

MEDIATION DURING INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS:
EVIDENCE FROM SUMNER WELLES' MISSION TO EUROPE IN 1940

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ABSTRACT

Spencer Douglas Slater Baily: Mediation During International Conflicts:
Evidence from Sumner Welles' Mission to Europe in 1940
(Under the direction of Holger Moroff)

The important question that this study attempted to answer is *Do diplomatic trips that neutral countries take during wartime influence the conflict?* In investigating this question, a trip to Europe taken by U.S. Under Secretary Sumner Welles was inspected. A yardstick was created from the findings of prior literature on mediation. Welles' trip during the beginning of World War II was then compared to this yardstick. The author found that Welles' mission was insightful but did not influence European countries. Finally, diplomatic trips taken during wartime do affect the conflict but only if certain tasks are performed by the mediator.

To my family, who have never strayed from my side.

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If there was ever a case in modern history when a dictator plunged a great nation into a wholly unjustified and wholly unpopular military adventure, it was when Mussolini forced the Italian people into a war against their traditional friends.

-Sumner Welles, 1944

Introduction

Diplomacy is an important part of any country's foreign policy. Franklin D. Roosevelt knew this when he sent the Under Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, to Europe during World War II. A break in the war that lasted from September 1939 to March 1940, known to many as the Phoney War¹ (McNaughton, 1939, p. 8) provided the opportune time. During the last two months of this recess, Welles traveled to Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France.

Some authors have done important work on the venture already. It has highlighted the small amount of space that FDR gave Welles to work in and the failure of his mission. For example, one author suggests that he misjudged Italy's influence (Gellman, 1995). Others suggest that it was a "mission to nowhere" with Welles giving the "press a dour statement" at the end of his trip (Shachtman, 1982). These authors are correct but they are too quick to write off the trip as an underestimation and a failure. Though their work provides important insight, it seems they were focused on other items of explanation.

¹ "Phoney" in this newspaper was spelled with an *e* between the n and y. In other circumstances, for example in *The Phony War* by Shachtman (1982), the common English spelling is used, with no *e*. The author chose to use the common English spelling without an *e*, except for this first instance.

What was the true aim of the trip? The President claimed it was for the purpose of “advising the President and the Secretary of State as to present conditions in Europe” (Roosevelt 1940, p. 139). Though the mission had multiple aims, as most diplomatic ventures do, Roosevelt portrayed it as neutral and informing. On the other hand, Hilton (1971) argues it was a realist attempt abroad to stop the war. In addition, O’Sullivan (2008) claims it was for the purposes of postwar planning. Whatever the main aims were, much can be learned from the trip that can help to describe international mediation.

The characteristics of Welles’ trip render it an unusual, yet revealing and often overlooked case. This particular situation is different from most because of the initial number of belligerents, the complex intentions of Hitler, the pause in fighting, and the possible influence of Welles. Few conflicts have one antagonist, as was the case during this part of World War II. At the time of Welles’ trip in February of 1940, Germany was the only belligerent, though other actors—for example, France and England—played important roles. Welles’ task of “reporting to [the President] on the present possibilities...of the bases for a permanent and stable peace in Europe” (Welles, 1940, Rome), relates to the concept of mediation.

Against this backdrop, the important question that this study will attempt to answer is *Do diplomatic trips that neutral countries take during wartime influence the conflict?* This general research question implying a causal investigation requires—in order to deliver a viable answer—a sample of case studies. Instead, this paper will be a single case study serving three purposes. First the author will a) provide a detailed and systemic (re)evaluation of the Welles’ trip aiming at identifying its specific features differentiating it from other diplomatic trips during war time. It will also b1) generate hypotheses on what factors might have caused these specific features.

Lastly, the paper attempts to b2) determine what, if any, influence Welles' trip might have had on one of the deadliest wars in U.S. and world history (DeBruyne et al, 2015, p. 2).

Specific methods of inquiry will be used to serve these three main purposes. Primary studies are used to create a comparability mechanism. The analysis will pay particular attention to the type of mediation Welles attempted: manipulation, facilitation, or formulation (Beardsley et al., 2006). It will also determine whether or not he was biased going into the trip and how this affected the final outcome (Kydd, 2003 and Savun, 2008). Additionally, the timing of his mission will be inspected to decide whether or not an earlier trip would have been more successful (Stam and Regan, 2000). Lastly, the author plans to assess the particular combination of communication and punishment (Eisenkopf and Bächtiger, 2012). By creating a yardstick from this previous literature to analyze the Welles' mission, this study ensures its relation to other research. It will also make clear what took place during the diplomatic trip that makes it distinct.

The second and third purposes of this study—generating hypotheses and determining whether or not Welles influenced the war—will be addressed after the trip is compared to previous literature. Further research should focus on causal analysis of the hypothesis. This causal analysis is not done in this study because of the additional breadth and length.

