

● PSF

Italy

1933-38

Italy - 1933

C O P Y

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 14th, 1933.

My dear Mr. Prime Minister:-

I am asking Ambassador Long, who is a very old personal friend of mine, to give you this note when he presents his credentials. I only wish that I might have the opportunity to see you myself, to give you my greetings and to talk over many things in which you and I have a common interest.

May I tell you how much I appreciated my talks with Signor Jung? His frankness, his complete understanding of our mutual problems, and his delightful personality gave me great pleasure and great confidence. Thank you for sending him.

Those two very wonderful volumes have thrilled me, not only because of their great artistic merit, but also because Vergil and Horace were my favorites in my student days - and I shall keep them among my treasures. When I am gone they will repose in the Library of Congress.

And in the meantime they will be symbols of the greatness of the spirit and understanding of the Italian people - and of you their leader whom I hope some day to meet.

I am, my dear Mr. Mussolini,

Very sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

His Excellency
Signor Benito Mussolini,
Head of the Government,
Prime Minister of the
Kingdom of Italy,
Rome.

PSF Italy

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 4, 1933.

Return

Dear Mr. President:

I beg to call to your attention a very interesting and confidential telegram from Ambassador Long, under yesterday's date, in which he reports the substance of recent conversations between Hitler and the French representative in Berlin. The telegram is excellently prepared and is a real contribution.

Faithfully yours,

William Phillips

The President
The White House.

Returned 12/5/33

My dear Mr President.

in response to your request to have
an exchange of views concerning the world economic
and political problems in which the United States
and Italy are mutually interested, I have asked
the Minister of Finance Hon. Guido Jung to
come to Washington as my representative.

Mr Jung is bringing you my
kindest personal regards and greetings. He will
tell you with how great an interest I am
following the work of the United States Government,
for the solution of the world's present difficulties
which only can be solved by the mutual
cooperation and goodwill of the nations.

It is with great pleasure that I entrust
Mr Jung with the reproduction of the manuscripts
of Virgil and Horace which are kept at the

Laurenziana library in Florence; my representative will have the honor of conveying them to you as a mark of my most cordial feelings.

I choose these two authors not only because their political works represent the greatest legacy of Rome in the field of letters but also because they stand as examples of that greatness of spirit and human understanding which I believe are the two central qualities of the American character.

With best wishes and sentiments of esteem, believe me

Very sincerely yours

Mumford

Roma 24 aprile 1933 - XI

Italy - - 1933

4-24-33

Mr Franklin D. Roosevelt
President of the United States

Washington, D. C.

"file
personal"

PSF
Italy file
(5) (2)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 21, 1935

My dear Mr. President:

With respect to the letter from Ambassador Long at Rome dated February 3, I wish to state that I received from Mr. Long on February 1 a cable, in which he stated that he had taken up the matter of the possibility of cotton trade with Suvich. The cable contained no information as to what he had in mind. The State Department had no information about Mr. Long's conversation, before leaving the United States, with Oscar Johnston, Morgenthau, Wallace, and others on the matter of cotton trade.

On February 3, the same day that he wrote his letter to you, Mr. Long sent a cable stating that he had talked with Signor Mussolini and that Signor Mussolini had asked if there were a chance that we could have some agreement on some few articles so as to make some immediate advance in the volume of trade,
and

The President,

The White House.

and that he hoped that some such arrangement might be arrived at in advance of the more general arrangements to follow. Mr. Long said that he had replied that he thought this was possible.

In reply to his cable, I wired that it was not clear what he had specifically in mind. There had been some earlier proposal with respect to raw silk. I pointed out that raw silk was already on the free list, and that if any arrangement carried a definite obligation to purchase raw silk, some agency of the Government would have to buy this silk and distribute it, an arrangement which would obviously present difficulties. I pointed out that a preliminary trade agreement containing a few items could not be made until after public hearings had been held, and that the announcement for such hearings had already been made for March 11, 1935, and that if preliminary arrangements were entered into in advance of such hearings, American protected interests could charge that they had not been heard. I asked Mr. Long to give us an expression of his views as to what might be done under these circumstances, and stated that it would be most helpful if he could secure from Signor Mussolini and his officials any suggestions that they might have.

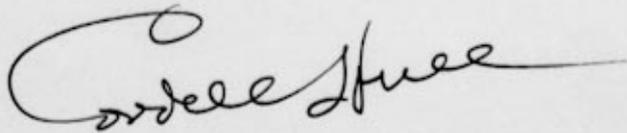
Mr.

Mr. Long replied the next day, February 6, 1934, expressing his gratitude for my exposition of the situation. He stated that he had made it clear in his conversations that the American Government was not able to purchase commodities of any kind, and that the purchase of silk was therefore out of the question. He had suggested that they find some other items of Italian origin which might be considered in an arrangement which would protect the market in Italy for American cotton. He stated further that he would now wait until they approached him and then report to us.

I think the foregoing exchange of views between the Ambassador and the Department since his letter of February 3, 1934, to you, has brought us all abreast of the situation and that we are now in a position to give careful consideration to any suggestions which the Italian officials might make. I am enclosing copies of all the telegrams relating to this matter. As these telegrams were transmitted in one of the Department's confidential codes, it would be appreciated if they could be returned to the Department at the President's convenience for appropriate disposition.

Faithfully yours,

Enclosures:
As above

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cordell Hull". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Cordell Hull".

File
Personal

[1935]

Blair
4

ETHIOPIAN MOBILIZATION ORDER.

This is a perfect example of a streamlined operations order.
If they didn't win it wasn't the fault of their order!

"When this order is received all men and all boys able to carry a spear will go to Addis Ababa. Every married man will bring his wife to cook and wash for him. Every unmarried man will bring any unmarried woman he can find to cook and wash for him. Women with babies, the blind, and those too aged or infirm to carry a spear are excused. Anyone found at home after receiving this order will be hanged."

COPY

No. 74

file private *PSF Italy*
Pittman
AMERICAN CONSULATE
Nairobi, Colony of Kenya, Africa.
June 25, 1935.

SUBJECT: Italian Activities in Italian Somaliland.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to submit the following information regarding the activities of the Italian Army in Italian Somaliland which was related to me by one Mr. Petersen, a traveling representative of the Caterpillar Tractor Company who visited that area during the latter part of May. In submitting this information it is not my intention to encroach upon the political reporting activities of other Consulates, but it is believed that some of the information may help to augment that already submitted to the Department.

At the time of Mr. Petersen's visit to Italian Somaliland there were some 38,000 Italian troops stationed in and about Mogadiscio. Most of these are understood to be from the south of Italy and are inclined to be sour and unruly. Consequently, one unit of Black Shirts has been brought in for police duty. In addition to the Italian troops there are some 30,000 Somali troops under arms. Captain

Vivian

Vivian Ward, a retired British army officer residing in Nairobi, who has had considerable experience with Somali troops, ventures the opinion that the Italian Government will be very foolish if it places much dependence upon the Somali troops since they are known to be extremely unreliable.

It is understood that 32,000 additional Italian troops are expected to arrive in Mogadiscio during June and that 800 more Black Shirts will also arrive to augment the unit now on duty there.

On May 24th a parade of all the troops and equipment in the area was held at Mogadiscio. In addition to the troops mentioned above the following equipment was observed: - 39 planes, about equally divided between fighters and bombers; 40 small tanks; and 36 - 75 millimeter field pieces. It was not known what equipment in the way of artillery, et cetera, would accompany the troops expected to arrive during June.

No barracks have as yet been provided, and all the troops are quartered under canvas, among the sand dunes surrounding Mogadiscio. All of the wells in the vicinity are brackish, and all water used for the troops must be distilled from sea water. Apparatus for distillation appears to be limited and water is rationed, the allowance for all purposes being two litres per day per person. About once a week the troops are marched to the beach for a bath, but by the time they have marched back to the camp in a temperature of 100 to 120° F., the salutary effects

effects of the bath have been dissipated.

The region produces no foodstuffs except bananas, and all meats and vegetables must be imported. To date the importations have not kept pace with needs and the troops are all on short rations. As a result of flies and the bad water available, a goodly number of the troops are suffering from dysentery.

The harbor of Mogadiscio will accommodate a maximum of 16 vessels, but due to the lack of equipment and labor only two vessels can be unloaded at one time. Vessels are forced to anchor about one mile out and are unloaded into Arab dhows. Consequently, in rough weather all loading or unloading operations must cease. After being off-loaded into dhows the cargo is taken to the docks. The port facilities comprise one dock about 120' long, on which there is one ten ton crane which will not handle ten tons and one three ton crane. As a result of the limited facilities the shortest time taken to unload one ship is three days, while some vessels have remained as long as thirty-three days before unloading was completed. Mogadiscio has a normal population of only 800 and, although every able-bodied man in town is employed, the labor shortage is most acute and the Italians are now attempting to recruit additional labor elsewhere.

There are no warehouses or other facilities for storing supplies and to date no material has been imported either for the construction of warehouses

or of

or of barracks. Several large shipments of flour and cement were imported just prior to the advent of the rainy season and were stored in large stacks on the shore with not even any sort of waterproofing covering to protect them from the rain. As a result the greater portion has been ruined.

In order to facilitate troop movements the Italians are constructing three roads from the coast to the Abyssinian border. The main road will run from Mogadiscio in a north-westerly direction. The other two roads will start at points north and south of Mogadiscio and will tend to converge with the Mogadiscio road as they approach the Abyssinian border. To date little progress has been made except on the main road from Mogadiscio, for which the Italians have imported six 40 H.P. Caterpillar Diesel Tractors.

Although Mogadiscio is approximately 250 miles from the Abyssinian border, the Italian forces have constructed a complete system of entrenchments and barbed wire entanglements in a semi-circle nine miles from Mogadiscio. Whether these entrenchments will be used for training purposes only or whether the Italians expect to make a last stand there should they be driven that far from the Abyssinian border is not known.

It is recognized in Mogadiscio that the Italian Government can not expect to commence any serious war-fare until after the monsoon period, which lasts during May, June and July. During this per-

iod the sea is almost invariably rough which hampers the loading and unloading of ships, and the rain which accompanies the monsoon will effectually prevent any operations on a large scale inland. Well informed persons in Mogadiscio make no hesitation about saying that active hostilities will commence about September 1st and that when the Italians consider themselves sufficiently prepared, a series of incidences or border clashes will be created which will be used as an excuse for sending troops into Abyssinia. It would appear, however, that unless the Italian Government goes about its war preparations in a much more businesslike manner than it has to date, they may find themselves seriously embarrassed by lack of equipment and supplies and by sickness among her troops.

An amusing incident in connection with the purchasing of supplies in Kenya for the Italian Government has occurred. The local firm of Mitchell Cotts & Company has obtained the authority for the purchase of all foodstuffs and other supplies needed for the Italian troops which may be obtained in East Africa. About two weeks ago a large order for various things was received and the first item on the list read:- "500 ladies of easy virtue". Although Kenya has a reputation abroad for a singular lack of morals among its white settlers, people in Nairobi felt that this was going a little too far. It is understood that this portion of the order was passed on to connections

nections in Bombay who are in a better position to fill the order than is the local firm.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) Robert B. Streeper

Robert B. Streeper
American Consul.

file
personal
35F *Italy*
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 15, 1935.

Dear Mr. President:

I enclose two interesting telegrams from Paris, dated July 13th and 14th, respectively. They indicate clearly the way the wind is blowing between Italy and Ethiopia.

