

State to understand that Switzerland would take over British interests after Rio de Janeiro Conference. Lord Halifax now asks for further instructions.

Meanwhile Foreign Office have consulted British Embassy, Buenos Aires which reported on March 2nd that:

- (a) Swiss appear also to be in charge of Japanese interests in London;
- (b) Swiss Government have apparently bowed meekly to Japanese expulsion of their Consular officers at Hong Kong and elsewhere;
- (c) That with only a Minister and assistant at Tokyo it seems doubtful whether they can cope with British as well as United States interests;
- (d) Consequently the Swiss Government seems to be using the Japanese Legation in Berne who may not pass on inconvenient representations.

On the other hand Argentine Government have

- (a) Handled British enquiries promptly and championed British interests in Tokyo with energy;
- (b) Announced publicly their representations to Japan both at Tokyo and at Buenos Aires on behalf of civilian and military prisoners at Hong Kong.

British Embassy, Buenos Aires, go on to say that the Canadian Government have signified their desire not to change their representation until and unless the Argentine Government expressly wished this to be done.

British Embassy are further convinced that United States Ambassador, Buenos Aires, already realizes no action on the part of the British or even United States pressure can shake the Argentine Government's determination to remain neutral until they have seen how Germany and Japan fare during coming summer offensives.

British Embassy therefore suggest that before asking Argentine Government to give up British interests, it would be advisable to make sure Switzerland has at least equal machinery and desire to force Axis hand over question of British prisoners and other British subjects in the Far East, including now, it would seem the Americans.

Although further instructions have not yet been sent to British Ambassador, Washington, it seems likely that in the long run United Kingdom authorities will feel that they must give way, however reluctantly, to American pressure in this matter.

MASSEY

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*Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures au ministre en Argentine*  
*Secretary of State for External Affairs to Minister in Argentina*

TELEGRAM 42

Ottawa, March 6, 1942

Your telegram No. 45 of March 2.<sup>1</sup> We have informed the Canadian High Commissioner, London, of the instructions sent in my telegram No. 55 of De-