. Mention leading paragraphs, persons, or political names, and the gist of the report.)

Appeal of Belgian and Holland rulers first greeted with surprise; France and England's replies naturally not acceptable to Germany; Russo-Finnish negotiations broken off; situation tense — Russia imposing "war of nerves" on Finns; Russian influence said to be spreading in Balkans; demarche against Romania expected soon; reason for quiet in military operations due to possibility that Russia may enter actively in war on side of Germany in the spring.

Sheet 8

In political movements, the appeal of the rulers of Belgium and Holland, looking toward the establishment of peace, was, at first, greeted with some surprise, but later with an understanding of their position, which is such that they could do nothing else. The answers to the peace note of the two neutral powers were immediately given by M. Lébrun and King George and, as was expected, constituted a refusal to come to any terms with the present German government, without first obtaining full restitution of Czecho-Slovakia, Austria and Poland — terms which, of course, are entirely unacceptable to Germany.

The Russo-Finnish negotiations have broken down completely with the return of the Finnish delegation to Finland. Conditions are still tense between the two countries, but it is believed that there will be no actual hostilities between them for some time. According to some plausible but unverified reports, the Russians believe that a continuation of the "war of nerves", forcing Finland to continue spending much money on mobilization and defense measures, will, in a few months' time lead Finland into capitulation without the need of employing any Russian armed forces.

French Army Intelligence reports are to the effect that Russian negotiation and influence are spreading in the Balkans, particularly in Bulgaria. These same sources state that a combined Soviet-Bulgar demarche against Romania would not be entirely unexpected in the near future. The Army authorities added that one reason for the present quiet in any military operations is that there is a possibility that Russia may conclude a definite military alliance with Germany, and enter actively the war in the spring.

May 2, 1933
ATTACHE'S REPORT 2.2.139.A (F.L.E.)

From ........ Date 27 Nov. 1939 Serial No. 610

Source of information [Official observation, press, contacts]

Subject FRANCE

POLITICAL SITUATION

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Reference

Basis: The review, editing, and distribution of reports by O. M. I. will be greatly expedited if a brief summary of the contents is entered in this space. (Examples: military, naval, political, economic, or social.)

General Situation 25-27 Nov., 1939: Activities during period, on front, without anything spectacular; bad weather partly the cause; German army concentration remains same; believed Germans will make no offensive in near future; on sea Germans have sunk several British, Polish and neutral ships;

BELFAST, BR. CRUISER, SERIOUSLY DAMAGED: IN FRANCE, COMMUNISTS HANG "PEACE" PAMPHLETS DURING "BLACK-OUTS:" INDIRECT SABOTAGE IN FRENCH FACTORIES; SOVIET-FINNISH DISPUTE FLARES UP AGAIN - PROBABLY ANOTHER STEP IN CAMPAIGN OF "NERVES" TO INDUCE FINNS TO CAPITULATE; SOVIET WAR VESSELS IN ESTONIAN HARBOR OF TALLINN.

In this four-day period since the last report, land, air, and sea activities have been quiescent as before. Military movements have been limited to a few small patrol actions, and airplanes, even reconnaissance, have been reduced in number. In a large part, this has been caused by the prevailing bad weather, which has been stormy, including rain and snow, high gusty winds, etc.

The German Army is still concentrated as before, with the great mass of German troops divided into two main parts, one concentrated to the north of Aiz-la-Chappelle, and the other between the Rhine and the Moselle. The other sections of the Western Front are very thinly held by the Germans. The French have now identified ninety-four active German divisions along the Western Front, and, although it is believed that no great German offensive will occur in the near future, their forces are still as placed that an attack against either Holland or France could be started at practically a moment's notice.

Naval activity has been confined to the sinking by either German mines of submarines of several more British, Polish and neutral ships, and of considerable damage to the British cruiser "BELFAST." In this connection, it is of interest to note that the German radio broadcast news of the damage to the "BELFAST" on Wednesday, which was finally admitted by the British on Saturday morning.

On the French internal front, although the Communist Party has been officially forbidden as an organization, there is much clandestine Communist agitation. During a recent "alert," when the city of Paris was blacked out, the French Foreign Office reported that at least two automobiles were dashing around the city throwing out Communist tracts, calling for peace. Also, it has been reported from several reliable sources that in the large factories, even those working on government war-time orders, there is a considerable amount of labor Communist propaganda being spread, and indirect sabotage, taking the form of slowing down work is common.

