

General Bradley stating publicly in Paris that the Western Powers would be "better off" to include Spain as well as Greece and Turkey in NATO. (1) The State Department assured our Embassy that the General spoke "from a strictly military point of view" and that no steps would be taken without consultation with the U.K. and French Governments. In the meantime the assessment of Spanish military capacities and requirements would continue. In July the Washington Embassy learned that the U.S. Government intended to consult the United Kingdom and France on the possible security and economic arrangements which might provide the basis for a bilateral agreement with Spain. Shortly afterwards, the Ambassadors of those countries were told that, subject to consultation with their Governments, the U.S. Government proposed to approach the Spanish Government with a request for naval and air facilities in Spain and Spanish Morocco in exchange for economic aid and assistance in developing airfields of interest to them and communications. Military equipment would not be made available at present and no assurances would be given for the future. As Earncliffe informed the Department on September 19, 1951, the United Kingdom strongly opposed this policy on both moral and material grounds. It believed that the admission to Western ranks of Franco's Spain would have the result of dangerously weakening the ideological foundations of the Atlantic Pact and would seriously impair Western morale "if the idea were to spread that Europe was to be defended from the Pyrenees". For material reasons it was highly undesirable to have United States arms and equipment diverted to Spain from the urgent needs of more deserving countries. For these reasons the United Kingdom proposed to make it clear to the United States that the Spanish question was a matter "on which the United Kingdom feels very strongly indeed". The French Government also registered disapproval. The anxiety of the United Kingdom was not lessened by the visit of Admiral Sherman to Spain. The State Department informed all NATO countries on August 3 that there was no proposal for the inclusion of Spain in NATO, no proposals had been advanced for an alliance, and no requests had been made for U.S. bases. The latter statement was qualified by the statement that negotiations had been restricted to "arrangements for facilities for the U.S. Air Force and Navy in Spain". By September a U.S. Service mission was in Spain to survey the existing airfields and anchorages to see what alterations and additions would be required, and an economic mission followed later.

135. It would certainly be putting it far too luridly to suggest that these developments have tended to "poison" relations among NATO countries, which had been described as Canada's prime concern when the talks first began. Since the failure of their overtures in July, the United Kingdom has taken the line that, if the United States chose to treat these talks as a purely local matter and on a bilateral basis, there was nothing to prevent such a course of action. Similarly, France appears to have lodged no further protest against U.S.-Spanish discussions.

---

(1) In March, Canada House learned from the Foreign Office that the United Kingdom considered the inclusion of Spain in NATO as a "non-starter". A Departmental memorandum, of April 17, declared that the admission of Spain would "greatly stretch the fabric of the North Atlantic alliance", and that the element of timing was much less urgent in the case of Spain than was true of Greece and Turkey.