Faithfully yours,

William Phillips

The President

The White House.

P5F

JS
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone (B)

PARIS
Dated July 13, 1935
Rec'd 3:05 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

RUSH, 591, July 13, 5 p.m.

URGENT AND ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ FOR THE SECRETARY

I saw Laval this afternoon accompanied by Tuck
and communicated to him the sense of your 270, July
11, 1 p.m. and 275, July 11, 8 p.m. He replied that he
is equally anxious to avoid war that he believes that
it might be avoided by Italian mandate over Abyssinia
which would give Italy territorial concessions, econ-
omic advantages and a form of administrative control
but he does not know whether that would be acceptable
to the Emperor. Laval expressed himself as willing to
cooperate with United States and England to settle the
dispute if that could be arranged. I told him of your
expressed ignorance of details of controversy to which
he replied that he had no knowledge of Mussolini's
reply to Eden in Rome except published reports

He feels that Italy is bent on war if war is
necessary to accomplish her purpose. In regard to my
question

From Paris July 13, #541

question as to the effect on Europe of sending four hundred thousand Italian troops to Abyssinia he said "that is Mussolini's business--not mine."

STRAUS

CIB

REP

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

PARIS

Dated July 14, 1935

Rec'd 1:05 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH

592, July 14, 3 p. m.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ FOR THE SECRETARY.

Saw Italian Ambassador to France at anniversary review this morning. In answer to my question he said that in his opinion war in Abyssinia is inevitable; that British Ambassador here had suggested to Laval a meeting between Mussolini, Laval and Hoare in an endeavor to find a solution that might avoid an armed conflict; that Laval had telephoned to Mussolini, and that Mussolini had replied that discussion would not alter his determination to maintain his position.

STRAUS

RR

*File
Confidential*

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

*PSF
Italy*

August 9, 1935

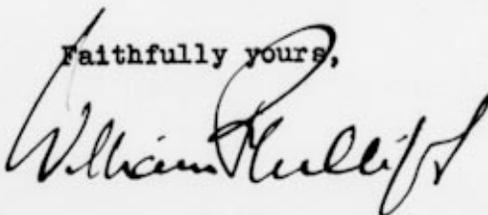
Dear Mr. President:

Referring again to your desire to be kept informed in regard to the health of Italian troops now in East Africa, I beg to enclose for your information a memorandum on the subject which has been prepared for me by our Division of Near Eastern Affairs. It is true that most of the information contained in our despatches is based on rumors and reports, but read together they present a rather definite picture.

I also bring to your attention a telegram just received from our Embassy at Rome, with regard to the same subject. We have yet to hear from our new effort to obtain information from Port Said.

Faithfully yours,

The President,
The White House.



PSF Italy

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

August 8, 1935.

In connection with the interest recently expressed by the President in obtaining information regarding the number and health of troops now being invalided home to Italy from East Africa, I have had a search made of all despatches from Rome on the subject of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute and think the following excerpts may be of some value, although it will be noted that most of the information is based on rumors and reports:

"It is rumored that the morale of the troops in Somalia is not good and that they are suffering greatly from the excessive heat, lack of an adequate water supply and from unsatisfactory sanitary conditions". (Despatch #1077 from Rome, May 3, 1935).

"It is reported that some 50% of the crews on the transports used in the East African service are demanding a transfer to some other service on account of impaired health and overwork incidental to tropical conditions". (Despatch #1108 from Rome, May 23, 1935).

"Rumors concerning serious outbreaks of illness among the Italian troops and workmen in East Africa continue to be heard. A report, attributed to the American Consul at Port Said, has reached the Embassy that a large Italian ship returning from Eritrea to Italy had recently passed through the Suez Canal under strict quarantine with many sick on board, and that it is believed that, in addition to malaria, cholera has broken out among the troops in Eritrea". (Despatch #1135 from Rome, June 6, 1935).

"Rumors of bad health conditions among the men sent to East Africa continue to circulate. The Consulate General at Naples reports that some 340 laborers invalided home from Eritrea were disembarked at that port from June 2nd to June 6th.... Despite official announcements to the contrary, it is generally believed that most of these men were in a very serious condition. It is understood that the strictest silence concerning living conditions in the East African Colonies has been enjoined upon the men invalided home, but rumors of extremely unsatisfactory health and sanitary conditions continue to emanate from the families and friends of men there. It is unofficially but fairly reliably reported that an alarming number of cases of dysentery and sunstroke are occurring in Somalia and that it is very difficult to get the Italians to understand the necessity for protecting themselves adequately from the tropical sun". (Despatch #1146 from Rome, June 13, 1935).

"Rumors and reports ... belie the newspaper statements concerning the excellent health conditions prevailing in the East African colonies. The American Consul in Palermo reports in this connection that there are some 300 men hospitalized in Palermo and between 700 and 800 in Messina who have been invalided home from Eritrea and Somalia. THE LONDON MORNING POST is said to have published an interview on June 18th with Professor Aldo Castellani, an Italian authority on tropical diseases whose work is well known in London, and who has recently returned from a tour of inspection in Eritrea, to the effect that, in spite of reports to the contrary, the sanitary situation is 'absolutely satisfactory'. A report has reached the Embassy, however, attributed to one who is close to Castellani, that he found an alarming number of cases of malaria in Eritrea and a wholly inadequate supply of quinine and other medicines to combat it". (Despatch #1168 from Rome, June 20, 1935).

"With regard to the health of the troops in East Africa the Embassy continues to hear unofficial reports and rumors concerning the increasing number of men being returned to Italy for hospital treatment". (Despatch #1180 from Rome, June 27, 1935).

"The English Consul at Messina reports that, on June 10th, 800 sick soldiers, returning from Eritrea,

were

were debarked at that port". (Report #14533 from the Military Attache at Rome, June 28, 1935).

According to the account of a militiaman returned to Naples in February of this year from Eritrea on account of illness, which was transmitted to the Embassy by the Consul General at Naples, laborers in East Africa are discontented but are placated by their high wages.

"With regard to the health conditions of the troops in Eritrea this militiaman reports that out of the 340 men sent there with him in November 1934, one half have since been returned to Italy on account of illness. He himself suffered from malaria. He also reported a water shortage at Asmara, but in view of the time that has elapsed since his departure from Eritrea, this information is not thought to be of value". (Despatch #1227 from Rome, July 25, 1935".

cib
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (B)

ROME

Dated August 8, 1935.

Received 4:18 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington.

456, August 8, 7 p.m.

My 446, August 6, 4 p.m.

Rumors regarding unfavorable health conditions among the Italian troops in East Africa were not generally circulated in Italy until the month of April but from that date reports of cases of sunstroke, malaria, dysentery, typhoid, and cholera among those troops were current as well as threatened water shortage and inadequate sanitary facilities at Massaua and elsewhere. The circulation of these reports was apparently finally taken into consideration by the central authorities and statements have been published in the press announcing that since January 1st, 624 troops have been invalided from the colonies and 37 have died of which 7 were officers and that during the same period 2,000 laborers have been repatriated and 113 have died. American consular officers, particularly those at Naples and Palermo, have submitted reports of hospital cases at those ports as well as at Messina but owing to the difficulty of obtaining details as to the nature of those cases no
satisfactory

-2- No. 456, August 8, 1935,
from Rome.

satisfactory check with the official figures has been possible.

The published accounts and statistics relating to the health of the troops sent to East Africa have been invariably accompanied by comment intended to show that the proportion of illnesses and deaths is negligible and a recent statement outlines the progress of sanitation in the East Africa colonies and the difficulties which are being overcome in the fight against disease there. According to this statement the hospital facilities which consisted originally of eight hundred beds has been increased to 20,000 beds of which 3,000 are destined for Somaliland and the remainder for Eritrea. In this connection, according to information supplied by an Italian officer in the army medical corps who has recently returned from Eritrea, it would appear the policy is being adopted of reducing the number of repatriation cases by sending the sick to the high plateau regions of Eritrea where an extensive hospital commiserating system is being installed for which supplies and equipment are now being purchased. This system is intended to care for the sick as well as for eventual casualties.

KIRK

CIB HSS

PS F Italy
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~COURT REPORT~~
August 20, 1935.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

In regard to Kirk's meeting
with Mussolini, and the latter's remarks:

It would be well in any subsequent note or message by us, either to Italy or to other Nations, to point out that it is never too late to avoid an armed conflict. The mere fact that Italy has mobilized a million men and spent two billion lire does not mean "destruction of her prestige in incurring the disdain of other countries who would be ready to accuse her of having attempted to bluff or of having engaged in an undertaking which she found she was unable to carry out." On the contrary, we could well point out that after all these preparations Italian prestige would be enhanced and not harmed if Italy could take the magnificent position that rather than resort to war, she would cancel the military preparations and submit the whole question to peaceful settlement by arbitration.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

-2-

In other words, a very strong document can be based on Mussolini's statement by making an appeal to the higher and not the lower ideal.

F. D. R.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

August 19, 1935.

Memorandum for The President.

I attach a part of telegram No. 500, from Kirk in Rome, which I think you will find interesting. The balance of the telegram is badly garbled and difficulty is being experienced in decoding.

I also enclose a copy of telegram No. 708, from Marriner in Paris, and call your attention to the marked paragraph.

C. Hue

C.H.

MED
This message must be
closely paraphrased
before being communi-
cated to anyone (c)

ROME

Dated August 19, 1935

Received 2:20 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

RUSH, 500, August 19, 1 p.m.

Strictly confidential. My 499, August 19, 11 a.m.

Mussolini received me shortly before 11:30 this morning and I left his office at noon. I presented him with a copy of the message contained in your 136, August 18, 1 p.m., and explained to him that it was a personal and confidential message sent to him by the Secretary of State at the direction of the President which the Department would not give out to the press.

Mussolini read the message carefully. He then asked me to convey to the President and the Secretary his appreciation of the expression of friendliness and of the character of the message. As to the subject matter, however, it was now too late to avoid an armed conflict. Italy, he continued, had mobilized a million men and had spent two billion lire. Two hundred thousand men had already been sent to East Africa and one hundred fifty thousand more were ready to go at any time. Two

Black

PSF
File
Italy
(S) (C)

MED - 2 - #500, August 19, 1 p.m., from Rome

Black Shirt divisions were being sent out this week and others were to follow. In the face of this preparation and the sacrifices which it implied, any alteration in purpose now would be absolutely disastrous to Italy and would entail consequences from which she would not recover for a century. No nation, and he specifically referred to the United States, could expect that Italy could draw back now and destroy her prestige in incurring the disdain of other countries who would be ready to accuse her of having attempted to bluff or of having engaged in an undertaking which she found she was unable to carry out. Six months ago perhaps some solution might have been found but the opposition of other countries and England in particular, although it had brought the Italian people unanimously to the support of the government, had strengthened the position of the Negus so that now only a military defeat at the hands of Italy could accomplish the ends which Italy had a right to obtain.

