

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

700
Rehabilitation program

FROM: JHW

DATE: November 24, 1947

TO:

WW		ww
RBF		RBF
JHW		JHW

COMMENTS:

APR 4 '950

SUBJECT: RF and Germany

I write this memorandum for two reasons:

1. From a talk with WW I gather that his real views are quite different from the views which some of us understood him to have in his talks at the discussion of the Mann report last winter and at the Havighurst meeting last week. I want to state my own impression of his views so as to give him a chance to allay my misapprehensions and discover the common ground of agreement which, I am sure, exists.

2. I want to be sure from my point of view that, on this issue, RF does not reverse its basic policy and reason for being, - the serving of "human welfare throughout the world."

From the Mann meeting and the Havighurst meeting, I got these impressions of WW's attitude:

1. That he thinks of the German nation as a monolithic whole, all of whose numbers are to be thought of as sharing equally in Nazi guilt and to be dealt with as a unit.

2. That, at the Mann meeting, it was clear that his policy toward this monolithic German group would be of the Old Testament variety, - with their continued suffering an accepted result. At the Havighurst meeting, the expression of this extreme view was somewhat softened but I still felt that it was implicit. Following the luncheon with the Hindu, Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, WW completely disowned the Old Testament as his guide in this matter.

3. That WW was willing, perhaps because the amenities called on us to make a gesture toward German reconstruction, to send some minor help but nothing that assumed that a rebuilding in Germany of a new intellectual life and culture of any depth was a legitimate objective.

If these are WW's real views, - and I, for one, am sure they do not represent the real WW, - then I think the position is dead wrong on these grounds:

1. Morals.
2. Our own self-interest.
3. The effect of our American policies on ourselves.

Morals

Without discussion, I submit these propositions:

1. The New Testament offers a better basis for human relations in society than the Old Testament.
2. The spirit (not the task) of the American Friends' Service Committee is a better guide for RF policy than is the War Department.
3. Thinking in terms of monolithic groups blots out thinking in terms of individual human beings, - where the ultimate questions of guilt and innocence and re-creation lie.
4. The youth under twenty, - who will be the Germans of tomorrow and determine their conduct, - should not be treated as of one color with the guilty Nazi elders.
5. The task of scholarship (and of religion) is always to discriminate and to lead into the future.

Our Own Self-Interest

1. America and the world have a stake in a prosperous Europe.
2. As General Marshall has said, a productive Germany is essential to a prosperous Europe and to world peace.
3. It is to our interest, and the interest of world peace, not to drive Germany into new totalitarian ways but to lead her away from such habits, if we can.
4. Modern penology recognizes the place of punishment, but puts the emphasis on reform.
5. In this unpeaceful world particularly, America needs friends, else she may become, as Tawney has suggested, "just an island off the coast of Kamchatka."
6. For the realization of these goals, an honest intellectual life must slowly be developed in Germany; a policy animated by mere negation will serve only negative ends.

The Effects of Our Policies on Ourselves

I suggest the following:

1. The most important thing about our American policies is the effect they have on ourselves.

2. War does evil things to the victors as well as to the vanquished, and they are subtly evil things.

3. What would Lord Acton say our victory had done, or might do, to us Americans? Would he remind us:

- a. That we are becoming too preoccupied with the instrumentalities of power and are developing too much faith in power?
- b. That we are becoming so "top-dog minded" that we are in danger of becoming:
 - i. Insensitive to the values on which survival ultimately depends?
 - ii. Insensitive to the differences and needs in individual human beings?
 - iii. Uncritical of ourselves and critical only of those who differ with us?
 - iv. Able to see only black and white and never the grays in between?
- c. That the prestige and independence of our learning is being endangered by a too-close identification with political and military power?

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Now, Warren, I have used your position (and exaggerated it) in order to provide a clothes-horse on which to hang my views and to provoke you into setting me and the record and RF policy straight in a counter-memorandum.

But RF should be the most sensitive agency of all to the ethical values in social policy and human culture. I am sure that WW would agree to this basis for our policy.

JHW
J. H. W.

JHW:LKH

P.S.: I don't need to say, after what I said at the meeting, that I am not arguing for a grandiose program for Germany. Only for one in proportion, but with positive objectives. And I don't think we ought to strengthen the faculty men whose minds are of yesterday. *And I condemn the Nazis as severely as any, - + their leaders should be punished.*