In order to answer these research questions, documents from the FDR Presidential Library, such as Welles' report following his return home, the President's Secretary's File, and other government documents will be examined. In addition, Welles' memoirs and Count Ciano's (the foreign minister of Italy) diaries will provide important primary source material that will allow the opportunity to do this analysis. The author visited FDR's presidential library to ensure that the most related and revealing evidence was used.

Though these and other sources provide high-quality evidence, this study is limited in scope. Welles corresponded little while he was abroad and instead wrote the report, which he gave to FDR, upon arriving home. Among other limiting factors are the inaccessibility of actual meeting minutes and the subjective nature of intentions. There are no meeting minutes available from Welles' trip. The most extensive data is Welles' report. This means he could have forgotten aspects of meetings and also chosen to write some things down and disregard others. In addition, personal notes and anecdotes are subjective which puts limits on the evidence. Finally, the author chose to create his own yardstick to be able to judge the trip. Even though six important studies were used, this is self-limiting because only a partial list was made.

Despite these limitations, this approach requires a review of past research. There is a great deal of scholarship on mediation, conflict resolution, war, and diplomacy. Welles' expedition was all of these, though it fits best within the mediation research. As defined by the prominent scholar Jacob Bercovitch, mediation is a "process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties' own efforts, whereby the disputing parties or their representatives seek the assistance, or accept an offer of help from an individual, group, state or organization to change, affect or influence their perceptions or behavior, without resorting to physical force, or invoking the authority of the law" (1992, p. 8).

Prior work has made important contributions in the field. These previous efforts can be separated into two categories—the first are mediation specific and the second devote their attention to Welles' trip. The more general efforts try to explain ambassadorial action as a science. The second identify a particular occasion—the Welles' mission to Europe in this case—and attempt to construct a better understanding of the event. At the end of this study, the author

hopes readers find themselves comprehending Welles' trip through a theoretical framework of mediation literature.

Pertinent Literature

Many previous studies that analyze mediation investigate its successfulness. For example, Bercovitch and Langley (1993) evaluate how the characteristics of a dispute affect the overall success of mediation. By doing an analysis of over 97 international disputes that had 364 mediation attempts, the authors find that high fatalities, dispute complexity, and dispute duration all increase the likelihood of unsuccessful negotiations. They conclude that hostile disputes are harder to solve and also illustrate that as straightforward as this broader conclusion is, it has important policy implications.

The timing of mediation is just as important as the nature of the dispute. Two different studies illustrate how time interacts with mediation. Bercovitch and Gartner (2006) tried to determine how the length of conflict settlements is influenced by mediation. By analyzing more than 1400 settlements they found that "mediation has a strong and consistently negative relationship to settlement duration" (p. 835). Agreements are likely to be short-lived unless they are made in coordination with non-state actors. In another study about time, Regan and Stam (2000) inspected the timing of conflict management efforts and dispute length. They find that mediation needs to be implemented at certain times to be successful. In short, "conflict management that gets in early, at the very outset of the dispute, has a much higher probability of leading to a quick end" (p. 257). This is crucial to understanding Welles' diplomatic efforts, as the reader will learn later in the paper.

In another investigation by Beardsley et al. (2006), the effectiveness of three different types of mediation, facilitation, formulation, and manipulation was assessed. They determined

the successfulness of these mediation styles by their influence on formal agreements, post-crisis tension reduction, and contribution to crisis abatement. Using data from the International Crisis Behavior Project (1918-2001) they found, among other conclusions, that manipulation mediation “often makes a positive contribution by more effectively securing formal agreements and achieving overall crisis abatement than all other mediation styles” (p. 83). This study indicates the effectiveness of different types of mediation as compared to Bercovitch and Langley’s analysis that explored the successfulness of mediation.

Two other important studies involve the role that bias plays in mediation. Savun (2008) analyzes how the information and bias a mediator might have toward a belligerent affects the negotiation’s success. He finds that on average, bias mediators are more likely to succeed and that mediators with relevant information are more likely to be successful. Kydd’s (2003) study supports Savun’s findings. He shows that neutrality is not a necessary attribute of a successful mediator and even that some bias is helpful.

A last study that is pertinent to investigating Welles’ trip is one by Eisenkopf and Bächtiger (2012). To determine the type of mediation activities that lead to success or failure, their research focuses on the combination of punishment and communication. They inquire by creating a “common-pool problem” in which resources are limited and “people have an incentive to undermine the efficient management of the resource in order to increase their own material benefits” (p. 573). The authors find that in most cases, indirect communication and punishment by the mediator “is conducive to efficient solutions in most cases” (p. 585). In other words, for mediation to be successful, communication between the parties and some kind of punishment administered by the mediator must be present.

Taken all together, these studies are just a few of the many available in mediation and conflict studies. As mentioned earlier, the unique positions of countries during the Phony War makes situating the conflict within other literature a difficult task. Germany was the only country constantly advancing. There was not another country that Welles could pit Germany against; it was a task of stopping or persuading Hitler. Most of this prior literature deals with two warring parties and a third-party mediator. Research is significantly lacking in its focus on one-instigator conflicts. They occur more rarely, which explains part of the deficiency. Yet even in recent years the world has seen provocation come from one actor; for example, in the Crimean Crisis.