Mussolini went on to say that for years Italy had made every effort to cooperate with the Abyssinians to the mutual advantage of both countries. Practically everything that had been done to improve the condition of the Abyssinians and advance their progress along modern lines had been due to the Italians. The treaty
of 1928

MED - 3 - #500, August 19, 1 p.m., from Rome

of 1928 was intended to declare this policy of amity and
and to render this collaboration effective. This
Treaty, however, had remained entirely ineffective
owing to the attitude of the Abyssinians and all efforts
to give effect to the purposes of the Treaty were of no
avail. Even prior to the construction of the (?)
of the road to Assab as an outlet to the sea, for the
past few days had met with the opposition of the
Abyssinian Government and no progress could be made.
It is true, he added, that during that time the influence
of the French which during those years was unfriendly
towards Italy, was a factor in negating Italy's efforts
at cooperation in Abyssinia but the main difficulty lay
in Abyssinia's attitude toward Italy herself. Italy
in 1896 had lost the battle of Adowa. That was forty
years ago and the circumstances were such that Italy
herself need not harbor a necessity for revenge. The
Abyssinians, however, regarded Adowa as the triumph of their
force over a powerful white nation and this spirit, which
had been encouraged by the friendly attitude and support
of other European nations, had created a situation in
Abyssinia which absolutely precluded the possibility
on the part of Italy of safeguarding or developing her
legitimate

MED - 4 - #500, August 19, 1 p.m. from Rome

legitimate interests. This situation could only be met by a display of force and could only be remedied by inflicting a defeat on the Abyssinians.

The Abyssinians, Mussolini continued, were known to have 450,000 men under arms. (End section one).

KIRK

HPD:CSB

MED
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased
before being communi-
cated to anyone (C)

ROME

Dated August 19, 1935

Received 2:15 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

RUSH, 500, August 19, 1 p.m. (Section two).

their military plan was to retreat before the Italian advance and then when the Italian lives were extended to launch attacks against those lives in the form of guerilla warfare. The Abyssinians were not taking sufficiently into account the Italian air force which would eliminate the chance of success of these tactics. Mussolini expressed complete confidence in the outcome of this military set up and he intimated that he believed it would be brief. He indicated that following this phase negotiations for a final adjustment would be simple and in this connection he pointed out the success of Italian administration in Eritrea where great progress along modern lines had been made and where no opposition on the part of the natives had ever been encountered. In giving the foregoing account Mussolini took pains to emphasize general attitude so far as envisaging the matter solely from the point of view that the conflict would be confined exclusively to Italy and Abyssinia and had

MED - 2 - #500, August 19, 1 p.m. from Rome

and had been alluding to the part played by other governments only insofar as they affected the relations between those two countries. If the conflict could be so limited he said no anxiety need be felt as to the consequences. He went on to say, however, that the attitude of England had brought to the fore the possibility that it might not be so confined and in that event he foresaw the gravest consequences to the peace of the world. The conversations at Paris which ended yesterday showed an attitude which gave little indication that there was an unwillingness to admit the Italian viewpoint. The proposals which had been put forward involving concessions in Abyssinia though vague were clear enough to show that they were entirely unacceptable to Italy. England, he said, might profess not to know what Italy really wanted in Abyssinia but she know very well (End of two).

KIRK

RR:CSB

MJD

Paris

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

Dated August 19, 1935.

Rec'd. 11:45 a. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

708, August 19, 4 p. m.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

Department's 332, August 18, 1p. m.

I saw Leger and Eden this morning and communicated orally and in the strictest confidence the nature of the message which Kirk has been instructed to deliver to Mussolini. I informed them that it was not being given to the press and they both agreed that in the present position of affairs this was the wisest means of bringing to Mussolini's attention the solidarity of the world in the interest of peace.

Both Leger and Eden expressed themselves as being extremely grateful for the prompt and effective action of the American Government in this matter and felt that even though the negotiations in Paris had broken down it was not too late for its effects to be felt in Italy.

It was Leger's opinion that with the return
of

-2- No. 708, August 19, from Paris

of Aloisi to Rome, Mussolini would gain a more accurate impression of the solidarity against him which existed here and what he would have to face in Geneva, where, in accordance with the information which the French have received from Rome, Mussolini still intends to send his representatives on September 4. (End of section one.)

MARRINER

RR

CSB

MJD

Paris

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

Dated August 19, 1935.

Rec'd. 1:00 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

708, August 19, 2 p. m. (Section two)

Neither Leger nor Eden felt that the failure of conversations here was necessarily the final chapter and that there was still time for Rome to alter its program.

Apparently Mussolini refused even to consider the Anglo-French offer as a basis of discussion. Eden's analysis of the Italian reply was that Mussolini would only be willing to accept through the medium of the League what he would take by force of arms if it were not granted.

Eden said that in his conversation with Laval this morning they both considered that in searching their consciences no efforts had been spared and no means neglected to find a peaceful settlement of the question. In this connection Leger told me that the only benefit that he felt had been derived from the negotiation was a much closer
rapprochement

-2- No. 708 (Section two) August 19, from Paris

rapprochement and understanding between Great Britain and France. Eden leaves late this afternoon for London and Vansittart for Aix-les-Bains where he will see Baldwin. It is possible that a Cabinet meeting will be called in London for August 22. (End message.)

MARRINER

RR

CSB

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE ECONOMIC ADVISER

November 7, 1935.

file
Mr. Secretary:

I attach on the basis of the best available material we have been able to secure up to the present, the following:

(1) Table 1. A record of our total exports to Italy during October, 1935, divided into the main classes of exports and compared with the record for October, 1934.

Included in the same table is a record of our total exports to Italy by the same main classes during the first ten months of 1935, as compared with the same period of 1934.

(2) Table 2. A comparison of the trade of American exports of numerous important specific items to Italy comparing that trade for October, 1935, with the trade in the same items for October, 1934, with increases and decreases.

(3) Table 3. A comparison of the American export trade to Italy of the same group of specific items as in Table 2 comparing the monthly average of our exports during the first ten months of 1935 with the monthly average for 1934, with increases and decreases.

This

File
~~Italy (2) 1935~~
Italy (2) 1935

This material covers trade with Italy alone and we are still waiting to receive from Commerce the information which will make possible a comparable record for Italian Africa and Ethiopia.

In the meanwhile, I attach tables 4 and 5 which give the record of export shipments to these countries for October, 1935, by main classes.

Attached to these tables is a short memorandum which is really a footnote pointing out the defects and necessary corrections to this statistical record.

Our trade records are being kept on a weekly basis and by the end of the afternoon there will be available a record for October, 1935, divided into a weekly basis. Because of the delays in forwarding of the necessary documents by the Customs Houses, this weekly record is still not complete enough to be wholly reliable. However, the tables will show a falling-off in total shipments subsequent to the President's proclamation.

Table (1)

Total Exports to Italy With Division by Classes.

	First ten months		October	
	<u>1934</u>	<u>1935</u>	<u>1934</u>	<u>1935</u>
Total Exports	\$50,865,070	\$54,105,361	\$6,184,491	\$5,840,781
Textile fibers and manufactures	25,422,675	24,463,433	3,956,452	2,678,293
(Unmanufactured cotton)	(24,456,254)	(23,511,579)	(3,740,755)	(2,602,443)
Nonmetallic minerals	5,830,942	6,594,203	382,821	969,816
Machinery and vehicles	4,757,371	7,085,201	390,426	626,003*
Metals and manufactures, except machinery and vehicles	6,081,287	9,301,790	502,030	1,085,322
Wood and paper	2,705,768	2,297,133	329,583	142,398
Animals and animal products	2,130,065	1,102,656	198,686	31,575
Chemicals and related products	1,422,972	1,646,427	138,103	142,805
Vegetable food products and beverages	961,889	354,504	138,032	29,397
Vegetable products, inedible, except fiber and wood	922,849	772,468	80,801	95,397
Miscellaneous	685,252	478,386	67,557	39,775

* Substantial shipments to Italian Africa in addition to this.

Table No. 2Comparison of American Exports to Italy October 1934 and
October 1935 in Some Important Items of Trade

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>October 1934</u>	<u>October 1935</u>	<u>Increase or Decrease</u>
Cotton.....	\$3,740,755	\$2,602,443	-1,038,312
↗ Petroleum products..	626,068	1,363,767	+ 737,699
↗ Refined copper.....	188,237	534,094	+ 345,857
↗ Iron and steel scrap	179,458	463,817	+ 284,359
↗ Aircraft and engines	4,081	179,540	+ 175,459
Steel plates, sheets, etc.....	46,822	6,368	- 40,454
Rubber and manufac- tures.....	20,808	275	- 20,533
Automobiles, parts, and accessories...	48,108	8,125	- 39,983
Other ferro-alloys..	11,306	450	- 10,856
↗ External cylindrical grinding machines	9,304	33,843	+ 24,539
Nickel.....	16,564	11,132	- 5,432
Gear-cutting machines	8,460	10,623	+ 2,163
Engine lathes.....	—	44,134	+ 44,134
↗ Internal grinding machines.....	4,183	65,147	+ 60,964
Coal.....	4,650	—	- 4,650
Tin and manufactures	—	—	—
Ferro-tungsten.....	544	—	- 544
Tin plate scrap.....	—	—	—
Lead.....	—	—	—

Table No. 3

Comparison of Monthly Average of American Exports to Italy,
first ten months of 1935 as compared with Monthly Average
for Whole Year 1934

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Monthly Averages</u>		<u>Increase or Decrease</u>
	<u>12 Mos. 1934</u>	<u>10 mos. 1935</u>	
Cotton.....	\$2,698,662	\$2,351,158	- \$347,304
Petroleum products	312,318	433,995	+ 121,677
Refined copper...	267,649	471,391	+ 203,742
Iron and steel scrap.....	185,517	335,284	+ 149,767
Aircraft and en- gines.....	8,941	65,305	+ 56,364
Steel plates, sheets, etc....	25,710	15,043	- 10,767
Rubber and manu- factures.....	28,650	13,372	- 15,278
Automobiles, parts, and accessories	60,099	61,307	+ 1,208
External cylindri- cal grinding machines.....	4,765	29,003	+ 24,238
Nickel.....	3,855	7,832	+ 3,977
Gear-cutting machines.....	3,003	18,005	+ 15,002
Engine lathes....	2,233	19,090	+ 16,857
Internal grinding machines.....	1,550	19,517	+ 17,967
Coal.....	20,500	9,284	- 11,216
Tin and manufac- tures.....	376	617	+ 241
Ferro-tungsten...	270	924	+ 654
Tin plate scrap..	—	3,644	+ 3,644
Lead.....	204	108	- 96

Table 4

U. S. EXPORTS TO ITALIAN AFRICA,
OCTOBER 1935, SHOWN BY MAIN CLASSI-
FICATIONS

Animals and animal products.....	\$	--
Vegetable food products and beverages...		--
Vegetable products, inedible, except fiber and wood.....		1,247
Textile fibers and manufactures.....		--
Wood and paper.....		--
Nonmetallic minerals.....		118,126
Metals and manufactures, except machin- ery and vehicles.....		1,381
Machinery and vehicles.....		206,511
Motor trucks, busses, and chassis..		36,116
Automobile parts and accessories...		12,115
Trailers.....		118,980
Chemicals and related products.....		25,868
Benzol.....		25,868
Miscellaneous.....		1,475
Total exports.....		354,608

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Table 5

U. S. EXPORTS TO ETHIOPIA
OCTOBER 1935,
SHOWN BY MAIN CLASSIFICATIONS

The monthly statistics of American foreign trade are published by the Bureau of Economic Warfare, Department of State, and do not include the trade of the United States with territories (other than Alaska, Hawaii, and the Philippines) of the United States.

