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Response by **Emmet Kennedy**, Professor Emeritus of European History, The George Washington University

In his review of my article, Professor Thomàs surveys the *subjects* I cover but ignores the crux of the *argument* and supporting evidence. What follows focuses mostly on the brunt of what Thomàs omits. I argue that Hayes made a concerted diplomatic effort with Madrid and Washington to facilitate passage of as many as 40,000 refugees across the Pyrenees from Hitler-occupied Vichy France, and that he coordinated the provision of their material and legal needs in Spain. While I cite Stanley Payne's view that their exact number will never be known (Kennedy, 246, n. 18), I do not conclude that the minimum estimate of about 33,000 is inconsiderable, as I fear Thomàs implies when he describes this entire emigration in one sentence as a "migratory wave and later a steady trickle of clandestine entries into Spain" (1, par. 2). Too many counts by *The New York Times* of April 16, 1943 and by historians like Emilienne Eychenne, Marcel Vivé, Robert Vieville, Concha Pallarés, J. M. Espinosa, and Robert Belot point to the contrary.¹ The latter's definitive, eight-hundred page book, *Aux frontières de la liberté* puts the "evasion" at 40,000 (Kennedy, 248, n. 27).² Hayes sent no fewer than seventy telegrams to Washington about the exodus and succeeded in gaining Roosevelt's personal and

¹ Emilienne Eychenne, *Les Pyrénées de la liberté: Les Invasions par l'Espagne, 1939-1945* (Toulouse, France, 1998), *Les Portes de la liberté: Le franchissement clandestin de la frontière espagnole dans les Pyrénées-Orientales de 1939 à 1945* (Toulouse, France, 1985); Marcel Vivé et Robert Vieville, *Les Evadés de France à travers l'Espagne: guerre 1939-1945* (Paris, 1998); Concha Pallarés and José María Espinosa de los Monteros, "Miranda, mosaico de nacionalidades: franceses, británicos y alemanes," *Ayer* 57 (Bo05): 153-87.

² Robert Belot *Aux frontières de la liberté: Vichy-Madrid-Alger-Londres: s'évader de France sous l'Occupation*, Fayard, 1998,

financial support. Had the Germans not made a continuous effort to thwart this exodus, it would have been far greater. The Franco government opened forty prisons, camps, spas, and hotels to accommodate the refugees in Spain. Hayes persuaded the Spanish Foreign Minister successfully in March 1943 to rescind Spain's decision to close the borders under German pressure. Finally, the description which these refugees give in their memoirs-- "escape to freedom" and the like-- are certainly telling (Kennedy, 247, n. 25). To many contemporary historians such as Paul Preston and apparently Thomàs, Franco's repression of Civil War Republicans will seem incongruous to my view that "Spain represented a place *for* liberty (a passage to freedom), if not a place of liberty" (Kennedy, 244, par. 4). The irony is that such a corridor existed, even if it was unknown and remains so to most Spaniards. Refugees, such as Eli Rubin, an Austrian inmate of Spain's largest and most notorious concentration camp, Miranda de Ebro, contrasted it favorably to those of the Reich and Vichy, which he said it resembled only in name. Joseph Melkme summed it up thirty years later: "The great advantage of the Spanish camp was that those who entered came out alive" (Kennedy, 259, n. 74).

Thomàs concludes in spite of the above, that Hayes "showed such a degree of affinity with the Franco regime" of which I evidently should be more critical (2, bot. 3 top). But Hayes denounced the "fascist" character of the Franco regime in a letter of June 1943 to the Foreign Minister.³ Hayes' outstanding pre-war reputation suffered from his appointment as Roosevelt's personal envoy to one of the most difficult assignments in the war. This was due largely to the great unpopularity of Franco in America. I do try to rehabilitate Hayes' reputation primarily by fully revealing his work on the refugee crisis drawing on sources which Thomàs commends (Thomàs p. 1, par.1). In the words of Hayes' one-time Columbia colleague, the Hitler historian Rudolph Binion, this evidence "vindicated a fine humanist."⁴ Hayes may not need it, because many historians have treated his overall diplomacy quite favorably, among them, Haïm Avni, James W. Cortada, and Robert Belot.⁵

After the war, the ambassador opposed a campaign by Stalin and others to ostracize Spain and overthrow Franco, which took a further toll on his reputation. He thought the Spanish people and civilization should be distinguished from the temporary dictatorship of Franco whose violent overthrow would benefit no party, including the U.S. He did anticipate the end of Franco Spain, but believed foreigners should "leave Spain to the

³ *Harper's Weekly*, December 1944, pp. 29-30 vs. Robert Paxton, *Anatomy of Fascism*, Vintage, 2005, 115, 149-150.

⁴ Private correspondence with the author, 5/22/10

⁵ Haïm Avni, *Spain, the Jews and Franco*, trans. Emmanuel Shimon (Philadelphia, 1982); James W. Cortada, *United States-Spanish Relations: Wolfram and World War II* (Barcelona, 1971); Belot, *Aux frontières de la liberté*.

Spaniards.”⁶ None of these facts warrant Thomas’ blatant assertion that Hayes was “a supporter of Franco’s Regime.”

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⁶ Carlton Haynes, *Wartime mission in Spain, 1942-1945*, The Macmillan Co., 1946, 308.