The Soviet-Finnish dispute has flared up again with the Russian claim that Finnish troops had fired on and killed seven Russian soldiers, along the common border. Rather than the prelude to an armed attack, however, this is probably only another step in the campaign of nerves to induce the Finns to capitulate without any war. The Second Bureau of the French Navy has informed this office that, at the present time, (25 November) the following Soviet naval vessels are in the port of Tallinn in Estonia: 11 submarines, 2 destroyers, 3 gunboats and a tanker. However, as Tallinn freezes over

Use forms for all copies. The only form as supplied by O. M. I. Make all changes, etc., uniform in size with this form when practical. Submit sets copies of clipping, outline of sketch, etc., where practical. If penciled, submit sketches in copy form as penciled.
ATTACHE'S REPORT

From: [Name]
Date: 27 May, 1969
Serial No.: 620
File No.: 105

Subject: 
Reference: 

Note: The review, indexing, and distribution of reports by O.M.I. will be greatly assisted if a brief summary of the contents is entered in the space above.

CONFIDENTIAL

Sheet 2

During the winter, this detachment, avoid being frozen in, will have to leave that place shortly and return either to Leningrad or go to some ice-free port in the Western Baltic.

Latest reports from the French Army Intelligence Section comment on the unfavorable attitude taken by Italy in continuing to supply Germany with materials and in protesting against the extension of the allied blockade to German export goods carried in neutral ships. This Italian attitude, however, is not taken to mean that Italy will participate in the war as an ally of Germany, even though Mussolini has announced the Italian position as one of "non-belligerency," not "neutrality.

The Army is also authority for the report that sometime in the future, probably not until spring, a Russian move against Rumania, looking to the reoccupation of Bessarabia, is scheduled. It is considered almost certain that if the Russians move against Bessarabia the Hungarians will move into Transylvania.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652 Sec. 205 and 5(D) or (RF)
OSD Letter May 1, 1972
By SLR Date MAY 21 1973
CONFIDENTIAL

OL'TIONEL

From:
Date:
Serial No.

Source of information:

Subject:

POLITICAL FORCES
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

Reference:

France - General Situation, 27 January - 1 February, 1940: Five days covered in this report were marked by three speeches - Daladier, Hitler, Chamberlain. Daladier insisted that new and more severe restrictions and increased taxes were to be forthcoming. Hitler assured listeners that Germany would be victorious. Chamberlain said nothing new. Naval and military activity slight. German aviation now attacking merchant ship convoys, with some successes. France: General Staff of opinion that there will be no more operations on Western Front or in Belgium or Holland for long time to come. Main German effort is to be developed along southern border of Poland, to the eastward, through the Ukraine, the Crimea, to the Caucasus and including Rumania. Area to be exploited economically with permission for Rumania for territory belonging to that country. If Rumania will not cooperate, then Rumania and Germany will occupy that country. No action envisaged in Scandinavian countries for the present - they recently have informally agreed to export to the Germans the raw materials desired. Navy Intelligence Bureau officials in substantial accord with Army viewpoint. Navy shows some tendency to criticize army for not starting offensive in Svy. Rumor of impending political changes in English and French Cabinets. Efforts to obtain further information on French aid to Finland unsuccessful - publicity causing French to make every effort to keep details secret, and it was publicly stated that no Italian ships have been seen in German waters through Germany.

These five days have witnessed the pronouncement of three speeches by the leaders of the respective warring governments. Daladier commenced the verbal battle with a radio broadcast on 29 January, in which he intimated that new and more severe restrictions, and increased taxation, were to be forthcoming. On 30 January, Hitler followed with a speech, once more saying that Germany had been driven into this war by British duplicity, and that in the end, Germany would be victorious. On the following evening, Chamberlain broadcast the British view in a speech that was the weakest of the three and which said practically nothing new.

Naval and military activities during this period have been extremely few. German aviation has commenced attacking merchant ship convoys, and have registered some successes. On the whole, however, military, air and naval activities have not been any more numerous or decisive than they have been previously, although the increasing frequency of German air attacks on merchantmen may pressage more continued operations against the English.