In addition to this broader work, there are a few in-depth studies that focus specifically on Welles' mission to Europe. This research tends to focus on the motivations for Welles' trip and why he was unable to separate Germany and Italy and buy time for the Allies.

First, Tom Shachtman covers the Phony War at length in his book titled *The Phony War: 1939-1940* (1982). When writing on Welles' trip, Shachtman claims, "It was widely assumed that Welles...might carry a Roosevelt peace proposal to Europe. There was no such proposal" (p. 158). He is indeed correct. However, he is also too quick to write the excursion as an attempt with two purposes: buying the Allies time and separating Mussolini and Hitler (p. 158). Shachtman's analysis is revealing. If the author spent more time (and pages, Welles' trip only gets 10 in his entire book) on Welles' journey, his analysis could better evaluate the undersecretary's purpose of "fact finding" in the first place.

Another work that covers Welles' venture more extensively is the biography written by his son. Benjamin Welles (1997) paints a more idealistic version of his father than Shachtman's version does. However, Benjamin is also reserved about the success of his father's mission to

Europe. Benjamin argues that Welles' took the trip because FDR wanted to look involved during an election year and had heard through certain cables that Hitler might agree to a peace proposal (Welles, 1997). He also illustrates praise for the information that Welles' gleaned while on his trip but notes that the undersecretary was only really able to establish a working friendship with Mussolini and not able to close in on peace of any kind.

These previous two works assume that the mission had other purposes besides fact finding. Stanley Hilton (1971) attacks the Welles trip from a different point of view, focusing on its practicality. He rebukes another work by William Langer and Everett Gleason (1952) who argue that the trip was based on illusions in Washington that Hitler would never agree to any kind of peace. Hilton argues that the trip, "far from being a result of confusion or 'illusion,' was a shrewd, realistic maneuver by the White House" and that there was a "continuity of policy and objectives between the repeal of the arms embargo and the Welles Mission" (p. 94). In the end, Hilton suggests that FDR's maneuver was quite accurate and in America's national interest, far from any illusion.

Christopher O'Sullivan (2008) charts a different path to the works discussed above. The author argues that Welles trip was as an important part of the Under Secretary's postwar planning agenda. He writes, "his mission was also indelibly linked to postwar concerns. He remained worried that the world powers might achieve an eventual settlement inconsistent with U.S. interests" (p. 36). According to O'Sullivan, the purpose of Welles' mission to Europe was to buy the Allies time, broker peace, and make sure that the U.S. was highly involved in any postwar planning, should it occur.

In addition to these works, another by Irwin Gellman (1995) details the relationship between the U.S.'s three most important international statesmen, FDR, Cordell Hull, and Sumner

Welles. Gellman is sometimes trapped in drama, instead of analysis and evidence throughout his discussion of the mission. However, the conclusion he comes to is one of little consequence, if any. He claims, “The Welles trip did not alter the course of European events” (p. 193).

Gellman’s account of the Under Secretary’s mission was full of detail but relies too much on the commotion of taking sides between government officials and countries, instead of analysis.

These texts emphasize the motives of the Welles’ mission and its failure to bring about peace and drive Italy and Germany apart. The authors provide insight to a significant diplomatic trip during the World War II. Welles’ trip probably had more than one motive, as they suggest. With this analysis, the author hopes to build on these prior works and to show what influence Welles had, instead of focusing on how successful he was. Doing so will provide more clarity to this particular event and to mediation literature. It will specifically illustrate whether or not diplomatic trips that neutral countries take during wartime influence the conflict.

What now follows is an analysis of the Welles mission. First will be an inspection of the different types of mediation that exist and which of these types Welles used himself. Then the author plans to identify whether or not Welles was biased during his talks. Third, the timing of the Under Secretary’s mission will be explained, as this is a vital aspect of mediation. Rounding out the comparison part of the study is an assessment of how present communication and punishment were in Welles’ talks. Following this will be a section where the author describes characteristics of Welles’ trip that make it unique and then generates hypothesis for future research. Last is a conclusion.

Inspection: Welles’ Mission and Mediation

Before Welles left aboard the ship *Rex* (Hull, 1940, p. 1), the conditions across the Atlantic were growing more urgent each day with German advances. The occupation of the

Rhineland on the German-French boarder in 1936 and then the annexation of Austria in 1938 and the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939 put more and more pressure on neutral countries--the United States, Italy, and the United Kingdom (Natkiel et al, 1985). A short delay in the war, beginning in September 1939 and extending through the winter and the early spring, gave FDR just enough time to gather his staff and propose this peace-seeking mission.

