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Foreign Relations
of the
United States

Diplomatic Papers

1938

(In Five Volumes)

Volume I
General



United States
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PREFACE

The *Foreign Relations* volumes have been compiled on an annual basis since the publication of diplomatic correspondence which accompanied President Lincoln's first annual message to Congress (December 3, 1861). Originally entitled *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs Accompanying the Annual Message of the President*, the name of this series was changed in 1870 to *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, and in 1947 to the present title.

Publication of these volumes, except for the year 1869, has been continuous. In addition to the annual volumes, supplements have also been published, among them the World War Supplements, the Lansing Papers, the special 1918-1919 Russia volumes, the Paris Peace Conference, 1919, series, Japan, 1931-1941, and The Soviet Union, 1933-1939.

The principles which guide the compilation and editing of *Foreign Relations* are stated in Department of State Regulation 045 of May 27, 1949, a revision of the order approved on March 26, 1925, by Mr. Frank B. Kellogg, then Secretary of State. The text of the current regulation is printed below:

045 DOCUMENTARY RECORD OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS

045.1 *Scope of Documentation*

The publication, *Foreign Relations of the United States* constitutes the official public record of United States foreign policy. These volumes include all papers relating to major policies and decisions of the Department in the matter of foreign relations, together with appropriate materials concerning the events and facts which contributed to the formulation of such decisions and policies.

045.2 *Editorial Preparation*

The basic documentary record of American foreign policy in *Foreign Relations of the United States* shall be edited by RE.¹ Documentation shall be substantially complete as regards the files of the Department. However, certain omissions of documents or parts of documents are permissible:

- a. To avoid publication of matters which would tend to impede current diplomatic negotiations or other business.
- b. To condense the record and avoid repetition of needless details.
- c. To preserve the confidence reposed in the Department by other governments and by individuals.
- d. To avoid needless offense to other nationalities or individuals.

¹ Division of Historical Policy Research (now the Historical Division).

- e. To eliminate personal opinions presented in despatches and not acted upon by the Department. To this there is one qualification—in connection with major decisions it is desirable, where possible, to show the alternatives presented to the Department when the decision was made.

No deletions shall be made without clearly indicating the place in the text where the deletion occurs.

045.3 *Clearance*

RE shall obtain the following clearances of material for publication in *Foreign Relations of the United States*:

- a. Refer to the appropriate policy officers such papers as would appear to require policy clearance.
- b. Refer to appropriate foreign governments requests for permission to print certain documents originating with them which it is desired to publish as part of the diplomatic correspondence of the United States. Without such permission the documents in question will not be used.

In keeping with the spirit of the above quoted Department regulation, the research staff is guided in compiling the record by the principles of historical objectivity. It is the rule that there shall be no alteration of the text, no deletions without indicating the place in the text where the deletion is made, no omission of facts which were of major importance in reaching a decision, and that nothing should be omitted with a view to concealing or glossing over what might be regarded by some as a defect of policy. In the selection of papers the editors have attempted to give a substantially complete record of American foreign policy as contained in the files of the Department of State together with as much background material as possible, while keeping the volumes within reasonable limits with respect to size and number. In the preparation of *Foreign Relations* for the decade preceding World War II special attention has been given to the inclusion of documents of significance with respect to the origins of that conflict.

Considerable concern has been expressed because the publication of the *Foreign Relations* annual volumes has fallen so far behind the time of the documents included. In an effort to reduce this timelag a program of accelerated publication has been undertaken. As part of this effort the lists of papers are being omitted for the time being at least, beginning with the 1937 volumes, and indexes beginning with the 1936 volumes have been drafted by a private company under contract.

The responsibilities of the Historical Division (formerly the Division of Historical Policy Research) for the preparation of the *Foreign Relations* volumes are entrusted, under the general supervision of the Chief of the Division, G. Bernard Noble, to the Chief of the Foreign Relations Branch (Editor of *Foreign Relations*), E. R. Perkins, and the Assistant Chief of the Branch, Gustave A. Nuermberger. The re-

search staff of this Branch is organized with a Special Problems Section and area sections for the British Commonwealth and Europe, the Soviet Union, the Near East and Africa, the Far East, and the American Republics. The compilers of the 1938 volumes were Matilda F. Axton, Rogers P. Churchill, Francis C. Prescott, John G. Reid, N. O. Sappington, Louis E. Gates, and Shirley L. Phillips of the present staff and George Verne Blue, Victor J. Farrar, Morrison B. Giffen, and Henry P. Beers, former staff members.

The Editorial Services Division is responsible with respect to *Foreign Relations* for the proofreading and editing of copy, the preparation of indexes, and the distribution of printed copies. Under the general direction of the Chief of the Division, Robert L. Thompson, the editorial functions mentioned above are performed by the Foreign Relations Editing Branch in charge of Elizabeth A. Vary.