The French Army General Staff have recently become the proponents of the idea that there will be no more operations on the Western Front or in Belgium or Holland for a long time. According to the Second Bureau, the main German effort is now to be developed along the southern border of Poland, to the eastward, eventually to extend through the Ukraine, the Crimea, to the Caucasus and including Rumania. It is said that this area is to be exploited economically, with the aid of German technicians and engineers, permission having been already obtained from Rumania for this purpose for the territory belonging to that country. If Rumania will not permit this exploitation then a combined Russo-German occupation of that country is envisaged, but it is felt that this step will not be required. No action is looked for, at the present, in the Scandinavian countries, because they recently have informally agreed to export to the Germans the raw materials and other products desired.
In discussing the above statement with officers of the Second Bureau of the Navy, they were found to be in substantial accord with the Army viewpoint. The naval staff added, however, that in such a case this war is going to be a long drawn out affair, with the probable result a stalemate, which, in effect, would be a German victory. The navy also shows some tendency to criticize the army for not starting an offensive in September, when there was an opportunity.

Also, in this connection, rumors of impending political changes in the English and French cabinets are daily more prevalent. It is believed that when the changes do come, the British Cabinet will first be reconstituted, and afterwards the French will make some changes. All remarks of political changes are still only in the nature of rumors, but these rumors are so wide-spread that they cannot be ignored.

With reference to the question of French aid to Finland, discussed in Y report #666 of 29 Dec., 1939, although it is known that shipments are going forward, efforts to obtain further specific information have so far been unsuccessful. It was publicity that stopped Italian shipments to Finland through Germany, and there are well founded fears that further publicity, such as the American press announcement yesterday of the arrival in Norway of 40 Brewster planes for Finland, will again result in German action. Under the circumstances French officials are making every effort to keep secret the details of the aid they are giving Finland.
ATTACHE’S REPORT

From: Y
Date: 2 Feb., 1940

Subject: FRANCE

Reference:

General Situation - 1-10 February, 1940:

All quiet during that period in military activities.

Increase in activities against allied and neutral shipping.

Difficulties of allies in combating sinkings.

Allies not to begin bombing land targets until Germans commence and until Allies have air superiority.

Abundance of sea targets for Germans and lack of sea targets for allies.

Unrest in French Army at inactivity; may force Army to attack Siegfried line in the spring.

French military officials admit that the Allies could not continue inactive and permit Germany to consolidate her position in South Eastern Europe. Without offensive in the west French claim war cannot be won.

That attack on Siegfried line will be a costly affair but state there is nothing else to be done. Inaction of Army causing unrest among civil population also.

Not much accomplished at Balkan Conference; eventual help from Western powers is considered too remote.

Severe losses by Finnish Army in recent fighting. Finns may not be held out unless help is given. French believe Finnish defences are beginning to crumble.

Recent Supreme War Council decided to provide adequate assistance to Finland.

Allied naval and military activities have continued their quiet way, during the period 1-10 February, with the greater portion of the daily communiques stating “nothing to report”. This is varied from time to time by the remark “Limited patrol actions are reported”. Allied air activities were also in an atmosphere of calm and quiet during these ten days.

German air and naval activities against allied and neutral shipping were increased, and the curve of sinkings during the last ten days has taken a sharp upward swing. The Allies feel that they are working under considerable difficulties in combating this particular form of activity. The Chief of the Second Bureau of the Navy informed the assistant Attaché that of course the French or British would not begin bombing land targets until after the Germans had commenced (and also after the German numerical superiority in planes is decreased). Meanwhile the Germans have plenty of sea targets in French, British, and neutral merchant shipping and in Allied merchant of-war. For some reason, illegal merchant ship bombings do not arouse the horror among neutral nations that land bombardments do. The sea-targets are denied to the Allies because, save for submarines, the German merchant fleet.

FRANCE

PUBLICATION POLITICAL STRATEGIES - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

(Index title as per index sheet)

Source of information: Press, personal observation, contacts.
There is a growing unrest among all classes of the French at the inaction of the Armies, and this sentiment is becoming so widespread that the French military may be forced into making an attack against the Siegfried Line in the spring. It is the mass of the French that is becoming too much for the natural feel of the French. Two members of the Naval Second Bureau, an officer of the Army Second Bureau, and another officer in the division between General Camelin and the British, have all repeated in the last week that the French could not go on like this, and allow Germany to consolidate and organize in Southeastern Europe and Russia economically. If that is done, say the French, the war cannot be won, and the alternative, since the Germans seem to have given up any idea of attacking in the West, is for the Allies to start an offensive themselves. Without exception, every Army and Naval officer questioned about such an offensive, believes that it will be a costly affair, but the justification is always the same: “What else can we do.”

