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State Dept.

June-Dec. 1940

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*Confidential*

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

*State*

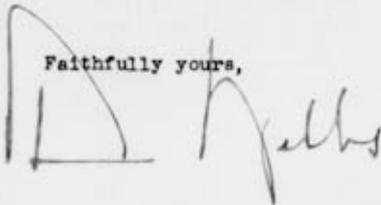
June 3, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing a copy of a personal letter I have received today from Jeff Caffery under date of May 27 which I believe will be of interest to you.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Enc.

The President,  
The White House.

C  
O  
P  
Y

EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Rio de Janeiro,  
May 27, 1940.

Personal  
No. 132

Dear Sumner:

Referring to my telegram No. 228 of May 24, 5 p.m. regarding my conversation with President Vargas, I did not set out in the telegram that President Vargas had told me in plain words that he mistrusted the Germans: "That race has given evidence that they are a dangerous lot. We have over a million of them here and I am perfectly aware that they would like to turn me out." He then added: "In case of need, I shall rely on your country to help me." Aranha was very curious to know what the President had told me because the President had merely said to Aranha, when Aranha tried to pump him, that he had set out his position clearly to me. When I told Aranha a little of the conversation, he was so surprised that I said perhaps the President was not sincere: "Oh, yes", said Aranha, "he was sincere alright. I am surprised that he talked so plainly; he never talks plainly to us in the Cabinet; he has talked more plainly to you than to anyone I know."

Aranha is a little befuddled and I am trying hard to keep him from running off the rails. (As you are aware, he doesn't get along very well with the Minister of War and various of the other principal Generals). He is now fearful that his well-known anti-German policy might end in failure.

With all good wishes,

Yours very sincerely,

JEFFERSON CAFFERY

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

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOR THE PRESS

JUNE 10, 1940  
No. 276

PROCLAIMING THE NEUTRALITY OF THE UNITED STATES  
IN THE WAR BETWEEN ITALY, ON THE ONE HAND,  
AND FRANCE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, ON  
THE OTHER HAND.

-----

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS a state of war unhappily exists between Italy, on the one hand, and France and the United Kingdom, on the other hand;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, President of the United States of America, in order to preserve the neutrality of the United States and of its citizens and of persons within its territory and jurisdiction, and to enforce its laws and treaties, and in order that all persons, being warned of the general tenor of the laws and treaties of the United States in this behalf, and of the law of nations, may thus be prevented from any violation of the same, do hereby declare and proclaim that all of the provisions of my proclamation of September 5, 1939, proclaiming the neutrality of the United States in a war between Germany and France; Poland; and the United Kingdom, India, Australia and New Zealand apply equally in respect to Italy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this tenth day  
of June, in the  
year of our Lord  
nineteen hundred  
and forty,  
and of the  
Independence  
of the United  
States of America  
the one hundred and  
sixty-fourth.

(SEAL)

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

By the President:

CORDELL HULL

Secretary of State.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOR THE PRESS

JUNE 10, 1940  
NO. 277

PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF WAR BETWEEN  
ITALY, ON THE ONE HAND, AND FRANCE  
AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, ON THE OTHER HAND

-----  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS section 1 of the joint resolution of Congress approved November 4, 1939, provides in part as follows:

"That whenever the President, or the Congress by concurrent resolution, shall find that there exists a state of war between foreign states, and that it is necessary to promote the security or preserve the peace of the United States or to protect the lives of citizens of the United States, the President shall issue a proclamation naming the states involved; and he shall, from time to time, by proclamation, name other states as and when they may become involved in the war."

AND WHEREAS it is further provided by section 13 of the said joint resolution that

"The President may, from time to time, promulgate such rules and regulations, not inconsistent with law as may be necessary and proper to carry out any of the provisions of this joint resolution; and he may exercise any power or authority conferred on him by this joint resolution through such officer or officers, or agency or agencies, as he shall direct."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, President of the United States of America, acting under and by virtue of the authority conferred on me by the said joint resolution, do hereby proclaim that a state of war unhappily exists between Italy, on the one hand, and France and the United Kingdom, on the other hand, and that it is necessary to promote the security and preserve the peace of the United States and to protect the lives of citizens of the United States.

AND I do hereby enjoin upon all officers of the United States, charged with the execution of

the

the laws thereof, the utmost diligence in preventing violations of the said joint resolution and in bringing to trial and punishment any offenders against the same.

AND I do hereby delegate to the Secretary of State the power to exercise any power or authority conferred on me by the said joint resolution, as made effective by this my proclamation issued thereunder, which is not specifically delegated by Executive order to some other officer or agency of this Government, and the power to promulgate such rules and regulations not inconsistent with law as may be necessary and proper to carry out any of its provisions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this tenth day  
of June, in the  
year of our Lord  
nineteen hundred  
and forty,  
and of the  
Independence  
of the United  
States of America  
the one hundred and  
sixty-fourth.

(SEAL)

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

By the President:

CORDELL HULL

Secretary of State.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOR THE PRESS

JUNE 10, 1940  
No. 278

USE OF PORTS OR TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES BY SUBMARINES OF FOREIGN BELLIGERENT STATES

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS section 11 of the joint resolution approved November 4, 1939, provides:

"Whenever, during any war in which the United States is neutral, the President shall find that special restrictions placed on the use of the ports and territorial waters of the United States by the submarines or armed merchant vessels of a foreign state, will serve to maintain peace between the United States and foreign states, or to protect the commercial interests of the United States and its citizens, or to promote the security of the United States, and shall make proclamation thereof, it shall thereafter be unlawful for any such submarine or armed merchant vessel to enter a port or the territorial waters of the United States or to depart therefrom, except under such conditions and subject to such limitations as the President may prescribe. Whenever, in his judgment, the conditions which have caused him to issue his proclamation have ceased to exist, he shall revoke his proclamation and the provisions of this section shall thereupon cease to apply, except as to offenses committed prior to such revocation."

WHEREAS there exists a state of war between Italy, on the one hand, and France and the United Kingdom, on the other hand;

WHEREAS the United States of America is neutral in such war;

WHEREAS by my proclamation of November 4, 1939, issued pursuant to the provision of law quoted above, I placed special restrictions on the use of ports and territorial waters of the United States by the submarines of France; Germany; Poland; and the United Kingdom, India, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, President of the United States of America, acting under and by virtue of the authority vested in me by the foregoing provision

of

of section 11 of the joint resolution approved November 4, 1939, do by this proclamation declare and proclaim that the provisions of my proclamation of November 4, 1939, in regard to the use of the ports and territorial waters of the United States, exclusive of the Canal Zone, by the submarines of France; Germany; Poland; and the United Kingdom, India, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa, shall also apply to the use of the ports and territorial waters of the United States, exclusive of the Canal Zone, by the submarines of Italy.

AND I do hereby enjoin upon all officers of the United States, charged with the execution of the laws thereof, the utmost diligence in preventing violations of the said joint resolution, and this my proclamation issued thereunder, and in bringing to trial and punishment any offenders against the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this tenth day  
of June, in the  
year of our Lord  
nineteen hundred  
and forty,  
(SEAL) and of the  
Independence  
of the United  
States of America  
the one hundred and  
sixty-fourth.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

By the President:

CORDELL HULL

Secretary of State.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOR THE PRESS

JUNE 10, 1940  
NO. 279

EXECUTIVE ORDER

-----  
PRESCRIBING REGULATIONS  
GOVERNING THE ENFORCEMENT  
OF THE NEUTRALITY OF THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, under the treaties of the United States and the law of nations it is the duty of the United States, in any war in which the United States is a neutral, not to permit the commission of unneutral acts within the jurisdiction of the United States;

AND WHEREAS, a proclamation was issued by me on the tenth day of June declaring the neutrality of the United States of America in the war now existing between Italy, on the one hand, and France and the United Kingdom, on the other hand:

NOW, THEREFORE, in order to make more effective the enforcement of the provisions of said treaties, law of nations, and proclamation, I hereby prescribe that the provisions of my Executive Order No. 8233 of September 5, 1939, prescribing regulations governing the enforcement of the neutrality of the United States, apply equally in respect to Italy.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE

June 10, 1940.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOR THE PRESS

JUNE 10, 1940  
No. 280

REGULATIONS UNDER SECTION 2 (c) AND (1)  
OF THE JOINT RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS  
APPROVED NOVEMBER 4, 1939

The Secretary of State announces that the regulations under section 2 (c) and (1) of the joint resolution of Congress approved November 4, 1939, which he promulgated on November 10 and November 25, 1939, henceforth apply equally in respect to the export or transport of articles and materials to Italy.

CORDELL HULL  
Secretary of State

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

June 12, 1940

*file  
personal  
State*

My dear Mr. President:

You may not have seen the attached telegram sent by Caffery and reporting on the speech of President Vargas yesterday.

President Vargas certainly chose a singularly unfortunate moment for his speech but I think you will agree, after reading the text quoted by Caffery, that there is nothing whatever in the speech except one or two ill-chosen phrases which justify the onslaught being made upon President Vargas by the American press today. It was clearly a speech intended solely for domestic consumption and the last page of the telegram makes it thoroughly clear that in all of the references which he makes to political systems he is talking solely about the Brazilian Government and in no sense about the German or Italian dictatorships.

The criticisms of our own press will be reprinted in the German and Italian controlled papers in Brazil

The President,

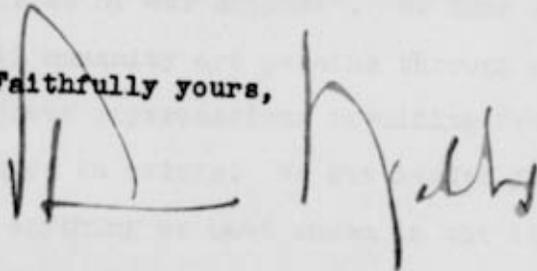
The White House.

and will undoubtedly be used to advantage to stir up feeling against the United States.

If, at your press conference on Friday, you were to find it possible to say a few words of regard for President Vargas and for the exceedingly close and friendly relationship between the two governments, I believe it would have an admirable effect. I may remind you that at this very moment the secret military and naval conversations are going on in Rio between our officers and members of the Brazilian Government and that the Brazilian Government has offered us every possible form of cooperation in the realm of national defense. We have fortunately been able so far to avoid any publicity with regard to these conversations.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Enclosure:  
Telegram 267, June 11,  
from Rio de Janeiro.

JR

GRAY

Rio de Janeiro

Dated June 11, 1940

Rec'd 11:55 a.m., 12th.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

RUSH.

237, June 11, 8 a.m.

By 266, June 10, noon.

President Vargas first stated in his Navy Day address that "there are no longer any differences on this Continent. We are united by bonds of close solidarity to all of the American nations in ideals and aspirations and in the common interest of our defense". He then went on to say: "We and all humanity are passing through a historical moment of grave repercussions resulting from rapid and violent changes in values. We are headed for a future different from anything we have known in the line of economic, social or political organization and we feel that the old systems and antiquated formulas have entered into decline. It is not however the end of civilization as the pessimists and staunch conservatives claim, but the tumultuous and fruitful beginning of a new era. Vigorous peoples, ready to face life, must follow the line of their aspirations instead of wasting time in the contemplation of that

-2- #267, June 11, 8 a.m., from Rio de Janeiro.

that which is tottering and falling in ruins. It is therefore necessary to understand our times and remove the hindrances of dead ideas and sterile ideals". Further on he said: "Political order is no longer made in the shadow of the vague rhetorical humanitarianism which sought to abolish frontiers and create an international society without characteristics or friction, united and fraternal, enjoying peace as a natural right and not as a day to day conquest. Instead of this panorama of balance and of just distribution of the world's riches we are witnessing the exasperation of nationalism, strong nations imposing their will by the sentiment of nationality and being sustained by the conviction of their own superiority. The era of improvident liberalism, sterile demagoguery, useless individualism and the sowers of disorder has passed. Political democracy is being substituted for economic democracy where the power, emanating directly from the people and instituted for the defense of their interests, organizes labor--the source of national greatness--and not ways for private fortunes. There is no longer room for regimes founded on privilege and class distinction; only those which incorporate the nation in the same duties and offer equitable social justice and opportunities in the struggle for life can survive". He continued: "The order created

by

-3- #267, June 11, 8 a.m., from Rio de Janeiro.

by new circumstances which are guiding nations is incompatible with individualism, at least when it clashes with the collective interest. It does not recognize rights which interfere with obligations to the nation.. Happily in Brazil we have established a regime which is adequate for our necessities without imitating or affiliating itself with any of the current ideologies. It is a Brazilian regime of order and peace in accordance with the nature and traditions of our people, capable of bringing about more rapidly our general progress and of guaranteeing the security of all."

CAFFERY

HPD

State  
1

June 14, 1940.

Dear Bertie:-

That is a mighty nice letter of yours of June eleventh and I am grateful to you for it. I hardly dare look ahead -- because no event these days goes by precedent and because no one has the slightest idea what the world situation will be a month from now, let alone next November.

I am strictly on a day to day basis!

My love to Olive,

As ever,

Honorable Herbert C. Pell,  
American Legation,  
Lisbon,  
Portugal.



LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Lisbon, Portugal  
June 11, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I am not writing this letter to you as I did the last, in my role as Minister to Portugal. I am writing as a fellow Democrat, an American citizen and a very old friend.

You may remember that last year I spoke to you of my hope that you would accept a renomination. I am more than ever convinced that your acceptance is a public necessity. I understand the feeling you expressed to me and a desire for rest. I know how much I would like to have you as an available neighbor in the country whom I could see for more than fifteen minutes at a time.

Although I started my political career supporting Theodore Roosevelt for a third term in 1912, I do not think that as a general thing a president should remain in office for more than eight years. There is a good deal to be said for limiting the presidency to four. We are, however, facing very exceptional circumstances in which things far more valuable than general rules made for normal circumstances, or your convenience or my pleasure, must be sacrificed.

The President

June 11, 1940

I am firmly convinced that your continuance in the White House is necessary if we are to preserve civilization. These are big words, but they do not exaggerate my belief. I have known you since you were a boy of twenty, and whether I have agreed with you or not, I know your character, and I know the needs of the world and of our country. I hope you will consider our old friendship as a sufficient excuse for this intrusion.

I am,

Yours respectfully,

*Britten*  
Herbert C. Pell.

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*Handwritten: 1*

June 17, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

Will you read the enclosed  
and speak to me about it?

F. D. R.

Letter to the President  
from Herbert Pell in re possibility  
of Spanish or Italian troops enter-  
ing Portugal to prevent the landing  
of British reinforcements for the  
protection of Gibraltar and a demand  
for the use of the Azores.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
THE SECRETARY

*file  
Confidential*

June 18, 1940

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The attached letter from Minister Pell seems to involve naval and possibly military action on our part in preventing the occupation of the Azores by German, Italian, or possibly Spanish forces. For practical reasons I do not see that there is anything that this country can do, as much as we might like to.

*CA*



SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

June 26, 1940

PSF: *State*

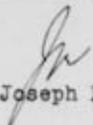
Dear General:

Here is a letter from Jim Moffett.  
He is hard headed and I have much  
confidence in his judgment.

What he says might be of some value  
to "the boss". If so, please pass it on.

With cordial regards, I am

Hastily yours,

  
Joseph E. Davies

Brigadier General Edwin M. Watson  
Secretary to the President  
The White House

J. A. MOFFETT  
130 EAST 43<sup>RD</sup> STREET  
NEW YORK

June 24, 1940

My dear Joe:

I got from a pretty reliable French source today that if the President could encourage the French Ambassador and stiffen him up at this time that it would be very helpful in the general interest -- and is needed.

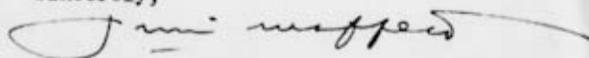
I understand that Laval is the prize traitor in this case, that he is a known grafter, and that Count de Chambrun, who has now been assigned as Assistant Military Attache at the Embassy in Washington, is Laval's son-in-law and that he is no good.

I also note that a man that I knew during the World War, Henri Beranger, who was the Senator from Guadalupe and years later Ambassador to the United States, who was a known grafter, to my knowledge in connection with oil matters, during the World War, is one of the chief negotiators for peace with Italy.

Of course, Count de St. Quentin is a very high-type man, a veteran from the World War, but he is probably in a rather uncertain situation and a good strong talk would bolster him very materially.

I thought possibly you might get a chance to pass this on to the Boss.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Joseph E. Davies  
Special Assistant to the Secretary of State  
Department of State  
Washington, D. C.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

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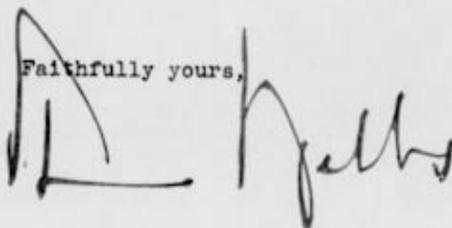
July 8, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I am sending you a copy of a letter, dated June 26,  
which I have received today from Frank Gunther and which  
I believe will be of interest to you.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Enclosure:

Copy of letter from  
Mr. Gunther, June 26, 1940.

The President

The White House.

COPY

Legation of the  
United States of America  
Bucharest, June 26, 1940.

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Sumner:

I did not think that the following was either authoritative or urgent enough to include in my telegram No. 299 of June 26, 11 a.m. Major Ratay, our Military Attaché, hobnobs constantly with a pretty important group of Germans in Bucharest, both military and civil, and, strangely enough, has got the impression from them that the Germans are "grooming" the Duke of Windsor for puppet King of England - just as Prince Ferdinand, son of the German ex-Crown Prince, is being "groomed" for active successor to Stalin after the expected successful Russian campaign. Prince Louis Ferdinand is well known to our Embassy at Berlin, is one-quarter Russian, and has a Russian wife. Major Ratay is quite impressed with all the above and says that the Germans plan to set up fair imitations of Nazi States in both England and Russia. It appears that they have no one in view as yet for the White House!

The above is an amazing tale, I admit, but strange things can happen, and now that I come to think of it I recall seeing in the press that the Duke of Windsor had abandoned his military assignment with the French Army and retired to the Riviera, and subsequently, with the collapsing of the French Army, had taken himself off to Madrid. I also recall that he was always very friendly disposed towards Germany; and that it was often said that the real quarrel with Baldwin was not only about Mrs. Simpson but over his pro-German leanings and proclivities.

With warmest regards, I am,

Yours most sincerely,

FRANKLIN MOTT GUNTHER

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

~~Pa:~~

9/6/40

For your information -- no can  
make any appointments until after  
election.

F. D. R.

STATION

L. D. W.

make and submit with wire  
for home transmission -- to you

5/10/30

MEMO FOR ROBERTA:

The General says - "Tell Roberta to hold  
this and keep it under her hat".

ld

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS

Aug. 26<sup>th</sup>

Dear Miss Le Hand:

Apologies and  
thanks.

C. Offie

P.S. Memo prepared by  
Henderson - State Dept.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PSF: State Folder

Mr. Masaryk, Czechoslovak Minister to London, is now in the United States. On his behalf representations have been made for the purpose of persuading the State Department to recognize the so-called Czechoslovak Government recently formed by Mr. Benes in London, of which Mr. Masaryk is the appointed Foreign Secretary. These representations have not had an encouraging reception, and efforts are therefore being made for Mr. Masaryk to have a personal interview on the subject with the President.

From such information as is available, Mr. Masaryk travels through the United States from time to time consulting with Czechs and American citizens of Czech origin, as well as with such American financial, industrial, and intellectual leaders to whom he may gain access. In these talks he does not devote himself entirely to discussions on Czechoslovakia. He spends much time praising the Soviet Union and Soviet foreign policies and endeavoring to persuade his listeners that the policy of all democracies towards the Soviet Union should be one more agreeable to that country. As a result of the activities of Mr. Masaryk and other Czech officials, the question has been raised as to the extent to which the Soviet Government has been able to utilize for its own purposes the rather well-organized Czech national movement in this country. In any event there is a feeling that Mr. Masaryk's apparent frankness conceals a duplicity of purpose and that he hopes with the prestige of the name which he bears, which would of course be increased in case he should obtain official recognition as Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, to build up from various groups of Czech origin in this country a numerically and financially strong organization which he could exploit to his own advantage.

Pw 12-1-30

**Department of State**

BUREAU  
DIVISION

PR

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

Miss LeHand

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO  
THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.



In reply refer to  
PR 811.001 Roosevelt, F. D./6728

*File Personal*  
*M. Knowl*  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

*State*  
1  
September 14, 1940

My dear Miss LeHand:

The American Minister at San José, Costa Rica, has forwarded to the Department the enclosed letter addressed to the President by President Calderón Guardia of Costa Rica. The communication was sealed when it was received in the Department and the contents are unknown.

Sincerely yours,

*L. J. Sumner*  
Chief of Protocol.

Enclosure:  
Sealed letter.

Miss Marguerite A. LeHand,  
Private Secretary to the President,  
The White House.



PRESIDENTE DE LA REPUBLICA.

To His Excellency  
The President of the United States  
Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Washington, D.C.  
U.S.A.

San José de Costa Rica  
September 5, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I was very much pleased to learn, through your very welcome letter that was handed to me by your American Minister, that you liked the stamp collection commemorating our National Airport inauguration that I so gladly sent you. You may feel sure that it is my sincere desire to serve you in every way possible with all the due respect and admiration that I have always held for you.-

Mrs. Calderón Guardia wants me to remember her respectfully to Mrs. Roosevelt and we both hope for your personal wellbeing and prosperity.-

Very sincerely yours,

*Abcedario*

To His Excellency  
The President of the United States,  
Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt.-  
Washington, D.C.  
U.S.A.-



PRESIDENTE DE LA REPUBLICA.

To his Excellency  
The President of the United States  
Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Washington D.C.  
U.S.A.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 19, 1940.

~~Confidential~~

MEMORANDUM FOR

UNDER SECRETARY WELLES:

In view of the continued "residence" i.e. imprisonment, of Polish Foreign Minister Jozef Beck, don't you think there is something we can or ought to do to try to get the dear man out before the Germans (or the Russians), do to him what the Germans did to the unfortunate Jew who shot the German at the German Embassy in Paris, and was subsequently delivered, body and soul, by the French Government to the German Gestapo a few weeks ago?

F. D. R.

100-10000-10  
INVESTIGATION  
ALICE WALKER HOUSE

RSP: State

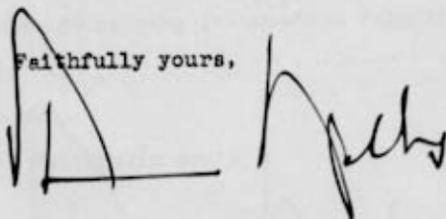
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

September 17, 1940.

My dear Mr. President:

With regard to my note of September 14, 1940  
Minister Gunther at Bucharest telegraphs that he has  
been assured by the Polish Ambassador there that the  
former Polish Foreign Minister, Jozef Beck, is still  
at the Villa which he occupies at Snagoz near Bucharest  
and is very well.

Faithfully yours,



The President,  
The White House.

*File  
Planned  
Confidential*

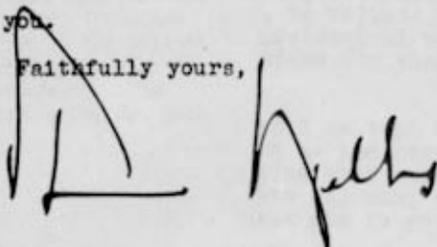
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

September 14, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

With regard to your communication of September 5, 1940 and its enclosure relating to the present position of the former Polish Minister, Jozef Beck, a report has reached the Department to the effect that Beck has been able to leave Rumania. A telegram has been sent to the Legation in Bucharest requesting information regarding this report. As soon as a reply can be received I shall immediately inform you.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosure:  
Letter from Ambassador  
Biddle, August 20, 1940.

The President,  
The White House.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

B

September 5, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

What can you do about this?

I think we should not let the whole  
thing remain in cold storage where  
it is at the present time.

F. D. R.

Biddle?

Letter from "Tony", Dept. of State, Washington, D. C., 8/20/40 to the President, stating that "I regret that when I had the honor and pleasure of dining with you the other night, I did not have the occasion to speak to you of the plight of former Polish Minister Josef Beck, now living in a state of internment in Bucharest". The writer asks if it would be possible for Mr. Beck to come to the U.S.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

August 20, 1940.

My dear Mr. President:

I regret that when I had the honor and pleasure of dining with you the other night, I did not have the occasion to speak to you of the plight of former Polish Minister Jozef Beck, now living in a state of internment in Bucharest.

There was a period, during the past year when the present Polish Government harbored ill feeling towards the interned former Government. By the end of May, however, this antagonism had given way to a serious concern for their welfare.

Prime Minister General Sikorski, as well as Foreign Minister Zaleski, informed me that due to their worry over the security of the members of the former regime, they had instructed their Special Representative on Refugee Problems in Rumania, former Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Minister Arciszewski, to make, in their behalf, a formal request of the Rumanian Government, to release Minister Beck and his associates; Minister Arciszewski was furthermore instructed to provide means for their evacuation.

Minister Arciszewski in turn told me that in receiving the foregoing instructions he had been told that the French Government was willing that certain of the former regime might evacuate into Algeria; others were to go to Egypt and Turkey. Beck was to go to Turkey.

Foreign Minister Zaleski subsequently informed me that in response to Arciszewski's formal request, Rumanian Foreign Minister, Gafencu had told him that while due to German pressure, it would be difficult to release the members of the former regime at that moment, he  
would

The President

The White House

would give his solemn assurances that he personally would see to it that Beck and his associates would be free to evacuate when and as a real threat to their security became imminent. General Sikorski and Foreign Minister Zaleski were disappointed in the Rumanian Government's reply, since reports at that time indicated an imminent threat to Rumanian territory both by Germany and Bulgaria, as well as Russia.