For 1938, the arrangement of volumes is as follows: Volume I, General; Volume II, The British Commonwealth, Europe, the Near East and Africa; Volumes III and IV, The Far East; Volume V, The American Republics.

E. R. PERKINS

Editor of Foreign Relations

JANUARY 10, 1955.

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ANALYSES AND REPORTS OF GENERAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE AFFECTING THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL ORDER AND PRESERVATION OF PEACE¹

740.00/259 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, January 4, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 8 p. m.]

14. In the course of a conversation today with Chautemps,² I said that I had derived the impression from my last talk with Delbos³ that the present foreign policy of the French Government might be described by the phrase "wait and see". He said that this was true; that he had no large projects in mind. He had thought of proposing to Germany, in a public statement, that the two countries should make a great effort to improve the tone of their relations by establishing cultural exchanges on a large scale and announcing to the world that they intended to work out all their difficulties in an atmosphere of friendship. He said that he was not now sure that he would do this. I gathered that he did not wish to seem to be seeking German favor at a moment when the prestige of France had been diminished seriously by events in Rumania.

With regard to the Rumanian situation, Chautemps said that unquestionably King Carol's action in choosing Goga⁴ was a severe blow to France. Inasmuch as this action had followed immediately Delbos' visit to Bucharest, the blow was all the more painful.

He believed that the King had acted in this way because of his fear and hatred of the National Peasants Party on the one hand and the Iron Guard on the other. Chautemps added that he expected Goga for the moment to continue to follow the foreign policy of Tatarescu⁵

¹ For previous correspondence, see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 24 ff.

See also Department of State, *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, series D, vol. I (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1949), henceforth cited as *German Documents, 1918-1945*, ser. D, vol. I; and *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vols. I and II, 1938 (London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1949), henceforth cited as *British Documents*, 3d ser., vols. I and II, respectively.

² Camille Chautemps, President of the French Council of Ministers.

³ Yvon Delbos, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

⁴ Octavian Goga, Rumanian Prime Minister, December 28, 1937-February 10, 1938.

⁵ George Tatarescu, former Rumanian Prime Minister.

but feared that after the elections, which would be arranged in order to give Goga a majority of the Parliament, Rumania would move further into the German-Italian orbit.

I asked Chautemps if he considered that any constructive international negotiations might be based on Van Zeeland's report.⁶ He said that he considered the report prudent and on the whole sound insofar as it went; but he thought it did not go nearly far enough and he believed that even the mild recommendations of the report would prove to be unpalatable to either Germany or Italy. For example he would like to act on Van Zeeland's [suggestion?] that all countries should agree not to take any further steps in the direction of autarchy. But he believed that neither Germany nor Italy would agree to limit evolution to repudiate autarchy. He also was not averse to discussing the exploitation of Equatorial Africa by international companies or consortiums. But he believed that Germany would not now be satisfied with the development of Central Africa by international organizations although the idea had originated in the brain of Schacht.⁷

Chautemps expressed his pleasure at the remarks on foreign affairs that the President has made in his message to Congress.⁸ He then reiterated what he has said to me on previous occasions; that the only effective intervention of the United States in world affairs would be if the President should be able to state that the United States would take arms against an aggressor or at least would cut off status of exports to an aggressor and send supplies to any nation or nations attacked. He added at once that he knew that it was impossible for the President to make any such statement or take any such position. He felt that this was unfortunate as he was convinced that such a statement by the President of the United States would be sufficient to stop the aggressor states and therefore would end the risk of the United States being involved in war. He was convinced that the United States would be drawn into war, if war should start in Europe and would suffer tremendous losses which could be avoided by taking a strong position which would prevent war.

I replied that he was quite right in his statement that it was impossible for the United States to take any such position, and reminded him that I had told him often that the United States would make every effort to stay out of war if war should come in Europe and that we would be involved only if our national honor should be trampled on as ruthlessly as it was by the Germans in 1917.

⁶ British Cmd. 5648: *Report Presented by Monsieur van Zeeland to the Governments of the United Kingdom and France on the Possibility of Obtaining a General Reduction of the Obstacles to International Trade*; see also *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 671 ff.

⁷ Hjalmar Schacht, German Minister without Portfolio and President of the Reichsbank.

⁸ January 3, 1938; *Congressional Record*, vol. 83, pt. 1, p. 8.

Chautemps said that the only ray of light he saw in the foreign situation was that internal conditions in Italy seemed to be becoming over-strained. He did not believe that Mussolini⁹ could continue to carry all the burdens imposed by his present policies. I asked Chautemps if he had done anything in the way of developing a *rapprochement* with Italy. He said that with Mussolini in his present state of mind it was virtually impossible to do anything with Italy. In point of fact diplomatic relations had practically been severed by France and Italy. Neither the Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Paris nor the French Chargé d'Affaires in Rome had any conversations of any importance whatsoever but were confined to strictly routine business.

