

# Kennedy Says Kent Gave Nazis Full Data On British Position Reveals Embassy Clerk Copied Secret Reports Meant Only for Roosevelt

By the Associated Press.

HYANNIS, Mass., Sept. 5.—Joseph P. Kennedy, former United States Ambassador to Great Britain, said today that Germany had an "exact and complete" knowledge of England's position in the war from its start to October, 1940, through Tyle Kent, American London Embassy code clerk.

Mr. Kennedy said in a telephone interview that Winston Churchill then First Lord of the Admiralty had supplied full data on England's manpower, army and navy installations and preparedness, as well as disposition of forces, for transmission to President Roosevelt, and that after Kent's arrest, he learned that Kent had made copies of 1,500 documents "which we assumed he sent to Germany."

Mr. Kennedy said the manner of Kent's communication with the Nazis was not learned until after Kent's arrest, when, during the search of his rooms, a telephone call for Kent came from the Italian Embassy in London. Kent was convicted in October, 1940, of violating the British Official Secrets Act.

#### Not Roosevelt-Churchill Mediator.

"Italy, you remember," he said, "did not go to war until after Kent's arrest."

Mr. Kennedy denied there was any truth in an assertion of John McGovern, Independent Laborite member of the British Parliament, who had been quoted in dispatches as saying he had been told that Kent and Capt. A. H. M. Ramsay, a member of Commons, were imprisoned to prevent disclosure of a reported pre-war understanding between President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill. This was described as a pledge that if Britain entered the war, the United States would aid her.

Mr. Kennedy said that Kent was simply a code clerk and "was no mediator between Roosevelt and Churchill."

The former Ambassador asserted that he learned of the Kent affair when a Scotland Yard man called upon him and told him the story.

#### Kennedy Greatly Disturbed.

Mr. Kennedy said he was greatly upset when the Scotland Yard man revealed they had been "on Kent's trail for a long time."

"That opened the question of whether Kent had been giving the Germans copies of our dispatches

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## Kent

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since October, 1939," Mr. Kennedy said.

"If it was true," he added, "the Germans would have no need of a secret service in England. Kent had seen all the messages between Roosevelt and Churchill. We had two codes, one an ordinary one, and the other one which was more complicated, and which we considered unbreakable.

"Kent had the unbreakable code book at his elbow.

"Churchill had given me a very frank and complete picture of England's unpreparedness, of her military and naval power and military placements, the status of her industries, and week-by-week developments, for forwarding to President Roosevelt.

#### Found Documents Photographed.

"After Kent's arrest, we could only assume that the same dis-

patches had been sent to the Germans."

Mr. Kennedy said that Kent's friendship with a Russian girl, Anna Walkoff, led to a photographic shop, where it was found Kent had the documents copied upon microfilm.

The trail was lost there, he said, until the Italian Embassy called Kent's rooms during the search.

He said that copies of 1,500 documents were found in a locked strongbox in Kent's apartment.

Mr. Kennedy asserted that a "diplomatic blackout" went into effect at American embassies all over the world that night after he had called President Roosevelt by telephone and informed him of his findings.

Mr. Kennedy explained that by supplying the Germans with originals and decoded copies of dispatches, it was assumed that the Germans could easily obtain copies of any documents being transmitted back to the United States over public communications, and that, therefore, the Germans had all information available to the American State Department.

#### Can't Explain Kent's Action.

Mr. Kennedy said he was at a loss to explain Kent's action.

"Kent's father had a good record with the American diplomatic service, but somewhere along the line Kent had developed a terrific anti-Semitic complex," Mr. Kennedy added.

"When he was arrested and I asked him what he could have been thinking of, he showed no remorse, but went into an anti-semitic blast that was a terrible thing."

Mr. Kennedy said that if this country had been at war he would have recommended that Kent be brought back to this country and shot.

As it was, he waived diplomatic

immunity for Kent with the knowledge and approval of the American State Department. Kent was convicted and was sentenced to seven years in prison.

In Washington Saturday the State Department said the question of whether the American Government will prefer additional charges against Kent for violating diplomatic secrets would be decided after he has served his term and again comes under the jurisdiction of American courts.

#### Had to Scrap Codes.

Mr. Kennedy said that waiving of diplomatic immunity for Kent was necessary at the time.

"The British government, of course, would have taken it up with our State Department, and it would appear that we were backing him up," Mr. Kennedy said. "It could have developed into a nasty mess."

As it was, with diplomatic codes made useless, the American Government was unable to obtain confidential messages from its Embassies all over the world for periods ranging from two to six weeks until couriers could deliver new codes, Mr. Kennedy added.

That came during a critical time, during the weeks which preceded the fall of France.