Since giving his assurances to Minister Arciszewski, Gafencu was replaced as Foreign Minister, and as the already unhappy situation in Rumania becomes more endangered, so the position of Beck becomes more precarious. Just before my departure from Lisbon, the former Counselor of the British Embassy in Rome imparted to me that he had received information through confidential channels, that Beck's position was growing rapidly worse.

Having in mind the State Department's cable of inquiry to me as of the latter part of April, confidentially indicating your humanitarian interest in Beck's welfare, I have taken this occasion to write you the above information.

Should it be possible for any formula to be worked out whereby Beck could be brought to the United States, I personally would be glad to contribute my financial support and efforts towards precluding the possibility of his becoming a burden on the community. I have in mind creating a chair of Contemporary History in some University for which I sincerely believe he is well qualified.

I cannot tell you how much Margaret and I enjoyed your delightful hospitality. It was wonderful to be with you again and we enjoyed every minute of our time with you.

With every good wish, I am

Yours faithfully,

Tony

State  
1

October 1, 1940.

Dear Boaz:-

Thank you ever so much for your nice letter of September twentieth, and especially as I grateful to you for those extremely interesting covers which have just arrived. They are a real addition to my collection and I am delighted to have them.

I hope all goes well with you and this note takes to you my very best wishes.

Always sincerely,

Honorable Boaz Long,  
American Legation,  
Quito,  
Ecuador.

*Hence  
To prepare  
very nice letter of  
reply*

Quito, Ecuador, September 20, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

What battles are raging the world over--and the strain of the daily decisions you have to make, only the stoutest heart could weather! You have my sincerest admiration in all you are trying to accomplish.

This small country is a listening post, and one which may be of special importance in the coming months.

SEDTA (Lufthansa) is still going strong with a monopoly on the handling of air mail within Ecuador. "State" authorized me on August 30 to take steps calculated to change this situation and negotiations may give Ecuador special importance for some time to come, hence my belief that I better stick to my job and not return for the campaign this year.

The bundle of covers, with stamps, that go forward in the sea pouch, will illustrate how the Germans work. Each letter they transport has SEDTA printed across the Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of The United States

face

of America,

Washington, D. C.

- 2 -

1/ face of the stamp. A list of the contents of the package is enclosed; sorry the variety is so limited.

Hoping that your health is excellent, I remain, with warmest personal regards,

Very sincerely yours,

Boaz Long

Enclosure:

1. List of covers, as noted.

LIST OF COVERS

- 24 covers from Ecuador.
- 43 covers from Ecuador with "SEDTA" stamps.
- 4 covers from Chile.
- 3 covers from Venezuela.
- 6 covers from Peru.
- 9 covers from Colombia.
- 8 covers from Nicaragua.
- 3 covers from Guatemala.
- 3 covers from Costa Rica.
- 32 covers from Mexico.

In addition to the above I am sending one cover each from Uruguay, Bolivia, El Salvador and Panama.

PSF: State

State

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

October 4, 1940

File  
Personal  
Confidential

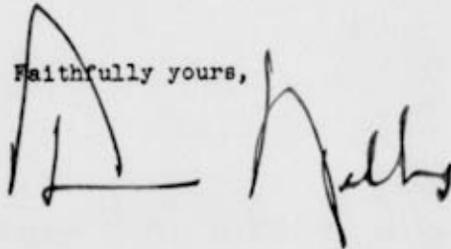
My dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing herewith a telegram just received from Ambassador Weddell regarding the message you sent to General Franco with regard to Mr. Paderewski.

The nature of this message seems to me to indicate that the decision we reached this morning with regard to Red Cross relief to civilians in Spain might be productive of good results.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Enclosure:  
From Madrid, No. 530,  
October 3, 1940, 9 p.m.

The President,  
The White House.

HR  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to any one. (Br)

Madrid

Dated October 3, 1940

Rec'd 11:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

530, October 3, 9 p.m.

Department's 241, October 2, 7 p.m.

I saw Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning and gave him the President's message for transmission to General Franco whom he was to meet within a few minutes. The Secretary General of the Foreign Office (\*) orders were being given that Mr. Paderewski's transit to Portugal be at once facilitated. The Secretary General added that the Minister wished to see me at 8 o'clock. I have just returned from this visit. The Foreign Minister said that he had been charged by the Caudillo to transmit personal greetings to the President and to say with how much pleasure he had given orders in the sense desired. The Foreign Minister added that for his own part he hoped that Mr. Paderewski would proceed immediately to Portugal since there were "so many complications".

WEDDELL

KLP

NB: Subject to correction.

AMBASSADEUR DE POLOGNE

*File  
The  
Paderewski  
File*

October 4th, 1940.

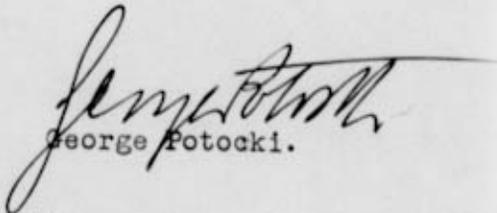
Dear Miss LeHand,

On my return yesterday from Louisville, Kentucky, I found your very kind message concerning the President's answer to my letter addressed to you on behalf of Mr. Paderewski who was detained in Saragossa, Spain.

May I express my deepest gratitude to the President for the interest he has shown for our great patriot and pianist, Mr. Paderewski, who is actually on his way to the United States.

I would be very grateful to you, dear Miss LeHand, if I could express personally to the President my thanks in the nearest future.

With kindest regards,

  
George Potocki.

Miss Marguerite A. LeHand,  
Private Secretary to the President,  
The White House.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

October 8, 1940

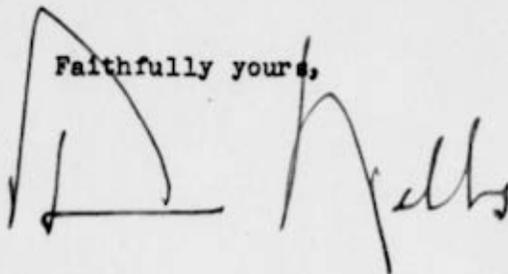
*File  
Personal*  
PSF: [unclear]  
[unclear]

My dear Mr. President:

I am transmitting herewith a telegram sent from Bucharest by Frank Gunther under date of October 7 with regard to Colonel Beck. Is there anything further that you wish me to telegraph Gunther in this regard?

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Enc.  
Telegram 581,  
Bucharest.

The President,  
The White House.

HR

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

Bucharest

Dated October 7, 1940

Rec'd 7:40 a.m., 8th.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

581, October 7, 8 p.m.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~ FOR UNDER SECRETARY WELLES  
PERSONALLY.

Your 321, September 30, 7 p.m.

A favorable opportunity came today when General Antonescu came to see me. I delivered your message. He says to have no fear but that Colonel Beck will be successfully protected. He has recently sent Colonel Riosdmu, Under Secretary of the Interior, whom I know quite well, personally, to see Beck and the General assured me that he has arranged that Beck's wishes be granted: (1) that he be permitted to row on the lake; (2) that he be allowed to take walks in the forest. The General added that he could not grant the other request for permission to come frequently to Bucharest. He will allow him to have any doctors or dentists whom he wishes to consult come here to the Snagov Villa. Apparently there is no further complaint about bed bugs. I reported in my despatch number 1548, August 30, that I had

endeavored

HR -2- #581, October 7, 8 p.m. from Bucharest.

endeavored to have Beck's wishes as above granted through ex-Premier Gigurtu but met with a cold reception.

The General informed me confidentially that a recent attempt had been made to abduct and escape with Beck to Istanbul. I remarked that that seemed a pity as in that case Beck would not be free and be no longer responsible. He replied that that could not be as the Rumanian Government had given a solemn undertaking to the German Government not to let Beck escape. I countered by observing that what was feared was that Hitler was reserving Beck for some particularly fiendish form of suffering later on such as he meted out to Schussnigg. He replied that he did not think so, that he personally would do everything in his power to protect him and that in any case not the faintest suggestion had been made by the Germans as yet that they would ever want Beck turned over to them.

GUNTHER

TFV



THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

October 21, 1940

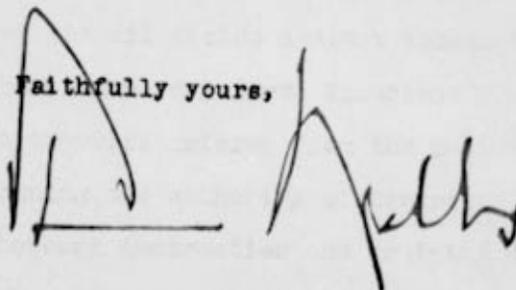
*File  
Confidential PSF:State 1*

My dear Mr. President:

In the pressure of business which you are under during these days, telegrams Nos. 621 and 623 of October 18 from our Legation in Bucharest may not have been brought to your personal attention. I am consequently enclosing copies herewith since I believe No. 623 may be of interest to you. The rumor contained therein seems too fantastic to be possible, but I am nevertheless bringing it to your attention for what it may be worth.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



Encs.  
Telegrams 621 and  
623, Bucharest.

The President,  
The White House.

LAR

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

Bucharest

Dated October 18, 1940

Rec'd 9:05 a.m., 19th.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

621, October 18, noon.

~~SECRETARY CONFIDENTIAL~~

A highly authoritative source whom I have quoted to you before (see my 239, May 29, 1 p.m. and previous) has made interesting statements to the Military Attache to the follow (\*).

(GRAY) The German forces arriving in Rumania are not troops of occupation. The mission of these troops is: (one) protection of the oil fields against sabotage and possible British bombing raids; (two) insurance of internal order against troubles arising from the political situation and strengthening the authority of General Antonescu; (three) thorough instruction and training of a small well-equipped Rumanian army in modern warfare.  
(END GRAY)

There is at present in the oil field area one-third of an air regiment with the regimental headquarters and about thirty pursuit planes. The other two-thirds of the regiment are being held in readiness in Vienna and will  
arrive

LAR-2- 621, October 18, noon from Bucharest.

arrive in Rumania only in case of (\*). A special fire-fighting detachment with experience in Rotterdam is there already and has demonstrated recently its efficiency in extinguishing of the fires of the three oil wells. One anti-aircraft regiment consisting of two light and one heavy battalions is arriving now in the oil field area. No other air force units except small detachments for instructional purposes will be sent to Rumania.

(GRAY) The German Army will furnish mechanized and motorized units, the total strength of which will be equivalent to that of a mixed reinforcement modern division. This will not be a tactical divisional unit but organized into detachments for instructional purposes. As yet there are in Rumania only headquarters detachments. The movement of all units into Rumania is expected to be completed in the next two or three weeks.

A German naval mission will not be sent to Rumania. Italy will not participate in any of these operations in Rumania.

In Vienna there are at present 400 transport planes held in readiness for the transport of special troops to any part of the Balkans.

For two weeks prior to the abdication of King Carol two motorized corps were held in readiness near Vienna for an invasion of Rumania. (END GRAY)

Within

LAR-3- 621, October 18, noon from Bucharest.

Within the next few days Hitler will undertake something which will signalize the beginning of the "reconstruction" of Europe. It will be seen that there will be no "famine". England is "isolated" and so are British forces in the Mediterranean. It will be seen that plans are complete for a long war if necessary. Understandings with Moscow are excellent and far-reaching.

(GRAY) Please communicate to the War Department.

GUNTHER

AW

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

From: Bucharest

Number: 623 Dated: Oct 18, noon

Code: "SC+C"

Caption:

This telegram has been distributed to:

S+U

Please advise the Division of Communications and Records if further distribution should be made.

JR

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

Bucharest

Dated October 18, 1940

Rec'd 5:45 a.m., 19th.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

623, October 18, noon.

CONFIDENTIAL FOR UNDER SECRETARY WELLES.

As having a possible bearing upon the coming announcement referred to in the last paragraph of my 621, October 18, 9 a.m., I have recently heard, though I take it with a large grain of salt, that Hitler may before our elections publicly reverse his policy of anti-Semitism. Some color is let to this by German advice here which I am reliably informed has recently been to go more slowly on anti-Semitic measures.

GUNTHER

GW



*H. Roosevelt*

*State*

LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Lisbon, November 2, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I received your very nice letter and telegram on my return from Switzerland where we had quite a bad motor accident. Olive cut her shins and collected the finest shiner you have ever seen. John L. Sullivan would have been proud to have given it to her. My knee was badly twisted and my wrist sprained, and we were both very much shaken. The whole trip was a curious Odyssey, the chronicle of which at a less busy time would interest and amuse you.

From all I can gather here and from all the letters I receive, your reelection seems certain. I want to take the occasion to congratulate the country and you, and perhaps to feel that the expression of my hope that you would run again had something to do with your decision. I know the sacrifice you are making, and I am grateful for it.

In occupied France, which I went through in a series of taxis, and in Switzerland, your reelection was hoped for as the only possible salvation of the world. The leading Italians and apparently the Germans hope to see the last of you. I am more than ever convinced that the spiritual



LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

-2-

changes which you have inspired, and the alteration in accepted values which you have directed, have been the minimum possible, if we have any hope of saving our institutions for our children.

I hope to be back in the winter, and that I shall be able to see you for something more than a fifteen-minute discussion.

