

● PSF: Edwin M. "Pa" Watson

PSF  
Subject File  
~~File~~  
Box 194

7  
file

PSF: Watson  
File - Watson (S) number 2 - 36

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 29, 1936.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Respectfully returned. A classmate of mine, Colonel T. J. Johnson, in charge of the Army Remount Service, sees General Mitchell quite often through his horse connections. He reports that he has recently been hunting with General Mitchell and finds him apparently in good condition, riding hard as usual. I have the greatest confidence in this officer's veracity.

Major Walsh of the Air Corps, who has known the General all his life, states that he saw General Mitchell several days ago. He had just had all his teeth extracted and presented a pathetic picture. He was on his way to New York for a general overhauling in a hospital.

Between these two reports is probably his condition; namely, good for a man of his age (57) and his active life, with normal overhaul treatments now seeming necessary. He has a fine farm at Warrenton on which he raises horses. I understand this farm is in his wife's name and was probably paid for by her money. This farm, I am reliably informed, is maintained with all the comforts and appurtenances becoming a gentleman farmer. The General is now being sued for one hundred thousand dollars for some statements he made in connection with the manufacturers of airplanes and allied products. I can find no one who believes General Mitchell and his wife in any real financial difficulties.



E. M. WATSON  
Lieut. Colonel, F. A.  
Military Aide to The President.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 25, 1936.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
COLONEL WATSON

Will you find out if  
Billy Mitchell is really in  
bad health and in need of  
financial aid?

F. D. R.

**AIR DEFENSE LEAGUE**  
**310 BELLEVUE-STRATFORD HOTEL**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PA.**

January 21st, 1936.

*Col Watson*  
*Wm H. G.*  
*Chas. H. G.*  
*Wm. H. G.*

Miss Margaret LeHand,  
Private Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Miss LeHand:

Again I intrude on your crowded calendar but will you please give to the President the enclosed letter.

General Mitchell, as should be, is one of the President's most loyal supporters and he has given to this country his productive years. He was a great officer, he remains a gentleman and a very fine citizen. He is in very bad health and I know that this small amount of money would be most welcome by him.

With kindest personal regards and may 1936 be the happiest and nicest year that you have ever known.

Sincerely,

*Virgil H. Frazier*  
Virgil H. Frazier

Secretary

VHF:es

**AIR DEFENSE LEAGUE**  
**310 BELLEVUE-STRATFORD HOTEL**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PA.**

January 21st, 1936.

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

My dear Mr. Commander-in-Chief:

Under the fine leadership of Mr. Robinson in the Senate there was passed last week a bill placing General William Mitchell on the retired list of the Army with rank of Colonel. This piece of legislation is now in the House. May I, Mr. Commander-in-Chief, ask for your favorable support in the final enactment of this just and overdue financial assistance to an outstanding citizen, who has given to his country the productive years of his life.

General Mitchell is in bad health - to my knowledge in need of financial aid. Knowing your full record of just leadership, I humbly ask that you endorse this legislation.

Faithfully yours,

Your obedient servant,

*Virgil H. Frazier*  
Virgil H. Frazier  
Secretary

VHF:es

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 25, 1936

PSF: Watson

*File  
Personal  
Watson*

FOR: The Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Navy.  
FROM: Acting Private Early  
SUBJECT: Singular conduct of The Military Aide to the Commander-in-Chief.

The attached photograph is respectfully submitted to the Commander-in-Chief as being especially revealing concerning the character, technique and general modus operandi of his Military Aide.

There is much more in this picture than meets the eye.

Although the train was boarded in the dead of night, The Military Aide had the presence of mind to rouse the photographers to satisfy his passion for publicity.

Always an indulgent witness when he speaks in his own behalf, The Military Aide is likewise careful to show himself to the best possible advantage in the photograph: It will be noted that he has clothed himself in shining garments.

The poses in the photograph will bear scrutiny.

Did The Military Aide, under the guise of magnanimity, pose the Major General on a stepping block, in order to add to the Major General's stature or to display his own magnificent physical proportions, even under handicap?

Why is the Major General wheedled into facing the camera when he might better direct his gaze and his thoughts to the partially obliterated warning: "Watch Your Step?"

Why did The Military Aide pose the Major General with one foot planted on the stepping-block and the other one planted on the car-step?

Was this to make sure that the Major General would be thrown flat on his face if the train moved forward or flat on his opposing surface if the train lurched backwards?

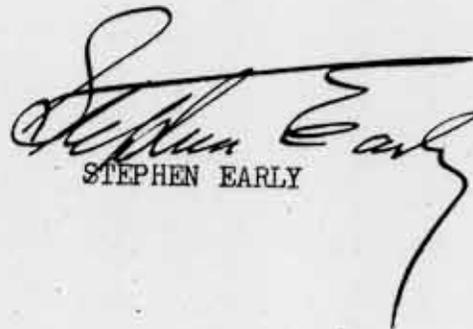
Did not The Military Aide thus place the Major General in that position of double jeopardy, which the Constitution specifically forbids?

If the case of the Major General has been settled, why not investigate the singular conduct of The Military Aide?

- 2 -

Could this not be done objectively by Naval Court Martial to be convened forthwith?

Acting Privately,

  
STEPHEN EARLY

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Hyde Park, N. Y.,  
September 28, 1936.

MEMORANDUM FOR

COLONEL WATSON

Will you find out about  
the enclosed without bringing in  
Jimmy's name, and will you return  
this directly to me and not through  
the office?

M. A. Le Hand  
PRIVATE SECRETARY

(Enclosure) Letter from Dexter Cooper,  
with enclosure from his Attorney, in  
re payment of \$10,000, balance due  
under the terms of his contract.

PSF: Watson

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*File*  
*Personal*  
*Col. Watson*  
*March 1936*

September 30, 1936.

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT

Colonel Watson says, under  
the law, he cannot be promoted  
unless he is on the eligible  
list.

G.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 17, 1936.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
COLONEL WATSON

Will you speak to me about  
this?

F. D. R.

September 19, 1936.