The sentiment against the comparative inaction of the Armies is also growing among the civil population in the rear. Were France to be invaded, the country would be as one man to throw out any invading forces but since that is not occurring, feelings are among families of the mobilized that the soldiers should be back at business and on the farm.

The recent Conference of the Balkan States is felt not to have been of any more value than to reassert the “status quo,” but very politely in order not to offend Germany or Russia. In speaking of this at a luncheon, the Minister of Colonies told the Assistant Attaché that there was nothing else for the Balkan countries to do except to go ahead and try to “conjure the two bogey-men right outside the door.” Eventual help from the Western Powers was too remote, and meanwhile Germany goes on taking the lion’s share of Balkan exports, whether the little countries like it or not.

The Finnish campaign goes on, but appeals for help are more and more urgent. The French Army has stated that unless serious military help, both men and machines, is supplied quickly the French will not be able to hold out a great deal longer. Finnish losses both in men, supplies, and position have been particularly severe during the past eight days. Although they are still holding out against the Russians, the French Army believes that the defenses are commencing to crack. It is believed, on good authority,
that one of the questions agreed upon at the Supreme War Council Meeting on 6 February, was that an intensification of effort to provide adequate assistance to Finland would be made.
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

From: [Blank] Date: 4 April, 1940
Serial No. 159

Subject: FRANCE
POLITICAL FORCES
INTERNATIONAL
NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

No change in military activities since last report.
Increased air activity due to better weather conditions.
British and German forces have exchanged bombing raids, but on neither side have appreciable results been obtained.

RAIDS ON SEAPA FLOW OF 16 MARCH SAID TO HAVE BEEN MUCH GREATER THAN PUBLISHED.
Naval operations also negligible - except for month of January, this period showed lowest losses from ships than any other since beginning of war. Probably result of number of causes - increased efficiency of anti-submarine measures, increased use of convoy system, and falling off in efficiency of submarines because of less well-trained crews.

Politically, a spell of quiet. Chamber reconvened on 2 April; Senate hears Reynaud, new Premier, on 9 April.
Believed Reynaud cabinet will continue to function for some time.
Relations of Allies to neutrals in Europe have improved very little.
Semi-official announcement that Allies are going to disregard Scandinavian neutrality would bring about immediate embargo on all trade, whatsoever, with England and France, advised the Swedish Naval Attaché.
Allied prestige suffered a loss in re-establishment of pro-Hitler Nazi party - "Iron Guard" in Romania.
Relations with Italy have undergone no improvement. Italy to proceed to Italy on confidential mission - effort to stop spread of anti-French feeling.

MILITARY ACTIVITIES HAVE CONTINUED IN THE SAME MANNER AS DURING THE PAST MONTH, BEING LIMITED TO PETROL ACTIONS, VARIED BY OCCASIONAL ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENTS, BUT IN NO SENSE OF THE WORD HAS ANY SERIOUS OFFENSIVE ON EITHER SIDE, DEVELOPED AGAINST ANY OF THE WESTERN FRONT DEFENSES. MORE FAVORABLE WEATHER HAS LED TO INCREASED RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS BY THE FRENCH, AS WELL AS INCREASED BOMBING AND RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS BY THE BRITISH AND GERMAN FORCES. THE BRITISH HAY FLOW OVER SYRIA AND THE OTHER FRANCO-GERMAN ISLANDS, BOMBING AIR AND NAVAL OBJECTIVES, WHILE THE GERMAN HAY FLOW WITH NUMEROUS RAIDS ON THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND AND THE SKYE ISLANDS. ON NEITHER SIDE HAVE ANY APPRECIABLE RESULTS BEEN OBTAINED FROM THESE BOMBINGS.