I should be grateful if you would send word to the Vanderbilt House Museum at Hyde Park, suggesting that they should accept a motor car which I offered them. It is a Minerva built in 1928 at a cost of over \$10,000, and was in its time, considered the best touring car in Europe. It would fit into such a social museum very well. I would rather have it there than at the Belmont House in Newport.

I must again tell you how proud I am to have been associated even in a humble way with your administration. Olive sends her love.

I am,

Respectfully,

*Herbert Pell*  
Herbert Pell,  
American Minister.

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

*File  
Personal  
File*

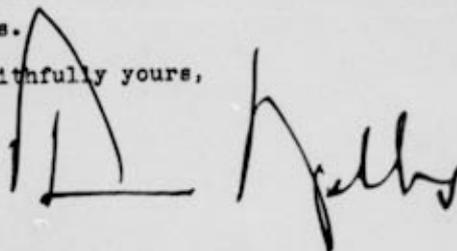
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

November 16, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

At the request of the Ambassador of Peru, I am enclosing a copy of a communication that has been received from him providing the text of a resolution passed by the Peruvian House of Representatives, indicating the gratification of that body on the occasion of your reelection. There is also enclosed a copy of the note sent to the Ambassador of Peru requesting, on your behalf, that he transmit an expression of your appreciation to the Peruvian House of Representatives.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosures:

1. From the Ambassador of Peru, November 12, 1940.
2. To the Ambassador of Peru.

The President,  
The White House.

**Department of State**

BUREAU  
DIVISION

**RA**

ENCLOSURE  
TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

**The President.**

PERUVIAN EMBASSY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

November 12th, 1940.

Your Excellency,

The House of Representatives in Peru has approved the following resolution:

"The Peruvian House of Representatives wishes to declare again its faith in democratic institutions and to express its gratification at the re-election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whereby the safety of the Americas and Continental solidarity have been assured."

Acting under instructions from my Government, I venture to request that Your Excellency be so good as to have the terms of this Resolution transmitted to the President of the United States.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

*M. de Foz y S.*

His Excellency  
Cordell Hull,  
Secretary of State,  
Washington.

November 16, 1940

**Excellency:**

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's communication of November 12, 1940 informing me of the cordial resolution of the House of Representatives of Peru on the occasion of the reelection of Franklin D. Roosevelt as President of the United States.

In response to Your Excellency's request, I have informed the President of this resolution. It is now my privilege to request, on behalf of the President, that Your Excellency transmit to your Government, for delivery to the Peruvian House of Representatives, the sincere expression of appreciation of the President for the generous and gratifying message of that distinguished body.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Sumner Welles

Acting Secretary of State.

**His Excellency**

**Señor Don Manuel de Freyre y Santander,**  
**Ambassador of Peru.**

811.00/778

*File personal*

*W. State*

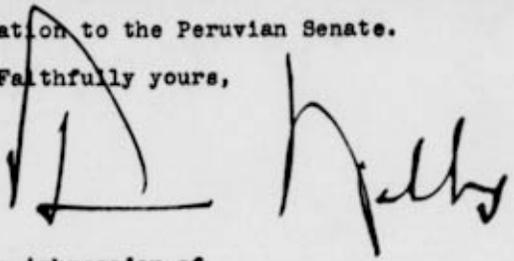
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

November 22, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

At the request of the Ambassador of Peru, I am enclosing a copy of a communication that has been received from him providing the text of a resolution passed by the Peruvian Senate, indicating the gratification of that body on the occasion of your reelection. There is also enclosed a copy of the note sent to the Ambassador of Peru requesting, on your behalf, that he transmit an expression of your appreciation to the Peruvian Senate.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosures:

1. From the Ambassador of Peru, November 16, 1940.
2. To the Ambassador of Peru.

The President,  
The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU  
DIVISION

RA

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

The President.

PERUVIAN EMBASSY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

November 16th, 1940.

Your Excellency,

My Government has directed me to acquaint Your Excellency with the following Resolution passed by the Peruvian Senate, on November 7th, 1940, with the request that you kindly have it transmitted to the President of the United States.

"The Senate of Peru wishes to express its gratification at the re-election of His Excellency Franklin D. Roosevelt as President of the United States. The people of the United States have thus contributed to insure the integrity of this Continent, and to foster a friendly understanding among our Nations, so that they may realize their common ideals in accordance with democratic principles."

Please accept, Your Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

*M. de Trazo y S.*

His Excellency  
Cordell Hull,  
Secretary of State,  
Washington.

November 22, 1940

**Excellency:**

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's communication of November 16, 1940 informing me of the friendly resolution of the Peruvian Senate on the occasion of the reelection of Franklin D. Roosevelt as President of the United States.

I have informed the President of this resolution, as Your Excellency requested. On behalf of the President, may I request Your Excellency to have delivered to the Peruvian Senate the President's deep appreciation to that eminent assembly for their very kind and heartening message.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Sumner Welles

His Excellency

Señor Don Manuel de Freyre y Santander,  
Ambassador of Peru.

611.001 Roosevelt, F. D./6787

*file*

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

*State  
1-40*

November 28, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

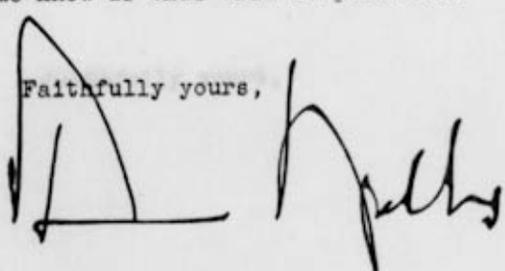
Mr. John Pelényi, the Hungarian Minister, has resigned his post and his resignation has been accepted by his Government. He has told me that he could no longer continue to represent Hungary in view of Hungarian participation in the Axis agreements.

As you know, he is married to an American and his sympathies have always been wholeheartedly with the democratic powers. In view of these circumstances I wonder if you would not agree to receive him for a few minutes before the end of the week. He is coming into the Department today to take his official leave and I know he will greatly value the privilege of having a chance to say goodbye to you personally.

Will you let me know if this will be possible?

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



The President

The White House.

Private and ~~Confidential~~

PSF  
State

Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>



LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sisbon -  
Portugal.

[1940]

Dear Mr. President -

This is about Bertie, although he does not know I'm writing to you. We are most grateful to you for the ~~the~~ interesting years we have had here, and proud to have been part of your administration. I know Bertie has written you that he would like to continue here. It was only his natural modesty which forbade his adding "Unless you could see your way to promoting me to an Embassy?" I am very ambitious for him when he comes to retire, I want it to be as an Ambassador in your service! We don't care where!! If you only knows how near this is to my heart !!!

Give my love to your dear Mother -  
Your humble and devoted servant -  
Olive Pell -

P.S. Needless to add what deep gratitude to God we both feel, for your glorious victory! Our beloved Country now continues in good hands

State  
1-40  
4

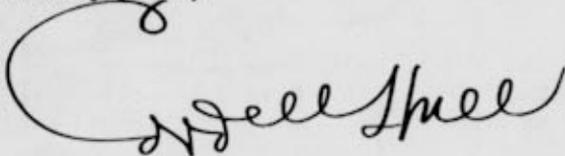
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

December 9, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I enclose for your information a copy of a letter of November 8, 1940 received from Senator Romualdo Silva Cortes of Chile, in which he sent you a "message of admiration and salutations". A copy of my reply, in which I thanked Senator Silva on your behalf, is also enclosed.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosures:

1. From Senator Silva,  
November 8, 1940.
2. To Senator Silva.

The President,  
The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU  
DIVISION

RA

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

**The President,**

**The White House.**

RA:MLG

REPUBLICA DE CHILE

SENADO

Santiago, Chile, november the 8th, 1940.

Dear Excellency,

Allow me to tell you that I congratulate you very much for the triumph and great success so happy in the electoral presidential campaign in United States.

I hope very much in favour of the ideals of just juridical democracy in America.

Perhaps you remember when you came to Chile and attended you and I spoke in the special meeting of our Senate in your honour.

My wife and I send to Mrs. Cordell Hull and to you our more respectful and kind salutations.

Please to present also our respectful message of admiration and salutations to H.E. the President and Mrs. Roosevelt.

I am, always,

Yours sincerely,

ROMUALDO SILVA CORTES

Chilean Senator

To

H.E.

Mr. Cordell Hull,  
Secretary of State,  
Washington.

U.S.A.

DEC 7 - 1940

My dear Senator Silva:

It was very kind of you to send me your cordial message of November 8. I was very pleased to hear from you again. You may be sure that I remember well the special meeting which you and your distinguished colleagues of the Chilean Senate held at the time of my visit to Santiago, and I recall vividly the generous remarks you made on that occasion.

As you requested, I have presented your message to the President and Mrs. Roosevelt and it is my privilege to thank you on their behalf for this friendly communication. Please accept my own sincere thanks for the sentiments expressed in your letter.

Mrs. Hull joins with me in sending very best wishes to Señora de Silva and you.

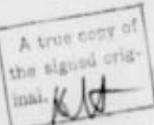
Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Cordell Hull

His Excellency

Senator Romualdo Silva Cortes,

Santiago, Chile.



December 10, 1940.

The memorandum here attached, prepared by an officer of the Department of State on his own initiative and by way of setting forth his own thought on the subject, contains a discussion of the importance of Singapore (as a strategic point within an important area) in relation to the problem of the defense of the British Isles and in relation to the interests of the United States. It deals only with that subject and not with the related question of what should be the policy or the strategy of the United States in view of facts and the line of reasoning to which it calls attention. (Its author has made suggestions regarding strategy and tactics in other memoranda.) This memorandum has been written as a contribution toward bringing into perspective the intimate connection between the problem of defending the British Isles and that of preventing acquisition by Japan of control over the areas and the transportation routes which can be dominated from Singapore.

[ COPY: ES: SS ]  
[ COMPARED: ]

December 4, 1940

The importance of Singapore to the defense of  
the British Isles and the British Empire and  
to the interests of the United States.

1. The importance of Singapore to the immediate  
defense of the British Isles lies in its command of the  
means of access to the raw materials and man power of  
Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and India. While the  
British Isles could doubtless do without direct access  
to these materials and to this man power, the effect of  
such a loss upon the economic and financial resources of  
the British Empire--a vital factor in the defense of the  
British Isles--would be considerable. Such a loss by  
seriously weakening our own economy (rubber, tin, jute,  
quinine, vegetable oils, tungsten, antimony, mica are  
among the supplies that might be lost to us) would ad-  
versely affect the extent of our economic aid to the  
British Isles.

2. Furthermore, the British Isles cannot maintain  
a defensive position indefinitely. However strong  
defensively, they must in time succumb unless an offensive  
can successfully be launched against Germany. It is from  
this

this point of view that Singapore assumes its most important role in the defense of the British Isles; i.e., the long-term defense of the Isles. The Eastern Mediterranean is an area of major importance from point of view of ultimate offensive action against Germany. The significance of Singapore to the defense of the British position in the Near East lies in its control of the only remaining effective lines of communication for the supply of materials and troops to this area. If the Japanese were based on Singapore it would seem that they could not only control Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies but the Indian Ocean as well. (See attached summary of distances from Singapore to various points.) Troop reinforcements for the British forces in the Near East come from Australia, New Zealand, India, Burma, South Africa and/or the British Isles. Supplies for these forces come from some or all of the foregoing areas and/or from among the following: Malaya, the Netherlands East Indies, and the Western Hemisphere. As British naval power cannot assure uninterrupted passage of the Mediterranean by British transports or by British merchant vessels (even though the somewhat doubtful assumption be made that the Axis powers will at no time during

during the war be able to close the Straits of Gibraltar), the only effective means of access to the Near East from the areas named above is via the Indian Ocean to the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. Consequently, loss by the British of control over the Indian Ocean as a result of a Japanese occupation of Singapore would tend to cut off the British forces in the Near East from sources of supply and of reinforcement. As Singapore clearly commands the Netherlands East Indies and Malaya, no exposition is needed to demonstrate that the fall of Singapore to Japan would isolate the British in the Near East from access to these regions. As to Australia and New Zealand, the fact that Singapore does not control the eastern, northern or southern approaches to these territories is not relevant to the question under discussion. To reach the Near East, the route from Australia and New Zealand eastward via the Panama Canal or westward by a route south of the Indian Ocean around the Cape of Good Hope must in either event traverse the Mediterranean, entering it at Gibraltar. Unless safe passage of the Mediterranean can be counted on--which it cannot be--resort to this route would not insure passage of necessary supplies of materials or men

to

to the British in the Near East. The point is that Australia and New Zealand would not be able to send men or supplies to Port Said and adjacent areas without serious threat of interruption if British control over the Indian Ocean were to be lost. The same thing is true with respect to men and supplies from South Africa and from the British Isles, and with respect to supplies from the Western Hemisphere. In the case of India and Burma, the loss of Singapore to Japan would affect the availability to the British Near Eastern forces of supplies of troops from these countries in two ways: first, through loss of control of the Indian Ocean the only sure route to Port Said would be lost or seriously impaired; second, the threat of a Japanese attack on India and Burma (by sea or via French Indochina and Thailand) would certainly tend to make the Indian and Burmese nationalists insist upon retaining more of their own supplies and men for their own defense. Cessation of economic and military assistance from India would in particular seriously weaken the British Near Eastern forces, since India is today the primary arsenal for these forces and an important source of their man power. Cut off from regular supplies and from adequate reinforcements

reinforcements, the British forces in the Near East would be seriously threatened. Like the British Isles, they would be on the defensive; prospect of successful offensive--so vital to the British cause--would be greatly diminished or lost.

