

PSF

FRANCE 1941

CONTINUED



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France
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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Vichy, August 26, 1941.

My dear Mr. President:

There appears, within the last few days, to have been a slight but promising change of attitude in this area toward the United States resulting directly from German difficulties in the Russian campaign, and a growing realization that we are really going to provide adequate assistance to the extent of entering the war if it should become necessary to do so in order to accomplish the defeat of the aggressor nations.

Your conference at sea with Mr. Churchill, the presence there of military and diplomatic officials, and the announcement that America and Great Britain have no desire for territory and no desire to interfere with the form of government that may be established by any people, have all had a quieting effect on officials of this Government.

The Marshal's public statement of August 12th, which I heard dramatically presented to the audience at a performance of the opera, Boris Godounov, was very like a committal service for the Third Republic that really passed out when the Armistice was signed a year ago.

It is discouraging, from the point of view of those of us who are confirmed believers in representative government, to see France completely in the hands of a dictator, a benevolent dictator for so long a time as the Marshal survives; but so much of a "Bill of Rights" as did previously exist in France has been abrogated and what are, in effect, lettres de cachet are now employed to get rid of opposition.

As an example, a very attractive and perfectly inoffensive old lady acquaintance of ours, the Comtesse de Villeneuve, received last week a notice telling her that she is considered not friendly to the government and that she must depart from Vichy this month. She

has

The Honorable
Franklin D. Roosevelt,
President of the United States of America,
Washington, D. C.

has no appeal. She holds an honorary position as Lady-in-Waiting to the Duchesse de Guise, her husband was killed in the last war, and her brother is now a prisoner of war in Germany.

The Government is very much concerned about present and prospective Communist activities, particularly in the occupied area. The Communist "Party" seems to be the only organized self-styled political party and the only group with sufficient courage to act against the invaders.

Special courts, from which there is no appeal, have been established by decree to pass judgment on persons accused of Communism, and in the complete absence of a Bill of Rights it promises to be very unfortunate for anybody who may be accused of Communist activity.

Information received in conversation with members of the now defunct Senate leads me to believe that the Marshal, if he survives the German occupation, will endeavor to establish a constitutional government modeled, to some extent, on our Constitution, and giving to the Chief of State actual executive authority similar to that granted to the President of the United States. There are indications that the Marshal's idea of a satisfactory form of government for France is a combination of the best elements of the Government of the United States and of Mussolini's original proposal for Italy.

I find not one Frenchman who will say anything good about the pre-war government, which is universally believed to be responsible for the complete failure to stop the Germans.

It does appear certain that when we finally accomplish a defeat of the Axis Powers there will be a demand by the French people that can not be refused for a return of their liberties and for a representative government.

Your joint statement with Mr. Churchill to the effect that people may choose their own form of government will probably work out all right in France after the usual rioting, street barricades, etc., with which the French people are familiar and which to them appear necessary, or at least customary.

Practically the entire population of France entertains a high regard for America, looks only to America for its salvation, and hopes for a British victory,

although

although they expect little consideration from a victorious Britain without our assistance.

Since the German invasion of Russia with its slow progress to date, since the American occupation of Iceland, since your conference with Mr. Churchill, and with a growing realization of the power of the American industrial effort, we sense a definite softening of the attitude of even the collaborationists toward America and a revival of hope among the people for an early release from bondage.

If Russia should be forced to sue for peace and release the German Army for use elsewhere, the official attitude of Vichy toward America would, of course, change for the worse at once, and the eyes of officialdom here would turn again toward the Nazi bandwagon.

Food remains scarce in this unoccupied zone, and there is much apprehension expressed as to the availability of food and fuel for next winter, but the people are not yet on starvation rations.

Food conditions are probably worse in occupied France.

Our importation of essentials into North Africa, in agreement with General Weygand, has strengthened his position and is building prestige for America while making it difficult for the collaborators to justify themselves in the eyes of the Arabs.

I hope the Red Cross will be permitted to continue its distribution of food and medicines for children through next winter, or at least until Vichy makes some further concessions to the Axis.

Most respectfully,

William D. Leahy -

WDL

THE FOREIGN SERVICE

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Vichy.

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The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D. C.

PAR AVION

BY AIR MAIL

VIA AIR MAIL POUCH FROM LISBON

REGISTERED

67

PERSONAL AND STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Francis Faldes 1-41

File Personal

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

8-27-41

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Admiral Leahy asked me to
give you the attached.

E.M.W.

E. M. W.

DEPARTMENT OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Vichy, August 5, 1941.

Dear Watson:

The enclosed translation of an article published in Le Pilon of June 12th, an anti-Jew paper published in Paris which finally succeeded in passing the line of demarcation last week, is forwarded as of possible interest, together with a clipping from L'Oeuvre of day before yesterday.

This highly complimentary publicity in regard to the American Ambassador is accepted as evidence that something is again getting into the hair of the Heinies and their friends, and it is particularly pleasing to me personally.

Perhaps the Boss, some time when he has nothing to do, might be interested in seeing them.

There has, in the last few days, been some evidence of a stiffening of the Marshal's attitude toward the collaborationists. We think that last week he refused, at least for the present, to grant to the Axis Powers use of the French African bases. In view of

existing

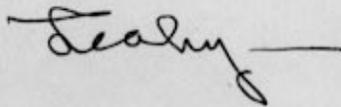
General E. M. Watson, U.S. Army,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

existing Axis difficulties in Libya it is highly probable that the demand for bases will be repeated and accompanied by pressure, in which event we do not yet know what the Vichy reaction may be.

We are bearing up in spite of few visible results from our efforts. There is enough food, such as it is, but I think we will manage to motor over to Switzerland some time soon and get a couple of beefsteaks inside of us as a precaution against prospective future shortage.

With warm personal regards and best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sealy", followed by a horizontal line.

Encls.

Source: Le Pilori of June 12, 1941.

LEAHY
ADMIRAL OF THE FAMINE.

No, Mr. Admiral of the famine, Frenchmen do not eat that kind of bread!

Since his arrival in Vichy this admiral of a parade fleet has been much talked about. His task is difficult for an admiral, blackmail not being taught at the Naval Academy, at least in France.

This admiral did not find himself at a loss in Vichy, accustomed as he is to lobbyism, to gossip, and to Washington yachting parties. The hotels of Vichy no longer hold any secrets for him. He knows how to make himself received in a palace reception room as well as he knows how to be patient, sitting in a steaming bathroom, until the Director in the adjoining room has had time to put on his trousers.

Despite the fact that he is a parliamentary admiral, we received Leahy as we would a friend who comes to visit us after a grave illness. We began telling him our present anxieties. He did not listen, instead, with a look he evaluated what could still be told to us.

Combining Anglo-Saxon hypocrisy with Jewish rapacity, this admiral was performing a task that we ordinarily confide to secret emissaries called spies.

When the first American ship arrived at Marseille it was received with all the publicity boom which characterizes Jewish enterprises: municipality, prefect, functionaries, generals, curate, pastor, and even rabbi, all the high personalities were on the dock. Admiral Leahy acknowledged the thanks, then advanced toward the rabbi, took him by the hands and said to him: "It is thanks to the generosity of your coreligionists from America that this ship was thus loaded".

