

Portugal

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AMENDED DISTRIBUTION (10th May, 1944)

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on.]

[CYPHER] WAR CABINET DISTRIBUTION

FROM LISBON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir R. Campbell.  
No. 815.

D: 2.00 p.m. GMT 9th May, 1944.

9th May, 1944.

R: 4.28 p.m. DBST 9th May, 1944.

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MOST IMMEDIATE

My telegrams Nos. 811, 813 and 814.

I fear we can only infer that Salazar's obstinacy remains unshaken as regards embargo. I have little doubt that our own efforts to bring him to reason supported by those of the Brazilian Government and of General Smuts and the intervention (so far as it went) of President Carmona will have decided Dr. Salazar to go to what he will regard as the furthest possible limit in the way of reduction of German quota. If he were not the man he is, he might yet retain some measure of British goodwill whilst preserving his principle and saving his face by reducing German quota to a purely symbolical figure. I doubt however whether having decided not to go the whole hog he will take this course.

2. When he sends for me he will presumably announce the extent of the reduction he has decided on. If I see him before you have had time to get specific instructions to him [sic: ? to me] and decision is unsatisfactory, I propose to go over the ground with him once more; make a particularly urgent appeal to him on humanitarian grounds (prolongation of the war in all its aspects) and for the sake of the alliance; and then beg him not to make public a decision which will let loose a storm of indignation in England and must lead inevitably to consequences of the gravest character until you have had time to communicate with him once more.

3. This might be the moment for a personal letter from the Prime Minister (with which the Dominion Ministers might perhaps associate themselves) warning Dr. Salazar of the consequences which must follow if he maintains his decision. There is perhaps an off-chance that it may move him where other methods have failed.

4. Before however that course is adopted, we must decide what steps would be taken and carried through if it failed and whether we should stand to gain or lose in the long run.

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