3. The importance of the Eastern Mediterranean area from point of view of ultimate offensive action against Germany lies in the fact that through successful operations in that area Italy may be weakened and eventually destroyed, a foothold can be maintained in Greece or at least in Turkey for an invasion of the Balkans and an eventual assault upon Germany via disaffected Austria, Russia may fear to come to terms with Germany on the basis of spheres of influence, Italy can be driven out of Libya and contact be reestablished between British forces and the French in North Africa. As a result of such contact, Morocco might become available for the landing of British Empire forces. Even localized British offensive successes would tend to encourage a spirit of resistance in the occupied countries. On the other hand, were Britain to be crushed in the Eastern Mediterranean, Italy would be able to avoid many of the effects of the blockade and by victories could strengthen its own weak morale,

morale, the possibility of using the potentially strong French forces in North Africa and in Syria would be lost, any possibility of a Balkan offensive against Germany would disappear, Germany would gain access to the oil of the Near East, the occupied countries would lose all incentive to the maintenance of a spirit of resistance and any differences between Russia and Germany would be of slight consequence to the British cause--indeed the prospect of at least a temporary Russian-German accommodation on the basis of spheres of influence would be increased, thus postponing any acute Russian-German differences.

4. It must also be remembered that one of Britain's major weapons against Germany is the blockade. The regions of the Indian Ocean and of the Pacific eastward and southward and northward from Singapore are vast reservoirs of supplies. While Great Britain controls those reservoirs, not only can the British Isles draw on those reservoirs but Germany can be kept in large measure from drawing on them. Should Great Britain lose that

Singapore

control, not only would the British Isles be deprived of those supplies but those supplies would in substantial measure be made available to Germany via the Persian Gulf and the Caspian and via Vladivostok. (In the event that loss of Singapore resulted in the defeat of the British in the Near East--by having contributed to such defeat--these supplies could be made directly available to Germany and all effectiveness of the strategy of the blockade would be lost. In any event, loss of Singapore would permit Italian East Africa--now crippled by the blockade--to receive full supplies.)---In brief, were Singapore to be taken by Japan, Great Britain's tasks, both of defending the British Isles and of winning the war, would be rendered vastly more difficult and her chances of survival be greatly diminished.

5. Singapore is important from point of view of more obviously direct interests of the United States. Were Singapore to fall, the blockade of China (except for the inadequate and unreliable northwest route from Russia) could be made complete and the defeat of China by Japan would be facilitated. The control over the natural resources of the South Seas area which Japan would acquire if it took

Singapore

Singapore has already been mentioned. Our own position in the Philippines--a far more valuable possession both economically and strategically than is usually recognized--would, of course, be strategically prejudiced.

It is in its effect upon China's resistance, however, that the fall of Singapore to Japan would most conclusively affect (adversely) our direct interests (as well as those of Great Britain). Were China to succumb, we would be less able than now to protect our interests in the Far East. Our policy of the past three years of giving support to China would have failed and, indeed, our historic Far Eastern policy would in itself be seriously compromised. Not the least of the disastrous results of China's defeat would be a serious drop, as a result of such a blow to our prestige, in our popular morale and in the morale of the peoples of South America. The only remaining counter weight in the Far East to Japan would be Russia. With the collapse of China, Japan would be master in Asia and the South Seas and would be able to draw freely upon China's natural resources and man power. The security of Australia and New Zealand--to both of which we are bound by increasingly strong ties--  
would

would be endangered. In addition, Japan's access to the great economic resources of India would be definitely facilitated and Japanese political influence in India would increase. The increase in Japan's strength vis-à-vis the United States which would result from these various developments would be notable, and Japan's ability to challenge our economic (and before long our political) position in Central and South America would be vastly increased. At the same time our general diplomatic and strategic position would be correspondingly impaired and our economic position would be considerably weakened--by our loss of the Chinese, Indian and South Seas markets for our exports (and by our loss of much of the Japanese market for our goods, as Japan would become more and more self-sufficient) as well as by inevitable restrictions upon our access to the rubber, tin, jute and other vital materials of the Asian and Oceanic regions.

6. It has been suggested that Japan would be only too glad to sell to the British and to us the products of the region, and that in fact, therefore, our (and the British) economic situation would not be adversely affected. The fate of British and American trade in Manchuria and in  
North

North China is persuasive evidence that our (and British) export trade would certainly suffer. Whether Japan's ability to dictate the terms upon which we could acquire rubber, tin and other products would also prove harmful to us in times of peace need not concern us. The present and the immediate futures are times of war, and in the war that is raging not only is Japan an open if nonbelligerent partner of Germany and Italy but the United States is openly aiding Great Britain and China. Japan has made her choice; her future depends on Germany's winning (Great Britain's being defeated). Japan cannot rest content with "driving Britain out of the Orient"--- for, unless the British Empire is crushed, Britain will not remain out of the Orient. Japan must, therefore, aid Germany in the latter's attempt to destroy the British Empire, and toward this end Japan must aid Germany's attempts to hamstring the British in their operations of resistance. Consequently, were Japan to acquire control of Singapore (i.e. control of the vast natural resources of Asia and the South Seas) she could not be expected freely to sell to the British or to us--Britain's greatest armorer and supplier--our severally and jointly expanding requirements

requirements of the strategic materials of the Orient.  
(What she would sell while the war lasts would be  
limited: she would sell only for the purpose of ac-  
quiring foreign exchange.)

Distances from Singapore to various points, in statute miles by Great Circle measurements--

West coast of Ceylon - 1700 miles.

(Note: If Singapore could not be defended, certainly Ceylon could not be--from Colombo to the mouth of the Gulf of Aden it is 2000 miles and from Colombo to the northwestern tip of Sumatra it is 1100 miles. Furthermore, Italian East Africa would be available for minor bases, thus permitting the distances from Colombo to the coast of Italian East Africa--2000 miles at the mouth of the Gulf of Aden; 2700 miles at the frontier between Kenya and Italian East Africa--to be halved. Bases at Singapore, Sumatra, Colombo and Italian East Africa would give Japan control of the Indian Ocean with consequent ability to blockade India and to cut all communications to the Gulf of Aden.)

Mouth of Gulf of Aden - 3700 miles.

Northwestern point of Australia - 1800 miles.

(From Java, which is controlled by Singapore, the distance is 1200 miles.)

West coast of Borneo - 400 miles.

Southern tip of French Indochina - 450 miles (thus controlling Gulf of Siam.)

Jolo in Sulu archipelago of Philippines - 1250 miles.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

December 13, 1940

*File  
Personal.*

*PSF: State  
1-40*

My dear Mr. President:

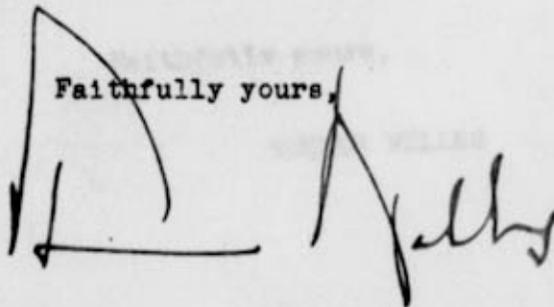
With reference to your correspondence with Arthur Sulzberger concerning John S. White, the New York Times correspondent in Buenos Aires, Arthur Sulzberger came to see me yesterday and told me that he felt that John White could no longer be retained in South America and that he was consequently transferring him to Mexico City and replacing him in Buenos Aires with Arnaldo Cortesi, at present the New York Times correspondent in Mexico.

I know Cortesi. I think he is reliable and a highly conscientious newspaperman and I hope that in a short time the bad effects of White's activities will be overcome.

I think that at last Arthur Sulzberger has tried sincerely to cooperate with us in this matter.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,



The President,

The White House.

*File  
Personal  
Confidential*

Warm Springs, Ga  
December 15, 1940

MEMORANDUM TAKEN OVER THE PHONE FROM STATE DEPARTMENT VIA  
WHITE HOUSE SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR \* COOK

When Petaïn received Charge at Vichy he said he could see no outcome but drawn peace but thought Germans would make further effort to invade England in Spring. Germans, who are treating French miserably, have made a number of advances concerning French fleet but have been repelled and Marshal reiterated solemn promise that French fleet would be scuttled before it would be allowed to fall into German hands.

Hitler plans ceremony of "collaboration" in Paris December fifteenth which Petaïn has refused to attend.

Large shipment of gold bullion from Dakar was sent to

Oran to be conveyed to Marsailles. It is stated that gold is  
destined for Reichsbank.

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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File  
Personnel  
Confidential  
received at  
Warm Springs  
11/15/40

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Warm Springs GA

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Department of State  
Division of European Affairs  
Dec 14 1940

Summary of telegrams for transmission to the President from  
the Secretary of State.

Hungarian-Yugoslav treaty is considered of little importance  
in Budapest but gives hope of precluding Hungary from joining  
Germany in attack on Yugoslavia. Berlin considers that the  
agreement constitutes renunciation of Hungarian revisionist  
policy as regards Yugoslavia and may lead to closer collaboration  
of Yugoslavia with Germany.

Moscow reports Soviet government informed Bulgarian government  
that if Bulgaria should decide not to enter Mutual assistance  
pact with Soviet Union the latter "preferred" that Bulgaria  
should not join tripartite pact.

Bucharest reports information from Moscow reveals Russia opposed  
to German expansion in Balkans had refused to consider any  
quid pro quo for German control of Straits. Russian troops have  
been withdrawn from Turkish border and improvement in Russo-  
Turkish relations continues.

Germans reported to have between 300,000 and 400,000 troops in  
Norway as security against possible attack from Russia which  
was refused freehand in Finland and Sweden.

---end---

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Department of State  
Division of Current Information

No. 236

MEMORANDUM OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1940

At the press conference today, Secretary Hull said:  
Have you any questions?

Q. Mr. Secretary, I was told by a gentleman who said that he had it from Mr. Knudsen that you sent word to the Manufacturers' Association that Britain could hold out for ninety days if they had immediate aid from the United States.

A. Well, I would not undertake to confirm that statement. I think in the first place that during recent weeks <sup>there</sup> ~~some~~ people in the country, including officials of the Government, have been discussing all of the essential factors in the international situation and our relation to it than had been doing it before. There is naturally a corresponding increase of interest in all phases of the matter during recent weeks over the interest prior to that time. Of course the State Department comes in possession of more of the essential facts pertaining to our relation to the international situation and our interest in it, always based primarily on the standpoint of our own interest and safety in whatever we say or do. Therefore, it has been natural that I would frankly but in no alarmist sense at all speak of the essential facts and developments as they come to me. That is my duty. While I am not primarily charged with the authority of dealing with production and its distribution and don't undertake to discuss the mechanics of that in any way, I <sup>do</sup> seek in a modest way to call the attention of my associates in the Government, to leaders of thought or others outside of the Government to the essential facts of the situation. That is

really

really about all that has been going on. I frankly speak to everyone who speaks to me and who stops me. I have been doing that for some years with reference to the underlying conditions that have led up to this situation, and so I don't undertake to take up every shade of meaning that may come back to me second, or third or fourth-hand about something I ~~may~~ <sup>am reported to</sup> have said officially or unofficially. I think it is better just to stand on this broad position that I have tried to define.

Q. Mr. Secretary, there are reports moving in the press out of Washington today that Norman Armour may be the new Ambassador to ~~Britain~~ Britain. Can you say anything on that?

A. No, not until I know more about it really.

Q. Mr. Secretary, in connection with the discussions about the essential facts in the international situation, would you care to elaborate to us on your views as to those facts?

A. I don't think there is much new that I have to say. I don't undertake to talk loosely with the public on those phases of this and it is a little bit difficult to do that. I prefer to sit down and have time to choose my words and be as accurate as well as as conservative as I can.

Q. Mr. Secretary, can you say whether an agreement has been asked for a British Ambassador?

A. I can not say that it has yet.

Q. It has been, did you say, Mr. Secretary?

A. I can ~~say~~ not say that it has without further information.

Q. Mr. Secretary, there are reports from London this morning that Colonel Donovan has arrived from Portugal on a diplomatic passport and is being afforded all facilities of the  
conduct

conduct of an investigation of the British position. Can you say anything at this time regarding his mission?

A. I thought you and I agreed the other day that we would wait until he got to Berlin or Rome.

Q. Mr. Secretary, in that connection, did Mr. Donovan's trip, by any chance, have any connection with the old law on our statutes called the Logan Act?

A. I can only say what I said the other day, that the State Department has nothing to do with his trip, and I have not gone into the matter really.

