

SECRET

Papal Nuncio.
Memorandum.

On 14 November 1940 the Papal Nuncio in Madrid visited the Ambassador. At this meeting he informed Sir Samuel that he had been requested to communicate the following peace offer on the behalf of the German Government representative the Ambassador met last July at the home of Beigbeder (APA representative Haushofer), when the last round of peace offers were made.

The Nuncio informed the Ambassador of the German Government's sincere wish to end the hostilities, and that he had been asked to hand the following details for transmission to a party who would be willing to act upon them:-

- (1) A confidential meeting as soon as possible in Switzerland between the representatives who are prepared to negotiate, to arrange a more formal conference at a later date.
- (2) Once the conference details have been agreed, then a meeting to take place between to parties to discuss Poland, guarantees, non-aggression pacts, disarmament, colonies, frontiers, the transfer of populations, and an end to hostilities.

The views of the German Government on the subjects detailed in (2) were as follows:-

The negotiating parties to meet on neutral territory under the stewardship of a neutral state, such as Switzerland or the United States of America.

Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and France would be independant free states, able to choose their constitution and government; but opposition to Germany must be excluded and assurances of non-retaliation given. Germany would withdraw her military forces, would not claim military concessions in these countries, and is prepared to negotiate a form of reparation for damage inflicted during conquest.

All aggressive weapons to be destroyed and then armed forces reduced to correspond with the economic and strategic requirements of each country.

Germany requests a return of her former colonies but would advance no other territorial claims. South-west Africa, might not be claimed. Germany might consider the payment of an indemnity for improvements effected in the colonies since 1918, and the purchase of property from present owners who might desire to leave.

The political independence and national identity of "a Polish state" to be restored, but the territory occupied by the Soviet Union is to be excluded from discussions. Czechoslovakia would not be prevented from developing her national character, but is to remain under the protection of the Reich.

Greater European economic solidarity should be pursued, and the solution of important economic questions solved by negotiation and national European agreement.

The Nuncio added to these details that the APA representative had informed him that Hitler's desire for peace was based on the principal that he wished there to be "no victor or vanquished" stigma applied to any of the negotiating parties, and that any agreement reached would have to be validated by a plebiscite in all countries affected by an agreement.

The Ambassador was informed that the Head of the German negotiating delegation wished for a meeting at the earliest opportunity to discuss the offer.

At the end of the meeting the Nuncio informed the Ambassador that a negotiated conclusion to the European conflict would have the full support of his Holiness the Pope, and that he had been informed that the Vatican would be willing to participate if further mediation were required.

G.A.H.

17th November, 1940.