In this connection, a British naval liaison officer (formerly British naval attaché at Paris) has stated that the damage to the British fleet at Scapa Flow by the german air raid of 16 March was much greater than published. It was stated that fourteen 1000-pound bombs had been dropped, and that three hits were made on large ships, one of the hits being made on THE IRON DUKE.

Naval operations were also limited, particularly in the matter of sinkings of vessels by German submarines. Except for the month of January this period showed the lowest losses from submarines than any other since the beginning of the war. This is probably the result of a number of causes, such as increased efficiency of anti-submarine measures, increased use of convoy system, and less, but not least, a falling off in the efficiency of the submarines because of less well-trained crews, and lack of volunteers (previously reported).
Politically, this has been a spell of quiet because of the Easter
Parliamentary vacations. The Chamber of Deputies reconvened on 2 April, and the
Senate first, for the first time, the new Premier, Raymond, on 9 April. It
is believed that he will receive some rough treatment, the Raymond
Cabinet will not be overthrown by the Senate, but that it will continue to
function for some time at least.

The relations of the Allies to neutrals in Europe have improved very little.
After a semi-official announcement in the "Temps" that the Allies were going
to disregard Scandinavian neutrality, the Swedish naval attaché advised that
if such steps were taken, the Scandinavian countries would immediately place
an embargo on all trade, whatever, with England and France. The attaché
continued that it was not a question whether or not such a step would be
pleasant, but it would be forced on the Scandinavian bloc by their proximity
to Germany.

In Rumania, Allied prestige suffered a loss in the re-establishment of
the pro-Hitler Nazi party "Iron Guard" as a legal party. Scarcely six months
ago, the "Iron Guard", by King Carol's order, was abolished. The seven
members of the "Iron Guard" whom had assassinated the Rumanian Premier, Călinescu,
were executed, and many other party members were jailed. Now, all party members
have been released, and pensions and damages have been granted to the families
of those executed. Also, under German leadership, an organization known as
"The German Minority Youth Movement" is set up. This organization should
number about 950,000 members of German blood, and its effect as a propaganda
agent is obvious.

Relations with Italy have undergone no improvement, but rather the reverse.
Mattollini continues calling reservists to active duty for "a period of instruction"
but it is significant that no reservists are released from active duty after
these instruction periods. The Italian press is in publishing inflammatory
and hostile articles. The French Minister of the Marine informed the Assistant
Attaché that an effort to stop the spread of anti-French feeling, former
Premier Laval, a personal friend of Mussolini, and exiled in Italy, is to
proceed there on a confidential mission. The Minister went on to say that in
his opinion Laval would have no success, as the Italian maneuvers were so much
blackmail and that there were only two ways to solve the question: One was to
demand bluntly that Italy cease all anti-French propaganda, and decide once and
for all whether she favors the Allies or Germany. The second was to pay the
blackmail demanded by ceding Djibouti to Italy, increasing Italian representation
on the Suez Canal Board, etc. Any French Government, however, trying to carry
out this second step would probably be stoned out of office.
Principai activities centered in Norway. German forces made attacks along three widely separated places on Western Front, which were most vigorous since beginning of war, but were not continued and were repulsed by the French.

French army had expected a general attack on 15 April and now a serious German offensive is expected in West almost any day.

French believe such an attack will come by way of southern Holland and Belgium. French army estimates there are 150 German divisions on Western Front, as opposed to French-British combination of 85.

Norwegian situation helped the Reynaud government, or at least prolonged it. Thought that if Reynaud had been overthrown, Laval (anti-British and pro-Italian) would have been able to form next government.

German move into Denmark and Norway caught allies unprepared, in sense that they believed Germany would spend several days in "pressure" and diplomatic activity.

Externally, situation facing Allies in Europe more unfavorable - Italy has them disturbed. Believed she makes move to grab Corfu or a part of Yugoslavia.

I have no information that Russia and Germany may move against Roumania between 20-30 April.

Comments of Swedish Attaché on Sweden's attitude - determined to remain neutral - cannot defend herself against Germany - has no faith in Allies' prevers of help - etc.

Germans did not disturb French Legation in Copenhagen, but arrested all British at their Legation.

Swedish Legation in Paris, acting for Germany, liquidating all leases of houses held by personnel formerly attached to German Embassy in Paris. May appear that Germany does not expect war to end in the near future.