Q. Mr. Secretary, it is my understanding that Colonel Donovan's <sup>first</sup> trip was from the Navy Department. Might it not be that his second trip might be of a like character?

A. It might be. I would not undertake to speak of the matter. I would rather you would ask the Navy Department itself.

Q. Mr. Secretary, might I ask in connection with your first statement on the defense question, could you say whether or not your information and your studies of the situation abroad led you to think we should speed up our defense program - I mean in a general sense?

A. Of course, I have made that clear for some time as many others have without knowing the technical side of the production situation, both as to volume and time of delivery.

I have recently expressed the hope that as to certain kinds of production, both of those phases could be very substantially improved upon.

M. J. McDermott.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

December 17, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I especially wish to call your attention to the attached, quoting excerpts from my recent press conferences relative to European and Spanish release.

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7000  
THE REC  
MAY 1940

Excerpt from the Secretary's press conference of Wednesday,  
December 11, 1940.

EUROPEAN RELIEF

A correspondent said that the British Ambassador had issued a statement last night regarding his Government's unwillingness to permit the shipment of food to German-occupied nations, and he asked if the British Government had communicated this decision to the Department. The Secretary replied that he knew about it, probably from copies of the statement which in circumstances like this the Embassy furnished both to the correspondents and to the Department. A correspondent asked how this affected the projects which the Secretary had stated previously were under discussion and consideration for shipping food to certain European countries, for the alleviation of distress. In reply, the Secretary said that, as he had stated from time to time, this Government had a definite policy on the whole question of human suffering and human needs, in every part of the world alike where such problems existed, and that we were as much concerned in these matters as any other government or group or individuals. He said that we undertook to keep abreast of all the circumstances and facts, by means of constant conference with individuals, groups and governments who might be interested or might be affected in any way, and that we approached every phase of the problem most sympathetically. The Secretary said that this was about what he had told the correspondents during recent days, and that this was the course this Government had been pursuing. He added that these policies were applied in such practical ways as were feasible. He did not know what would be the next step in developments; whether someone would approach the German Government to

see what its attitude was, and to see to what extent--if any-- it had deprived populations in occupied territory; and whether, if so, it would be disposed to make a contribution in accordance with the immemorial custom of nations where one country conquered another.

A correspondent asked whether, when the Secretary said that someone might approach the German Government, he meant through the Department or privately. The Secretary answered that he meant all the people who were expressing interest in the problem, or who later might have interest in it. He added that they might visualize the problem in its entirety.

A correspondent said that this question was not intended to be facetious but that the Department of Agriculture within the last week or so had published an analysis of the food situation in Italy which represented supplies there as being exceedingly short, and he wondered whether, in the light of what the Secretary had just said, there would be any consideration precluding the supplying of food to Italy. The Secretary replied that we would have to check all of the facts in the first place, before discussing the matter, in order to see where need really existed.

A correspondent asked whether it would be correct to say that, in spite of the British announcement, this Government would continue to consider the European relief situation in general, as to what it might be possible to do. The Secretary answered that this Government would keep alive the policies which he had described to the correspondents.

#### FINLAND

A correspondent said that the Finnish Minister had called a press conference this morning to state that

Finland

Finland was in a somewhat different category from the occupied countries, and also to say that Finland needed supplies and hoped to obtain them from the United States. Asked if this would receive his sympathetic consideration, the Secretary said that this was covered by what he had just stated, which applied as far as China and to any other area of the world.

A correspondent inquired whether a request had been received from the Finnish Government for a government loan. In reply, the Secretary said that the Finns occasionally brought up something about trade, food or other topics in which they were interested, or in which we were mutually interested, but that he did not recall offhand what the facts were in this particular regard.

Excerpt from Secretary's press conference of Friday,  
December 13, 1940.

RELIEF FOR SPAIN

A correspondent referred to the question of the shipment of American foodstuffs to Spain, and said that there had been reports in the press that the British Government would like to see such shipments made; but that, on the other hand, there had been reports as long as three months ago that a New York exporter had filed an application for a navicert to cover a shipment of \$30,000 worth of Cuban sugar to Spain, that the British Government had taken no action thus far on the application, and that--still according to these reports--the State Department had instructed the American Consul General in London to lay the matter before the British Ministry of Economic Warfare. The correspondent asked if the Secretary could clarify the situation regarding the British position on food shipments. The Secretary answered that the only thing he could say today would be to repeat what he had said some days ago, with regard to the fact that some discussion had been going on about sending <sup>some</sup> food to the distressed people in Spain. He explained that this was about as far as he could go at this time, and that if he found something definite or tangible about the sugar matter--which might either be collateral or unrelated--he would be glad to inform the correspondents.

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Department of State  
Division of Current Information No. 230

MEMORANDUM OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1940

At the press conference this morning, the Secretary asked if the correspondents had any questions. A correspondent replied that the papers seemed to be full of them this morning. The Secretary asked smilingly if the answers, too, appeared in the papers?

CREDITS AND RELIEF FOR SPAIN

A correspondent said that some clarification with regard to Spain was required, and that there were reports that an agreement of some description had been reached to assist Spain, in return for its implied promise to stay out of the war. The Secretary replied that he did not believe there was anything sufficiently tangible, beyond what the correspondents already knew, that he could tell them this morning. He added that he would be glad to give them information, as time went on, and anything developed further.

A correspondent asked if there was anything the Secretary could say on that portion of the reports which stated that the United States would guarantee an Argentine credit to Spain. The Secretary answered that, frankly, he had not heard that discussed. He said that he supposed this would be a matter taken up at the Treasury Department, or at the office of Mr. Jesse Jones.

A correspondent inquired if the Secretary could give one straw to cling to in the Spanish matter--that at least no agreement had been reached. The Secretary said that he thought this was about as accurate as the way in which he had put it. The correspondent said that the matter had been in such a progressive state, that he would like to have one fact: that at any rate an agreement had not been reached. The Secretary replied that it was all right either way with him. He explained that he did not think there was anything really new; but that these matters called for despatches back and forth, and discussions and considerations, and that it was a matter of some time before you could get everything cleared, even if you were moving straight toward an agreement. The Secretary said that we had not gotten far enough for him to say that there was an agreement, but that the matter was receiving attention from day to day.

COLONEL DONOVAN

A correspondent asked if the Secretary could throw any light on the mission to Europe of Colonel William J. Donovan. The Secretary answered that he had nothing to do with that matter, and that that was about all he knew to tell the correspondents. A correspondent said that a story in the Baltimore Sun had stated that the utmost precautions had been taken, when the Clipper took off from Baltimore, to conceal Colonel Donovan's identity and destination, and that this had been dictated by the State Department. The Secretary replied that this was the first he had heard of it, and that he was glad to be able to be entirely frank with the correspondents.

DETENTION

DETENTION OF MRS. DEEGAN

Asked if there was anything further regarding Mrs. Deegan, the clerk in the American Embassy in Paris who was being detained by German authorities, the Secretary said that he had nothing new on it this morning, and that the matter was receiving attention there through our officials. A correspondent inquired if there had been no further report since Mrs. Deegan had failed to report for work on December 3. The Secretary replied that there had been nothing that he knew of, and told Mr. McDermott that, if he ascertained anything, he was authorized to give it to the correspondents.

NAVAL INCIDENT OFF BRAZIL

A correspondent recalled that the Secretary had stated yesterday there was nothing new regarding the apparent violation of the neutrality zone in a British-German engagement off Brazil, and he asked if there was anything the Secretary could see now. In reply, the Secretary said that he had no despatches on that subject this morning, except some reference to the fight off the coast, below Brazil.

A correspondent inquired if diplomatic conversations were going on concerning the Brazilian ships Itape and Euarque, stopped some days ago by the British. The Secretary said that he did not think there had been any more than what had been given out by Brazil. He explained that we primarily deferred to Brazil to give out whatever news it had, and that he himself knew of nothing new from Rio de Janeiro within the last day or two, and he assumed that Brazil would give it out if it could.

A correspondent said that despatches from Rio de Janeiro termed untrue a report in Rome that the Foreign Ministers of the American Republics would be called to consider this matter, and that these Rio despatches declared that a settlement was expected in the case of the Itape and of the other vessel. The Secretary replied that, as he had said the other day, the whole thing was developing as incidents of this kind did; and that interchanges took place with the view of working out a mutually satisfactory solution.

MEXICO: DESTROYER AND NAVAL BASES

A correspondent said that there was another report, from Mexico City, to the effect that Mexico was expecting to receive from six to twelve destroyers from the United States for training purposes and to improve Mexico's defense. Asked if he could give any information in this connection, the Secretary replied that this was brand new stuff, and that he had never heard of it before. He said that the Department did not know anything about it, and that he imagined they would tell the correspondents the same thing at the Navy Department. He added that he was sure there was no truth in it whatever.

A correspondent said that the report was coupled with one that, in return for the destroyers, the United States would obtain the use of Mexican naval bases for refueling and similar purposes. The Secretary replied that he had not heard a thing on which the story could be based.

ARGENTINA

ARGENTINA

A correspondent remarked that Doctor Prebisch of the Argentine financial mission had conferred with Under Secretary Welles for about an hour yesterday, and he asked if the Secretary could say anything about the progress of negotiations with the mission. The Secretary replied that this had been merely a general talk on the financial, monetary and credit relations between the two governments. He said that we had committees, as the correspondents knew, which conferred and made arrangements with Mr. Jesse Jones and the Treasury Department, as the case might be.

A correspondent said that there were persistent published reports that these conversations would ultimately result in some agreement whereby Great Britain would benefit, through a triangular arrangement. Asked if he could comment on this in any way, the Secretary said that he could not do so authoritatively because other departments and agencies were primarily discussing the matter; but that he thought the correspondents would find that any plans contemplated the working out of financial, trade and commercial arrangements which would be mutually satisfactory to each of the countries affected, whether two countries or three or more, and that this called for elaborate consideration and very careful selection of topics for consideration in this connection.

REPATRIATION OF AMERICANS FROM FRANCE

A correspondent said that there was a report from Lisbon that American diplomatic and consular officials there and in France had completed plans for the removal of some six hundred or more penniless American citizens in France, and had arranged for their passage home. Asked if he could say just what form this assistance would take, the Secretary said that the Department was seeking to facilitate the passage of these Americans, and perhaps of a few in Italy. He asked Mr. McDermott to ascertain from Assistant Secretary Long's office whether they had anything on this subject today, and to give the correspondents any information available.

COFFEE

Asked if he could say anything on the Department's plans for submitting the coffee agreement to Congress, the Secretary said that he assumed it would go to the Senate in due course.

M. J. McDermott.

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Department of State  
Division of Current Information

No. 231

MEMORANDUM OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE, MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1940

REFUGEE HAVEN IN VIRGIN ISLANDS

A correspondent said that there were reports that the State Department had been conferring with some other departments of the Government with the idea of setting up a refugee haven in the Virgin Islands. The Secretary answered that, frankly, he had not heard of it.

CREDITS AND RELIEF FOR SPAIN

A correspondent said that there had been considerable discussion in the press over the week-end concerning the reported consideration of a \$100,000,000 loan to Spain, and he asked if the Secretary could say, as of today, what the position was on that question. The Secretary replied that all he could do was to repeat what he had said the other day. He had spoken about conversations regarding some sort of food relief, and had never thought about a \$100,000,000 loan; and if he had mentioned such a thing as a \$100,000,000 loan, he must have been talking through his hat. The Secretary said that what he had meant was that he had not heard the matter discussed.

A correspondent said that he believed that the reports were that the Spanish had asked for \$100,000,000, and that the Secretary, in reply to a question on the matter, had said that the matter of shipments of food was being considered, without any reference to the \$100,000,000. The Secretary replied that he did not know how these reports had gotten out, and that he knew it was not in his mind to convey that (anything about a \$100,000,000 loan).

A correspondent said that reports had been published that Spain would not get any lump sum, but that there would be a beginning and continuance of shipments of food to Spain, which would necessarily be discontinued if the Spanish Government went to war. The Secretary replied that he had not heard that phase discussed, and that all he had heard talked about was the question of some sort of food relief to those who were indigent. A correspondent asked if this would be in the nature of a gift by the United States, or whether some financing would be involved. In reply, the Secretary said that he would have to wait until a little later before he could tell the correspondents about that.

MR. ROBERT D. MURPHY

A correspondent said that there were different reports as to where Mr. Robert D. Murphy was at present. He explained that one despatch had stated that Mr. Murphy had returned to Vichy, but that there were other reports that he was going to French North Africa. The Secretary replied that Mr. Murphy had returned to Vichy and had resumed charge of our Embassy, and that he was there now. Asked if there was any expectation that he might go to French North Africa, the Secretary said that this was a matter that would be more or less hypothetical. He said that he would rather await concrete developments, one way or another, and that there was nothing on which he could be helpful to the correspondents in that connection at present.

NAVAL

NAVAL ACTION OFF CUBA

A correspondent asked if any diplomatic action was being taken regarding the naval engagement yesterday off Cuba (when the British cruiser Diomedé was reported to have captured the crew of the German freighter Idarwald). The Secretary replied that he had seen press accounts, and that whenever we obtained anything official that Mr. McDermott could give the correspondents, we would be glad to do it.