Respectfully returned. Colonel B.O. Davis is not on the confidential general officer eligible list prepared each year by a board of generals. I verified this personally, and under the National Defense Act of 1920 it is prescribed that all general officers of the Line be promoted from this list.



E. M. WATSON

Lieut. Colonel, F.A.  
Military Aide to The President.

Cpl. Davis

To promote to Brigadier Genl.  
or retire them?

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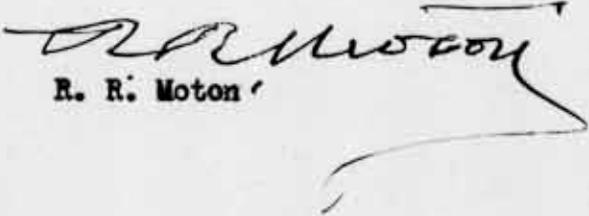
September 16, 1936

Memorandum for President Franklin D. Roosevelt

Subject: Retirement of Colonel B. O. Davis

I am making this request without the consent of Colonel B. O. Davis who has been with us at Tuskegee for some years having been assigned by the War Department as Professor of Military Science and Tactics.

In my opinion, it would be some relief to him if he were retired as Brigadier General. Such action, I am sure, would please the colored people. This action would not increase the budget of the War Department. Such an action, we are advised, is not without precedent. In the case of a colored officer this was done in the Federal militia when Colonel Dennison was retired.

  
R. R. Moton

5,  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID  
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300

Colonel E. M. Watson,  
Military Aide to the President.

PSF  
file  
Col Watson  
2: 36

October 22, 1936

Subject "Activities of Japanese Naval and Civil  
Personel in Hawaii."

President asks Col. Watson to speak to him about  
the above memo etc.

SEE--Army folder-(S) Drawer 1--1937

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

PSF  
Col Watson  
2

May 21, 1937.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
COLONEL WATSON

Will you look into  
this for me?

F. D. R.

Longhand memorandum

Woodring

Colonel Allen Gallion to be  
J. A. G. ?

Sen. Barkley

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

PSF  
Watson

CONFIDENTIAL

February 16, 1938.

MEMORANDUM FOR

COLONEL WATSON

This, on the face of it, is not a letter from a crank. He evidently has little technical ability but has a sense of humor and, on the whole, does not overstate his case. Important inventions have been made on suggestions or claims that appeared much wilder than this.

I, therefore, suggest that you talk, confidentially, with the Chief of Artillery and see whether he believes it worthwhile to rig up a simple test which in any arsenal could be made for a few hundred dollars on a very small scale.

F. D. R.

Letter from Carey DeMent, 1224 Fourth Street, New Orleans, La.,

February 16, 1938.

My dear Mr. DeMent:-

I have personally given your letter to the President and he asks me to thank you for it and to tell you that he is speaking to the proper people about it.

Very sincerely yours,

M. A. Le Hand  
PRIVATE SECRETARY

Carey DeMent, Esq.,  
1224 Fourth Street,  
New Orleans,  
Louisiana.

file  
"private"

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Watson  
2

February 24, 1938.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

I have the honor to attach hereto the letter from Mr. Carey DeMent to The President and the confidential study and report of the Chief of Ordnance regarding this letter.

Very respectfully,



EDWIN WATSON  
Colonel, F. A.,  
Military Aide to The President.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY CARBON COPY AND ADDRESSED TO

TO INSURE PROMPT ATTENTION  
IN REPLYING REFER TO

No. 400.111/5714

ATTENTION OF

WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ORDNANCE  
WASHINGTON

SECRET
<i>W. H. Tschappat</i>
Rank & Name
February 21, 1938

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL E. M. WATSON, MILITARY AIDE TO THE PRESIDENT.

1. The accompanying letter, from Mr. Carey DeMent to The President of the United States, dated February 10, 1938 (O.O.400.111/5693-DeMent, Carey-Incl. 1) has been studied. After careful consideration the Ordnance Committee recommended that the ideas presented by Mr. DeMent possess insufficient merit of military value to warrant any development by the War Department. I have approved the action of the Ordnance Committee, and recommend that no development of the ideas presented by Mr. DeMent be undertaken by the War Department.

2. To amplify this formal, technical action, the following data may be of interest in this connection:

The earliest attempts to produce such a magnetic gun were made about 1882, resulting in U. S. Patent No. 251817. A great many similar patents have since been granted.

A magnetic gun is neither theoretically nor practically useful as compared with our present modern cannon. The 12.7 pound projectile in our 3-inch antiaircraft gun, with a muzzle velocity of 2,800 feet per second and bore travel of .008 second, attains a kinetic energy of about 1,540,000 foot pounds. This is equivalent to a rate of about 326,000 horsepower.

No such rate of energy conversion from electrical to mechanical can be attained through a magnetic circuit, since the ratio of inductance to resistance, which is the time constant of a circuit, must be high to produce a powerful magnetic field. In fact, the liberation of energy in the rapid combustion of explosives is the only method that has yet been found to produce the desired result.

While the magnetic method of energy conversion, as submitted by Mr. DeMent is impracticable, there is a theoretical possibility that the high frequency discharge of a condenser through a low resistance circuit could be utilized to produce the rapid energy conversion necessary. This matter has been under study by the Ordnance Department as a secret project for some time as of possible importance for fixed gun installations, but is in no way to be confused with any magnetic circuit connection.

CLASSIFIED

DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

Date-2-19-59

Signature- *Carl S. Spicer*

*W. H. Tschappat*  
W. H. TSCHAPPAT  
Major General, Chief of Ordnance

SECRET

O. O. WAR DEPT  
460.111 5693  
FEB 17 1938  
DeMent, Carey

February 10, 1938  
New Orleans, La.

Miss Margurite LeHand  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Miss LeHand,

Please wait until you have time to read the enclosed letter in its entirety before tackling it. Feel sure you'll fully appreciate its possible significance, and consequently guard its contents with absolute secrecy, presenting it to the President at his convenience.