Animals and animal products.....	\$ --
Vegetable food products and beverages.....	--
Vegetable products, inedible, except fiber and wood.....	--
Textile fibers and manufactures.....	--
Wood and paper.....	--
Nonmetallic minerals.....	--
Metals and manufactures, except machinery and vehicles.....	--
Machinery and vehicles.....	361
Chemicals and related products.....	500
Miscellaneous.....	--
Total exports.....	861

Table 5a being October trade actually was shipped earlier than October. These figures are as follows:

Animals and animal products.....	\$ 5,536
Vegetable food products and beverages.....	944
Textile fibers and manufactures.....	184,910
Wood and paper.....	44,986
Non-metallic minerals.....	32,008
Metals and manufactures, except machinery and vehicles.....	803,492
Machinery and vehicles.....	308,612
Chemicals and related products.....	51,632
Miscellaneous.....	242
TOTAL.....	1,779,342

Arrangements

FOOTNOTE TO TABLES 1, 2 AND 3, AND 4 & 5

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE ECONOMIC ADVISER

November 8, 1935.

The monthly statistics of American foreign trade are not strictly on a calendar month basis. The figures always include a certain amount of trade which actually took place in a previous time period. The figures for any one month usually include some shipments which were actually made in the previous month, and do not include some shipments made towards the end of the month dealt with (these appear under the heading of a later month). Therefore, in order to have the October statistics of our import and export trade more closely comparable with previous periods the figures in the preceding tables were left uncorrected. Figures are available, however, showing what part of the trade recorded in the preceding table as being October trade actually was shipped earlier than October. These figures are as follows:

Animals and animal products.....	\$ 3,636
Vegetable food products and beverages.....	944
Textile fibers and manufactures....	184,810
Wood and paper.....	44,956
Non-metallic minerals.....	39,006
Metals and manufactures, except machinery and vehicles.....	263,499
Machinery and vehicles.....	208,819
Chemicals and related products....	31,039
Miscellaneous.....	540
TOTAL.....	\$777,249

Arrangements

What actual shipments in October still remain to be reported cannot be estimated with sufficient reliability at this moment; they would be an offset to the figures of earlier trade included in the October figures.

Arrangements have been worked out whereby future records of monthly trade with the belligerents will be more closely adjusted to the actual trade of each month.

EA:HF:LWW

Pauler file *PSF*
Italy

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE UNDER SECRETARY

November 14, 1935

Mr. Secretary:

In view of the information brought us by Mr. Hackworth this morning as a result of the discussions in New York last night, my feelings are as follows:

1. The argument of the representatives of the ten big oil companies that while they would abide by the wishes of the Federal Government and would, therefore, be willing to refrain from exporting oil to the belligerents, the 120 odd American companies certainly would not do so. These are small companies purely out for gain and would undoubtedly take advantage of the situation created by the failure of the big companies to export.

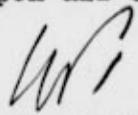
2. We do not yet know precisely what sanctions are going into effect nor how far-reaching they will be. We know enough to presume that there will be a flow of materials into Italy from Germany, Rumania, Hungary, Austria, Brazil and the Argentine to make it exceedingly doubtful whether there will be any severity in the sanctions as prescribed. The question is whether the United States should undertake to penalize

American

American trade before we have any knowledge as to the real situation resulting from the action of the League on the 18th instant. It does not seem to me quite fair to American trade to put in "on the spot" in this way. Therefore, I recommend that we wait until after the League has acted before making the appeal.

With especial reference to oils, I do not like the idea of putting the President in the position of making an appeal to the oil industries of the country, which is not respected by the smaller companies and therefore not effective, nor do I like the idea, at this moment, before the League action for the President to "black list" the exporting companies by announcing their names.

In brief I believe that it will be wiser to await the result of the League action in this case rather than to act somewhat precipitously now. It may even be wiser to await action by our Congress in order that the Government may be in a position to exercise real restraint upon the export of raw materials - a restraint which will be equally effective upon all companies exporting raw materials.


William Phillips.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

~~Confidential~~ for the President
from Secretary Hull.

Nov. 23, 1935.

PSE
Italy

At Warm Springs, Ga.,
November 27, 1935.

Dear Cordell:-

That memorandum of your conversation with the Italian Ambassador on November twenty-second is a classic. You did a splendid job in making our position clear and, at the same time, pointing out the very untenable position in which Italy has deliberately placed herself.

In regard to the 1871 treaty, there is, of course, the undoubted fact that Italy, by a deliberate violation of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, made strict compliance with the old treaty impossible. Furthermore, I very much doubt whether the language in the 1871 treaty was ever intended to apply to a situation in which one nation was engaged in a war in which that nation was the aggressor.

As ever yours,

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

PSF Italy

November 22, 1935.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN SECRETARY HULL AND
THE ROYAL ITALIAN AMBASSADOR, SIGNOR AUGUSTO ROSSO

The Italian Ambassador called by his own request and after some preliminary exchanges of the usual nature he said that he called upon instruction of his Government to lay before me two views which his Government supports; that he was not handing me a note or any other formal instrument of writing; that he had reduced to writing the oral conversation that he is proposing to conduct. The Ambassador thereupon proceeded to read to me the typewritten copy of his proposed oral conversation:

- "1 - The various official declarations and public statements issued from the Federal Government during the last two months with regard to the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, and particularly the statement of the Secretary of State of November 15, cannot be interpreted otherwise than an extension and aggravation, to the principal detriment of Italy, of the meaning of the Neutrality Act of August 31, 1935.

"Although these declarations and statements apply, formally and theoretically, to both the contending parties, it is well known that their practical result would be actually to impair the freedom of trade only with respect to Italy.

"Such

"Such an assumption has been confirmed by the fact that the statement made by the Secretary of State on November 15 specifically mentions certain commodities which Italy has been used to buy in the United States and which, being largely employed for non military purposes, are essential to the needs of the economic and social life of any civilized country.

"We maintain that any measure or policy aiming at, or resulting in, imposing restrictions which actually are detrimental to only one of the contending parties, goes against the spirit of neutrality.

"2 - We maintain also that the above mentioned statement of the Secretary of State is contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Treaty signed between the United States and Italy in 1871 - and still in force - which reciprocally guarantees each contracting party a 'complete freedom of commerce and navigation'.

"No justification whatsoever for the limitation of the freedom guaranteed by the Treaty can be found in any international Act dealing with the status of neutrals. Reference is made in this respect to the Hague Convention of 1907.

"Such a limitation, if and when applied, is bound to assume the meaning of a 'sanction' and therefore the positive character of an unfriendly act.

November 22, 1935."

The Ambassador paused briefly here and there in the course of the reading to elaborate with one or two sentences, but they did not change the purport of the instrument of writing. He then indicated his desire to answer any question or listen to any comment I might see fit to offer in case I desired to do so. I addressed
the

the Ambassador and said that, of course, he and his Government should keep in mind all of the essential phases of the situation as it relates to this country; that in all of the past the most cordial and friendly relations have existed between the people of this country and those of Italy; that the people of this country today do not feel personally unfriendly towards the people of Italy, but that they are vigorously and almost wildly against war and are at all hazards in favor of keeping out of the present war; that, if those participating in the war were double cousins and twin brothers of the American people, the people of this country would be just as violently and eternally against the war and in favor of peace and, above all considerations, in favor of keeping ^{as far} away from and out of the war as ~~possible~~ would be possible. I said that it was in these circumstances and in this highly wrought up state of the public mind of this country that the Neutrality Act of last August was enacted and the Executive Department was directed to pursue the policy of neutrality which it provided; that this mandate of Congress was promptly put into effect when the President declared a state of war to exist between Ethiopia and Italy and declared an embargo on the shipment of arms, ammunition and implements of war to either of the belligerents; that
at

at the time heavy pressure was brought to bear upon the State Department also to include a number of prime and essential war materials out of which finished arms, ammunition and implements of war might be made in large quantities over night; that since that time insistent demands representing large groups of sentiment in this country have been made upon the Executive Department to include these war materials in the embargo issued under the Neutrality Act against arms, ammunition and implements of war. I added, in this connection, that I hoped that the Ambassador and his Government would recall the experience of the people of this country in ways that will shed much light upon the state of mind and the viewpoint of the people and of this Government in accordance with it, and that is that our country sent 3,000,000 men to Europe to fight for Italy and other countries at an enormous cost to this Government and this country; that we likewise loaned Italy much money at the time and afterwards; that we later made almost a nominal settlement with the Italian Government at twenty-five cents on the dollar, all of which, with interest, is due and unpaid, to say nothing of other vast indebtedness in Europe; that I have been besought during past months to demand aggressively, if necessary,
payment

payment by the Italian Government of this indebtedness instead of its spending hundreds of millions in this Ethiopian conquest. I said that I had not done so thus far, but until this time I had been willing, on a suitable occasion, to sit down with the Ambassador and seek a satisfactory adjustment of the indebtedness. I then said that with the extremely disastrous and unsatisfactory experience of the American people in going to Europe and aiding Italy and other countries to the extent they did, they are almost wild in their demand that we not only avoid being drawn into the war but that we stay entirely away from the same; that the people of this country are in no state of mind to engage in any activities or steps except those primarily looking towards keeping out of the war and in a secondary or subordinate sense manifesting proper interest in peace and the shortening of the duration of the war in the light of our obligations under the Kellogg Pact; that it is in this highly wrought up state of mind of the American people that the Government of Italy now arraigns this Government upon both a charge of unneutrality and of violating the provisions of the treaty between the United States and Italy of 1871 pledging complete freedom of commerce and navigation. I said that these are surprising as well as

serious

serious complaints in the circumstances. I said I might remark here that from the outset this Government has pursued its own separate, independent course and initiative with respect to all phases of the controversy between Ethiopia and Italy; that we have had no agreements whatsoever, directly or indirectly, with Geneva or London or Paris; that they did not know of any of the steps this Government had taken until they read about the same in the press; that this Government believes that it has been consistent in its course and policies and naturally feels constrained to adhere to them; that the Government, as stated, placed in operation its embargoes and at the same time the President warned all Americans against any business or economic contacts with any of the belligerents, except at their own risk. The President and myself in public statements during the weeks that followed made it clear that this warning statement of the President was intended, generally, to discourage any business or economic relationships between our nationals and the belligerents; that nothing further was said by the President, myself or the Government officials relative to business dealings with the belligerents until some days ago when the official statistics showed that some five essential war materials were

were being exported from this country to belligerents in abnormal quantities compared with similar shipments during any recent period, and that I thereupon made a further official statement, in which I said that this class of business was directly contrary to the policy of the Government in opposition to selling war materials to belligerents, which policy was held and believed to be strictly within the spirit of the Neutrality Act; that nothing further has been said by the President or myself with respect to trade relations between this country and the belligerents. I then said that the Ambassador must realize that just as soon as the American people discovered that abnormal quantities of essential war materials were being shipped on an increasing scale to belligerents without protest but with the silent acquiescence of the proper Government officials, there would probably be a storm of criticism and a loud demand for the immediate convening of Congress to take adequate steps in the premises, and that the result scarcely beyond any question would be a swift passage of a drastic act dissolving every possible relationship with the belligerents pending the war. I repeatedly expressed surprise that the Italian Government would make a complaint against this Government in all the circumstances in the severe language that it does. I
inquired

inquired whether and what the Italian Government had said to Germany in the light of a more sweeping and inflexible prohibition of business relations with the belligerents than this Government has taken. The Ambassador replied that he did not know whether his Government had made any representations to Germany. I commented rather emphatically and stated that I had seen no published account of any complaint whatsoever, and that it was therefore all the more strange to me to read this rather harsh complaint against this Government; that it seemed all the more surprising when both the Ambassador and I know that the bitterest critics of the Executive branch of the Government and the most extreme isolationists who are demanding that all Americans stay entirely away from the war zone do not in the slightest question the integrity of the neutrality policies of this Government as they are being carried out in accordance with the letter or the spirit, or both, of the Neutrality Act. I said that it was really astonishing to find that a government cannot be neutral without being attacked and a demand made to supply war materials to a belligerent under penalty of being charged with an unfriendly act. The Ambassador emphasized the view that the manner in which this Government is conducting