Types of Mediation

When Welles boarded the ship, he had a choice to make about the kind of mediation he would use. According to Beardsley et al. (2006) he had three main options: facilitation, formulation, and manipulation. Though these were not categorized as such in 1939, most ways of negotiation fit into one of these three types. When mediators act as facilitators they can do anything from provide good offices to more help to communicate messages (p. 63). An important aspect is revealing information to clarify misconceptions (p. 63). When mediators act as formulators, they “conceive and propose new solutions to the disputants” (p. 63). Lastly, when mediators act as manipulators, they use their “position and leverage to influence the crisis bargaining process” (p. 64). Given these three options, Beardsley et al. show that a mix of all three is important to in order to be successful, though manipulation is most important.

In Welles’ case, he only had so much room to negotiate. His mission was for the purposes of finding information (Welles, 1940, p. 77), yet he did have room to verbalize the position of the U.S. and find a consensus, or at least try to convince Italy to stay neutral. Of the three types of mediation as highlighted by Beardsley et al. (2006), what type did Welles use?

Welles’ report indicates that he used facilitation at numerous times throughout his trip. Upon arriving in Italy, Welles repeatedly clarified information for the foreign minister, Count

Ciano and the Prime Minister, Benito Mussolini. In his first meeting with Ciano, Welles told the minister that “the day I left Washington a bill had been introduced in the United States Senate providing for the appropriation of \$2,000,000 for participation by the United States in the Rome Exposition of 1942” (Welles, 1940, Rome). Welles wanted Ciano to know that the Under Secretary’s words regarding U.S. and Italian relations were not continuing without complementary action.

Welles further clarified the position of the U.S. when he met with Prime Minister Mussolini the following day. In his report, he writes that he brought with him “a brief written statement of the views of the United States with regard to a sane international economic relationship” (Welles, 1940, Rome). Both examples illustrate one type of mediation that Welles used. These instances clarify misconceptions and reveal important information, key aspects of facilitation.

After leaving Italy, Welles traveled to Berlin, arriving on March 1, to meet with Hitler and the German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop. There was little in the way of exchange of information, as Welles writes, “Ribbentrop then commenced to speak and never stopped” (Welles Report, 1940, Berlin). Hitler and Ribbentrop did the majority of the talking while Welles merely reiterated the stance of the U.S. The Under Secretary did not provide any new information, other than state his own views and those of the president.

Nonetheless, during his other meetings in Paris, London, and back in Italy, Welles’ mission is marked by facilitation, at the beginning and the end. During his return trip to Italy, he noted to the Pope that “a very great obstacle at this time was the apparently sincere belief on the part of the highest German authorities that the Allied governments were determined to destroy the German Reich and to destroy the German people” (Welles, 1940, Rome). In this instance,

Welles communicates to the Pope a problem with the view of the Germans. It seems as if the Under Secretary's trip was one of intense facilitation, with Welles trying to clarify and expound upon the stance of the U.S. and the stances of other countries.

According to Beardsley et al. (2006), a mediation attempt is most successful when facilitation and formulation are used, in addition to a heavy focus on manipulation. The author found many examples of facilitation, from specific numbers to the general clarifying of views that helped to communicate messages. Unfortunately, no substantial evidence was found for formulation or proposal of solutions to the disputants. Roosevelt specifically constrained Welles. The Under Secretary was to put forth no peace proposals.

The last type of mediation to be addressed following facilitation and formulation is manipulation. Did Welles attempt to use the U.S. position and leverage to influence the disputants? This is difficult to characterize because of its subjective nature. However, some instances suggest Welles emphasized the position of the U.S. in relation to other countries. For example, Welles notes to Ciano during his first stop in Italy that, "at that moment all neutral countries found their normal export trade severely curtailed. It would surely be helpful to Italy as well as to the United States if some satisfactory method of enlarging the volume of trade between them were found" (Welles, 1944, p. 79). It was important to Welles that he emphasize the similarity of trade conditions of Italy and the U.S. In this way he might be able to put Italy and the U.S. on more equal terms and propose a trade deal that would tie them closer together, using their equality of positions as leverage.

At another point when talking with Prime Minister Edouard Daladier of France, Welles made clear how the outbreak of war in the spring might affect the U.S. He claimed, "the Government of the United States realized that such a state of affairs as that which I had

mentioned would inevitably have most intimate repercussions...of all the neutral powers” (Welles, 1940, Paris). As he did with Ciano, Welles attempted to express his concern for the United States and other neutrals. The Under Secretary wished to convey to Daladier that an outbreak of war would have incredible consequences on all neutral powers and that this alone should make the Prime Minister think twice about his actions.

In all, an analysis of the Welles report and his memoirs written during the final year of the war, illustrate the type of mediation outlined in Beardsley et al.’s (2006) important research. Of the three types of mediation--facilitation, formulation, and manipulation--evidence was found for facilitation and manipulation but not formulation. Welles tried to communicate important messages and reveal important information throughout his trip (facilitation). He also attempted to use the leverage of his position as Under Secretary of the U.S. to put influence on the diplomatic process. Formulation, as defined by Beardsley et al., was never found in the evidence. The position Welles used as a bargaining tool most was that of the similarities in positions of the varying countries.