Yes, the article in the Post prompted me to write to you directly, as I feel that you are more than just dependable.

Awaiting your pleasure, I am,

Truly yours,

*Carey DeMent*

Carey DeMent  
1224 Fourth Street,  
New Orleans, La.

February 10, 1938

New Orleans, La.

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

Dear Mister President,

Am explaining herein a concrete idea with complete details that I believe will be worth hundreds of millions of dollars, potentially billions, to the nation and therefore of genuine interest to you. My initial statements may sound almost fantastic, but please bear with me as every claim is based on proven scientific facts, there being nothing visionary whatever.

Briefly, and to the point, the following concerns the vital matter of national defense and explains the construction and operation of a gun (an artillery piece of from 4 to 16 inches) that can be fired as rapidly as a machine gun, at a cost of only a small fraction of the expense of firing the pieces now in use, and would have a firing range of 500 miles. This sounds preposterous, I know, but please follow me for the explanation, as I'm sure of my ground having devoted many years of thought and effort to the accomplishment of this end.

O. O. WAR DEPT.  
466.111/5693  
FEB 17 1938  
J. M. I.  
McMurt. Cony

Explosives, as a propelling force for projectiles, have probably reached their peak of development, so we may forget them entirely and consider a newer, more powerful source of energy. For a number of years, electro-magnets have been used daily in the industrial centers of the East to lift enormous loads. For example, let us consider the type of electro-magnet, a pair of which, suspended from the cables of a huge crane, are lowered to the top of the sides of a gondola freight car loaded with coal. The electric current then is switched on, and the crane lifts the loaded car from its track and moves it to the desired spot where the coal is dumped. The car is then returned, the electric switch turned off, and the magnets instantly release their hold. Needless to say, these magnets exert tremendous power.

Now as an experiment, what if one of these magnets, which is approximately 2 feet in diameter and 2 feet long, were swung over a piece of iron weighing only a few hundred pounds, but before it is lowered to the iron, while still suspended a few feet above it, the electric switch is turned on. The attraction of the magnet would lift the piece of iron and draw it to its face with such terrific force that both the magnet and the iron would be shattered to bits from the violence of the impact.

But now let us drill a 6 inch hole through the magnet, perpendicular to its face, though by so doing we lessen its power to a considerable extent, and use a cylindrically shaped piece

of iron, 6 inches in diameter and 2 feet in length, which we will call the projectile. We will also erect 6 guide-rods, each 1 inch square and 4 feet long, parallel to each other and perpendicular to the magnet's face, leading to the hole in the magnet which we will designate as the bore. The guide-rods are held together by two circular bands, one near each end of the rods. Guide-rods and bands are made of a non-magnetic metal. There is a simple hand switch on the high tension line running to the magnet, which we will call the main switch. Now inlay a copper stud on the inner surface of each of two opposite guide-rods,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from the face of the magnet, and run an electric line carrying 110 volts to one of the studs and run a continuation of the line from the other stud to the high tension line that runs to the magnet. On the high tension line at this point of juncture, install an electrically operated cut off switch that will be thrown by an electrical impulse on the 110 volt line, cutting off the current by breaking the contact on the high tension line. This type of switch is in common use, so no need of a detailed description. We will now grind out a groove,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in width and  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deep, around the projectile,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from its front end, and into this groove we will place a ring, constructed and operated exactly like a piston ring around a piston. This ring we will call the contact band.

The magnet is on its side, its bore in a horizontal position. We now place the front end of the projectile in between

the guide-rods, as one would start to load a gun and turn on the main switch. The pull of the magnet draws the projectile toward its bore, faster and faster, as it slides between the guide-rods. Then just as the projectile reaches the bore, or the face of the magnet, the contact band touches the two studs, thereby completing the circuit on the 110 volt line, which act throws the cut off switch on the high tension line, cutting off the power to the magnet. But the projectile has already gained considerable velocity and so shoots through the bore on its own momentum and would, of course, go some little distance beyond.

We now have a start. Simply construct a few more electro-magnets, identical to the one considered, 10 in all, with an electrical cut off switch to be used with each. But instead of a 6 inch bore, drill a 7 inch bore through each of the 10 magnets, and grind out 6 grooves,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep and 1 inch wide, spaced equidistant, on the inner surface of the bore of each magnet and running through it from end to end. Then use 6 guide-rods, 1 inch square but 37 feet in length, instead of the 4 foot rods. Each guide-rod should be slightly concave on its inner side, from end to end, the curve being the arc of a 6 inch circle. Now, inlay 10 copper studs on the inner surface <sup>of each</sup> of two of the guide-rods, spacing the first stud 3 feet  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches from the end of its rod. All other studs 3 feet apart.

The assembly of these parts would be greatly facilitated, and accuracy assured, by using a shaft or pipe, its straightness trued to perfection, 6 inches in diameter and 38 feet long. On this shaft, slide the magnets, which are two feet long and two

feet in diameter, spacing them 1 foot apart. The guide-rods would then be slid in place between the shaft and the magnets, each of the 6 rods fitting into a groove in the bore of each magnet, the curved side of the rods turned toward the center of the bore. The two studded rods should be inserted on opposite sides. The rods would extend 4 feet back of the first magnet and 4 feet beyond the last. The ends of the rods leading to the first magnet should be flared out slightly to insure easy entry of the projectiles. Then rivet a circular band around the rods just behind each magnet and rivet each band to each rod at each point of juncture. Two additional bands should be thus fixed before the first magnet and beyond the last.

A separate lead wire is run from the high tension line to each magnet and a lead wire from the 110 volt line to each pair of studs, with a continuing wire to a switch on each high tension line, as previously described.

We now place 4 heavy metal strips, 37 feet long, to the outside of the magnets, running the full length of the gun, and bolt each strip to each magnet to hold them together. We may now remove the shaft and discard it.

But now for one important point. With the gun thus assembled, a projectile might be placed between the guide-rods at the breech, the main switch flashed on, and the gun thus fired with great success, as far as a single projectile is concerned. But let's make it a rapid fire piece.

