

TEXT OF MESSAGE FROM HIS MAJESTY'S
GOVERNMENT TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

At this critical moment in the Mediterranean campaign when the destinies of Syria and French North Africa are at stake, His Majesty's Government make a new appeal to the French Government to join with them in repelling the danger before it is too late, and in seizing an opportunity which may never recur.

The threat to Syria is now imminent; that to North Africa and West Africa hardly less so. Pressure upon Spain is increasing and we understand that the French Government may expect a request for passage of German forces across unoccupied France to the Spanish frontier.

Unless these threats are resisted and these requests refused, and if French Government allow the Germans or Italians to use these territories for operations against ourselves, France will have been forced from capitulation to collaboration and from collaboration to participation in the war and will suffer from both sides and gain nothing. Such participation would constitute a departure from the condition of passive capitulation in which France received from us our guarantee to restore her independence and greatness. It would be impossible for us to maintain in any respect the distinction we have hitherto drawn between unoccupied and occupied France in the execution of our military and economic plans.

If on the other hand the French Government would effectively resist these encroachments we should give them the utmost assistance in our power. It should be possible to hold Syria against any forces

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which the Axis could bring against it in the near future. French and British fleets acting together in the Eastern Mediterranean could cut the Axis communications with Africa and make a descent upon Syria a matter of grave hazard to the enemy and invaluable bases would be available to us. French resistance and renewed Franco British collaboration would go far to prevent the dangers which the French at present fear.

BRITISH EMBASSY,

WASHINGTON, D.C.

29th April, 1941