No, Mr. Admiral, it is not your Jewish bankers, your Jewish friends, your Jewish relatives, who made possible the loading of this ship because, Mr. Admiral, what became of the sixty billions in gold which we thought we could entrust to you?

Your Jewish industrialists, seeing that the war was lost for them, sent you to see what they could furnish to us.

Leahy, admiral of Their Gracious Majesties Roosevelt father, woman, sons, daughters, cousins, nephews, fathers-in-law, uncles, wading-birds, and little fishes, go back and swim in your financial waters; above all, don't come to Paris. If you have been able to fish in troubled waters

in

in Vichy, don't think you can continue to do so on the banks of the Seine.

Frenchmen don't know what to do with your calculations and your blackmailing offers. We realize that your position was difficult. Compared to the noble figure of Admiral Darlan, aureoled by the glory of Dunkerque, to which rank could your titles properly assign you? Condemned to being nothing but an admiral business man, did you think you could aggrandize yourself by becoming an admiral Shylock?

You thought you could attract respect in becoming admiral of the famine! We can easily see that you know Frenchmen only through the despicable cowards who took refuge among your Jewish coreligionists, hanging on to their purse strings, and subjected to their orders!

The only ambassador that the new France will receive from your country, when it too shall have banished its Jews, will be the one who, finally, after two centuries of Jewish intrigues, will come and render to France the salute not yet returned to La Fayette.

Leahy, admiral of the famine, return to your country, continue to denature the wheat, continue to uproot your peanut plants, continue to destroy what we lack, France does not live on charity, it knows the cost of Jewish-American friendship.

Above all, tell those who sent you that Frenchmen do not eat that kind of bread any more.

(Jean Theroigne).

L'ŒUVRE

9, RUE LOUIS-LE-GRAND (2^e arr.)
Adresses Télégraphiques : ŒUVRE-PARIS
Objets postal n° 1066

DERNIÈRE ÉDITION - 5 h. du MATIN

N° 9.403. — Dimanche 3 août 1940

Ça recommence ou ça continue ?

A Vichy, hier, on a officiellement expédié des « affaires courantes »...

LES manifestations extérieures de l'attentisme vichyssois sont cycliques. Chaque fois que — pour des raisons plus ou moins avouables — un coup de frein a été donné aux développements de la politique de collaboration franco-allemande — on voit réapparaître sur l'eau — de Vichy, naturellement — l'inquiétante figure de M. l'amiral Leahy, ambassadeur du président Roosevelt, de Churchill et de Staline réunis.

C'est ainsi que vendredi, alors qu'on se passait encore une fois la question du remaniement nécessaire d'un gouvernement qui correspond de moins en moins aux exigences de l'intérêt national, le Maréchal Pétain, chef de l'Etat, a reçu la visite de M. Leahy.

Lequel est sans doute venu lui dire que les Etats-Unis ne nourrissent aucune visée sur Dakar et notre Afrique noire, qu'au contraire ils nous offrent leur concours pour la défense contre l'Allemagne. Ce qui est le prétexte systématiquement et mensongèrement invoqué pour masquer les menaces que fait peser sur notre Empire l'impérialisme anglo-saxon.

De quel Vichy est plus ou moins catholique.

L'exemple le plus récent que l'on en peut donner — outre la dernière visite de M. Leahy — est ce numéro de la nouvelle revue mensuelle et nommée « PATRIE », que nous disions hier. Si le format « timbré-poste » a suffi à ces messieurs, pour célébrer l'arrivée de Marseille, évènement capital de ses derniers mois, tout page entière est consacrée à l'arrivée à Marseille de ce paquebot américain « Cold Harbor », qui en janvier dernier, après six mois de la Joliette à Marseille, avec une cargaison de lait condensé, sucre et vitamines, envoyée — rappela-t-on — par la « Croix-Rouge » et non pas par le gouvernement américain, qui, pour sa part, se fit faïre, pour la galerie, une douce violence par ses amis Anglais, pour s'envoyer point en France le blé, que M. Caziot, ayant perdu sa soudure, réclamait à tous les échos.

L'aide américaine à la France victime du blocus britannique — il ne devrait pas être nécessaire de le répéter mais le Français gaulliste a la mémoire de plus en plus courte — fut strictement nulle.

A cet égard, la constitution par l'Allemagne du blé réquisitionné, fut autrement décisive pour la « soudure » française que les promesses sans suite du président Roosevelt et de M. Sumner Welles.

Mais la vérité brüle les yeux, attentistes et vichyssois.

Et l'Union américaine est l'opposition pour le revu « Patrie », d'un enthousiasme délirant envers l'ordre Nazi, qui va de la « joie et de la reconnaissance » des enfants qui « ont eu peur d'avoir faim », à une

photo — double de celle de Montoire — d'une des multiples réceptions de Leahy par le Maréchal.

On reste stupéfié devant une méconnaissance aussi volontaire des réalités les plus élémentaires.

Mais à Vichy, un oeil de Churchill ou de Roosevelt fait oublier tout à la fois Mers-el-Kébir, Dakar, l'A.E.F. et la Syrie.

Ce qui explique bien des choses.

Nous avons parlé hier de l'équipe endoctrinée, soutenue et poussée au pouvoir par la Banque Worms; qu'il serait d'ailleurs plus exact d'intituler la « bande Worms ». C'est elle qui, depuis la fin de l'année 1939, tient le haut du pavé politique à Vichy.

Or, qu'est-ce que la Banque Worms, sinon, avant tout, une organisation anglaise; ce sont les cargos de Worms qui transportaient en France la plus grande partie des 26 millions de tonnes de charbon britannique qui nous importions; c'est la Banque Worms qui, après certaines et importantes participations dans les exploitations minières britanniques, est devenue, de l'autre côté de la Manche, PROPRIÉTAIRE de mines anglaises; c'est M. Hippolyte Worms qui, pour ses affiliés pro-anglais, tient du point de vue commercial que familial, fut désigné pendant la guerre, comme chef de la mission de la marine marchande française à Londres.

Vous pourriez la tendance à Vichy, ou le groupe Worms inventer de plus en plus de gouvernemental, est à l'anglophilie.

Vous pourriez l'attentisme s'est mis à renouer de ses cordes, encore chaude.

Vous pourriez Vichy travaille contre la France.

Où est le temps où de notre capitale provisoire partaient des apostrophes vengeresses à l'égard du capitalisme international?

Vous comprenez maintenant pourquoi la Révolution Nationale n'est plus qu'un mot. Vous comprenez maintenant pourquoi la collaboration — est de vœux de l'Europe de demain — n'est examinée que sous l'angle rétréci des « Affaires ».

Or, l'alternative est toujours; ou la collaboration sera avant tout, politique, voire militaire comme en Extrême-Orient pour la défense de notre Empire colonial, et la France reconquerra sans mal de pièce de grande puissance; ou Vichy continuera de s'enliser dans une négativité à la Poincaré et dans une politique de marchandage indigne d'une grande nation, et s'en peut être fait de nos espérances de relèvement.