Was Welles Biased or Neutral?

In addition to the type of mediation used, a factor of importance in international negotiations is the bias of the mediator. Kydd (2003) and Savun (2008) focus on different but similar aspects of bias. Kydd hypothesizes that “mediators who attempt to persuade one side to make a concession because the other side has high resolve must be biased in favor of the side they are communicating with in order to be successful” (2003, p. 607). Applying this to our situation, Germany has high resolve, so Italy should be the country Welles is biased in favor of. Savun adds that “as the degree of a mediator’s bias increases, mediation success becomes more likely” and that “mediators with relevant information about the disputants tend to be more

successful than those without such information” (2008, p. 44). In other words, Savun shares Kydd’s belief that a mediator should be biased in favor of the country he is trying to influence. Does the Welles’ mission support these findings?

In order to answer this question, one must assess the information Welles had prior to his mission. This will give a thorough indication of how he felt going into his meetings. Welles received numerous memoranda before leaving for his mission to Europe. One highlighted the postwar economic objectives of the U.S.: “Sound international trade relations are an indispensable part of the foundation of economic well-being within nations, and of enduring peace among nations...To fulfill this vital role international trade must be freed” (Memorandum to Welles, 1940, p. 1). This memorandum does not illustrate a bias towards a country; rather it emphasizes the importance of the mission economically. It was in Welles’ interest to focus on economic objectives; he was likely biased in favor of which countries shared this view.

In addition to this information, the Under Secretary was also well aware of Hitler’s stance on peace aims. In a speech by Hitler in September of 1939, a few months before Welles’ trip, the Führer made clear Germany’s peace objectives. In addition to restoring “sovereignty over territories of the German Reich,” Hitler wanted to make clear that Germany had “nothing to demand and that [they] shall never demand anything of the Western Nations...Some of the other European Nations understand our attitude. Here I should like to thank above all Italy” (Hitler, 1940, p. 2). At this point, Germany’s aims were not clear. The U.S. and other nations were unaware of what Hitler meant by securing sovereignty over territories of the German Reich. Nevertheless, this likely impacted Welles’ views towards Germany and Hitler. It is clear from Hitler’s speech that the German leader was biased in favor of Italy. Therefore, Welles’ intention,

according to Kydd and Savun, should be bias in favor of Italy as well, in order to drive Italy and Germany apart.

Welles himself shares this view. When he wrote about his first trip to Italy, he notes that he “tried to stress in every possible way the advantage to Italy of a policy of real neutrality in the European war” (Welles, 1944, p. 78). According to Kydd (2003), Hitler was the party with high resolve and Italy was the party Welles needed to be biased in favor of. Welles’ level of bias is difficult to determine; however, it is clear in which direction he leaned. Indeed, the information the Under Secretary was presented with prior to his European mission was relevant.

From this evidence alone, it is not difficult to determine where Welles’ bias lay. Though these are only a few pieces of evidence, they all point towards Welles’ interest in Italy and his favorability for this country over Germany. The extent to which he was biased in favor of Italy is hard to determine. Further examination and comparison with Savun’s (2008) research could illuminate this.

The Timing of Welles’ Mission

In addition to mediation types and biases, prior work suggests that in order to be successful, mediation must occur soon after the conflict has started. Though it is not a direct causation, Stam and Regan (2000) found that as a conflict drags on, the probability lowers that mediation can work. They argue, “on average, mediation is associated with shorter, not longer disputes” (2000, p. 252). How does the Welles mission correspond with this?

The timing of the Under Secretary’s venture is telling. World War II officially began in the first week in September 1939 (Royde-Smith), when Germany invaded Poland. Though plenty of war activities happened before this time, it is a common starting point. Welles’ began his mission, arriving in Italy on February 25, approximately six months after the war officially began

(Welles, 1940, p. 79). Further inspection is necessary to determine if the U.S. underwent a peacekeeping mission soon enough.

Welles first spoke with Count Ciano. In this discussion, Welles noted in his memoirs that at the time of his first visit to Italy, “not only the vast majority of the Italian people but also the key figures within the Italian government itself...were totally and even violently opposed to the entrance of Italy into the war” (Welles 1944, p. 83). Even Mussolini said yes when Welles asked if there was any possibility that Germany and the Allies could secure a lasting peace (Welles 1944, p. 87). The two seemed open to discussing the idea.

Ciano and Mussolini could have been lying. However, their actions confirm their belief in peace and their reception of Welles. For example, when reviewing a document given to him by Welles about the economic stance of the U.S., Mussolini concluded, “I subscribe to every word of this” (Welles, 1940, Rome). Ciano also revealed to Welles that Italy made an agreement with Germany under which “if Germany undertakes any military adventure, Italy must be first afforded the opportunity of consultation” (Welles, 1940, Rome). Ciano’s statement shows his and Mussolini’s desire to confer with Hitler before any kind of war breaks out. This and other evidence illustrates that Mussolini and Ciano were telling the truth. At the time of Welles’ trip, peace was possible.