Visualizing the course of the projectile as it passes

through the bore of the gun, the power to the first magnet is turned off as the projectile reaches its face, the contact band on the projectile touching the studs, completing the 110 volt circuit which throws the switch on the high tension line. The same thing takes place at the second magnet and likewise at the third and so on. But from the 110 volt line running from a stud in front of the third magnet, we run a line back to the switch on the high tension line of the first magnet, so that when a projectile turns off the power to the third magnet it also turns on the power to the first magnet. And thus the hook-up is made throughout the bore, the 4th being connected back to the 2nd, 5th to the 3rd etc. It is necessary to install 2 more pairs of studs, these placed beyond the last magnet, so that a projectile on leaving turns the switches of the last two magnets back on.

It would be only a question of how fast projectiles could be fed into the breech as to how fast the gun could be fired. With a motor driven conveyor of the endless chain type, the rapidity would be nothing short of phenomenal.

Now for a feature of great advantage. The rear of the projectiles would be stream-lined to the  $N^{\text{th}}$  degree, something heretofore unattainable. No need to elaborate on this point, I'm sure. Rifling of bores with the present type of blunt tailed projectiles is but a poor substitute for stream-lining.

One reason for using guide-rods instead of tubing between the magnets is to give free play for the magnetism of each magnet to exert its pull on the projectiles. The second reason

is to allow the air to escape freely around the sides of the projectiles, thereby avoiding accumulated air pressure in front of them as is the case with a solid bore. The fact that the projectiles are held clear of the bore of each magnet by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch all around helps in this respect also, though the primary reason for this arrangement is to prevent the magnets, the last few especially, from being overheated by friction of the projectiles, as would be the case were they allowed to come in direct contact with the bore.

And so here you have it. The realization of the engineer's dream. The continuous application of power in a straight line. No reverse of motion to combat as in an internal combustion engine, nor centrifugal force as in a turbine. Neither do we rely on a single application of a propelling force as in present day artillery. A projectile fired from the explosive type of piece has attained almost its muzzle velocity by the time it has gone the first 5 feet through a 30 foot bore. As an illustration, a bullet from a .32 calibre cartridge will travel almost as far when fired from a revolver with a 6 inch bore as when fired from a rifle with a 28 inch bore.

As for the maximum range of the gun, find it difficult to compute to exactness, as I can find no formula that converts the foot-pound pull of even the first magnet into feet per second of the projectile. As for the increase in the velocity of the projectile as it passes through the bore, have found from actual experiment, on a limited basis, that it is almost squarred by each magnet. Theoretically, it would be, but a deduction must be made for friction and air

resistance. At best, can only estimate, but as a most conservative calculation would say that with a current of 50,000 volts, a 6 inch gun would fire a 200 pound projectile 500 miles. As far as theory is concerned, the muzzle velocity of a projectile would approach infinity by simply adding more and more magnets. For at what velocity would a projectile have to be traveling for the tremendous pull of one of these magnets, at a very close proximity, not to increase its speed? Pardon this fanciful digression, but you get the point, I'm sure.

For anti-aircraft use we would use a projectile made with several ridges,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch high, on its surface, running its full length. These ridges in conjunction with the guide-rods would keep the projectile from turning more than a degree or two while passing through the bore. This would enable us to use a projectile made of a thin outer shell, filled with small pellets of iron or steel, constructed so that the outer shell would be discarded as the projectile leaves the muzzle, only the pellets continuing, as the shot from a shot gun. This could be effected by making the shell of separate units, like the staves of a barrel, held together at each end by a band that would be constructed by bending a small piece of flat, resilient steel into a circle to fit around the projectile and coupling its two ends together with a pin. Now since the projectile does not rotate at all, by virtue of the ridges inside the guide-rods, a lever may be constructed, on the rear of the projectile, that protrudes  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from its body. This lever would be connected to the pins holding the bands

at each end of the projectile so that when it is knocked back the pins are withdrawn, and the bands, being held under their own tension, fly apart, allowing the shell of the projectile to do likewise. Each projectile would be guided into the gun with the side on which the little lever is set turned straight up. Then on the muzzle of the gun we will fix a small metal lip, 2 inches long, extending down over the bore by  $7/16$  of an inch, so that as the projectile leaves the muzzle, the lever which protrudes up from the surface of the projectile, at its rear, by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch will strike the lip which overhangs the bore by  $7/16$  at its top, thereby releasing the pins and thus stripping the projectile of its outer shell and allowing only the shot to continue. This method would be extremely effective for anti-aircraft use because of the high muzzle velocity and rapid firing ability of the gun. The general idea would be, of course, not to rely on deadly aim and a direct hit, which is highly improbable in present day artillery, but to literally fill the air in the vicinity of oncoming aircraft with whizzing pellets so that the enemy advance would be utterly impossible. Realize that the range of this type of fire would be far less, perhaps only one tenth of that of a solid, stream-lined mass. But even so, that would be quite sufficient. This same general method would no doubt be advantageous in all forms of artillery, by simply using larger pellets loaded with a high explosive.

Trust I've not overtaxed your patience with such an extended discussion, and sincerely hope I've made my explanation clear. All specifications given are tentative, as

I fully realize the gun could be greatly enhanced by proper engineering and improved design. This is at best only a rough outline. There are of course, other methods of breaking and making contact on the high tension lines, for instance, but believe the method described above to be as good as any.

Had hoped for a long time to be able to build a real working model that would demonstrate the principal more conclusively than does a crude verbal description. But ill health for the past year and a half and consequent unemployment have me almost at a standstill, though not permanently, I'm sure, as I'm still comparatively young.