Les remaniements ne signifient rien s'ils n'impliquent pas un changement radical des hommes et des méthodes.

Et la France veut tout de même mieux que la bande WORMS!

WORMS

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Personal

For the President

You might like to see last paragraph.

E.R.

The American MERCURY

*Jo A
very interesting
last year
cep*

THE REAL FRANCE SPEAKS

BY EDOUARD HERRIOT

Former Premier of France and Mayor of Lyons

NOTE: We are proud to publish this memoir — the first article written, since the armistice, by a democratic French statesman residing inside France. Sent, as M. Herriot says, "from the depths of his solitude," it carefully avoids direct discussion of the current tragedy. But it is significantly vibrant with love of America, England and the way of life that has been snuffed out in France. The world will recognize this article as an act of courage and patriotism. — THE EDITORS.

ON February 23, 1939, Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia of New York, inviting me to participate in Mayors' Day at the World's Fair, wrote:

This invitation is extended to you as Dean of Mayors of the entire world. Your great record and the policy which you established during the long period that you have been mayor of your city entitles you to this distinction, and the American mayors are anxious to express publicly their admiration and appreciation of your inspiring leadership in the field of municipal government. . . . I do hope that the situa-

tion in France will permit you to attend and to give us the pleasure and honor of having you with us.

I was deeply touched by this letter and I have kept it as something very precious. True, Mr. LaGuardia made it much too laudatory; but it contains one point that cannot be denied. I was Mayor of the city of Lyons for 35 years, from November 1905 to September, 1940. I was suspended from my activities on the anniversary of the first French Republic. In 1939

I was unable to accept the cordial invitation of the Mayor of New York. Already we had begun to hear the rumblings of war. Accepting today the call of an American publication, I have the feeling that I have received a compensation. I seized with alacrity the opportunity offered me to "come" to my friends in the United States. It is a matter of pride with me that I have always remained faithful to them. The most beautiful moment in my public life was when in December, 1932, I sacrificed a government over which I presided, in order to respect the signature of France and not to betray our common memories of the last war.¹

I am aware that I must choose carefully from among my many memories. The very democratic function of mayor — I have often said this in international congresses — is such that in every country in the world his obligations are the same. To record and to protect the birth of children; to watch over their infancy and the destinies of their mothers; to assure them of the best methods of instruction and education; to put at the disposal of his men establishments well equipped for health and sport; to

solemnize marriage in the name of the law; to create hospitals for the sick in line with the progress of science; to open asylums for the weak; to assist the aged; to watch over the poor. Even death does not break the tie which binds the citizen to his city, since the mayor is the protector of his grave. Thus, while the heads of governments control interests often dissimilar or hostile, the mayor is the steward of human obligations. Therein lies the greatness of his office.

Among the memories which fill my journal, the most precious to me in these tragic days we are living through are the ones which bring back the beginnings of my cordial relations with two nations for which my admiration is today more fervent than ever — Great Britain and the United States.

It happened that the Mayoralty of Lyons had the great honor of collaborating in the formation of that Entente Cordiale which, in consequence, guided my policies when I was in the Cabinet or Head of the government. This is how it occurred: I had had the privilege of meeting and appreciating a man for whom I almost immediately conceived the highest esteem — Sir Thomas Barclay. A confirmed pacifist, already at the beginning of the century he believed *that the*

¹ He resigned as Premier on the issue of the French debt to the United States. — Ed.

union of France and Great Britain was one of the best means of protecting free civilization. He suggested to me the idea of making an official visit, with a delegation from my City Council, to several cities in England and in Scotland. I agreed eagerly. So at the end of May, 1906, I started out for Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and some other cities. I still possess the program of events showing the French and British flags intertwined. One of these programs was adorned with the following prayer:

For these and all Thy mercies given
We bless and praise Thy name, O Lord;
May we receive them with thanksgiving,
Ever trusting in Thy word.
To Thee alone be honour, glory,
Now, and henceforth, for evermore.

The journey, which took us as far as the country of Rob Roy, made a deep impression upon me. I may be permitted to tell you some of its amusing sides. When we reached Manchester we were met at the station by a delegation of leading citizens. Hardly had we left our car than the crowd greeted us with a terrible volley of whistles. We were dumbfounded! In France — I have had the experience more than once! — whistling is the sign of deep disapproval. So naturally I thought that the people of Manchester were protesting against the

invitation which had been extended to us by the city. But someone quickly reassured me by explaining that in England such a demonstration is an expression of cordiality.

My second anecdote is more philosophical in intent. Before we left Lyons, we had discussed at length whether we ought to take an interpreter or two along with us. But several Esperanto fanatics who were in the party assured us that all the contacts would be satisfactory, and I was simple-minded enough to believe them. Now here we were in Manchester. His Excellency Mayor Thewlis gave a magnificent reception for us in the Town Hall. Perfect cordiality. Only one obstacle — the barrier of language! At this point I decided to round up the Esperantists from all sides. Alas, this only added to the confusion! I am sure these gentlemen were all using the very same words, but each had his own manner of using them. That evening I understood that in order to bring men together, it is not enough to teach them the same language if they have not the same pronunciation.

I learned many other things too. In her passion for liberty Great Britain gives to her towns the right of self-government, which

French centralization often curtailed or suppressed completely. I admired the institutions born of local initiative — the care given the problem of homes for workingmen; the tender regard for children; the desire to take advantage of everything that science has to teach. I verified what I had learned from my reading; what, even in the eighteenth century, Voltaire was describing to the French people — the inviolable attachment of the English to freedom. The feeling was not born in England the same way as in France. In our country it broke out just before the French Revolution. It was carried out in the principles of 1789. At times it has been abolished, but it has always been restored. In Great Britain, love of liberty has its roots in the very depths of the nation's history. It penetrates everything, extends to everything, dominates everything. The King himself places his honor in being the protector of the liberties of every citizen. After this journey, I was completely won over to these principles. From then on, *I have been convinced that Great Britain and France are two complementary nations destined together to defend liberty, human individuality, human justice. I believe it today in 1941 just as I believed it in 1906.*

As was natural, we invited our English and Scotch friends to return our visit. They did so, and remained with us for five unforgettable days in May of 1907. We wanted to make their visit coincide with that of the President of the French Republic, Fallières, and with two expositions, one of Agriculture, the other of Public Health. Our guests paid visits to our great silk and dyeing factories; to the Conditioning House for Silk, that establishment so peculiar to Lyons, whose role is "to let manufacturers and dealers know the exact quantity of water contained in raw materials, to fix for each transaction the normal condition of moisture in the goods, and thus to fix the true marketable weight." They visited one of the first hydroelectric installations, the Honage Canal. We showed them one of the oldest schools of technology, the Institute de la Martinière, which "was created by royal ordinance on November 20th, 1831, in virtue of a legacy left to his native city by Major General Martin, who was born in Lyons in 1735 and died at Lucknow in 1800, in the service of the Indian Government." Our guests also visited our universities, our schools, our hospitals.