In Welles’ first visit, Italy was receptive towards the Under Secretary, the two Italian leaders believed a lasting peace to be a possibility. Stam and Regan (2000) would argue that the timing of Welles’ mission was well placed given this evidence. It was at the beginning of the war and the Under Secretary was able to get confirmation of the possibility of peace. However, upon further inspection, it becomes clearer that Mussolini’s mind changed shortly after Welles left Europe.

In his return discussion with Mussolini, the Prime Minister revealed to Welles that he was meeting with Hitler on March 18 at the Brenner Pass (Welles Report, 1940, Rome). These were not reassuring words to Welles. Ciano noted in his diary on the day of the meeting with Hitler that Mussolini “has felt more and more the fascination of the Führer. His military successes...are the cause of this” (Ciano, 1945, p. 223). It is unknowable whether Welles was aware of the outcome of Mussolini and Hitler’s meeting. However, soon after that spring, Italy made her position clear, joining Germany. It seems that the Brenner Pass meeting had implications for the triangle relationship between Germany, Italy, and the U.S.

The timing of Welles’ trip was crucial to the mission’s success or failure. This evidence alone cannot confirm or reject Stam and Regan’s (2000) hypothesis. However, it has important implications for the overall outcome. His mission could have been more successful if he had been a few months earlier. Mussolini’s mind was not completely made up. However, it is clear that he was leaning toward taking sides with Germany, though he was slightly open to what Welles had to say. An earlier trip could have caught Italy less on the German side and even more receptive to Welles than it already was.

The Presence of Punishment and Communication

In addition to the three previously inspected aspects, a final and testable characteristic of the Welles’ mission is the occurrence of punishment and communication. Eisenkopf and Bächtiger (2012), argue that the mediator’s use of both is vital to the success of negotiations. These two elements work together because “Punishment supports the coordination effect of communication since the anticipation of punishment reduces people’s incentives to promise cooperative behavior and then act otherwise” (2012, p. 585). Though their study focused on a

simulated, “common-pool problem” (2012, p. 573), it can still have important implications when contrasted with the Welles’ mission.

How prevalent was punishment? Were any of the countries that Welles visited worried about being punished by the U.S. had they not cooperated? Did Welles even suggest any kind of punishment? Upon investigation of Welles’ report, he does not mention any kind of punishment that might be applied to any of the countries. The closest the Under Secretary comes to mentioning any kind of repercussion was when he was talking with Ribbentrop in Berlin. After discussing the current situation Welles mentioned what would happen if a war were to break out. He said, “I believe...that if a war of devastation now took place, all that civilization held most dear...would be in great part destroyed” (Welles, 1940, Berlin). This illustrates Welles did not suggest to Hitler that the U.S. would punish Germany if the Führer continued being confrontational. On the contrary, Welles was interested in stating clearly what would happen if war broke out.

Further along in his trip, when visiting Paris, Welles reiterates the same repercussions of a war that he noted to Ribbentrop. He made clear to Prime Minister Daladier that if a total destructive war broke out it would bring with it “a breakdown of most of the spiritual, social, and economic factors in the fabric of our modern civilization” (Welles, 1940, Paris). Again, Welles reiterated the destructive nature of a war when he spoke with Mussolini on his return trip to Italy, saying that there was an “ever present possibility of the bombardment from the air of civilian populations and the slaughter of defenseless women and children” (Welles, 1940, Rome). Not only did the Under Secretary stress to Germany the detriment a total war could cause, he made it clear to France and Italy as well.

The evidence illustrates that Welles was interested in making clear the kind of repercussions that might take place if a war were to break out. The author found no evidence of the Under Secretary threatening any kind of punishment. Though Eisenkopf and Bächtiger's (2012) study suggests that mediation is more successful when punishment is made clear and then is coordinated with communication, one must look elsewhere to prove their research. It is important to note that Welles' mission may have been more successful if he indicated that some kind of punishment might occur to any antagonizing nation.

In sum, the evidence illuminates a number of aspects of the Welles trip. First, analysis so far illustrates that of the three influential types of mediation as explained by Beardsley et al. (2006), Welles used facilitation and manipulation. Next, the records demonstrate that Welles was slightly in favor of Italy. However, his inability to fully negotiate a peace deal limited his success. Also, in order for mediators to be successful, Stam and Regan (2000) show that a negotiator must attempt to make amends in the beginning of the conflict. Welles went to Europe in the first six months, yet if he went even earlier, his impact could have been more substantial. Finally, though Eisenkopf and Bächtiger (2012) argue that the presence of punishment and communication can increase a mediator's success, evidence was not found of Welles making any kind of hint at punishing antagonistic nations. Instead, it is clear that the Under Secretary stated the repercussions of a large-scale conflict.