During these two weeks, the principal military, naval and air activities have been centered in Norway. (For naval activities, see Y Report No. 169, 15 April, 1940). On 15 April, however, the German forces made attacks along the front in three widely separated places, (1) just east of the Moselle near Sierck, (2) opposite Strasbourg, and (3) just north of the Swiss border at Eltinge.

These attacks were most vigorous of any that had developed since the beginning of the war in September, but they were not continued, and were repulsed by the French.

The Acting Attaché accompanied the Military Attaché on a visit to General Georges, the Commander-in-Chief of the French Army, on 16 April, and was informed by General Georges that the French army had expected a rather general attack on 15 April, and that now (on the 16th) a serious German offensive is expected in the West almost any day. The French army believes that such an offensive will come by way of southern Holland and Belgium, in the shape of a turning movement.

General Georges lamented the fact that the Belgian's
interpretation of neutrality would not permit the French to enter Belgium before a German attack, as he said, the Belgian defense lines were not particularly strong, and that the Germans could break through them without too much difficulty. The French Army now estimates that on the West Front there are 150 German divisions as opposed to a Franco-British combination of 80.

Internally, in France, the Norwegian situation provided a breath of life for the Republican government. The inside political information in Paris is that Reynaud, who is extremely pro-British, was just about to be overthrown at the Senate meeting scheduled for 9 April. The general information was that when Reynaud was overthrown, Laval, who is anti-British and pro-Italian, would be asked to form the next government. To avoid that, the British, earlier than they had originally intended, The German move caught the Allies totally unprepared in the sense that, although some sort of an answer was expected, it was thought that the Germans would spend several days in "pressure" and diplomatic activity at Oslo and Copenhagen before moving in. The British, however, did achieve one favorable result in that the French Senate did not vote on the Reynaud Cabinet, and that government is still in power, although its days are not considered to be long.

Externally, the situation facing the Allies in Europe has become more unfavorable. Italy, in addition to sending twenty-thousand additional troops to Albania, (a total of 80,000 are now estimated to be in that country) has moved a paratroop division to the vicinity of the Brenner Pass toward the French frontier. The French are disturbed about the situation as they fear, not that it will enter the war against the Allies, but that a move of the Island of Corfu or a part of Yugoslavia is being contemplated. Colonel Soghemos Belm of the I.T. & T. in passing through Paris en route from Romania to Spain, a week ago, confidentially to the American Attaché that it was believed in Romania that between the 20th and 30th of April, there would be a German-Russian move against Romania. In such an event, Italy would probably immediately take a slice of Yugoslavia or Greece, and the war would thus spread to the Balkans.

The Swedish Attaché, who has been a constant visitor to this office, explained the Swedish attitude as being one of not desiring to engage in the war in any circumstances, but particularly, not against the Allies. However, as he repeated many times, Sweden cannot defend herself against Germany, and they had no faith in the Allies frontiers of help. The Swedes were too much impressed with the record of past performances in Austria, Checoslovakia, Poland, Finland and Norway. As the Swedish Attaché said, "The only thing we are certain of is that Allied help for Sweden will arrive too late and in too small a quantity. Therefore, we cannot jump off into direct opposition to Germany."

When the Germans went in to Denmark, the first of the invading forces reached Copenhagen shortly before daylight. The French Naval Attaché there
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From: ... Date: 16 April 1940
Serial No.: 131 File No.: 105

Source of information

Subject

Reference

The French attaché said that during all the three days the French personnel were in German hands, they were most kindly and courteously treated, and when they finally left Denmark they went across Germany in daylight, no curtains were drawn on any of the train's windows, and the food supplied was exceptionally sumptuous both in quality and quantity.

There may be an indication as to the duration of the war, in the fact that this past week the Swedish legation in Paris, acting for Germany, was liquidating all leases of houses held by personnel who were formerly attached to the German embassy in Paris, packing up furniture, etc. Up to the present, since last September, the Swedish legation stated that each month they had received from the German government money to pay the rent on the houses and apartments formerly occupied by German embassy personnel. Early in April, however, instructions were received to close out all leases, pack up and store all belongings, etc. From that it may appear that Germany now does not expect the war to be over in the near future.
ISSUED BY THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, NAVY DEPARTMENT

ATTACHE'S REPORT

From: Y
Date: 24 April, 1940
Serial No. 194

Source of information: Personal observation, contacts

Subject: FRANCE (VARIOUS SOURCES) POLITICAL FORCES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Reference: COUPON NOTES - 3 - 20 April, 1940. Lieut. Comdr. L. Bagamast,

FINISHED FILE MAY 9, 1941

Resumed:

1. Rumors of Ciano's opposition to Duce's foreign policy confirmed. Ciano expectant of being relieved of his post.

2. More apparent that Mussolini favors entering war on Germany's side. Is opposed on this score by majority of Italian people, the Pope and the Royal family.