When we were in Glasgow I had

been invited to plant a young tree in the park. What has become of it now? I took our dear visitors to see our horticultural collections, our Parc de la Tête d'Or. Lyons is the City of Roses.

In the theatre, the great Coquelin gave a performance of the charming comedy, *The Romantics*, by Edmond Rostand, for our English and Scotch friends. Do you remember the story of that play? Sylvette, daughter of Pasquinot, and Percinet, son of Bergamin, meet on either side of the moss-covered wall separating their fathers' parks. He reads to her one of the most touching scenes in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. They sympathize with the young lovers deeply, because they are in love themselves and their fathers are unfortunately sworn enemies. . . . As soon as they have gone, the two fathers climb up the wall, shake hands and congratulate each other on the success of the scheme which they imagine has caused their children to fall in love. Soon the wall is taken down and henceforth the parks form but one property. . . .

Today in 1941, this tale seems to me symbolic. The friends of other days will know how to tear down another wall, the wall of misunderstanding.

II

My visits to Great Britain in 1906 secured for me excellent relations which have never been broken. There is nothing more delightful than having an English friend. I have had many proofs of this. I was particularly attached to Sir Daniel Stevenson, provost of Glasgow. Of my relations with England in my capacity as Mayor, I want to recall just one experience because it reveals so much about the English character.

I had decided to organize in Lyons a great exposition for the year 1914. Near the end of 1913, I realized that it would be the part of wisdom to insure my enterprise against possible deficit, and decided to apply to Lloyds of London. I took advantage of the short respite that the New Year holiday brought me. When I arrived in London, a friend introduced me to Lloyds and to their director, Mr. Heath. I laid my plans before him. When I saw Mr. Heath smile, I was tempted to excuse myself and withdraw. "Don't go," he said, "I was amused hearing you talk, because every time anyone proposes to me to insure an exposition, he promises wonders, brilliant successes, exceptional profits; and each time I am faced with

a deficit. However, that's of no importance. Here is a pencil and a slip of paper. Write down the amount for which you wish to be guaranteed. I will deduct the premium to be paid; then the deal will be closed."

If I remember correctly, I asked for a guarantee of 3,000,000 francs. I promised to pay a premium of 250,000 francs. The whole thing was drawn up in a single sentence — in lead pencil, I repeat — and signed then and there. I was very happy for my city. The people of Lyons have the taste and the feeling for greatness, but also they cherish economy. The symbol of Lyons is Madame Récamier, who, although very beautiful and desired by the great men of her time, never really gave herself to any of them — all her life she paid from her dividends but never cut into her capital. I felt reassured.

"Now then," I said to Mr. Heath, "where shall we go to find a lawyer to transform our contract into a legal document?"

Again he laughed. "Will a lawyer be more honest than we are? Put your slip of paper in your pocket and when you get back home put it into your safe deposit box. And sleep well."

A few months later came the war. My exposition opened at

last — late, like all or almost all expositions. But it met with every kind of bad luck. A tempest soaked the buildings; a sudden rising of the Rhone carried away the bridge that led to the fair grounds; strikes raged. What, I wondered, was to become of me? Full of anxiety, I wrote in the autumn to the good Mr. Heath. I had an answer back at once: "I am unable to do anything for you at this moment, because of the concern which the coming of the Zeppelins over London is giving me. Wait just a few days longer."

Very shortly after arrived from London a Lloyds confidential man, Mr. Prince. In a few hours Mr. Prince had verified my accounts. Then in the elegant flourish with which one offers a flower to a lady he handed me the check which freed me. Early the next morning he left for London. As my City Treasurer was about to deposit the check, he found that in reckoning the exchange Mr. Prince had made a mistake to his own disadvantage of 25,000 francs. I cabled immediately, and immediately I had back an answer: "Give money to a French War charity." The verification of this little story may be found in the archives of the city of Lyons.

Then I realized what it meant —

an English sign
able to make
the French go

an English signature. Later I was able to make comparisons. When the French government with M. Tardieu at its head accepted the substitution of the Young Plan for the Dawes Plan, that is to say when the Allies decided to rely upon the signature, freely given, of Germany, certain men, especially the Commission of Reparations, were alarmed to see us relinquish our guarantees. I kept a memorandum of the indignant protest to the Reichstag by the then German Chancellor. Everyone knows what happened. . . .

During the War of 1914-1918 affairs of state or of the city of Lyons took me several times to England. Here again I should like to cite only one fact. On the day after the Italian disaster of Caporetto, I found myself either in Manchester or in Liverpool, I do not remember which. English newspapers, freer than the French, published ghastly details of the size of the catastrophe.

On the very day of my arrival, it was announced that Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was holding an important meeting and I was invited to attend. I knew Mr. Law very little. I had seen him once in Paris playing chess at the Café de la Régence. An Englishman playing chess is not a man

open to impressions. But knowing the Minister's reputation I was curious to hear him. I went. An immense crowd. I was invited to a seat on the platform. I even said a few words in disreputable English, but the crowd was too courteous to laugh at me. Mr. Law spoke. I remember distinctly the contents of his speech.

"I am convinced," he said to his fellow countrymen, "that in spite of the difficulties of the present moment, England is going to win the war; for there is not a single instance of a war she has waged that she has not won. But I am going to tax you just as though you were going to be beaten."

"Careful there," I said to myself, "I know countries where that kind of talk would be dangerous." But the huge audience sat quiet, perfectly attentive, taking his every word. "The outburst," I thought, "will come at the close of the speech."

He finished. There was a moment of profound concentration. Then, from somewhere at the end of the hall, the organ began to play *Rule, Britannia*. The crowd took up the strains of the national anthem and sang it out as in one great chorus. You could no longer distinguish the individual: it was one immense unity, overwhelmed by the same

passion. The song rolled over that huge mass like wind over the ocean. With one violent drive, it swayed under the rhythm of that song like a superb ship about to take to the open sea. . . . *Then I understood that such a people was invincible when it let itself be guided by love of country and the inspiration of freedom.*

III

I did not know the United States until very much later, in 1923. With several others I had created the International Exposition at Lyons, and I had crossed the ocean to get some information and to seek advice. With the cooperation of a gifted architect whom America knows well, Tony Garnier, I was building some slaughter-houses and I wanted to inspect the stock-yards in Chicago.

In the United States, as in Great Britain, what charming courtesies were shown to a Frenchman! When I visited the Marshall Field department store in Chicago, they had the tact to drape my country's flag across the entrance. In Cleveland my very dear friend, Myron Her- rick, whose memory remains among us crowned with respect and gratitude, detained me on my journey and invited me to his fine estate

which he modestly called his "little farm." I visited the Etienne Girard Foundation in Philadelphia. I noticed that of our philosophic creed of the eighteenth century the United States has retained not only the liberal spirit which is the basis of the political constitution of that country, but also the science of mechanical professions incited by the great effort of the Encyclopedists of the time, Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot. And I admired the ceaselessly growing appetite of the Americans for pure science, in accordance with Emerson's pregnant thought, "The spring must always be higher than the fountain."