S.S. ITAPE

A correspondent recalled that the Secretary had said previously that he was making inquiries to find out just what had happened in the case where a British naval vessel was reported to have stopped a Brazilian ship. The Secretary replied that he thought there had been some sort of discussions, but that, as far as he recalled, there had been nothing in today on the subject. The matter had been under discussion, and this Government had been inquiring of all parties about the circumstances, and the matter had been developing. The Secretary asked Mr. McDermott to make available anything that came in on the subject.

A correspondent asked if any action was being taken concerning the safety zone, beyond the inquiries in progress. The Secretary replied that, up to this time, there was no further action.

DETENTION OF MRS. DEEGAN

Asked if there was any word regarding Mrs. Deegan (being detained by German authorities in Paris), the Secretary said there was nothing today.

COLONEL DONOVAN

A correspondent inquired if there had been any change in the status of Colonel William J. Donovan. The Secretary replied that he did not know any more than he had known when asked about the matter on Saturday.

GERMANY: RADIO

A correspondent said that some time ago she had asked if there was anything new in regard to registration by Germany of radio frequencies by foreign countries, and that as she understood it, the United States had not been officially informed of what she termed this unprecedented act. Asked if any diplomatic action was being contemplated, the Secretary said that he would have to check with the officials of the Division of International Communications in order to bring himself up to date on the subject.

RED CROSS SHIPMENTS TO FRANCE

A correspondent said that she understood that a request had been sent some time ago to Great Britain to allow Red Cross shipments of vitamin products to France, and she asked if a reply had been received from Great Britain. The Secretary answered that the question of relief in all its different phases was up in some form with people both here and abroad--individuals, groups and governments interested in the matter--but that there was really nothing new for him to announce at this stage. He said that if and as developments occurred the Department would be glad to keep the correspondents as nearly up to date as possible.

\*\*\*

M. J. McDermott.

Page 2.

(NOT FOR THE PRESS)  
(FOR DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY)

Department of State  
Division of Current Information

No. 232

MEMORANDUM OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1940

MATSUOKA INTERVIEW

At the press conference this morning, a correspondent inquired whether the Secretary had had occasion to examine press reports of the interview granted yesterday by Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka. The Secretary replied that the honest truth was that he had arisen this morning at seven o'clock and had been tied up ever since on four or five matters, and it had been the first time in many months he had not looked at a newspaper. He added smilingly that he had not intended to make this known, but that the correspondents had exposed him.

LOAN TO THE NETHERLANDS

A correspondent said that there was a press report that this Government was considering a loan to the Dutch, on the condition that they make the funds available to the British, and he asked if the Secretary had heard any such project discussed. The Secretary replied that he had not heard this discussed by anyone.

A correspondent asked whether the fact that the Dutch were at war would not, under the Neutrality Act, preclude their obtaining a loan. In reply, the Secretary said that at any rate, as far as he knew, no one in this Government had the matter up for discussion.

COLONEL DONOVAN

A correspondent asked if the Secretary could tell the press what the purpose was of Colonel Donovan's trip to the Near East and the Mediterranean. The Secretary replied that all he knew was about what the correspondents knew, and that he had not been keeping up with the matter in any way.

A correspondent said that there was a report from Lisbon this morning that Colonel Donovan intended to interview Premier Mussolini, and he asked if the Secretary had any such information. The Secretary answered in the negative, and said that he did not know what report would come in next of this kind.

A correspondent asked if the Secretary could say definitely that Colonel Donovan was not on a State Department or diplomatic mission. The Secretary replied that, as he had stated before, the Department had nothing to do with these reports. He said that he had not even kept up with or inquired where Colonel Donovan was supposed to be at this time, or in what direction he was headed.

The correspondent said that the Lisbon report indicated that Colonel Donovan might follow the same route which Under Secretary Welles had taken on his trip to Europe--that is, from Rome to Berlin, Paris and London. The correspondent said that he took it that the Secretary did not place much credence in this. The Secretary suggested smilingly that

they

they might suspend any discussion until Colonel Donovan got to Rome or Berlin, or some place like that, and then resume it.

ADMIRAL LEAHY

Asked if he could say when Admiral Leahy expected to leave for Vichy, the Secretary said that all he knew was that Admiral Leahy hoped to get away as soon as practicable, and that he assumed that this would be within a few days or some time within the next two or three weeks.

SPANISH RELIEF

✓ Asked if there was anything he could tell the correspondents on the Spanish relief question, the Secretary said that there was not, as yet, and that the matter was being given attention along the lines of his description the other day.

M. J. McDermott.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

PSF:State  
1-40

December 18, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

I deeply sympathize with what Nelson Johnson says in his personal letter to Long. He suggests naming Willys Peck. It has also been suggested to me that we transfer MacMurray from Turkey to China. He has had experience in the Far East. I want to keep Nelson Johnson in the Service. We could either send him to Turkey or bring him to the State Department in charge of Far Eastern Affairs.

In any event, will you prepare a nice letter for me to send to Johnson?

F. D. R.

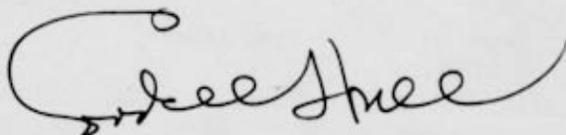
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

November 29, 1940.

My dear Mr. President:

I am transmitting herewith the resignation of Nelson T. Johnson as Ambassador to China. As will appear on the face of the letter, the Ambassador sent in his resignation very early with the request that it be held until the time when the new Administration took over. It was transmitted early because of the uncertainty of communications and was accompanied by a letter which I am enclosing herewith and which will explain the background.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosures:

1. Letter of resignation.
2. Letter to Mr. Long.

The President,  
The White House.



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Chungking, China.

July 8, 1940.

The President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Mr. President,

As is Customary I tender herewith my resignation as Ambassador to China. Having served the Government of the United States in its Foreign Service for some thirty three years I shall be glad to continue to serve in whatever capacity you may desire to use me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nelson Truler Johnson".

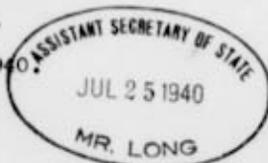
Nelson Truler Johnson



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Chungking, China.

July 8, 1940.



Honorable Breckenridge Long,  
Assistant Secretary of State,  
Department of State, Washington.

Dear Long,

I appreciate this sending this document off to you at this early date is rather anticipating things but because of the uncertainty of communications and a feeling that if I do not get it off now, when air communication is possible, I am sending it along with the idea of leaving it with you for use at the time when the new administration takes over at the beginning of the year.

I have been at the head of this mission now since the beginning of 1930. For the past three years I have been separated from my family except for a brief home leave in 1939 and a brief visit to Peking last winter. Ordinarily I would be loath to leave this post as long as it was felt by the President that I could be useful here. But I feel that I would like to be assigned somewhere where I could have my family with me and I could enjoy a little home life with my wife and children about me. I cannot do that here, and I cannot now foresee a time in the near future when that may be possible. I have hesitated to say this to anyone for I would be very hesitant about doing anything that might be interpreted as indicating a change of policy here, but why not name Willys Peck Ambassador here, he can have his wife here, having no children dependent upon him, and he at least could take over without any change being indicated. I confess that I am in a box and do not know what is best, but I do long for an opportunity to be with my family again.

With kindest personal regards,

Sincerely yours  
*Walter D. Phillips*

*file  
personal*

*PSF; State Dept  
1-66*



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

December 23, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I return herewith the letter to you from Frank Gunther, Minister to Rumania, dated November 5, 1940, with its enclosure, together with a suggested reply for your signature, if you approve.

Faithfully yours,

Enclosures:  
Letter from Franklin Mott Gunther of November 5, 1940, with its enclosure.

The President,  
The White House.

Dear Frank:

I have just received your letter of November 9, 1948, enclosing a copy of your letter to Sumner Welles embodying the substance of your conversation with the Queen Mother. I am glad of an opportunity to read this and to have these comments upon the situation in Italy as well as in the Balkans. I also appreciate your comments and congratulations.

I well realize that these are very trying days for you both. My best wishes to you for the New Year.

Yours very sincerely,

The Honorable  
Franklin Mott Gunther,  
American Minister,  
Bucharest.

No. 12.

Bucharest, November 5, 1940.

Dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter to Sumner embodying the substance of a conversation which I had recently with the Queen Mother Helen. However, you will probably never have time to read it. It is unimportant for the most part except as an adumbration of a certain species of would-be "pernicious" propaganda. I find it difficult to believe also that George Lloyd, Welshman that he is, ever really made the statement which she imputes to him.

I expect to be kept busy tomorrow answering congratulations from all over this country. As you see, I have no doubt as to the result of the election and extend my heartiest congratulations in advance.

With highest regard and fervent wishes for your personal health and strength, believe me, dear Mr. President,

Yours most respectfully,

The President,

The White House.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

Bucharest, October 30, 1940.

Dear Sumner:

Last Sunday my wife and I were invited to tea with the Queen Mother Helen of Greece at Sinaia. We started in plenty of time from Predeal, where I had been seeing General Antonescu and others, but got caught in the jam of a Guardist funeral of one of the "martyrs" and arrived forty minutes late.

The Queen Mother made a number of interesting but biased observations. We have known her since she and her sister were girls in Rome when they used to come to our house. Inter alia, she told me that there was an agreement between the Germans and the Italians, coincident with the collapse of the French Army, that the Italians should occupy Corsica, Nice and "that bit of France which links up with Switzerland", meaning, I suppose, Haute Savoie, but that Italy did not carry out its promise, as we know, for the reason that it was not in a position to do so. The Queen Mother observed that there had been quite a row about this with the Germans. However, presumably, you knew of this.

She also commented on the "injudiciousness" of the raids on Milan, which, she said, had attained no military objectives but had set against England all those—

and

The Honorable

Sumner Welles,

Under Secretary of State,

Washington.

and they were legion—who up to that time had been heart and soul for England. She said that there had been a prior cooling off due to the "abominable treatment" of the Italians who were put out of England, going into details of undressing in none-too-private rooms at the port of embarkation, seizing most of the baggage, not allowing them to open even a port hole on the boat, taking them to Italy, etc., etc. She said that this was so unlike the British that people could hardly believe it; that the "bombing of Geneva" was because the British pilots were instructed to bomb Genoa and were so ignorant that they mixed up the two and that a subsequent bombing of Genoa resulted only in the hitting of non-military objectives, including Beppinodella Gheradesca's yacht; that one of the pilots who came down was interviewed and said, "Oh, was that Genoa? But we thought it was Spezia", the naval yard.

What was very interesting was her comment regarding the Duke of Aosta, whom I knew years ago in Rome when he was Duca delle Puglie, who she said was a marvelous engineer and strategist and had prepared all plans for the African campaign down to the last detail—you probably know of his good work in Eritrea—but was being kept entirely in the background due to Mussolini's jealousy of so promising a member of the Royal Family. She said that Graziani was not much use and that there was even a good deal of veiled jealousy regarding him.

She was tart regarding Winston Churchill. You can imagine that she was not over fond of him even before

this

this war due to recollections of his attitude regarding her Father and Mother, especially the latter. She referred to this and told of her having met Winston at dinner at Lord Lloyds in England when Winston suddenly said to her: "Prince Paul of Yugoslavia is a traitor. He was educated in England and is anti-British." She turned on him and bade him remember that "though we all love England, there were other duties and responsibilities than being pro-British," especially in her part of the world where each country had its own interests to defend. Though personally an admirer of Churchill, I had previously lead her out by observing that it irritated me to see how Winston was obviously enjoying each minute of the war and showing it and remarking that personally I hated war as nothing was gained therefrom and only everything worthwhile lost, such as culture, reform, progress, sport, etc.

I do not know whether you know Lord Lloyd. I knew him well when in Egypt and reported from there that he was strongly anti-American and that it would be unfortunate were he to be named Governor General of Canada, as was then mooted. Lloyd tried to outsmart the Egyptians and in the end got outsmarted himself. I saw him last when he was out here in the early days of the war and told him that personally I did not think that either England or France was prepared to fight so powerful an enemy as Germany and that they had better make peace on honorable terms, if they could, and give Germany her head to the East and themselves time to prepare for eventualities. Queen Helen said that

that she saw him on his way home through Italy and when twitted by her regarding the British guarantee to Poland and how England had done nothing but send "an old general with one arm, one eye and one leg", Lloyd, the little Welshman, countered that England never had any intention of doing anything for Poland, that Poland was just an excuse for war as Germany was getting far too strong and bumptious, and if it had not been Poland some other excuse would have been found. Se non e vero e ben trovato. You undoubtedly know the truth, but personally I incline to André Maurois' explanation that Chamberlain gave the guarantee in a fit of pique and exhausted patience without prior consultation with the Cabinet. I suppose that you have seen Maurois' articles in *Colliers*.

King Mihai was present during all this conversation over the teacups, which was just on the eve of the Italian attack upon Greece. I was about to refer to the evident strain in that situation but never got a chance. I have been wondering since how she now feels as, though pro-Italian, a resident of Florence, she, surely, is first of all pro-Greek. If it interests you shall let you know later when I have another talk with her.