ducting its policy of neutrality operates as a discrimination against Italy. I replied that under the law of neutrality in the past any belligerent controlling the high seas was usually at an advantage over its enemy with respect to obtaining goods from neutral countries, that a poor belligerent without means of purchasing and paying for supplies from neutrals was at a disadvantage under the operation of neutrality laws, and likewise where one country has or can produce its military supplies and another is without such facilities or equipment, the latter suffers under the operation of the neutrality law. I then pointed out that, in fact, under the policy this Government is now pursuing neither Italy nor Ethiopia should be securing war materials with the result that both countries are as nearly on a parity in this respect as it is possible for them to be. The charge of discrimination, therefore, does not apply. I repeatedly inquired of the Ambassador why his Government does not sit down with others and work out this difficulty in a peaceful manner. He made very slight and casual comment in reply. The Ambassador sought to emphasize the idea that the attitude of his Government was not fully understood in this country and that it had been misrepresented to a considerable extent. I
commented

commented that his Government might well have thought of all of these and other unsatisfactory phases before getting into the war. I stated as emphatically as possible that these trading incidents to which the Italian Government refers and about which it complains are entirely trivial compared with the real problems and deep concern which the Ethiopian-Italian war causes this Government; that the Ambassador must realize the awful repercussions that make their immediate appearance in far and remote parts of the world, but which are calculated to give this nation and perhaps others, including Italy, unimaginable troubles for a generation. The Ambassador immediately indicated that he knew the Far East was in mind. I added that the second condition which is giving this Government immense concern relates to the possible spread of the war to any number of other countries at almost any time with unimaginable troubles and injuries and consequences to this country as well as others; that it is, therefore, all the more deplorable to see the Italian nation moving forward with the war, which it must realize threatens to create these terrific problems and conditions so far-reaching that the imagination cannot grasp their possibilities. I inquired why these considerations were not in the mind of the Italian Government

Government before it went into the war and again reiterated my surprise that the Italian Government, on the contrary, is upbraiding this Government virtually because it is thus so deeply concerned and is striving in every possible way to keep entirely away from and out of the war. I remarked then that the Ambassador well recalls that the President and I pleaded with and almost prayed with Mr. Mussolini to keep out of the war but that he ignored our plea and now seems to expect us to furnish him with war supplies while he prosecutes the war ad libitum. I added that regardless of anything or anybody this nation proposed to stay out of and as far away from the war as possible, and that we feel most deeply the indifference with which the world is subjected to the threat of a general war and with the frightful repercussions in the Far East; that this Government is keeping its attitude flexible under the Neutrality Act and the spirit of that Act which is being carried out in connection with the policy of opposition to the supplying of certain war materials to the belligerents; that if the war should spread, for example, this Government will be in an attitude to take further steps relative to both miscellaneous trade and the five war materials which I recently referred to in a statement opposing their shipment to the belligerents;

that

that this Government cannot think of any course or any precautionary plans short of these, in view of the fact that aeroplane bases, naval bases and submarine bases dot the entire Mediterranean section with the result that almost at any time a conflagration might be touched off; that it is in the light of these dangerous possibilities, which to the American people seem to be probabilities, that this country is almost madly opposed to our Government taking the slightest risk of being drawn into the war by permitting its nationals to trade promiscuously with belligerents in and about this dangerous war zone, especially in essential war materials. I stated that during the past three years I had almost worn myself out physically in an effort to aid in world economic rehabilitation so that Italy and other countries would have an adequate amount of international trade to afford contentment to their respective populations, and that the Ambassador could not begin to imagine the deep disappointment I feel at the effort to renew the practice which all nations have recently undertaken to abandon, relating to that of military aggression by any and all countries at any and all times, and that, of course, if one country is to be allowed to violate this new policy of the pacific settlement of disputes, then

every

every country may do so with consequences that one shudders to contemplate. I pointed out to the Ambassador the fact that the League of Nations organization at Geneva solemnly adjudged an aggressor in this war, while the United States did not; that the Geneva agency seeks to aid Ethiopia, which the United States does not; that the Geneva agency seeks to embargo all imports from Italy, which this Government does not; that this Government, as stated, is pursuing its own separate course without understanding or collaboration with other governments or peace agencies, and that in these circumstances it is not only difficult to understand the Italian complaint but I repeat that it is surprising to contemplate it; that the mere fact that there are some concurring acts on the part of the League of Nations in pursuing sanctions and of the United States in frankly carrying out its policy of neutrality is, in the circumstances, no basis whatever for a charge against the United States of unneutrality and of unfriendliness. This makes a mere coincidence or its absence determine the question of whether the United States is or is not neutral, in the eyes of the Italian Government. In other words, if there were no attempted sanctions at Geneva the United States would be entirely neutral

neutral in carrying out its present policies of opposing the sale of war materials to belligerents. I added that when I issued my statement on the 15th of November, about which complaint is now made, I did not know and, in my opinion, no one here knows yet what the League of Nations may or may not do regarding concerted action to curb exports to Italy of oil and other prime war materials, and yet here is a charge that this Government is engaged in an unfriendly act as stated. The Ambassador said that this step, in his opinion, would be taken on the 30th of this month at Geneva. I commented that, of course, that remains to be seen. I inquired of the Ambassador why his Government had not taken \$100,000,000 to Ethiopia and brought back a key ? to the entire Empire instead of expending several hundred million dollars in its military conquest with all of the worry and threat of danger to the balance of the world. He replied that Italy had been attempting for forty years to effect colonizations in Ethiopia, but without success. I repeated that the people of this country are as yet entirely friendly to the Italian people but added that if his note should be made public in the United States, an inflamed public that nobody could control or curb would be almost instantly aroused and that, of course, the pressure of a surprising charge such

such as he is bringing against this Government will in due time make the American people personally hostile to the people of Italy, and naturally it would endure long in their minds. I took up the complaint of violation by this Government of the treaty of freedom of commerce and navigation of 1871 with Italy and at once stated that I was satisfied that international and all other law makes it possible for either country a party to this commercial treaty to remain neutral in the event the other country becomes involved in war; that it is inconceivable that either Italy or the United States in an ordinary commercial treaty signed away its right to remain neutral in case of war on the part of the other and that that is the precise reason this Government is undertaking to pursue and has no other idea than to pursue it; that, furthermore, with both Italy and America signatories of the Paris Peace Pact with the solemn obligations it imposes upon each, it is not possible to understand how Italy can go to war and announce to the United States Government that despite the Paris Pact it must supply Italy with materials of war under penalty of being guilty of an unfriendly act, as stated. I remarked further, without discussing the merits, that the American people cannot be convinced
that

that the Italian Government is not under most solemn obligations to keep the peace under three or four treaties, and it is incomprehensible to them to find Italy demanding of this Government that to be neutral it must furnish war supplies and that if it fails to do so it is guilty of an unfriendly act. I repeatedly emphasized my great surprise and incomprehension and repeatedly inquired why his Government had not thought of these phases before it went into the war. I finally said that, while entirely satisfied as to the lack of interference of the treaty of 1871 with the present course of this Government, I would, as a matter of courtesy to the Ambassador, again give some further attention to the authorities, although I have no doubt that I have examined them fully and accurately. The Ambassador did not attempt any aggressive utterances and I endeavored throughout the conversation to make the impression upon him that our nation and most other peace loving nations were greatly pained and hurt to find their traditional friends, the Italian people, involved in this war despite the numerous treaties of peace to which the Government is a party, and despite the awful menace to the peace of the world which this war creates.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

PSE
Italy - 4935
Paul
(5) (2)

December 11, 1935.

My dear Miss LeHand:

I am again referring to the matter of the shipment of oil to the Italian Government on the tanker ULYSSES. Since our telephone conversation yesterday afternoon, I have ascertained definitely that as early as September, 1935, the owner of the vessel was expecting to arrange for such a transaction, and he placed the tanker in dry dock, where it was reconditioned at an expense of certainly not less than \$25,000 and perhaps as much as \$40,000; that on October 25 the vessel was chartered to the Reed Company for a voyage to Italy, and that on the same date the Italian interests entered into an agreement with the Reed Company for the vessel to carry a cargo of oil to the Italian Government. If the carriage of the oil is forbidden, the Reed Company will be liable to a suit for damages; the owner of the vessel will almost certainly look to our Government for the payment of damages; and the prospect of the vessel being kept in business so as to afford its owner some opportunity of paying the Government's mortgage will be gone. It is thought by the Department of Commerce and the Department of State that we should not stand in the way of the transaction being completed. You will bear in mind that October 25 was prior to the announcement being made with reference to the shipment to the belligerents of five specified articles, one

of

of which is oil.

The only reason I am writing you is that I wish the President to have all the facts, and if he desires to do so, confirm the understanding you gave me yesterday that he leaves the matter to the determination of the two departments mentioned. I hope on receipt of this you may be able to see the President within at least an hour or so, and telephone me.

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert A. Taft".

PSF - Italy
Dunnell 2-36

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 6, 1936

My dear Mr. President:

With reference to inquiries which you have made previously concerning conditions in Italian East Africa I believe that you may be interested in reading the attached report from our Military Attaché at Rome, recounting a conversation which he had with Mr. W. B. Courtney, a representative of COLLIER'S WEEKLY, who has just returned from a three weeks' visit to Eritrea.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosure:

Report from Military
Attaché at Rome.

The President,
The White House.

~~Department of State~~

NE

BUREAU
DIVISION

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

The President,

The White House.

DSF Italy

Enclosure No. 1 (Report No. 2) to despatch No. 1471
of Jan. 3, 1936, from the Embassy at Rome.

G-2 Report.

6920.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

ITALY (COMBAT).

Subject: Minor Field Operations.

Visit to Theater of Operations by American
Correspondent.

Mr. W. B. Courtney, representing Collier's has just returned to Rome after being three weeks in Britrea and Tigre. The following notes were made during a conversation with him concerning his trip. They represent of course Mr. Courtney's impressions but are perhaps worthwhile as indicating an objective view of some of the details in East Africa as he saw them. Mr. Courtney left Naples on November 18th, 1935, on the S. S. "SANNIO" of 9,900 tons, carrying Marshal Badoglio and 2,500 workmen. Marshal Badoglio took this boat rather than one of the Italian liners with better accommodations as an example to the Black Shirt elements of his command. Conditions aboard the "SANNIO" were far from ideal. The 2,500 workmen were crowded below decks. During a storm in the Red Sea just before reaching Massaua it was necessary to station Carabinieri at each of the hatches to prevent the workmen from coming on deck. Toilet facilities and water supply were inadequate and the living accommodations for these workmen were described by Mr. Courtney as nothing short of filthy.

At Massaua two old tankers were tied up at wharfs and drums were being filled from these ships and stacked in a dump adjoining the docks. Every ounce of gasoline was concentrated in this one dump. It is estimated that the supply is sufficient for about 3 months. The Italian supply service in estimating its requirements failed to take into consideration the fact that the trucks would have to operate almost continually in low gear, and consequently what was expected to be a year's supply will probably not last beyond the present dry season.