3. Violent press campaign against France and Britain having some effect - definite increase in anti-British feeling.

4. Italian economic situation becoming steadily worse.

5. Torpedo defense of harbor at Malta - description.

6. Leader of the Frankist party in Yugo-Slavia reported to have been murdered.

7. Greek official circles alarmed over reports that Italy has now assembled 100,000 troops in Albania.

8. Italian ship on which Courier Officer was taking passage from Piraeus to Istanbul diverted to Malta by British destroyer because navigators not held.

ITALY.

The situation in Italy as reported in Courier Notes, 15 March, 1940, has clarified somewhat.

The rumors of Ciano's opposition to Il Duce's foreign policy are confirmed. It is reliably stated that Ciano is fully expectant of being relieved of his post. It is also becoming more and more apparent that Mussolini desires to enter the war on Germany's side, and is only stayed, at present, from taking such action by the opposition of the majority of the Italian people, the Pope and the Royal family. It is said that Mussolini is exceedingly annoyed at this opposition as he considers it a blow at his prestige and disloyalty to him on the part of the Italian nation.

The violent, biased, press campaign against France and Great Britain, undoubtedly launched to change the attitude of the country, appears to be having some effect, and there is a definite increase in anti-British feeling among the Italians.

If, as a very few observers believe, Il Duce is merely trying to help Hitler by a gigantic bluff, he certainly is doing it well, for all the surface effects are quite genuine.
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From 7 Date 24 April, 1940 Serial No. 154 File No. 105

Source of information

Subject

Reference

Section 2

INDICATIONS ARE THAT HE IS PREPARING TO ABANDON THE POLICY OF NON-BELLIGERENCY.

The economic situation is becoming steadily worse. There is such a shortage of credits in the U.S. that it is becoming almost impossible for Italy to procure vital raw materials. The official banks in Italy have been contacting foreigners and offering them very important premiums for dollars—in some instances as high as 45 to 50 lire to the dollar.

The British trade mission is not making much headway. The Italians, short of raw materials and coal (no one believes that Germany will keep up scheduled delivery of coal via the Brenner), want to barter luxury articles for these goods. The British want ships. An impressive having been reached, it was decided to drop the idea of a general agreement, and instead to attempt to make separate accords on each commodity in question.

It is reliably reported in Milan that many factories have received orders to stop work on all but army orders. (Appears to be a change of policy, since up to now the several war industries had been concentrating on French orders). One factory just received an urgent order for 1,000,000 pairs of shoes for the Italian army.

MALTA.

The harbor of Malta was virtually deserted an April 12–13. Two mine sweepers were working over the approaches, and one destroyer entered the harbor. Otherwise no combatant ships were present.

The torpedo defense of the harbor is composed of a gate capable of closing the entrance to the inner harbor. The gate is composed of a triple (double at the middle of the channel) row of nun buoys, secured together by wire cable. The net presumably hangs from the lower end of the buoys. The whole is further supported by large cylindrical mooring buoys. The masts are strong about ten feet apart, and the rows are about 12 feet apart.

YUGO-SLAVIA.

It is reliably reported (though not published in the papers) that Benadak, the leader of the Frankist party (Gennex) but opposed to Macek, had been murdered.

GREECE.

Official circles are much concerned over the reports that Italy has now assembled 100,000 troops in Albania. These men are officially there as workers, but it is said that they are all trained men, ready to take up arms at a moment's notice.

Rumors persist as to the seriousness of General Metaxas illness.

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From:          Date: 24 April, 1940          Serial No.: 154          File No.: 103

Source of information

Subject: (Nation reported on) (Index title as per index sheet) (Subtitle)

Reference

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SHEET B

CONTRABAND CONTROL

While proceeding from Piraeus to Istanbul on the Italian steamer CITTA de BARI, we were stopped off the entrance to the Dardanelles by a British destroyer.