Queen Helen expressed surprise that we were so worked up over Germany and incredulity that Germany should ever attack us. I explained the situation in detail, the airplane orarium as per the President's speech, that we or others on our continent were the real objectives via England, else why should the Germans have

have spent such huge sums "boring from within" in all American democracies, that the real objective was Lebensraum in South America and a bandit's demand of gold from us "at the point of the airplane". She had obviously never heard the American point of view expounded before.

We spoke of the old days when I was Chargé d'Affaires so much in Rome after the advent of Mussolini and the excellent relations I always had with him during the first two years of his tenure, his square dealing with the American problems I presented to him, and the fact that each year we still exchange messages— at which she made a face. She told me of Myron Taylor's illness and subsequent recovery and the details of his wife's dramatic dash across the Atlantic and the dash to Rome with the surgeon who saved him.

Much of the above is trivial, I know, but just the same some of it may be "grist to the mill".

With warm personal regards, believe me,

Yours most sincerely,

State  
1-40

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

*file  
Confidential*

THE SECRETARY

December 26, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I believe that you will be interested in glancing through the attached despatch from Brussels of November thirteenth reporting disturbances on Armistice Day despite German military dictates.

*CH*

University of Wisconsin  
Library of the University of Wisconsin  
1000 Walnut Street  
Madison, Wis. 53706  
November 20, 1940  
THE SECRETARY  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

420

AMERICAN CONSULATE  
Brussels, Belgium, November 13, 1940

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Subject: November 11 Disturbances in Brussels

The Honorable

The Secretary of State

Washington

Sir:

I have the honor to report that despite strict orders by the German military authorities in Belgium there were many spontaneous demonstrations in celebration of Armistice Day in Brussels, certain of which culminated in serious disturbances.

The German Military Commander for Belgium, General Baron Von Falkenhausen, addressed a letter on October 31 to the Secretaries General of the Belgian Ministries ordering that steps should be taken by Belgian local authorities to prevent any celebration whatsoever of Armistice Day in Belgium. Proclamations were consequently placed on the walls in Brussels, signed by the Burgomaster of the city, urging the population not to attempt any demonstrations on November 11 and strictly forbidding the closing of shops or places of business on that day. Mimeographed hand bills had in the meantime been distributed throughout the city, partially through the mails, urging all Brussels citizens to celebrate Armistice Day. A copy of the circular in question is enclosed herewith. Among

other

other points it will be noted that the circular urged that children should not attend school on November 11. The school authorities, however, immediately informed parents that they would be held responsible for the presence of their children in class on that day.

As a result of the strict orders issued by the German military authorities, it was generally believed that there would be little done on the part of the population to celebrate Armistice Day and shops and places of business did not close, while very few children remained away from school on that day. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Brussels was strongly guarded by both Belgian police and German military police as it was rightly assumed that the Tomb would be the focal point of any demonstration which might take place. Other monuments to the World War dead were also guarded.

By 10 o'clock a crowd of several thousand persons had gathered in the neighborhood of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and attempted to place wreaths on the Tomb. They were at first prevented from doing so, but were later allowed to pass in single file before the Tomb. This permission was rescinded as the crowd grew. Traffic began to be considerably impeded and civilian cars were detoured, but German military cars continued to pass through the crowd. Shortly before 11 o'clock the crowd began to jeer at the German officers in cars which were forcing their way through. By 11 o'clock the crowd was so dense that it appeared impossible for the German cars to pass and incredible that any should attempt to do so. A large staff car, unable to go through the crowd at slow speed, sped through at a rapid rate. The car, which appeared to contain high German staff officers, did not injure anyone in its progress

but

but was greeted with a chorus of jeers. As the car passed through the last of the crowd, one of the officers stood up in the rear seat, drew his revolver and fired at random into the crowd. As far as could be ascertained only one person was hit. The crowd then became so indignant that large reserves of German military police had to be brought on the scene and the wounded man was carried off the street. A large pool of blood left behind on the pavement was surrounded by persons attempting to dip their handkerchiefs in the blood. The German military police and Belgian police then cleared all of the surrounding streets.

Disturbances took place in other parts of the city as well and although the number of persons involved was not as large, such difficulty was encountered in dispersing them and the German military police drew their revolvers on the crowd a number of times. One such disturbance took place at the monument to the Belgian 1914-1918 dead opposite the Palace of Justice, while another occurred at the monument to the British World War troops.

Shortly before noon a considerable crowd gathered in front of this Consulate, which was closed to public business on that day, although most of the staff were in the building. The crowd began cheering the United States and President Roosevelt and obviously was eagerly awaiting a response from the Consulate. There were no police on hand and although there were a number of German officers and soldiers on the street, these did not appear to know just what their duty was in the matter. I asked the staff of the Consulate to keep away from the windows and to give no answer, by word or sign, to the crowd, as it was clear that

that had any such sympathy been manifested, the Consulate might have been accused of provoking the manifestation. Belgian police then appeared and persuaded the crowd, with some difficulty, to move on, reminding them that the German military police were on their way to the scene. They were finally dispersed, but continued to shout "Vive la Démocratie, Vive Roosevelt".

The crowd in front of the Consulate appeared to be composed chiefly of students, although there were a number of older persons in it. It was obvious that the authorities had not foreseen that a demonstration of sympathy might take place in front of the Consulate as no police guard had been placed there in the morning. In the afternoon, however, a number of Belgian police were placed in front of the building to prevent any gathering from taking place. The flag was flying as usual, but it was not placed at half mast on the morning of November 11 because of the possibility of such a demonstration as did actually take place.

The demonstrations which took place are believed to be of particular significance in that they constituted the first protest manifestation of any kind to occur in Brussels since the occupation of the city on May 17. Since the press is entirely German-controlled and no medium of expression is open to the population, it was possible to maintain, as it was maintained even in certain Belgian quarters, that the people as a whole were becoming used to the occupation and had decided to accept it with resignation. Not the scope of the demonstrations, but their spontaneity, and the fact that they were held in the face of the strictest prohibition by the German authorities, makes them of importance.

Intense

Intense indignation is expressed by all types of Belgians at the action of the German officer in firing into the crowd at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The eyewitness account of the incident given above bears no relation to the description now current in Brussels, it being reported that several persons were killed and that a number of German officers fired at the crowd. The press, as was expected, made no reference whatsoever to the demonstrations.

The German authorities are reported to have been surprised by the manifestations and the more conservative Belgians, while pleased at the spirit shown, fear that advantage will be taken of the incidents by the military authorities to penalize the city in some manner, either in the form of a fine or in some intensification of the already strict curfew regulations.

Respectfully yours,

Edward A. Dow, Jr.  
American Vice Consul

Enclosure  
EAD/AB  
File No. 711

PSP State

Sumner Welles Reports of his Special Mission to Europe, 1940

SEE: Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940, Vol. I, General  
pages 21-117

RLJ  
11/5/59

PSF State

[1940]?

~~SECRET~~ MEMO

for

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

~~Strictly Confidential~~ Memo for President Roosevelt.

The Japanese Government cannot admit, through official channels, that American economic pressure and defense preparations under President Roosevelt have been so politically successful that the Japanese now would welcome an opportunity to change their international, and modify their China, positions.

The domestic position of the present Japanese Government is like that of the Brüning Government in Germany in 1931. The Japanese would rather lose the war in China than lose the domestic war to their own Extremists. But, the loss of the China War and the imminence of an American War, would put the radical nationalists, civil and military, in complete control. If the Conservative authorities, including Prince Konoye, Mr. Matsuoka, Count Arima, General Muto, etc. and the Emperor, can win, by diplomacy, a safe economic and international position, public opinion in Japan would restore the Conservatives to complete control.

For such a reversal, the Japanese majority needs, no less than China, the help of the United States. Failing this, they foresee the possibility of a union of their own Extremist elements with the Radical forces in China; a union comparable to, and an appendage of, the compact of Russia and Germany in Europe. They feel that if some constructive cooperation is not realized with the United States before March or April, the Fascist element will take control in both China and Japan, no matter whether England or Germany wins in the Spring offensive.

Such an eventuality would surely close the door for the Allied cause in the Far East. \_\_\_\_\_, in his own words, "is riding the horses until he can stop them." \_\_\_\_\_, in his own words, said that "to call the present war in China a Holy War is a blasphemy," and "to call the Treaty with Wang-Ching-Wei an equal Treaty is a lie." \_\_\_\_\_ said he would probably be killed if we revealed his statements to certain Japanese.

We found the Japanese officials virtually despairing of any possibility of reestablishing cordial relations with the United States. President Roosevelt's policy, and the Italian losses in the Mediterranean have created a remarkable opportunity for solidifying the Far Eastern situation in our own favor, and the Japanese are apparently now following a plan of procedure for cooperation with the United States. Mr. Matsuoka designed his speech of December 19th as an indication of this intention.

The Japanese feel that their alliance with the Axis will have to be nullified realistically before it can be broken legally and officially. The Japanese authorities are ready (though they dare not admit their readiness at the peril of their lives) to substitute the United States for Germany, by an agreement which would embrace the following aspects:

#### I. LEGAL (for Japanese public opinion)

- A. The Japanese Government could maintain that as they accepted the Axis Alliance to maintain world peace by restricting the European War vis-a-vis the United States (but much more Russia) they could apply the same principle to Germany and threaten Germany with Japanese involvement if she extends the War beyond its present confines. (Germany then would be doubly hesitant to declare war on the United States.)

#### II. POLITICAL

- A. Acceptance of the cooperation of the United States in a settlement of the China War on the basis of the secret Truce Terms offered last October by Chiang Kai Shek. With some guarantee of politic-economic order in China, and the removal of China as an immediate military menace, or a political menace through a European 'sell-out', China and Japan could then unite to fight Communism in China and in the Far East. This would take Germany, now acting through Russia, out of China.

- B. A recognition of a Far Eastern Monroe Doctrine based on the aforementioned China settlement, the Japanese-American guarantee to check any third power attempting to alter the political status of the Philippine Islands, Hong Kong, Singapore or Malaya, and the establishment of autonomous Governments in Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies, in order to remove these areas as potential war spoils, and in order to forestall the demand of Japanese Extremists for forcible action. (These autonomous Governments would agree to respect all existing investments, etc.) Actually, in the Dutch East Indies, Queen Wilhelmina could be accepted as a Sovereign.
- C. Just prior to our abrogation of the Commercial Treaty, the Japanese and British had virtually agreed upon a Treaty reopening trade in the Yangtze Valley. The British, therefore, would have no objection.
- D. No territorial aggrandizement in China proper.

### III. ECONOMIC

- A. Japan (and with her, the Far East) is drifting into a commodity economy which will produce a low standard of living which she does not like, but cannot avoid without American assistance. American assistance (cfr. additional memoranda) could be so given as to guarantee the political agreement and set up an economy in the Far East so totally variant from the German that the Germans could not do business with it. By ear-marking, but leaving in the United States, a heavy gold credit, with interest payments, for substantiating the currencies of Japan and China, the United States would put the Far East on a money economy like our own, and hold over both China and Japan the threat of withdrawal for any failure to comply with the political provisions of the joint agreements.

- B. Japan would grant a complete Open Door provided she received similar treatment from other Far Eastern countries. She would write a Reciprocal Trade Treaty with the United States allowing free entry of certain basic commodities, heavy machinery, etc. Cotton and agricultural surpluses would be similarly accepted and could actually be bought by both China and Japan under the monetary arrangement above mentioned.

---  
Because of the domestic situations, any such arrangement would have to be presented to the Japanese and Chinese people as a fait accompli. Meantime, merely to indicate that such a settlement is possible is to put power in the hands of the Conservative element in Japan and give them confidence to proceed.

A representative of President Roosevelt could be introduced, with the full knowledge of Mr. Grew, to work out, with the utmost speed and secrecy, in cooperation with the controlling elements in Japan, including the Emperor, such an agreement as would bring some order in the Far East, and put within the power of President Roosevelt the opportunity to immunize the Pacific for at least three years.

The Japanese people who now despair of American friendship would welcome this as the greatest boon to their national life and security, for which the Japanese would sacrifice anything except their Far Eastern position. The representative of the President should be someone whom he knows and trusts intimately; someone who will be apprised fully of American aims in the Far East; someone who is keenly aware that the Germans will attempt ruthlessly to prevent any American-Japanese agreement; and someone who will not attract attention as an official member of our State Department.

If President Roosevelt acts to investigate this possibility, we would be willing to cooperate with his representative for the safeguarding of the Japanese officials, and the verification of their statements.

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Steinhardt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, March 24, 1941. For the President, Secretary, and Under Secretary.

Relates his discussions with roving Japanese ambassador, Matsuoka and discusses his impressions of Hitler, Ribbentrop, and Japanese aims and policies in China.

SEE: Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941, Vol. IV, The Far East, pages 921-922.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

June 1, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

You and the Secretary should  
answer this telegram from Bullitt  
reviving the subject of Mr. Beck.

F. D. R.