I paid a visit to Samuel Gompers. I see him now — short, thick-set, compactly built. He is sitting at his desk completely surrounded by telephones in the little room with wide windowpanes through which I look out on the parks of Washington. I admire that small, powerful head, entirely bald; that expression of vigor, those eyes never still; those strongly marked features. He looks straight into his listener's eyes. The extended finger accentuates his arguments. Behind the gold-rimmed glasses, he fixes you with his big grey eyes. From time to time, Gompers pounds the table with a clean stroke, and interrupts himself. He relights his cigar, takes

up his discourse again, continually gesturing with his hands. In his secretary's office, I notice a photograph of M. Foch. Gompers speaks of my country. "The workers in France," he says, "are losing their economic power by reason of their political dissensions." I do not protest.

If I was able to build many houses for workingmen in Lyons, it was possible largely because of the comfortable workmen's homes I saw in the United States.

I remember also the New York Public Library, which, in its garment of pure marble, stands like a symbol between Fortieth and Forty-second Streets and bears in its lobby the following inscription: "On the diffusion of education among the people rests the preservation and perpetuation of our institutions." In the Art Gallery of the Library I saw the portraits by Gilbert Stuart, who, having painted George Washington, gave the General's features to all his other sitters. I should like to have been able to reproduce in my own city that charming children's library with its low chairs and tables, where the very young are admitted the moment they are able to write their names.

In a corridor at Harvard University I bent respectfully over

that sacred list, the Roll of Honor, where I found the names of the aviator, Victor Chapman, of André Cheronnet, of Champollion. And I reflected under the moving fresco by John Sargent. Dear city of Boston, whose voice reaches us even in these cruel times and stirs us to the depths of our soul! I remember seeing near the Community House, in front of King's Chapel and the old cemetery, an inscription to the memory of the knight, Saint Sauveur, adjutant of the French fleet, who died in 1778 after having risked his life for the United States. The words were chosen by Count d'Estaing, commander of the first fleet of ships sent out by France. It reads: "*May the efforts anyone would dare to make to separate France from America always be fruitless.*"

I left the United States with greater ambition to modernize the city of which I was Mayor. In America I had learned the value of minutes and that the motto of the man of action is not "time is money" but that "time is time." Unlike those travelers who talk to us only of American technique, I came away with the conviction that in the United States moral purpose is the motive of all activity.

During the war of 1914-1918

I had been called to collaborate in Lyons with many American men and women of great hearts. Several traces remain of that collaboration. The most beautiful bridge in Lyons, completed during the War, was named on my suggestion, Wilson Bridge. A humorist said of our city that three rivers run through it—the Rhone, the Saône and Beaujolais wine! Of these three the first is by all odds the most violent. In spite of the widening of the river bed from its source in the Alps, it is still more like a torrent than a river. Victor Hugo wrote, "The Rhine is a lion, the Rhone, a tiger." It is famous for its periodic floods.

I had decided to furnish Lyons with a fine wide bridge. In Paris I was made to understand that the capital was content with narrower constructions. I humbly asked permission to build my bridge longer than those over the Seine. After many appeals I was given the authority. I consulted a famous French specialist, M. Auric. He was a fine scholar, an enthusiastic mathematician, and tried to convert me to geometry in the n th dimension. I decided, for our bridge, to be content with a work of three dimensions, of a new type, the platform resting simply on the walls. I shall never forget the open-

ing of the bridge by a detachment of men from the American army, General Alexander cutting the three-colored ribbon which symbolically prohibited access to it. The Star-Spangled Banner was the first to wave over the Wilson Bridge in Lyons.

The United States is associated with another Lyons construction. Our hospitals are famous. But did you ever notice that hospitals become more famous the closer they draw to decay? Our old city hospital, illustrious for that school which is honored to have enrolled Ollier and Carrel, is proud of its connections with the most distant past. When, as a young Mayor, I visited it, I was reminded of this as a youthful physician put into my hand a medal which he traced back to King Chilperic and Queen Ultrogothe.

"I ask the pardon of these two authentic Merovingians, but I shall do away with their noble house," I said.

"And the tradition, sir?"

I made bold to answer, "Tradition represents today what was progress in the past. Now let us have *our* turn at progress. Thus we shall create a tradition for the future." As a matter of fact, some men build for progress, others for tradition, without perceiving that

these are two sides of the same idea.

With the assistance of the great Garnier, of whom I have already spoken, we decided to build a new hospital on a broad site with plenty of sun and air on all sides. The basic idea was given us by the Pasteur Hospital in Paris. Before deciding on final plans, we inspected the famous hospitals of foreign lands. Those in Denmark seemed to us especially interesting. It was several years before the building was finally completed; those who profit by it and those who have inspected it will readily admit its advantages. But the hospital finished, one thing was lacking: the Faculty of Medicine remained in the heart of the town because we had not the money to remove it. The Rockefeller Foundation came to the aid of the University of Lyons. Thanks to its generosity we were able to supply Lyons with a completely modern Health Center organized for scientific research as well as for the care of the sick. The same Health Center protects another institution, the Franco-American Foundation for Visiting Nurses.

Before completing these memories, I should like to explain briefly two charities to which I was especially attached — the Free Municipal Restaurants for Nursing Women, and the Maternity Home.

The Municipal Restaurants, to the number of three, function under a very simple plan. They open twice a day for women who are awaiting children and for young mothers. It is forbidden to ask these women for the slightest information concerning their nationality, their economic condition, or their religion. "You are hungry, eat." That is the charity's only principle. Only one official paper is required — a certificate of vaccination, if the woman is accompanied by a child. I take the liberty of recommending this kind of institution to all those who believe in sound principles of help.

The Maternity Home is run on the same principles. Any woman about to become a mother may be admitted without regard to race, creed or economic situation. All she need do is to present herself to the Institution's doctor. He alone, bound by the obligations of professional secrecy, will know her name, her position, her origin. Then he sends her to the Home under the name which he gives her, and it is under this name that she is received as a guest. She is constantly observed. If she is able to work, the product of her effort will be carefully conserved, and, in the form of savings, given back to her when she is ready to leave. Inso-

far as possible advantage is taken of the opportunity to offer these women instruction and education.

Of my various organizations, the Maternity Home is the one from which I most regret being separated. How many dramatic situations I have seen there! What letters I have received! What confidences under the pledge of secrecy I have listened to! The Home has welcomed thousands of women, has seen thousands of babies brought into the world. Its mortality rate is very low. I learned there the truth that in order to save a child it must be cared for not at its birth, but before its birth, in the person of its mother. And I learned, too, that a woman who has borne a child need never be separated from it. I like to think that that Maternity Home has contributed in large part to the result that Lyons is one of the few cities in France whose birth rate is higher than its death rate.

At this point I bring my memories to a close. As will be readily admitted, they represent only a

small portion of an official city life covering a period of 35 years. I wanted to show that I was bound and always will be bound to Great Britain and to the United States.