Lack the presumption to dare offer advice as to the necessity of absolute secrecy in regard to this matter. Must assure you however, that I've gone to an extreme in keeping every detail to myself. Have even refrained from consulting any individual on any phase of electricity or magnetism, as there simply isn't room for a leak of any sort. Completely destroyed the only little model I've been able to make. It wasn't much more than an experiment made with makeshift materials. Only three magnets lined up on 110 volts. But it worked. In fact, I consider it highly successful, as it proved the theories to perfection. One interesting fact that I ran upon is that although by drilling a hole through a magnet, perpendicular to its face, we lessen the lifting power of the magnet as a whole, the very hole itself that we drilled offers a stronger attraction to a piece of metal than does any other point on the face of the magnet. This sounds almost like saying that the hole is the

sweetest part of a dough-nut. But seriously, the fact is simply understood when we consider the course of the magnetic waves about the magnet. They are glad to find that hole and really rush for it, which fits in perfectly with our little scheme.

There are a few general ideas that I might add, though they are no doubt self-evident. Forinstance, the whole gun could be easily disguised by a thin metal covering over all, to make it resemble a present type of piece. Even the electric lines leading to it could be enclosed in pipes or hollow rods. Its cradle of course, would be at its middle instead of near its rear, with an excavation behind it to allow its bore to be elevated. Etc and so on.

Should I endeavor to express my estimate of you as a president and as a man, you might mistake such a eulogy for mere palavor. I prefer to let the fact that I'm placing this matter solely in your hands to be handled in whatever way you deem best, express my personal regards.

Would appreciate a reply of the briefest sort, simply to let me know you have received this letter.

So here's wishing you continued success in all your worthy endeavors!

Most respectfully yours,

*Carey DeMent*

Carey DeMent  
1224 Fourth Street,  
New Orleans, La.

PSF: Watson

Washington, D. C.  
September 3, 1938

Dear Pa:

I feel quite concerned about the status of Frank Andrews after next February when his tour of duty as Commanding General of the GHQ Air Force is completed.

Here is a man who now holds the temporary rank of Major General and because future provision has not been made for a suitable status for those who complete this assignment, he must revert to a colonelcy and be given an active assignment in that grade or retire in that grade. He is far too valuable and deserving a man for either.

As you may remember, Andrews was given this command when it was organized. This was shortly after the Air Mail attempt by the Army had indicated the necessity for some one to take the situation in hand. He inspired his subordinates by vigorous leadership, long hours on duty, and the personal example of a commander who arrived at the subordinate units of his command at any time, day or night, flying his own airplane in all kinds of weather. This new interest in combat training made itself felt down through the ranks.

A few months after taking command Andrews directed a concentration of GHQ Air Force units in southern Florida. This was accomplished in less than twenty-four hours after orders were issued. Manoeuvres each succeeding year showed continued progress in developing the fire power of the units. All types of missions were carried out both by day and by night in all kinds of weather. The round trip of a squadron of four engined bombers to Buenos Aires is an example of the efficiency of this command.

Some provision by law should be made to give the Commanding General of the GHQ Air Force the same privileges and rewards as a Chief of Branch which office is also by appointment. Andrews' responsibilities are considered as co-equal to those of a Corps Area Commander, which is also an assignment for a Major General.

May it be suggested that Andrews be continued another year in his present assignment and then he would have an opportunity for appointment as Chief of Branch. In the meantime legislation should be enacted so that the Commanding General, GHQ Air Force, would have the same retirement privileges as a Branch Chief.

Sincerely,

file  
confidential

PSF: Watson  
1-2-38

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

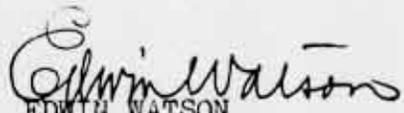
September 22, 1938.

MEMORANDUM re Major General Frank Andrews:

I attach a personal and confidential letter to me from Colonel Walsh, Air Corps, relative the status of General Frank Andrews, commanding the GHQ Air Force under a four-year detail as a Major General. This Colonel Walsh asked to do as he was interested in the fact that General Andrews would revert to a Colonel in March.

Since the tragic death of General Westover yesterday, this letter has peculiar significance. I believe Andrews' background and his recent experience in commanding the GHQ Air Force, the greatest combat unit of airplanes in the world, would make him particularly fitted to succeed Westover.

I was at West Point with Westover, Andrews, and Arnold. They are all very excellent men, and between Andrews and Arnold there is little to choose as regards their technical equipment and availability. There is, in my humble opinion, possessed by Andrews a more seasoned judgment and experience, and balanced personality. Andrews is senior to Arnold, he being Class of 1906 -- Arnold 1907. They are both approximately the same age.

  
EDWIN WATSON  
Colonel, F. A.,  
Military Aide to The President.

*file  
personal  
D. V.*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Warm Springs, Georgia  
November 27, 1938

CONFIDENTIAL MEMO FOR COLONEL WATSON

I am told that Colonel James  
Collins of the Artillery is a good man.  
Has he a chance for promotion to Brigadier?

F. D. R.

December 8, 1938.

Respectfully returned -- I have known this officer since West Point. He is an excellent man and was Aide-de-camp to General Pershing during the war. General Craig, in his attached memorandum, seems to think his time has not yet arrived for promotion but will soon, and promised most serious consideration.

*Edwin M. Watson*

EDWIN M. WATSON

Colonel, F.A.

Military Aide to The President.

MC

WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

CONFIDENTIAL

December 7, 1938

MEMORANDUM for Colonel Watson:

Colonel James L. Collins, Field Artillery, is the last officer of the Army who was close to General Pershing during the World War who has not been promoted.

Colonel Collins is a very junior colonel, but he has been on the Eligible List practically ever since he has been a colonel (approximately two years). His name has heretofore been carefully considered, but he was not recommended because of his junior position and the fact that some of the men whom he would have jumped had records perhaps better than that of his own.

When the next vacancies occur, which will be February 1st, 1939, the record and eligibility of Colonel Collins will receive careful consideration. General Pershing is extremely interested in this officer and I am of the opinion that he spoke to the President recently about him.

*Gray*  
Chief of Staff.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

DECLASSIFIED

DOD DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

Date- 2-19-59

Signature- *Carl L. Spicer*

MY

*PSF  
Watson*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*file  
personal*

September 29, 1938.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The outstanding Colonel of the Coast Artillery is probably the present Executive Officer, Colonel Joseph A. Green.