The boarding officer asked for the navigators and when told that the ship didn't have them, he told the Captain that he had warned him on his two previous trips to have the necessary papers, but as apparently the ship wouldn't pay attention to these warnings, he had no alternative but to send the ship to Malta.

At Malta, the British officials did not inspect the ship, but merely inspected the papers. Permission to proceed to Istanbul was received from London in a few hours, but the ship was delayed until the next day due to the necessity for fuelling.

R.O. 11651, Sec. 305 and 307, O.C.
OSD letter, May 1, 1942

By S.R. Date: MAY 21, 1973
ATTACHÉ'S REPORT

BY 14 1940

From 27 April 1940

Source of information Press

Subject FRANCE POLITICAL FORCES INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Reference (Mission reported on)

Italy has not accepted France's offer to settle differences
Probable show-down not far off
Italian reasons for delay - better bargain later on.
Italy's chances of joining Germany if Balkans invaded.

Speaking before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, Premier Paul Reynaud stated that the offer of France to straighten out differences with Italy, made in September, 1939, remained unanswered on the part of Italy.

The French press, in liaison with the British press, have recently featured the present unsatisfactory relations between the Allies and Italy. Articles in the press indicate that the Allies are slowly but surely leading up to a showdown regarding Italy's attitude toward the Allies.

The following excerpt from an article on Italian relations, taken from the Brest Depeche, gives the general French view of Italy's stand:

"Italy and the Allies -

In brief, Italy does not at present intend to limit her desires for the reason that she may be too modest due to the present undecided international situation. Let us suppose that the Allies find themselves in an intricate situation, in the near future, Italy may find an excellent opportunity to increase her demands and receive satisfaction. Thus, Mussolini, instead of accepting France's offer to discuss outstanding differences, prefers to sit on the fence and watch the game.

Foreign observers have no illusions about the difficulty of an accord between Italy and the Allies for the reason that Italy's demands have gone beyond the stage of simple adjustments in the Mediterranean. The Allies have no intention of granting Italy's aspirations to such an extent.

Information from Turkey infers that Italy is trying to force the Balkans to furnish Germany with all supplies; that the Italian-German entente will eventually force Italy to join up with Germany should the latter invade the Balkans. Hence, the only way Italy can avoid being drawn into the war is to remove any reason for Germany invading the Balkans by having the Balkans act as a supply depot for Germany."
ATTACHE'S REPORT

From... Date 8 May, 1940
Serial No. 175
File No. 106

Subject..... FRANCE

Ref. (Statement reported on)

Resume:

Practically all military activity for period took place in Norway. A few patrol and air actions on Western Front.

French naval vessels active in Norwegian waters; one cruiser hit by bomb, but only slightly damaged.

Allies landed at three points in Norway. Landing forces bombed from air - losses suffered not known.

Present indications are that Allied southern force is in position and may have to retire and leave all parts of Norway south of Trondheim to the enemy.

Germans sending reinforcements to Oslo rapidly. From 18 to 29 April 128 ships said to have entered Oslo. French Army authorities estimate number of German troops in Norway as about 108,000.

Appears that Allies will soon capture Narvik.

French considerably disgruntled over failure of British force south of Trondheim. Germans have been enabled to deny entrance to Hatteberg and Staggumskar to the British.

General Gamelin stated to our Ambassador that the result of the almost certain German successes in southern Norway would be again a severe loss of allied prestige and that Germany would spread out over southeastern Europe. Criticizes British "muddling" through the war.

British suggestion to French to send expeditionary force of 200,000 to Norway turned down by French for many good reasons.

French expect no Italian moves for at least two weeks, after an appreciative period. Italian Ambassador in Paris said to have been informed that Allies and Turkey would take no initiative anywhere in the Balkans.

Allies said to have assured Sweden that the Allies would in no case violate Swedish neutrality unless the Germans did so first.

Militarily, practically all activities during this period took place in Norway. Only a few limited patrol and air actions occurred on the Western Front; these, just enough to keep troops on the alert. The French Navy had two cruisers and four destroyers in Norwegian waters. Of these, the EMILE BERTHIN, 5900 ton cruiser, received slight damages from a hit by an airplane bomb, and the