

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
SECRET FILE

C194465

NAR/SR
25.2.44

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

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Since preparing the attached memorandum and draft reply to Kearney, we have received his further detailed report of his interview with De Valera. It was obviously a difficult interview, and I think Kearney conducted himself very wisely.

I am sure De Valera's fears that some ulterior motive underlay the United States-United Kingdom initiative are groundless. I cannot, at this stage of the war, see any military objective which would begin to justify the occupation of an unfriendly Ireland.

I would say rather that the United Kingdom and the United States now feel in a position to put pressure on the remaining neutrals to complete the isolation of the Axis countries, and perhaps shorten the war. The diplomatic pressure presently being put upon Argentina, Sweden, Portugal, Spain and Turkey probably provides a clue to this latest United Kingdom-United States approach to the Irish Government. De Valera's fear that it is a prelude to invasion seems to be grotesque.

I agree with Kearney that we should not endeavour to secure the withdrawal of the United States and United Kingdom notes, but I think there is a good deal of merit in his suggestion that we might urge the United Kingdom and the United States to keep secret the fact that they have made an unsuccessful diplomatic approach to the Irish Government. I cannot see any advantage whatever in

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