

SECRET

AIDE MEMOIRE.

His Majesty's Ambassador has been instructed to request the United States Government to be so good as to transmit through the United States Ambassador in Vichy the attached message from His Majesty's Government to the French Government. His Majesty's Government regard it as most important that the message should be delivered to Marshal Petain personally; they do not consider that any useful purpose would be served by its transmission to Admiral Darlan.

His Majesty's Government have been moved to make this approach to the French Government by the apparent inability of the French authorities to arrest the German infiltration into North Africa and by the possibility that the French Government may be constrained to allow German troops to pass through unoccupied France on their way to Spain. It is understood that the United States Government have also received information to this effect. His Majesty's Government are also preoccupied by the imminence of threats to Syria.

In this situation His Majesty's Government feel bound to make a further effort to stimulate the French Government and the French overseas territories to make an effort of resistance before it is too late.

The message from His Majesty's Government to the French Government represents all that the British authorities themselves are able to do in order to arrest the deterioration in the French situation. His Majesty's Government would greatly value anything that the United

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States Government could say to the French Government from themselves and any steps that they could take. The United States Government can speak with authority at Vichy and exercise great influence on the French Government. They have a special interest in French North and West Africa and His Majesty's Government feel that they alone can save the situation there. His Majesty's Government have noted with much appreciation the steps which the United States Government have been taking at Vichy to move the French Government from their attitude of passive acquiescence and they hope that the American authorities will persevere in these efforts. Indeed His Majesty's Government hope that the United States Government will feel able to go further and to arrange for some units of the United States Fleet to visit Dakar and Casablanca. Such visits, which should have a steadying effect on the situation, would be in line with the proposed visits of certain United States warships to the Portuguese Atlantic Islands.

In any case, His Majesty's Government trust that the United States Government will be prepared to instruct their Ambassador when communicating the British message to Marshal Petain, to make it clear that they themselves entirely share the sentiments which have inspired this message. Such an indication of the views of the United States Government would be of great value.

As soon as His Majesty's Government know that

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Marshal Petain has received the message they propose to arrange for copies of it to be conveyed to General Weygand and General Dentz. They would also propose to inform the Turkish Government of the message and would hold themselves free to publish the gist of it.