I decided not to allow myself to tell anything about the role I played in the life of the nation. That would be another matter. It would lead me to recall my second visit to the United States in 1933 when I had the privilege of talking with that splendid leader who presides over the Republic, Franklin D. Roosevelt. In him I found combined all the qualities which give a man true nobility: loyalty, justice, courage. I shall never forget the talks we had in the White House. I would not bring this article to a close without addressing to him an expression of my warm admiration, and without sending from the depths of my solitude my greetings to the great people of the United States, where differing opinions may be freely expressed and where every one, whatever his political group, cherishes a respect for the human being and for moral law.

(Translated by Morris Bentnick)

...—V...—

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS

9/24/41

Mr. Daniels
Mr. [unclear]

P.S.F: France - 1941
7

I have spoken to Mr. [unclear] in [unclear] on this matter of the offensive letter from the French Charge d'Affaires in Panama. He agreed that our instruction should authorize a "staff" answer.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF PROTOCOL

I checked with the Department and with Mr. [unclear] on the instructions from the Sec. of War to Canal Zone authorities permitting extensions of courtesy visits.

MEMORANDUM

September 24, 1941.

Mr. Forster:

The attached revocation of exequatur has been prepared for the President's signature.

x3683

The American Ambassador at Panama has recommended the withdrawal of the exequatur of Mr. Henry de la Blanchetais as Consul of France for the Canal Zone. This recommendation has met with the full approval of the Department's officials.

G. W. [unclear]

x25-I
x203
x203-A

x20

PR: SHQ: EFP

1. [unclear] 9/24/41
2. [unclear] 10/15/41
9/25/41

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS

9/2/41.

Mr. Wise

~~Mr. Daniels:~~
~~Mr. Bonsett:~~

I have spoken to Mr. Reber in EU on this matter of the offensive letter from the French Chargé d'Affaires in Panama. He agreed that our instruction should authorize a "stiff" answer.

I checked with the War Department and with Mr. Reber on the instructions from the Sec. of War to Canal Zone authorities permitting the extensions of courtesies, etc. *MMWise.*

The French Chargé d'Affaires in Panama, Mr. de la Blanchetel, has protested and demanded explanations concerning certain acts which took place on the part of military authorities of the Canal Zone on the occasion of the passage of the Free French destroyer TRISTAN through the Canal on August 13. The officers and crew were accorded the same consideration as that shown the personnel of British vessels of the same category.

When our military authorities took over the French merchant vessel INDIA, Mr. de la Blanchetel attempted to go on board but was told he would not. This he also protests.

Mr. de la Blanchetel requests assurances that these occurrences are regarded as regrettable and that they will not take place again. He states that he cannot admit that facilities and crew should be accorded to military vessels in the Canal Zone. He cannot admit that these vessels be authorized to operate in the territory of

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS
MEMORANDUM

9/1/41.

Mr. Daniels: ✓
Mr. Bonsal:

EU

The French Chargé d'Affaires in Panama (French Consul in the Canal Zone), M. de la Blanchetai has protested and demanded explanations concerning certain acts which took place on the part of military authorities of the Canal Zone on the occasion of the passage of the Free French destroyer TRIOMPHANT through the Canal on August 16. The officers and crew were accorded the same consideration as that shown the personnel of British vessels of the same category.

When our military authorities took over the French merchant vessel INDIANA M. de la Blanchetai attempted to go on board but was told he could not. This he also protests.

M. de la Blanchetai requests assurances that these occurrences are regarded as regrettable and that they will not take place again. He states that he cannot admit that facilities and even honors be accorded to sailors in revolt against a nation recognized by the United States; that he cannot admit that these sailors be authorized to circulate in uniform on the territory of

his consular district; and that he cannot admit that press statements be issued by the military authorities regarding receptions organized in honor of de gaulistes.

Thus is raised the question of relations of the United States Government with the Government of Free France and with the Vichy Government. The Ambassador requests instructions authorizing him to make a stiff answer. He suggests that the reply might simply state that the facilities and courtesies received by the TRIOMPHANT were accorded under instructions from the Secretary of War.

Ambassador Wilson suggests the advisability of canceling de la Blanchetai's exequatur as French Consul in the Canal Zone.

MMWise.

x 25
x 463-B

PS France Folder
1-41

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 29, 1941.

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Will you read the enclosed
from Ambassador Leahy and prepare
a reply for my signature -- Dear
Bill?

F. D. R.

Letter addressed to the
President from Ambassador
Leahy dated October 15, 1941.

France Folder
1-41

November 1, 1941

Dear Bill:

I have received your letter of October 15, 1941, regarding the present organization and the trends of the French Government which is now in the process of formation.

From all reports we have received the power and position of Pucheu is apparently growing along well recognized Gestapo lines. It would seem that he was apparently endeavoring to install his own position so firmly that he could withstand any political storms or changes of government. His methods, however, cannot make him popular.

This country was profoundly shocked by the actions of the Germans in ordering the shooting of hostages, which should have made clear to all Frenchmen the value of their "collaboration". It is also felt that the Marshal might have taken a more positive stand.

Should the Germans change the direction of their main activities from Russia to the Mediterranean we are fearful that France will not be able to hold out much longer against increasing German demands for what would correspond to military assistance on the part of the French. Events of the next few weeks will probably give us a clearer picture in that respect.

You are quite right in expressing the opinion that

Admiral William D. Leahy,
American Ambassador,
Vichy.

*Signed original sent to Hon. Sumner Welles for
delivery 11/3/41
hm*

that this country will not join in any effort to
bring about a negotiated peace with Nazi-ism.
This attitude of ours should be clear by now to
all the world.

With kind regards,

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Franklin D. Roosevelt



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ackd
11/1/41
Vichy, October 15, 1941

Dear Mr. President:

Since the beginning of the Russian campaign three and a half months ago there has been little change in the attitude of this Vichy Government toward the United States or the belligerents. During a large part of that time the unexpected difficulties encountered by Germany in Russia have caused French officials, including Darlan and other collaborationists, to lean over toward our side of the question and their final attitude is dependent upon the outcome of the campaign in Russia.

At the present time the already partly successful drive on Moscow, and German successes in the Ukraine have caused them to make preparations for a move toward more collaboration with the Axis powers.

We are informed by reliable sources that Germany will in the immediate future establish Consulates in Vichy, Marseille and Lyons, and that later French Consulates will be opened in Germany.

My early impression that neither the Marshal nor any member of his Government has any intention of permitting the establishment of a representative Government has been strengthened by time.

While it is reasonable to assume that America, at least while engaged in the task of defeating Nazism, is not particularly interested in the kind of Government that is in process of formation here, the prospect may be of academic interest.

The general impression here is that active efforts are now being made to build up around the Marshal as a symbol a Government very much like, in its details and its announced purposes, that forced upon Italy by Mussolini, with Darlan or somebody else acting the part taken in the Italian tragedy by El Duce.

At the present time all functions of the Government, executive, legislative, and judicial are centered

in ...

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

in the person of Marshal Pétain who at the age of eighty-six years is not physically capable of carrying the load, and who therefore has delegated much of it to Admiral Darlan and to some other members of his Cabinet. While the Marshal himself is sensitive to public opinion and is directing such energies as remain to him toward the welfare of his people, the effort of the dominant members of his Cabinet at the present time is directed toward building up a political organization which can preserve order in the immediate future and maintain the present Government when and if the German army withdraws from any or all of the at present occupied area.