Sanitary condition in Massaua leave much to be desired. The port is crowded with men and supplies. There is only one public toilet in the town and no sewage system. The streets are used indiscriminately as latrines. No warehousing facilities exist. Supplies are stacked in open dumps and when rains occur prior to removal of supplies to the plateau, large quantities are spoiled. There are no hotels or other sleeping accommodations excepting one or two freighters anchored in the harbor and used to accommodate casualties awaiting shipment to Italy. These freighters are so infested with vermin and bugs as to be almost uninhabitable. Press correspondents and others who were acquainted with the situation preferred to stay ashore until they could get aboard a transport. Even here it is next to impossible to sit down anywhere because of the accumulated filth. Many have found it more agreeable to seek accommodations in the native brothels rather than go aboard the freighters.

Communication

From: M.A. Rome, Italy.

Report No. 14,986.

January 3, 1936.

Communication between Massaua and Adowa depends on one road and this road has been very badly cut up by the heavy travel. The stretch between Nefasit and Asmara is especially bad. It is cut out of the side of the mountain with straight drops of over 1000 feet. It is narrow and passing is only done with great difficulty. For a while traffic was controlled on this road - one way during certain hours - but so many exceptions were made that the control has now broken down completely and traffic moves both ways, passing on such turnouts as could be built. Heavy traffic has ground the road surfacing to powder and the shoulders give way under the weight of the trucks. Accidents are frequent. Often several trucks, their drivers blinded by the dust, have followed each other over the bank. The same is true of the newly constructed roads from Asmara to the front. Casualties due to road accidents have exceeded those due to battle. In one 31 mile stretch of road (a section of the Senafe-Adigrat road) there are 1700 hair-pin turns. On another section of the road between Asmara and Adowa Mr. Courtney counted 27 trucks down the embankment. He came to one truck fully loaded and bound for the front which had broken down and after some delay this truck was rolled over the bank with its entire cargo. He stated that the casualties among trucks due to accidents and breakdown ran as high as 5% per day, many of these of course being repaired and returned to service.

While en-route from Asmara to Adowa Mr. Courtney passed many 75 mm. guns and 105 mm. howitzers returning from Adowa. It is not possible to use anything except pack artillery in this zone.

There is a fertile plateau around Axum and between Adowa and Axum. Other than that the country that he saw is not even suitable for grazing. Mr. Courtney got as far forward as the Dam-beguina Pass. He left before the fighting which took place in this vicinity the middle of December. He subsequently learned that the Italian advanced elements which were driven back from Mai Timchet were blocked in this pass and suffered severe casualties.

The Italians were similarly ambushed during the advance from Adigrat to Macalle in a canyon north of Azbi. The Danakil column (Mariotti group of natives) which consisted of two battalions of Askaris and about 1000 Danakils marched into a gorge without sufficient reconnaissance and were trapped in the gorge, suffering heavy casualties. Attempts to communicate by radio with the Corps Commander, General Santini, failed because the radio sets were not functioning. The column remained in the gorge throughout the day and night but the Abyssinians withdrew without attempting to annihilate it. The attack was such a surprise that the supply units (combat trains) had to abandon their supplies and close up in order to avoid being cut off. The column continued on to the village of Azbi without food or water. The radio equipment was repaired and a message gotten through to the Corps Commander who managed to transport supplies by air but the supplies were dropped at the wrong place and were taken by the natives before the troops could get to them. This column had to rejoin the corps by its own efforts before it could receive any assistance.

The Askaris are good soldiers. As one Italian officer put it: "They are a lot better than the Black Shirts". The Black Shirts have made lots of noise in East Africa but have not been effective as combat troops. The regular soldiers are much better.

Morale among the Italian troops is not high. There is a great deal of the usual grumbling, but also a lot of real dissatisfaction with the existing conditions. If it was hoped that many of the troops now in East Africa would want to settle there, the hope will not be realized, for almost to a man the Italian soldiers would like nothing better than a transport home.

The Askaris have borne the brunt of the fighting to date and in consequence have adopted a rather superior attitude toward the Italians.

Mr. Courtney was ill for a time in the hospital at Aksum. He describes this hospital as without any sanitary arrangements at all. The only latrines are open straddle-trenches, and bathing facilities do not exist. A moat around the city contains some fresh water and is used indiscriminately for drinking purposes, sewage disposal, watering animals and washing pigs and goats. The natives seem to have attained an immunity to typhoid but there is lots of syphilis and African ulcers. The white troops have suffered somewhat from pneumonia, but on the whole their health has been surprisingly good considering the conditions.

As soon as Marshal Badoglio assumed command, all war correspondents have been ordered back to Asmara. There they get very little information. Frequently the official communiques are not delivered to them until several days after they have been published in Rome.

Mr. Courtney feels that the Italians are now definitely stopped in their present positions and will not be able to advance again this season. He feels that Marshal Badoglio will be fortunate if he can hold on to territory now occupied. The aviation has been of little real value. The country is so vast and there are so many opportunities to hide in the brush and among the rocks that air observers find it impossible to pick up even large bodies of native troops. The natives are becoming accustomed to the Italian aircraft and know how to avoid being seen. They have even gone so far as to prepare traps for the Italian aviation by setting up a camp in a valley, then abandoning the camp and taking positions on the steep sides of the mountains from which they can fire from above on any aircraft attempting a low altitude attack on the camp. As a result Italian air attacks now are being made from an altitude of 10,000 feet.

The tanks have been of somewhat more value, especially in advancing against villages, but the country has been too rough for their extended use.

NOTE: This picture drawn by Mr. Courtney may be very much overdrawn. It is reported for what it may be worth as the impression of an American journalist gained from a three weeks' visit to the scene of operations in East Africa.

NORMAN E. FISKE
Major, Cavalry, U.S.A.,
Asst. Military Attache.

*file
Resnais*

PSF Italy

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

[Signature]

June 30, 1936.

Dear Mr. President:

It appears that the United Press gave out yesterday a somewhat misleading report, which has found its way into the Italian press. The Embassy has this morning sent us the item, as it appears in this morning's papers in Rome, and I attach a copy of the despatch.

Inasmuch as it was announced from St. Louis yesterday that Long had resigned, it occurs to me that possibly you may care, in your press conference, to confirm the fact of his resignation and at the same time say something to the effect that, in due course, you would make an announcement of a new American Ambassador to Rome, whose appointment would be in the ordinary routine.

The United Press statement that a "special ambassador" is to be sent from this country to Italy

for

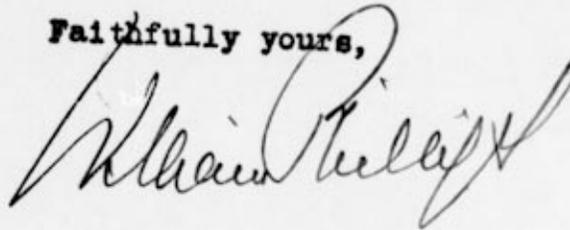
The President

The White House.

for certain special purposes, perhaps might well be disposed of as soon as possible before it gains headway.

I am expecting a reply from Rome at any moment for the requested agrément for the new Ambassador, but meanwhile, as is so often the case, the United Press is giving out another statement mentioning my name in this connection. Needless to say, I have said nothing to the press whatsoever.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Phillips". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed text "Faithfully yours,".

WCNS79

THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO SEND UNDERSECRETARY PHILLIPS TO ROME, THE UNITED PRESS SAYS UNDER A COPYRIGHT.

PHILLIPS WILL ATTEMPT TO WORK OUT AMERICA'S RELATIONS WITH THE NEW ITALIAN EMPIRE WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE ADMINISTRATION'S PRINCIPLE OF NOT RECOGNIZING TERRITORIAL GAINS MADE BY FORCE.

THE IMPORTANCE WITH WHICH BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND ITALY REGARD THE ETHIOPIAN PROBLEM IS SHOWN BY THE FACT THAT THEY ARE EXCHANGING UNDERSECRETARIES OF STATE AS ENVOYS. ITALY HAS JUST APPOINTED FULVIO SUVICH, PHILLIP'S ITALIAN COUNTERPART, AS AMBASSADOR TO THIS COUNTRY. HE WILL REPLACE AUGUSTO ROSSO.

6/30.--RB134P

PSF Italy

JS

Gray

ROME

Dated June 30, 1936

Rec'd 7:00 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

241, June 30, 10 a.m.

Following United Press report under Washington date line of June 29th published in this morning's papers:

"From a most reliable source it is learned that a high official of the Federal Government will go to Rome in the near future to discuss and settle with the Italian Government questions of direct interest to the United States which have arisen as a consequence of the Italian annexation of Ethiopia.

At the State Department there is neither confirmation nor denial of the rumor that the American Ambassador to Rome Breckinridge Long is being at least temporarily replaced by special ambassador. Long, it will be recalled, is still in a hospital at Rochester, Minnesota, and has asked to be replaced in his mission to Rome."

KIRK

JS



IL CAPO DEL GOVERNO

My dear Mr. President,

In the last three years I have often remembered our exchange of letters of 1933, and regretted that the course of events has not allowed the first contacts, then established between ourselves to be pursued with the intimacy which was in our intention.

It is therefore with the deepest satisfaction that I avail myself of the occasion presented by your triumphal reelection to the Presidency, to convey to you my warmest congratulations for this expression of universal approval.

that your great work has met with.

I also desire to express to you
my very kindest wishes for the ever-greater
prosperity, which - I am sure - the United States
will achieve under your enlightened guidance.

Hoping that our relations, now
re-established, may not undergo any further
interruption, I am, my dear President
very sincerely

yours

Munich

Rome 19 novembre 1935 - XV



IL CAPO DEL GOVERNO

STANDARD FORM NO. 14 A
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 10, 1926

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

CABLEGRAM

FROM

PSF: Italy
The White House
Washington

*file
personal*

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 72052

January 27, 1937.

H. E. AUGUSTO ROSSO
HOTEL PRINCE DE GALLES
PARIS

MY WARM GREETINGS AND GOOD WISHES TO YOU BOTH

ROOSEVELT



RECEIVED
JAN 25 1937
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

REC'D 12:15 PM
January 25, 1937.

Secretary of State
Washington

The Secretary of State encloses for the information of the President copies of the telegrams indicated below.

Since some of these telegrams were transmitted in one of the Department's confidential codes, it would be appreciated if the enclosures could be returned to the Department at the President's convenience for appropriate disposition.

Enclosures:

Telegram No. -, Paris. (dated January 25, 12:15 p.m.)

U

GRAY

Paris

Dated January 25, 1937

Rec'd 12:15 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

PERSONAL FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Rosso, former Italian Ambassador to Washington, is to be married in Paris on the morning of January 28 to an American lady, Mrs. Bunker. I am to be witness at the marriage.

From a conversation I had with Rosso I know that he would be deeply moved if you should send him a personal telegram of good wishes. His address is Hotel Prince de Galles.

BULLITT

CSB:HPD

FAST



RCA

DIRECT



RADIOGRAM

R. C. A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
A RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA SUBSIDIARY

TO ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — TO SHIPS AT SEA

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LC PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

file

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1112 CONNECTICUT AVENUE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

1937 JAN 28 AM 8 51

AT _____
STANDARD TIME

PSE Italy

DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR KIND MESSAGE WE BEG YOU TO ACCEPT OUR MOST
HEARTFELT THANKS AND THE EXPRESSION OF OUR SINCERE DEVOTION FRANCES
AND AUGUSTO ROSSO

TELEPHONE: NATIONAL 2600

FORM 112WN-W

To secure prompt action on inquiries, this original RADIOGRAM should be presented at the office of R. C. A. COMMUNICATIONS, Inc. In telephone inquiries quote the number preceding the place of origin.