He is on the Eligible List and the one referred to by General Craig as being too old. He was born January, 1881, and if appointed now would have several months to serve before reaching the age of fifty eight, which I understand has been accepted as the minimum for a Brigadier General.

Very respectfully,

*Edwin M. Watson*  
EDWIN M. WATSON  
Colonel, F. A.

Military Aide to The President.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

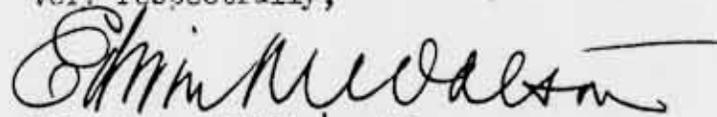
September 28, 1938.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

I respectfully submit that the recommendations of the War Department be adjusted so that General Andrews would become the Chief of the Air Corps and General Arnold would become Commanding General, GHQ Air Force for the following reasons:

1. General Andrews has commanded the GHQ Air Force since its creation in 1935. He understands what must be done by the Chief of the Air Corps organization to make this important part of our national defense an efficient fighting force and he, Andrews, is prepared to do these things at once.
2. He is senior to General Arnold. He (Andrews) is more even tempered and less impulsive than General Arnold, and in my opinion has better judgment. His selection would be popular with the Air Corps officers, and he would have their loyal support.
3. General Arnold is particularly qualified to command the GHQ Air Force. He is by temperament the type most suitable to command duty. His experience as Assistant Chief of the Air Corps would enable him as the GHQ Commander to cooperate intelligently and efficiently with General Andrews.

Very respectfully,

  
Col. F.A., Military Aide.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT.

I call attention to the fact that in the recommendation Colonel Maxwell Murray to be brigadier general, the entire classes of 1905 and of 1906 are eliminated. These two classes contain outstanding men. I have particular reference to Colonels Sherman Miles, Cortlandt Parker, and DeRussy Hoyle. These three officers have a general efficiency rating superior to that of Colonel Murray. I give the actual ratings, based on a maximum of 7.00:

Miles	6.96
Hoyle	6.94
Parker	6.48
Murray	6.16

It would in my humble opinion be unfortunate if these three officers should be passed by a junior officer with a lower rating. The morale factor would be bad for the Field Artillery branch.

Miles	Born	December 1882	(1905)
Parker		December 1884	(1906)
Hoyle		September 1883	(1906)
Murray		June 1885	(1907)

This report pertains only to the Field Artillery, my own branch, with which I am already familiar. I would like a couple more days to study the situation in the Coast Artillery, Engineers, and Cavalry.

Very respectfully,

  
Edwin M. Watson,  
Colonel, F.A.,  
Military Aide to the President.

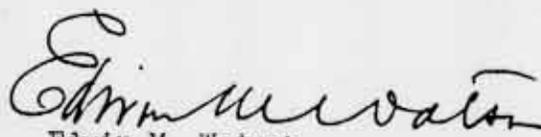
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 28, 1938

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

A recommendation that Colonel Shedd, Coast Artillery be promoted Brigadier General, would eliminate the Class of 1906, Colonel Shedd being 1907. There are two men in the class of 1906 -- Colonel Green and Colonel Williford, who are outstanding. To pass over these men would, in my opinion, be bad for the morale of the Coast Artillery Corps.

Very respectfully,



Edwin M. Watson  
Colonel, F.A.  
Military Aide to the President

PSF  
Wahorn  
12-1946

ARMY AND NAVY MUNITIONS BOARD

All reports from the Above Board, which forms part of the General Board, on the following subject:  
FOREIGN INQUIRIES FOR PRODUCTION OF MUNITIONS outlined by Col Charles Hines, Chairman, Clearance Commission for Louis Johnson.

See: Raw File(War Dept folder)Drawer 4-1939

file  
personal  
A-2

PSF  
Watson

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 11, 1939

Memorandum For The President.

Dear Mr. President:

After our conversation this morning I went immediately to see General Craig and he has held up any retirement until an expression is given him from the White House to proceed.

In other words General Craig now states the only irregularity would be in retiring before a year without going before a retirement board. However, he says I can serve on as a General on the active list until I request retirement.

Your suggestion as to detailing me, worded in the same way that Harrington's designation was, would seem to fit the case perfectly and could be done immediately or at your convenience.

Very respectfully,

  
Edwin M. Watson

*file  
Confidential*

*d. ✓*

*BF  
Watson  
2*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 22, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Pursuant to your instructions I have had a conference with the Chief of Staff, General Craig; the Judge Advocate General, General Gullion; and the Chief of the Military Intelligence Division, Colonel McCabe.

General Craig stated: "I will at once communicate with the Commander, Fourth Corps Area, to prevent any access to the Fourth Corps Area records on the part of General Moseley, or to obtain any copies or data in any of these records." Since this statement by General Craig, he has phoned me that it has been accomplished, and he has also made the prohibition apply to any personal files that may be at Headquarters.

General Gullion stated: "In my opinion it would be an unwarranted search and seizure in violation of the Constitution for any representative of the Army or of the President to seize forcibly or by stealth the private papers of General Moseley now in his home or on his person. What powers the Dies Committee may have regarding such seizures, I do not know. There is no objection to the action which General Craig has just stated he intends taking.

"I shall immediately undertake a study of all matter which I can have made available to me by the Dies Committee. I shall also at once study all files relating to General Moseley in the War Department with a view to seeing what offenses denounced by the Articles of War he may have committed. If permitted by Mr. Dies, I shall have a representative before his committee to watch the proceedings with a view to learning other details of General Moseley's activities. If the presence of my representative is denied by Mr. Dies, I shall obtain the copies of the proceedings of the committee as soon as they are available and make a special effort to get those copies at the earliest possible date."

Colonel McCabe stated that a thorough search will be made of the files of the Military Intelligence Division, and any relating to the activities of General Moseley will be turned over to the Chief of Staff in the morning.

I have asked Mr. James Rowe to immediately get in touch with the Department of Justice and find out what, if any, powers the Dies Committee has to get these private papers.