The Uniqueness of Welles' trip

In addition to the types of mediation, bias of the mediator, timing of the trip, and presence of punishment and communication, there are other aspects of the Welles' mission that make it unique. These four already-inspected features are applicable to many diplomatic trips.

On the other hand, part of what made the Under Secretary's venture particular was his attention to detail and people's behavior, his lack of room to negotiate, and the quietness of the foreign press. Analysis of these phenomena will be taken in turn.

Welles was a man of infinite detail, especially as it pertained to the people and surroundings of his trip in Europe. For instance, when first meeting with Mussolini, Welles notes, "During our long and rapid interchange of views, he kept his eyes shut a considerable part of the time" (Welles, 1940, Rome). Additionally, the Under Secretary made many remarks in his memoirs and report about where he met with the statesmen and what the rooms looked like. For example, in his first meeting with Ribbentrop, Welles wrote "after passing the two sphinxes at the portal which date from Bismarck's time, there were stationed storm-troopers in stained uniforms" (Welles, 1940, Berlin). Like this previous one, there are many times when the Under Secretary makes detailed notes of the nature of his surroundings.

Making sense of Welles' detail is difficult. His notation of different statesmen's behaviors in his report may have been helpful to Roosevelt. Mussolini's continuous closed eyes, as Welles wrote, illustrates his contemplation and understanding. Personal action is important in meetings like this and would possibly help to make sense of the situation. In addition, Welles constant remarking on his surroundings has implications for further trips that U.S. officials take and diplomatic efforts that others take to the U.S. People notice their surroundings. They can be intimidating, welcoming, bland or bright, and this can have an effect on the diplomat's understanding and experiences, influencing the trip.

Welles' trip was also unique because of the guidelines given to him by FDR. It is difficult to determine how much room Welles' was given to negotiate. In a biography about his father, Benjamin Welles writes about FDR, "He, himself, had no interest in a truce or unstable

peace” (1997, p. 244). Welles comments on this in his own memoir writing “even at the worst, it could yield information that would be valuable to the President” (Welles, 1944, p. 77-78). In addition, when first speaking directly to Ribbentrop, the Under Secretary reiterated the purpose of his trip saying “I had, in the name of my Government, no proposals to offer, and no commitments whatever to put forward” (Welles, 1940, Berlin). This evidence suggests that Welles had no room to negotiate any kind of peace. However, other evidence illustrates he had some leeway.

The Under Secretary did have some mediation capabilities. When speaking with Mussolini, Welles asked “whether they did not consider it desirable to exchange views with regard to the possibility of finding a common point of view” (Welles, 1940, Rome). Welles also, when presented the opportunity, suggested to Prime Minister Daladier in Paris that “[he] would be particularly grateful for the views which M. Daladier might express to [him] as to the possibilities for the negotiation now of a just and lasting peace” (Welles, 1940, Paris). These are two more pieces of evidence that sit contrary to the earlier stated evidence. Part of the uniqueness of Welles’ trip was the difficult situation the Under Secretary was put in in the first place. The room he had with which to negotiate was unclear. Further clarification by FDR to Welles about the purpose of his mission could have had positive consequences for the outcomes. The evidence suggests that Welles’ trip was unique.

The last aspect that makes the Under Secretary’s trip different from other diplomatic ventures was the quietness of his trip. Governments knew of his mission. However, the citizens of countries, particularly Germany, were purposefully made unaware. William Shirer, the famous radio announcer in Berlin during the war makes this plainly clear. In a broadcast from Berlin he said that there had been nothing in the newspapers, indicating Welles had even arrived

in Europe (Shirer, 1999). Welles corroborates this statement in his own memoirs, writing, “The German government had permitted no word of my arrival in Berlin to appear in the German press. The public had no knowledge of my mission or its purpose” (Welles, 1944, p. 90). Evidence of this kind of press control was only found for Germany. Clearly, German officials wanted their citizens to be unaware of Welles’ trip. Only after his arrival were people notified of the Under Secretary’s mission.

Every diplomatic venture has its own characteristics that make it unique. In the case of the Welles’ mission, his attention to people and his surroundings, his particular negotiating position, and the quietness of the press in Germany, make his trip stand out. It is substantial that these phenomena existed for the Under Secretary and their influence is not dismissible.

Hypothesis Generation

Now that numerous occurrences of the Welles’ mission have been inspected, it is time to generate a hypothesis for why these particular incidences occurred. For example, why did Welles focus on facilitation and manipulation but not formulation? Because formulation involves proposing new solutions (Beardsley et al., 2006, p. 63), it is likely FDR did not give this option to Welles. As already illustrated, FDR did not give Welles room to make any proposals. He only gave him space to glean information and find out the current situation in Europe. This could have significantly influenced the mission. A first hypothesis regarding future mediation is as follows: diplomats should be sent with a set of conditions under which the U.S. would accept a treaty, even if they are not to specifically negotiate for these stipulations.