PSF:Stely

Rosso

file
"journal"

Paris, February 2, 1937.

Dear Miss Le Hand:

I am enclosing herewith, for transmittal to the President, a letter from His Excellency Augusto Rosso, former Italian Ambassador in Washington and now Italian Ambassador in Moscow.

With all good wishes and kindest regards, I remain,

Hastily and sincerely yours,

Offie

Carmel Offie.

P. S. -- All is quiet on the Seine!

Enclosure.

Miss Marguerite Le Hand,

Private Secretary to the President,

The White House,

Washington, D. C.

*But I know
somebody who feels
like blaming you
for not writing!!*



Paris, January 29th, 1937

Dear Mr. President,

Having asked the advice of my friend Bullitt as to the way a former Ambassador to Washington should follow in sending his wedding announcement to the President of the United States, the answer was : "Just write a personal letter. The President does not mind an occasional breach of the Rules of Protocol !".

Following Mr. Bullitt's advice, I take the liberty of addressing to you this informal communication of my marriage with Mrs. Frances Wilkinson Bunker of Washington, formerly an American citizen, and since yesterday the Italian Ambassadress in Moscow.

I wonder, Mr. President, if you happen to remember that two years ago, at the diplomatic reception

His Excellency
Franklin D. Roosevelt
President of the United States
The White House

Washington, D.C.

at the White House, you teased me for my delay in obeying the Duce's ukase to his diplomats : "Marry or quit!".

This is one of the reasons why I thought I should let you know that I have actually complied with the order of my Boss !

But I have been prompted to do so also by the memory of the great kindness and friendliness you have always shown me during my mission in Washington, which make me feel doubly happy to-day for the new tie binding me to a country and a people I have learnt to know and love.

May I respectfully ask you, also in the name of my wife, to convey to Mrs. Roosevelt our deepest regards, and to accept yourself on this occasion, the assurance of our sincere devotion.

Believe me, dear Mr. President,

most sincerely yours

Ross

P.S. This letter was already written when
I had the pleasure of receiving your most
gracious cable, for which we wish to thank
you again.

R.

Vinny
file PSE
Glady

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE SECRETARY

July 6, 1937.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN SECRETARY HULL
AND THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR, SIGNOR FULVIO DE SUVICH

Trade Agreements Program.

The Ambassador of Italy called at his own request. He had just returned from a three weeks' trip to the Pacific Coast. For several minutes we discussed what he saw and heard on this trip. He spoke of Hollywood and the different stars he met there and ended with the statement that there was a great deal of rare genius among them. I took this lead to state that unless Italy was well represented among the foremost of these geniuses it would be the first time that that great country had not been well represented among the best minds of the world in one or more lines of thought; that this reminded me that many more of Italy's statesmen should visit this country, just as American statesmen visit Italy and other countries of Europe and other European statesmen visit this country. I then added that one of the valuable policies which contributed very much to the enthusiasm of the conference of American nations, both at Montevideo and Buenos Aires, was that each

proposed

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

-2-

proposed a full and constant interchange between all of the American nations of the educational, cultural, artistic and other valuable attainments of each country to the end that each would have the benefit of the best that all could produce. I then launched into the strongest possible discussion of nationalism in its extreme form, carefully distinguishing between sane, practical nationalism within reasonable limits and the extreme type which during the post-war period has constituted the worst disease that could overtake the human family. I repeated my illustration of a community of families, as set forth in a radio address of mine during Foreign Trade Week, in which I pointed out what happened to a family that undertook to live a hermit existence without a single friend among the families of the same community, how it stagnated and steadily became hopelessly decadent. I said, "This is the great curse of the world today and threatens civilized nations with still more disastrous effects, unless the nations immediately begin at least to move in a different direction with a definite and sound program. I remarked that our entire program promulgated at Buenos Aires

contains

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 3 -

contains a reasonable, practical and most urgent set of principles and policies as the single alternative to the present disastrous course of affairs in Europe, -- that is, a peaceful settlement and adjustment and rehabilitation of all worthwhile and indispensable international relationships. I said that it is nobody's fault in particular that after eighteen years the only foundation which Europe presents for a restored international order is the narrowest, cutthroat, trouble-breeding method of trading and a wild, runaway race in armaments; but that this is in striking contrast with the program of the 21 American nations, and of several European countries which have approved it in the main, which does provide a solid and permanent foundation for a stable structure of business, of peace, and of government; that the single question is -- whether the civilized nations will wait until it is too late before proclaiming and pursuing this practical and constructive course. I elaborated further with my usual arguments in support of this program and especially emphasized the extreme necessity for its support by European countries generally, before too late.

The

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE SECRETARY

-4-

The Ambassador interjected, for illustration and without criticism, the view that the British are engaged in an armament program which will require two years for completion, and that, considering altogether conditions in Europe, the time is not ripe just now for a movement in support of the program to which I was referring in some detail; that within another year or two the time would be ripe.

I replied that we were talking now as citizens of the world, rather than as officials representing our two governments and that I desired his permission to discuss the other side of the view he was expressing. I then said that I had been reared in an undeveloped mountainous region, where on Saturday afternoons the neighbors gathered in and about the country store; that when I would see several of the younger element, who were still engaged in sowing their wild oats, come in armed with pistols, I knew there was most likely to be a cigar stub or a cigarette stub dropped accidentally during the afternoon and somebody would get hurt; that these same persons would get hurt even though none of them intended or desired a pistol fight; on the other hand,

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

-5-

hand, that when these young men would come in of a Saturday afternoon with no sign of firearms at all, everyone breathed a sigh of relief because of the assurance there would be no violence undertaken during the day. I said, "Human nature among statesmen and among nations is very much the same. Furthermore, all of the nations never get fully armed under a policy of rearmament races; one or more always desires longer time to get more fully armed and equipped; and, in the end, an explosion inevitably occurs." I continued, "This is the situation in Europe today. It is to avoid just such a cataclysm that the 21 American nations have offered a program and are pleading to all other civilized nations to embrace it and give it support without a day's delay." I referred to the recent statements on economic and military peace made by Mussolini and said that these gave hope and gratification to all -- the only trouble was that the masses of the people everywhere, within almost 24 hours, forget and that, therefore, it is necessary that the program for business restoration and peace must be preached each week by the important statesmen of each country;

that

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 6 -

that I desired to request the Ambassador again to tell Mussolini how much we appreciated these statements of his but that we profoundly hope he or his statesmen will deliver a speech along these lines each week. I said that there was never before such an opportunity for some important country in Europe to furnish leadership with just this sort of a program as I had outlined; that a few addresses proclaiming it and supporting it would result in an amazing awakening of peace and good neighbor sentiment and that a wave of grateful public sentiment would sweep over Europe and over the entire Western world. I said, "This government is keeping entirely away from the political difficulties in Europe. It is preserving neutrality with respect to both political and military activities and complications. We are hoping and praying we may be able to keep 3,000 miles away from any undesirable experiences in Europe. We have a rather definite neutrality act which is very inflexible in certain respects, and we are assuming that no governments -- such as the British, the Russian, the German, the French, the Italian, or any other -- will say or do enough officially to require the carrying into operation of the neutrality act."

The Ambassador

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 7 -

The Ambassador was not very vocal in reply to this and did not take issue or offer definite comment except, by inference, to the effect that nothing of this nature was contemplated so far as he knew. He again came back to the question of the time not being propitious for a movement in support of an alternative program for economic and peace restoration. I replied that if each nation waits until the time is exactly right from its standpoint, then I must again repeat that the time never would become propitious; that the experience of recent years in Europe clearly demonstrates this view; that it has not been possible for the nations of Europe to settle any one or two of the 7 or 8 point program involved, or, in other words, the situation is merely drifting amidst increasing turbulence and uproar in Europe, as well as in certain other parts of the world; that the development of a broader background and a more favorable psychology is probably vital to a broad and successful attack upon the numerous problems presented; that our method of approach and our championship in the Western hemisphere of the Buenos Aires program should be a splendid example; that I could offer no better illustration of what I had in mind than to say that if Italy and other important countries of Europe were preaching

our

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 8 -

our Buenos Aires program today, they and the 26 other governments, parties to the non-intervention pact, would meet in London on next Friday with a softened state of mind, with a friendlier spirit and one of mutual concession, and with a strong disposition to find ways for the complete settlement of the matters of difference before they ceased their efforts or adjourned their meeting; that this is in wide contrast to a meeting next Friday where there may be just a little aloofness from each other, a little too much suspicion of each other's motives and purposes and a lack of that confidence and neighborly spirit which is so necessary on the occasion of great crises; that, in brief, the preachment and the championship of a program such as pointed out by me was probably indispensable to the development of the necessary psychology among statesmen and nations to deal adequately and promptly with present emergency problems; that statesmen must develop an interest and a disposition and a will to cooperate in a broad and flexible manner in support of a basic program of peace and business restoration -- otherwise that it will not be possible to induce nations to halt their present armament races and to suppress their present suspicions and lack of trust

in

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 9 -

in each other to an extent sufficient to enable them to cooperate in support of a desirable program. The Ambassador took no issue with this view but seemed to be much interested.

I elaborated here on the general situation in Europe, referring to it as serious and what many would call dangerous. I remarked that either another war or a deep-seated economic panic would be utterly destructive of all that is worthwhile in the affairs of the western world, and yet absolutely nothing in Europe is being done in the way of permanent planning in the direction of peace and general stability. I said that today there are probably 4 million wage-earners in Germany engaged in armament production, who, with their families, comprise 15 to 20 million of the entire German population of 70 million; that relative numbers in the United States, Great Britain, Italy, France, and other countries, are likewise engaged; that within another eighteen months, when the resources of most countries necessary for further increased armaments are exhausted, it would not be humanly possible to find other gainful and productive employment for all the millions and millions and millions of wage-earners now engaged in military production; and

that

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 10 -

that yet, with the roar of the economic and the military Niagara below, now within distinct hearing, and with the certain knowledge that the happening of either catastrophe would be fatal, nations are drifting and drifting and drifting with no broad or permanent or peaceful planning.

The Ambassador again came back to the idea that the armament workers could a year or two hence be gradually transferred to productive industry. I said that I must distinctly differ on this point; that nothing in the future could be more clear than that the races in armaments by industrial nations, as happens to be the case, and continued delay in adopting a cooperative program for general rehabilitation, would within another two years have compelled all of the surplus-producing food and surplus-producing raw material countries to establish their own manufacturing and other industrial plants, thus leaving surplus-producing industrial countries, like Italy and others in Europe, not to mention the United States, high and dry so far as anything resembling a real and profitable international trade in the future would be concerned. I further stated

that there

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 11 -

that there could beyond question be restored 30 billion dollars of mutually desirable and mutually profitable international trade above the present depleted volume; that there are many things Italy and other industrial countries produce, differing materially in value or quality or use, which it would be highly profitable for the United States and other countries to purchase, thus giving employment to capital and labor in both countries; that another two years of armament races and failure to adopt a program of peace and economic rehabilitation would inevitably fasten upon the world permanent conditions of the most extreme economic nationalism and all of its unthinkable consequences and deep privations. I said that it is in these circumstances that this country, as stated before, while taking every precaution to keep aloof from political and military involvements abroad, strongly feels that each civilized country right now has the unshirkable responsibility of making a real contribution to promote peace and normal international relationships; that therefore it and the other American nations are behind the broad economic program and its kindred provisions to which I had referred, and that naturally we are
looking

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 12 -

looking longingly to leading countries in Europe to offer a similar contribution to peace and economic well-being; that unless they do awaken and give support to such a program and movement, an economic collapse in Europe within 18 to 24 months is inevitable.