This is the present status of the investigation.

Respectfully,

*E.M.W.*  
E.M.W.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*PSF  
Watson*

June 3, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR

PA

Will you tell Congressman Smith that the British had to make a rule not to accept presents on their trip? However, I suggest you tell Little Lord Fauntleroy, the King's Equerry, about it, and, at the same time, explain to Lady Godiva that I am accepting the copy offered to me. Perhaps the King's copy could be sent to Buckingham Palace.

F. D. R.

PSF

Watson

January 4, 1940

MEMO FOR GENERAL WATSON FROM JAMES ROWE, JR.

Encloses memo for the President

Re-Senator Guffey and the reappointment of Tom  
Woodward as Maritime Commissioner etc etc.

See:Senate folder(Jan 4-1940 memo from Rowe)Drawer 2-1940

BF return  
2  
1940

Letter to General Watson From Welles--January 5, 1940.

Enclosing despatch No 539 of Nov 28, 1939 from Ambassador  
Davies in Brussels. who reports conversations he had  
with Prime Minister Peirlot and Foreign Minister Spaak.

See: Belgium folder-Drawer 1-1939

PSF Watson  
4-40

Memorandum from General Watson for the President--Jan 5, 1940.

Enclosing summary on FINLAND given him by Minister Procope.

See:Finland-Drawer 4-1940

PSF Watson  
2

Jan 9, 1940

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL WATSON FROM D. J. CALLAGHAN

Re-President Quezon's despatch to Thornycroft Co of  
England to waive contractual delivery of two motor torpedo boats  
just completed for the Commonwealth Gov, which leaves gate open  
for negotiations between Finnish Embassy in London and Thornycroft.  
Procops has been advised.

See:For the above memo--See:Navy--Drawer 1-1940

Copy

PSF Watson

January 10, 1940.

My dear General Watson:

I am enclosing a copy of Ambassador Biddle's strictly confidential despatch No 5 of November 29, 1939 which was marked for the President.

In this despatch the discontinuance of the protection of Polish interests in Germany by the Swedish Legation at Berlin is reported.

Sincerely yours,

Sumner Wells

Enclosure:

From Angers, No 5,  
November 29, 1939

For despatch--See Poland folder--Drawer 4-1939

*PSF Watson*  
January 19, 1940.

Memorandum for General Watson from Roberta Barrows 1-19-40

Re-Attached memo dictated to her over the telephone by Jesse Jones.

Subject: Finland's debt and Russian Gold Bars which were bought in Nov and Dec.

See: Jesse Jones-Gen corres-Drawer 2-1940

PSF Watson  
2

Memorandum to General Watson from Marshall-War Dept- Jan 29, 1940

Re-Message which he meant for Admiral Stark which went to

Admiral Byrd having been relayed wrongly by operator who read

Stark as Stork and stork being a bird, he sent it to Admiral

Byrd in Little America.

See: Navy folder-Drawer 1-1940 (Dan Callaghan's memo of Feb 7-40)

PSF  
Watson  
2

February 1, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR MISS PERKINS:

The President encloses letter to General Watson 1/26/40 from Messersmith who enclosed memo of resume of conversation which member of staff in Mexico had with Diego Rivera, Mural Painter, with regard to alleged financial aid given by Mr. John Lewis of the CIO to Mexican Labor Organization.

See: Labor folder-Drawer 1-1940

BSF water

March 5, 1940.

Conf Memo to "Naval Person" (American Embassy-London)

From the President

Attached is memo to President from Adolph Berle-March 5, 1940  
Re: President's message to Naval Person

See:Berle---Drawer 1-1940

BSF Watson

MEMORANDUM TO SECRETARY WOODRING FROM THE PRESIDENT-March 11, 1940

Re: Railroad bridges across the Potomac in case the one in existence now should be blown up--could tracks be laid across Georgetown or Memorial bridges etc?

Woodring's reply of April 12, 1940 to above memo with the map of Potomac River and data for possible expedients on the KEY BRIDGE--MEMORIAL--14th STREET BRIDGE is attached.

General Watson's memo to the President of March 9, 1940 is attached.

See: Raw File-Drawer 4-1939

PSF Watson

March 14, 1940.

Memo for the President from General Watson

Re:Phone call from LaGuardia who understood that  
Hall Roosevelt got impression when talking to  
him that he was critical of the A.A.A. Mayor  
says, on the contrary etc etc.

See:LaGuardia-Gen Corres-Drawer 2-1940 for memo

PSF  
Watson  
~

March 18, 1940

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Benedict:

Here is your original letter, my memorandum to the President and your recent letter. The President has seen this but he is the only one who has seen it.

Yours,

EDWIN M. WATSON  
Secretary to the President

Brigadier General Jay L. Benedict,  
Superintendent,  
United States Military Academy,  
West Point, New York.

Enclosure. (Letter from General Benedict dated March 6, 1940 re change in Superintendency at West Point, Memo to the President dated March 6, 1940 and letter from General Benedict dated March 11, 1940.)

Copy

Headquarters  
United States Military Academy  
West Point, New York

March 11, 1940

Brigadier General E. M. Watson,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Pa:

I know you have a hard job but that it has some compensations is evidenced by a Washington Post picture of March 9th!!

When I returned here I checked on the record of Wilson. He was on duty here for six years as executive officer, about three years with General W. R. Smith and his last three years with General W. D. Connor.

I hope you have destroyed the memo I left with you. It might be interpreted as irregular whereas the last thing I would think of would be either to be, or appear to be, disloyal to Secretary Woodring. My only purpose in submitting the memo was to respond to your request for information. In fact I hope it will not become known that we even discussed the subject as such happenings are so frequently misinterpreted.

When the matter we discussed is settled I hope you can find a moment to drop me a line.

I am inclosing some orders recently issued that should be of interest to an old grad.

As ever,

JAY L. BENEDICT,  
Brigadier General,  
Superintendent.