This effort is clearly indicated by:

(1) the organization, expansion and indoctrination of the Légion Française des Combattants as supporters of the Government, and by the promise of the appointment of members thereof to minor executive and police offices;

(2) by the activities of M. Pierre Pucheu, Minister of the Interior, an open collaborationist who has control of the Sureté, and who is busily engaged in building up through the Légion and the Regional Prefects a militant following that is very similar in its organization and its methods to the "black shirts" and "brown shirts" of other dictatorships;

(3) by the delegation of much local executive authority to six carefully selected regional prefects;

(4) by the establishment of regional tribunals to investigate reports of disaffection and to punish alleged Communists and other dissident elements of the population;

(5) and by the recent appointment of M. de la Rocque, one-time leader of the Croix de Feu, to an office directly responsible to the Marshal as a reward for bringing his followers into line.

Present membership of the Légion des Combattants which has come under my observation is too old and flabby to be effective other than as a base upon which to build a younger more aggressive organization.

Pierre Pucheu, of whom I have no personal knowledge, is said to be young, energetic, aggressive, and ambitious. He is expected, if his present efforts meet with success,

to ...

to be a contender with Darlan for the position of dictator when the Marshal passes out.

I am told that Pucheu and de la Rocque were political enemies at one time.

A M. Picot, one time an Ambassador of France, and whose reliability is unknown to me, told me some days ago that he had advised the Marshal to make radical changes in his Cabinet because of the public lack of confidence in Darlan and other members, and that while the Marshal is in agreement in principle, he has taken no action.

M. Picot also told me that Pucheu asked him to accept appointment as Head of a Regional Tribunal in Lyons to try and award punishment to persons in that area suspected of subversive activities. M. Pucheu stated to him that the usual judicial procedure conducted by the established judiciary was too slow to be effective and that quick drastic action is necessary to maintain discipline. M. Picot declined to accept the appointment.

The Marshal has been absent from Vichy so much in the last three weeks that I have had no conversation with him. We were told day before yesterday by a friend of his and of ours that his recent journeys about the country have been so fatiguing as to require him to spend three or four days in bed, and that additional trips contemplated for the near future have been cancelled with the purpose of conserving the Marshal's strength.

He is particularly, openly, and noticeably friendly with me, and at the age of 86 is in an astonishingly excellent physical condition, but I do not believe that he knows of everything that goes on within his own Cabinet. While I have as yet found no difficulty in seeing him, Admiral Darlan always of late manages to be present, and other Chiefs of Mission tell me they are required to deal directly with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and are unable to see the Marshal.

It does not appear possible at the present time that without the Marshal as a popular symbol the existing Government or its apparent plans for the future can be maintained unless the Nazis are definitely successful in Russia and give such assistance here as is necessary to support the Vichy régime.

A number of Frenchmen have recently talked to me with the purpose of influencing you to join with the Pope in arranging a peace with the Nazis. All of the high officials here and a large majority of the people in unoccupied France seem prepared to welcome a peace at almost any price.

I have of course in each instance expressed a personal opinion that America will not make any effort to bring about a negotiated peace with Hitlerism.

There is little or no reason to believe that the existing Government of France or whatever may result from its present direction of development is or will be sufficiently strong to maintain itself after the Marshal disappears or after peace is made.

Most respectfully,

William D. Leahy

November 1, 1941

Dear Bill:

I have received your letter of October 15, 1941, regarding the present organization and the trends of the French Government which is now in the process of formation.

From all reports we have received the power and position of Pucheu is apparently growing along well recognized Gestapo lines. It would seem that he was apparently endeavoring to install his own position so firmly that he could withstand any political storms or changes of government. His methods, however, cannot make him popular.

This country was profoundly shocked by the actions of the Germans in ordering the shooting of hostages, which should have made clear to all Frenchmen the value of their "collaboration". It is also felt that the Marshal might have taken a more positive stand.

Should the Germans change the direction of their main activities from Russia to the Mediterranean we are fearful that France will not be able to hold out much longer against increasing German demands for what would correspond to military assistance on the part of the French. Events of the next few weeks will probably give us a clearer picture in that respect.

You are quite right in expressing the opinion that

Admiral William D. Leahy,
American Ambassador,
Vichy.

that this country will not join in any effort to
bring about a negotiated peace with Nazi-ism.
This attitude of ours should be clear by now to
all the world.

With kind regards,

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Franklin D. Roosevelt

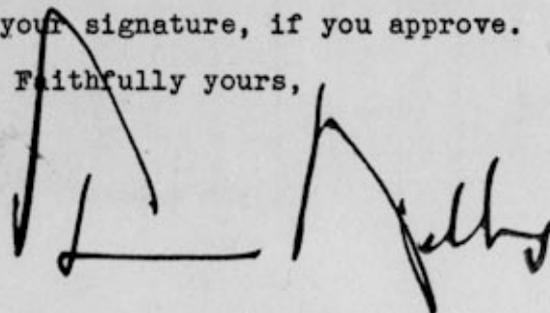
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

November 1, 1941

My dear Mr. President:

I am returning herewith the letter to you from Ambassador Leahy, dated October 15, 1941, concerning the present organization and the trends of the French Government which is now in the process of formation, together with a suggested reply for your signature, if you approve.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. D. Leahy', written in a cursive style.

Enclosure:
Letter from Admiral
William D. Leahy of
October 15, 1941.

The President,
The White House.

COPY of letter from President Roosevelt, Washington, November 1, 1941, to
Admiral Leahy:

The White House

Washington

November 1, 1941

Dear Bill:

I have received your letter of October 15, 1941, regarding the present organization and the trends of the French Government which is now in the process of formation.

From all reports we have received the power and position of Pucheu is apparently growing along well recognized Gestapo lines. It would seem that he was apparently endeavoring to install his own position so firmly that he could withstand any political storms or changes of government. His methods, however, cannot make him popular.

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You are quite right in expressing the opinion that this country will not join in any effort to bring about a negotiated peace with Naziism. This attitude of our should be clear by now to all the world.

With kind regards,

Very sincerely yours,
/s/ Franklin D. Roosevelt

France folder
1-41

The President made a recording of
this as per telephone inquiry to
O.W.I.

O.M.I.
1912
The Department

Grace:

No, it was not sent, but
keep this current. The original
is with Hull.

F.D.R.

CLASSIFIED

Dec. 15, 1941.

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT

Was this proposed message
ever sent?

G. G. T.

*12/14/41
G. G. T.
12/16/41*

December 13, 1941.

The President of the United States, long-time friend of the French people, wants France to know that his heart still beats for the restoration of their independence.

The President wants them to know that he is unable to visualize a post-war France with a purely nominal independence, but actually acting under German domination. That is the alternative before the French people today.

All of this applies equally to the great Colonial Empire of France. Its ultimate maintenance will, of course, be more secure if Germany, Italy and Japanese encroachments upon that Empire are bravely resisted by it.

The people of the United States earnestly hope that it will not be occupied and divided by the tripartite powers.