The Ambassador made very little further comment, except to agree in principle on all that I was saying about the economic situation and the desire for peace.

He then said that his government requested him to say to this government that Italy has no purpose whatever to occupy Spanish territory in any event and is only concerned in that respect to see that a Communist government does not prevail in Spain. He then added that his government strongly favored recognition of belligerent rights of General Franco's organization, not recognition of the Franco organization as a government as Italy and Germany had recognized it. His theory seemed to be that recognition of belligerency by all the nations would clarify and serve to solve the present important differences relative to the Spanish situation. He emphasized the point as stated that Italy continues to adhere to the non-intervention

pact

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 13 -

pact along with the other 26 governments signatory to it. I thanked him for the information and expressed the hope that the interested nations in Europe would find ways to compose every difference; that, as indicated, this country has a rather definite and inflexible neutrality act, and that, of course, with our variety of population some people at all times are urging us to take steps; that naturally we have been assuming that none of the many governments interested will be disposed to indulge in such official utterances or acts as would raise the question of placing it in operation. The Ambassador said, "I observe that you are not operating the embargo provisions", to which I replied that this is upon the assumption, as just stated, that no other government will engage in such official acts as would aggravate or complicate the situation any further in so far as it would relate to our neutrality law.

The Ambassador made no further comment on this particular phase. He then proceeded to say that his government would be flexible in its attitude in conference with other governments, and that it was the purpose of his government, while going as far in
dealing

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE SECRETARY

- 14 -

dealing with a given phase as was deemed necessary or advisable, to stop short of action which might be calculated to provoke violence or hostility with another country or countries.

C.H.

S CH:HR

File
Personal

B.F.
Italy

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 7, 1937

My dear Mr. President:

I received this morning a personal letter from Bill Phillips dated June 23 in which he says that he is considerably worried because of the long delay which has elapsed in your sending a reply to Mussolini's letter to you of November 19, 1936. He says that "This long delay is really unfortunate", and expresses the belief that it would be very helpful if you saw fit to send a reply in the near future.

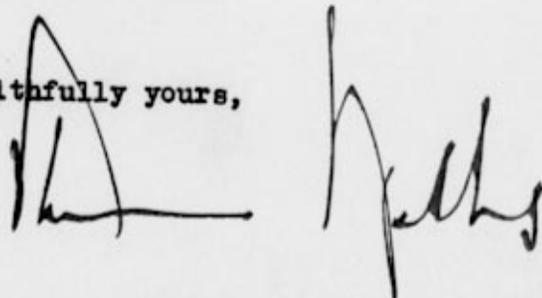
I remember that you spoke to me some weeks ago about this matter and indicated that you were then preparing to draft a reply.

It may be that because of recent developments you have thought it better to wait a while longer before sending your answer, but in view of the concern which Bill Phillips expressed, I thought I had better bring his request personally to your attention.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

The President,
The White House.



Published in

Foreign Relations of the U. S.

1937

Vol. I General

pp. 662-664

Mussolini
(S)

Cordell -

Is this O.K. ?

HR

Sumner and I heartily
approve

HR

see Foreign Dignitaries file
for longhand letter from
Signor Mussolini

PSF Italy
1937

July 29, 1937.

My dear Signor Mussolini:-

I have waited for many months to thank you for your gracious and much appreciated letter to me, which I found on my return from South America last December. I have delayed writing you because through all these months I have been hoping that the world situation would clarify sufficiently for me to discuss with you measures looking toward the stabilization of peace among nations.

But, unfortunately the situation today seems no clearer than before, and, indeed, in some aspects the drift of events has been toward and not away from an ultimate crisis.

I have been gratified in reading of your statements in favor of the principles of reduction of armament. As you know, the Secretary of State has had my full support in his effective efforts toward the increase of international trade and the lowering of barriers against trade.

Nevertheless, all of these efforts, even if they are joined by additional nations, and even if a greater total of world trade results in the coming years, will not prove a completely effective guarantee of international peace if world armament among the nations continues on its present scale.

The two things must go hand in hand. It seems clear to me that if the nations can agree on armament reduction, even if it be in the form of a progressive reduction over a period of years, they can far more effectively discuss practical instruments for reduction of trade barriers, thus building up employment in industry to take the place of employment in armament. And I recognize that as a part of the discussion of increasing trade, every consideration should be given to a more ready access to raw materials' markets for those nations which in themselves do not produce the raw materials necessary to industry.

I am confident, my dear Duce, that you share with me the fear that the trend of the present international situation is ominous to peace. And I am confident that you share with me the desire to turn the course of the world toward stabilizing peace. I have often wished that I might talk with you frankly and in person because from such a meeting great good might come. But we both realize the great difficulties that stand in the way -- international difficulties as well as the distances of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

I was very happy to learn that my youngest son, John, had the privilege of meeting you last week. I had charged him with conveying to you my very warm regards. Some day you and I must and shall meet in person.

Believe me, with every good wish,

Faithfully yours,

His Excellency
Signor Benito Mussolini,
Chief of the Government,
Rome, Italy.

**P.S. This is your birthday and I send you wishes
for many happy returns of the day.**



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
NE 865D.01/378

February 9, 1938

My dear Mr. McIntyre:

In accordance with the President's memorandum of January 31, 1938, I am returning the letter of January 15 addressed to the President by Dr. W. C. Martin on behalf of Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia.

The Department has instructed the Embassy at London to make appropriate acknowledgment of Dr. Martin's communication.

Sincerely yours,

W. C. Martin

Enclosure:

From Dr. Martin,
January 15, 1938.

The Honorable

Marvin H. McIntyre,

Secretary to the President,

The White House.

*513
Melles*

PSF Italy

APPROVED FOR RELEASE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE
ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMISSIONER

ME IN



Department of State

BUREAU
DIVISION

NE

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

The Honorable

Marvin H. McIntyre.



IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN LEGATION
LONDON

State Dept
for necessary
turn + return
FDR
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1938 JAN 31 PM 2 28

TEL. KENSINGTON 7433.

5, PRINCE'S GATE,
S.W. 7.

January 15th 1938.

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

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

Sir,

I have the honour to thank you heartily in the name of His Majesty The Emperor of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian People for your right and noble act in refusing to recognize the unjust and precarious occupation and pretended sovereignty of the King of Italy over the Ethiopian Empire.

Such a firm stand for international right and justice on the part of the Head of the great American People is a great encouragement for us and for all weak peoples and a noble example to the world, and we have no doubt that perseverance in these vital moral principles by the great democracies will in the end overcome all difficulties and bring peace and security to the peoples of the world.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest consideration,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

d-1-34

PST Italy

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 31, 1938.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE:

The following comes from a person who actually has a somewhat intimate access to Mussolini:

"On May 29th, Mussolini received a telegram from Hitler saying that on May 24th he had informed Henlein and also Esterhazy (of Hungary) that they should lay low for the moment to give Hitler the necessary time of ten weeks to complete his defense line -- at which time Hitler would be ready to present an ultimatum to Prague. At that time the "ring" of Germany, Austria and Hungary would be ready to act as a concerted unit. One item of the ultimatum under consideration would be the discharge of Benes by Czechoslovakia."

I merely pass this on to you. The information was sent me early in July but only just reached me. It is worth noting that ten weeks from the end of May brings us approximately to the early part of September.

F.D.R.

FDR/dj

Send you

Wood Hall
5. 11. 38. ^{File Personal Confidential}

My dear Franklin - Before leaving Italy I was asked to carry you a message about a certain matter which undoubtedly has already come to your attention in several ways - So I am sending it along to you as being absolutely authentic - (So I was asked to tell you) - in case anyone is wondering how much truth there is in the rumors - that on May the 29th Mussolini received a telegram from Hitler saying that on May 24th he had informed Henlein & also Esterhazy - (Who is, I believe, the Hungarian parliamentary speaker, man of our

Slovakia in the Prague parliament),
& together with them Hanbury - to
believe for the moment, giving him
the necessary time of ten weeks
to complete his defence line - at
which time he would be ready to
present an ultimatum to Prague
& ^{at} which time the Nings would be ready
to act as a concerted unit.

It seems also in the air that
one of the items under consi-
deration in this ultimatum
could be the dismissal of Beneš -
(as they say "Beneš's head") -

It goes without saying, doesn't
it? - that Beneš's power and pres-
tige inside & outside his country
could be regarded as an obvious
handicap to the easy-realization of
the Sudeten program.

However, in addition to this all-too-
obvious fact - there has been a

gives a definite explanation
of the Mussolini antagonism
towards Britain, which I have been
tried to have being investigated.
Of course the intervention
of the British at that point
(perhaps one could say that ex-
actly part of the program!) makes
it difficult to say how & to what de-
gree it will influence or amend that
long plan Hitler may have been
formulating until then.

In speaking to you, I would
quested to keep in mind that those
who asked me to do this were es-
pecially concerned that London
also be informed as to the undoubted
authenticity of this Hitler telegram
to Mussolini - & were themselves en-
deavoring to get a reliable messenger
through to London - and although I

Said at the time I felt none of
this would be news either to you
or to London - I was of course
willing to pass the message along.

As you know the Central European
problem is, as it always has been, com-
plex & baffling. I am sorry I cannot fit
over a cup of tea speaking of these later
developments there, & the background for
them - for it would be interesting & comforting
to point to them in a way that the written
word cannot manage.

But you are, happily, off to a destination
which promises to be much more fun.
I hope after the trans-continental
program is behind you - that the holi-
days will be refreshing in every way.

Always yours affectionately -

Frances Crane

[Frances Crane]

PSF Italy

OK
Telephoned
file

THE COUNSELOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

September 22, 1938.

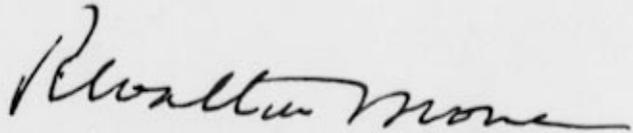
Dear Mr. President:

A question has been raised as to whether the request should be met of those who are interested to exempt from the payment of customs duties a number of household furnishings that are being brought in from Italy to be used in a house that is being provided in Washington by or under the direction of the Vatican State. Assistant Secretary Gibbons of the Treasury tells me that he will feel justified in granting the request should the State Department indicate to him that it will be glad to see it granted as an act of international courtesy. So far as I know, none of us here who have considered the matter perceive any objection to a note being written to Mr. Gibbons on which he may base an order exempting the articles, which I do not understand to be of any considerable value, from the payment of customs duties. When the matter was casually mentioned in a conversation with the Secretary yesterday, he thought it would be well for me to bring it to your attention, and therefore I am now doing this in the hope that you can find time to have someone telephone me as to whether or not you see any objection. Mr. Gibbons would like to know as soon as possible what to do.

The suggested action would not imply any recognition by our Government of the Vatican State.

Yours very sincerely,

The President,
The White House.



President Roosevelt to the Chief of the Italian Government
(Mussolini), Washington, December 7, 1938.

(re: political refugees)

Published in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1938,
Volume I, General, pages 858-859.

RLJ 5/24/57