Why did FDR prevent Welles from offering proposals? Some theories have been put forward. For instance, Benjamin Welles argues that “1940 was an election year, and failure to

act might subject FDR and the Democratic party to censure” (1999, p. 214). In other words, FDR wanted to look active, yet not create visible tension. Another reason might have been public opinion. Welles notes in his memoirs that if the U.S. were to join the war on the side of the Allies any representative sent on behalf of the U.S. “would likewise have knowingly disregarded popular sentiment” (1944, p 77). A third reason is that the war was young. Given that Germany had only bullied smaller countries, FDR was waiting for a more opportune time. In addition, by sending Welles with nothing more than fact-finding duties, FDR was able to negotiate a peace proposal without actually negotiating. He saved himself and the U.S. from looking foolish if a peace proposal was presented and rejected.

It is also perplexing why FDR sent Welles when he did. The author would argue that FDR was waiting for more suggestive events. Germany had antagonized major Western powers, but only France and the U.K. were going to war at the time of Welles’ visit. The U.S. was neutral and would stay that way for some time. Involving themselves in a war with Germany because of Hitler’s occupation of Czechoslovakia and Austria would have been a significant military move, given the smaller efforts of Germany at that time. If the U.S. was going to join into the war, FDR made sure it was for the right reasons and at the right time, when there were few, if any options left. A second hypothesis is that when a conflict begins that the U.S. has a significant stake in, a fact-finding mission should be sent right away and followed up by a peacekeeping trip that offers a proposal and purposefully engages in negotiations.

Finally, why did Welles refrain from claiming that the U.S. would punish antagonistic countries? The author would argue that this could have pulled the U.S. directly into the war. If Welles threatened to punish Italy or Germany, the U.S. would have to increase its role in the conflict, if either country furthered their advancement. During these first six months, FDR made

it clear that he was hardly interested in joining a war and was more interested in determining if a lasting peace could be found. A final question that should be researched further is, what kind of punishment works in a mediator's favor? Many different types of punishments exist in politics, for example, economic sanctions and military confrontation. It is difficult to argue whether or not the use of punishment by Welles would have influenced countries in WWII, without knowing which kinds of punishments work well.

Conclusion

If the importance and implications of a historical event are indicative of the amount of scholarship on a topic, then one should be able to find exhaustive analyses of Welles' diplomatic trip during World War II. Yet, examinations of the Under Secretary's mediation attempt six months into the war are limited in number and scope. So far, the scholarship on the mission has focused on its success or failure and on the motivations for the trip in the first place. By looking at the evidence in a different way, this author attempted to determine whether or not diplomatic trips taken during wartime influence the conflict.

This study aimed to re-assess the Welles' venture by paying particular attention to his report. By reviewing prior mediation literature, it sought to first create a yardstick with which the Under Secretary's trip could be compared. Five particular studies were used to do this, Beardsley et al. (2006), Kydd (2003), Savun (2008), Stam and Regan (2000), and Eisenkopf and Bächtiger (2012). The index the author used then related the types of mediation used by Welles to those that Beardsley et al., argue are most useful. It then contrasted Kydd and Savun's findings on the bias of mediators to Welles' own bias prior to his trip. Next, this study compared Stam and Regan's discoveries about the timing of diplomatic ventures to the timing of the Under

Secretary's. Last, it used Eisenkopf and Bächtiger's study, which argued that punishment and communication are key to a mediator's success.

Conclusions can be drawn after relating Welles' mission to prior mediation literature. First, evidence suggests that the Under Secretary used facilitation and manipulation to discuss with other heads of state. Formulation was not found in the evidence. Next, Welles was probably biased in favor of Italy. As Kydd (2003) and Savun (2008) argue, it is important to be biased in favor of the country the negotiator is trying to persuade. Third, the timing of Welles' trip follows Stam and Regan's (2000) suggestion that the earlier a mediator goes to negotiate, the more successful he will be. In addition, further analysis illustrates that if Welles traveled even earlier, the prospects that his mission were a success would have increased. Finally, the author found that the undersecretary favored highlighting the repercussions of a war instead of threatening to punish the war's antagonistic countries.

These findings provide further analysis of the mission. It also illustrated unique aspects that were specific to this trip; for example, Welles' attention to detail and his surroundings and also the unusual guidelines he was provided by FDR. Supplementary inquiry could provide other significant findings. For instance, the yardstick used by the author was not an exhaustive one. Based on prior literature, one could add more items that could be compared to the Welles' mission. In addition, analysis of body language and surroundings might reveal how other elements might affect a mediator's discussions.

In sum, the hypothesis offered prior to the conclusion should be tested. They are supposed to be a starting point for further research on mediation. Diplomatic trips taken during wartime do influence the conflict. However, in the case of Welles' trip during World War II, the U.S. had not done enough in order to keep Italy neutral and suspected Germany and Italy's

intention to be less confrontational than they turned out to be. Had the diplomatic attempt been tried just a few weeks earlier, it might have had more of an impact on the war.

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