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL

Vichy, December 22, 1941

My dear Mr. President:

Our unfortunate experience in Pearl Harbor with Japanese treachery, the detailed results of which are completely unknown here, seems to have had little influence on French opinion of the war situation or its future prospects.

I have noted in radio broadcasts your new arrangement of the high command at sea, and of all the flag officers known to me I should, given a free choice, have selected Hart, King, and Nimitz as the best. Of the three I consider Hart the most reliable, the least likely to make a mistake, and as being physically doubtful because of his age. A sea commander in this war must be capable of taking cruel physical punishment.

One error of judgment in regard to the selection of a CinC which I made in the past should make me doubtful but one can feel pretty sure of Hart, King and Nimitz.

By evaluating such radio and press news as we do manage to get here in this controlled and propaganda flooded area it seems to be clear that Germany is suffering a major defeat in Russia and is rapidly approaching a smaller but a more complete military reverse in Cyrenaica.

The barometric French opinion has reacted to this situation with a leaning over toward our side of the question but with reservations and with preparations to jump back on a moment's notice.

Our friends are coming out into the open a little more, and our enemies are a little less aggressive for the moment.

Your personal message to Marshal Pétain which I delivered December 14th seems to have been perfectly

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

timed, ..

VI
WA 9

timed, and according to our friends in the Vichy Government it did provide the Marshal with so much courage as was needed to tell his Minister of Foreign Affairs that no agreement with the Axis in regard to American relations should be made by any Minister without his prior approval.

That is considered here an exhibition of superlative courage.

During my interview with the Marshal and in Admiral Darlan's presence I took advantage of the opportunity to say that now since we are at war with the Axis powers any assistance that France might give to Germany such as use of bases or assistance by French naval vessels would in fact amount to taking military action against the United States.

The Marshal undoubtedly wishes to do everything within his power to hold the good will of the United States which he very correctly believes to be the only disinterested friend that the post-war future holds for France.

While I entertain for the Marshal a very high personal regard there is little if any reason to believe that he will do anything to help win the war or that he will offer any effective resistance to future German demands that are accompanied with the usual threats of punishment in the event of refusal to agree.

Since my last talk with the Marshal one week ago we hear from our reliable informants in the Government offices that Germany is applying heavy pressure on Vichy to grant certain demands which have not yet been presented in the form of an ultimatum.

Some of our informants know what these demands are but say they are not free to give us any details other than that the demands are serious and extensive and that they are so far not pointed directly at the American Embassy.

We think the demands include assistance to the Axis troops in Lybia, base facilities, and probably the use of naval vessels to convoy French merchant ships in the Mediterranean and elsewhere.

Yesterday, Sunday, the following officials from North Africa arrived by airplane without any public

notice ...

notice and the press has not been permitted to say anything whatever about their arrival:

General Juin, Commander of the Army in North Africa;

General Noguès, Resident General of Morocco;
Admiral Esteva, Resident General of Tunisia.

In spite of the veil of secrecy which envelopes the visit of these officials we are of the opinion that they are here to discuss current demands made by Germany for assistance in North Africa.

We note that Boisson, Governor of the Dakar region, is not with the others.

The interruption of our mail service will probably make all of this ancient history before the letter reaches Washington, but it will give you a brief sketch of the local situation as we see it from here today.

Our friends say that public announcement in America of an agreement with Admiral Robert regarding Martinique has made difficulties with the Germans and that it has been necessary to deny that any such agreement has been made.

Our requisitioning of the NORMANDIE seems to have produced no violent reaction whatever.

So far, whether it is worth anything or not, we have succeeded in keeping the attitude of the Marshal and the French public altogether friendly toward us in spite of continued German efforts to the contrary.

Some of our anti-Axis friends believe that in view of German reverses in Russia, the Axis defeat in Lybia, and our entry into the war, there is a possibility that the Marshal may refuse to surrender to German demands to which we take serious objection.

Judging from past performances I would think that is at best only a possibility and definitely not a probability.

It is however certain that the Marshal does not desire a diplomatic break with the United States.

Most respectfully,

William D. Leahy

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 29, 1941.

The attached letters were given to Mr. Matthews, Counselor of the American Embassy, London, to take to Lisbon on December 28th.

*France Folder
1-41*



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

DEC 27 1941

My dear Mr. President:

In compliance with your suggestion I enclose
the drafts of a letter to Marshal Petain and of one
to General Weygand for your signature, if you approve.
It is understood that these would be delivered by
safe hand to Ambassador Leahy for presentation, should
the desired occasion arise.

Faithfully yours,

Enclosure:

Two drafts.

Cordell Hull

The President,
The White House.

Department of State

BUREAU
DIVISION

Eu

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted **10/18/41**

ADDRESSED TO

The President,

The White House

Dec 27, 1941

My dear Marshal Pétain:

At this approaching moment of the new year I am taking advantage of the departure of a courier to send you a message of greeting and also to express by note my gratification for the recent assurances from you which Admiral Leahy has transmitted to me.

Now that this country is actively engaged in the struggle imposed upon it by the Powers of aggression your reaffirmations that no use will be made of the French Fleet for hostile operations in support of Germany and that no utilization of French territory or bases by the Axis Powers will be permitted can only serve to reinforce the traditions which have long linked our peoples.

In the critical days ahead it is the continued hope of this country that French territory shall remain intact and that at the close of the present war to the victorious conclusion of which the Government and the people of the United States have dedicated their every effort France will resume that glorious place which it has held among the enlightened nations of the world. I have not failed to make known to you that the Government of the United States is fully cognizant of the severe limitations imposed upon the French Government and people by the terms of the Armistice Convention and that within these limitations there is every reason to believe that France can preserve French

soil everywhere for the French people.

You will readily understand how essential it is to the vital interests of the United States that France shall continue to exercise jurisdiction free from foreign domination over its own territories and possessions. I again repeat that as long as French sovereign control remains in reality purely French, subject solely to the limitations of the Armistice Agreement, the Government of the United States has no desire to see existing French sovereignty over French North Africa or over any of French colonies pass to the control of any other nation.

I am confident that during the New Year which lies ahead of us you will defend the honor and integrity of the French people and nation upon which their future so clearly depends.

In conclusion, may I express to you my most cordial wishes for your continued good health.

Very sincerely yours,

His Excellency
The Marshal of France,
Phillipe Henri Petain,
Chief of the French State.

Dec 27, 1941

My dear General Weygand:

I am taking advantage of the departure of a courier a few days before the opening of the New Year to send you my cordial greetings. I have followed the situation in North Africa during your stay in that region with great interest and I am conscious of your courage and devotion in maintaining in so far as possible under the Armistice limitations the integrity of the French Empire. I am convinced that your resolution to do everything possible for the people of France has not ended with your departure from North Africa. I also believe that France cannot fail to recognize now and in the future what your contribution is and has been to its welfare and future greatness. As a lifelong friend of France I share your resolution.

It is in this particular sense that I write you as I am confident that in the difficult hours that lie ahead, your devotion to the best interests of your country will rise above any adverse circumstance.

In conclusion, I express my cordial greetings to you.

Very sincerely yours,

General Maxime Weygand,

France.