2 incs.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Copy

March 6, 1940

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

I asked General Benedict for  
a statement of the situation at West  
Point re a change in the Superintendency.  
It is attached hereto.

I thought you should see this  
before the Secretary of War broaches the  
subject at Cabinet meeting.

E. M. W.

Copy

March 6, 1940

Dear Pa:

I deeply appreciate your telling me that there was some move on foot to transfer me from the Military Academy. I am, of course, ready to perform to the best of my ability any duty to which I may be assigned, but I hope that in reaching any decision some of the reasons why I feel that I should stay at the Military Academy will be given consideration. Personal considerations have nothing to do with these reasons. They are based solely upon what I consider to be for the good of the service and the Academy.

I have been at the Academy for two years. It took me about a year to become thoroughly oriented and to determine what changes I thought would be beneficial and how they could be put into effect. Many minor changes along the lines of liberalization and improved training have been made but the major changes that should be made are still in process.

First: The Academic ward is engaged under my direction in a complete study of the curriculum with a view to such revision as is necessary to meet modern conditions. I fear that much of the work already done would be lost under a change in superintendents.

Second: The training programs pertaining to all arms are now in process of being revised in consultation with Chiefs of Arms.

Third: A revision of regulations is in process and my primary purpose being to eliminate much of what I consider to be unnecessary rigidity

in the life and handling of Cadets. In this connection, on the first of March I put into effect some regulations lifting many restrictions upon first classmen and granting the additional privileges with the view of facilitating their transition from Cadets to officers. The nature of this change you can probably appreciate from the fact that locally at West Point the first classmen are now being referred to as Third Lieutenants.

I do not mean to infer that any other liberal-minded superintendent might not accomplish as much or even more than I can accomplish but I have already made the ground-work and I am making much progress and I cannot help but feel from my own experience that any other man coming in would either abandon what I have started or postpone any further action until he had served the year or more that would be necessary to become thoroughly oriented.

Personally, as I have said, I am ready to do anything or serve anywhere I am needed. My big interest is in the Military Academy. I feel that if any changes are desirable it is not material to me that they should be accomplished in my administration but my big desire is that they should be accomplished. I fear that a change at this time would result at the very least in delay in their accomplishment.

On the other hand, if my tendencies and objectives do not meet with favor the sooner I am sent away the better.

Sincerely,

/s/ Benedict.

PSF  
Watson

Memo to President from General Watson---March 26, 1940.

Re:phone call from Jimmy Byrnes about previous idea of his for Sec Hull to speak to the President about advisability of putting a little pressure on Schwellenbach, etc, etc.

See:Senate folder-Drawer 2-1940

BF  
Waleson  
2

April 4, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL WATSON FROM SUMNER WELLES:

Enclosing despatch from Ambassador Biddle of Feb 28, 1940 re attached copy and translation of authenticated copy of confidential instruction recently issued to the press in Germany and German occupied Poland, by the German propaganda Ministry.

Minister Zaleski gave the copy to Amb Biddle and informed him in strictest confidence that it had been secured and forwarded to him by Prince Janusz Radziwill.

See: France folder-Drawer 4-1940(April 4, 1940 letter)

PSF: Watson

LETTER TO GENERAL WATSON FROM EDGAR HOOVER-April 11, 1940

Re:Vincente Lombardo Toledano who is head of the Confederation of Mexican workers and whose organization is going to publicly protest against "Yankee Imperial Government on April 11, 1940.

See:Edgar Hoover-Drawer 1-1940

COPY

PSF  
Valson

April 15, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Stanley Woodward of the State Dept informs me that your message to MacKenzie King has been delivered, and that MacKenzie King will write you from Virginia Beach directly to the President.

See: Canada-Drawer 4-1940 (for original memo)

E.M.W.

*file  
personal.*

*Watson  
2  
PSF*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

8-27-40

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Confirming my report to you, Congressman Murdock of Utah 'phoned that he had long distance conversation with Smith and Smith will not resign. Murdock says, however, that Smith assured him that he, Smith, would not object to the President reappointing Madden with the statement that he, Smith, would not be reappointed at the expiration of his present term.

E. M. W.

PSF-Watson  
2

Memo to FDR from General Watson--Oct 4, 1940

Re: Lord Lothian leaving on his Mission of which the  
President is aware.

See: Great Britain-Drawer 4-1940

PSF Watson

Memo from General Watson to Sumner Welles--Oct 8, 1940

Enclosing letter from Minturn R. Sedgwick (which was sent to the President by Catherine Grant) for his information.

See: Sedgwick-Gen corres-Drawer 3-1940

BF  
Watson  
2

Memo to General Watson from Edgar Hoover Oct 9, 1940  
transmitting memo dated Oct 9, 1940 pertaining to the improvement of Mexican west  
coast ports and the construction of the Mexican oil pipeline.

See: Edgar Hoover folder-Drawer 1-1940

PSF

Watson

FDR memo of Oct 10th 1940 to General Watson to tell Hamilton Fish Armstrong to keep quiet for the moment on what he ought to reply to Premier Sikorski and Foreign Minister Zaleski.

See: Armstrong-Gen corres-Drawer 2-1940

PSF

Watson  
~

Re:---Memo from L. Mellett to FDR 10/12/40  
Thinks it might be serious error to  
delay draft etc. FDR's memo to Watson  
to talk to Mellett--Watson's reply that  
he told Mellett that FDR would take up  
with Dykstra when he reports for duty.

See:Draft folder-Drawer 1-1940(Oct 15th memo)

PSF

Watson  
2

Letter to General Watson from Morgenthau--October 14, 1940

Encloses conf letter to him from Sir Walter Layton  
10/11/40 with attached summary of supplies needed to complete British Army's program;  
also document (Secret) containing information of very secret character--only 4 copies made--  
one for FDR, Stimson Knox and Morgenthau. Asks that no others be made--this correspondence  
is attached to a previous report of 10/2/40 which gives picture of British Supply  
position and supplements in detail orders transmitted to British Purchasing Commission.

For the above corres-----See:Morgenthau-Drawer 1-1940(Oct 14th letter)