BULLITT

751.60C/119

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

No. 297

WARSAW, January 8, 1938.

[Received January 20.]

SIR:

My confidential talks with Polish Government officials reveal in substance the following: Although the French press had heralded a drastic parliamentary questioning of M. Delbos upon the results of his recent voyage through Eastern and Central Europe, M. Delbos was in a position to offer adequate defense. Subsequent to the London Anglo-French conversations, in light of the previous Halifax-Hitler discussions, Polish official circles had gained the impression that the French Government had agreed with the British Government that the purpose of the Delbos tour would envisage soundings on the broader issues looking to a general appeasement and pacification settlement rather than looking to any specific questions. Hence, realistically appraised, the value of the Delbos tour consisted of (a) an enlightening realistic and useful inventory of the attitudes of each of France's allies in Eastern and Central Europe, whereby France had learned that her allies were not to be expected to carry on as in the past five or six years. The inventory should also show France that her allies individually had become more powerful during the past several years, and that not only had they less faith in the collective system of security, but also that circumstances due to the turn of events during the past two years throughout Europe had changed the political complexion both of Eastern and Central Europe.

⁹ Benito Mussolini, "Duce" and Head of the Italian Government.

Moreover, Delbos had found out that reliance on the Little Entente was like relying on the wind, except perhaps for Czechoslovakia. Realistically viewed however, Czechoslovakia could not be regarded as an element of strength, but rather as an element requiring protection. On the other hand, Delbos' inventory had brought to light certain current swings, such as Rumania's present apparent swing to more of an "on-the-fence-position" as indicated by her political change-over, and the Yugoslav apparent swing away from the dominance of French influence. On the other hand, the inventory would show Poland continuing her practice of "active neutrality" according to her established policy.

Moreover, according to my informants' views, French friendship, as well as Polish loyalty to the Franco-Polish alliance in terms of Poland's direct obligations, could be depended upon. That is to say, Poland would march if France were directly attacked by Germany. However, France had ascertained that Poland refused to deviate from her established stand in respect to a possible German-Soviet conflict. That is to say, France could not look for Poland to maintain other than a neutral position in the event of a conflict between Germany and Russia.

It is, moreover, my own opinion that M. Delbos undoubtedly came to the conclusion that Poland might not be expected to march on Germany in the event France attacked the latter as a result of a German thrust against Czechoslovakia. I personally am still of the opinion that in such event, Poland would "sit tight".

Besides, in considering this question, one should bear in mind Poland's foreign policy as directed by Colonel Beck, in pursuance of the late Marshal Piłsudski's precepts: a determination to prevent the passage of foreign troops over Polish territory. To my mind, this determination has an important bearing on Poland's past and present attitude in respect to Czechoslovakia.

On the one hand, Minister Beck has been aware of Germany's growing appetite for Sudeten Deutsch; on the other, he is apprehensive lest in the event of a conflict, France might march, and Russia might be called upon to discharge her obligations under her pact with the Czechs. By constantly building up a record of misunderstanding, despite correct official Polish-Czech relations, Poland envisages the establishment of a moral defense against future League or other foreign pressure towards urging her either to lend Czechoslovakia military assistance or by permitting passage of a Soviet punitive expedition over Polish territory in event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia.

France had found in fact that Poland would not and could not, according to her established policy, play any part in a scheme en-

visaging the encirclement of Germany. Indeed, Delbos' inventory would show that France could no longer go forward with her previously entertained illusion that she could maintain Germany's encirclement. Hence, France undoubtedly would have awakened to the fact, that her position in relation to her allies in this part of Europe was not as secure, in terms of a policy which France wished to impose, as she had previously allowed herself to believe. In light of these revelations, therefore, France was expected to become more desirous of joint action with Britain towards bringing about a general appeasement and pacification settlement.

In the eyes of my informants, moreover, the foregoing disclosures might be expected to contribute to France's making strenuous efforts to "do business" directly with Germany—in other words, to do all possible to improve Franco-German relations.

I suggest that the foregoing be read in connection with my despatch No. 298¹⁰ on the subject of "Poland's position in respect to the League", which will go forward by next week's pouch.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. DREXEL BIDDLE, JR.

871.4016 Jews/82: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]¹¹

PARIS, February 1, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received 4:46 p. m.]

170. I discussed with Delbos a number of matters:

1. *Rumania*. Delbos said that both he and Eden¹² had reminded Micescu¹³ in Geneva that the treaty guaranteeing the rights of minorities in Rumania was the same treaty which had given Rumania both Transylvania and Bessarabia,¹⁴ and had stated that if the Rumanian Government should destroy the integrity of this treaty by attacking the Jewish minority in Rumania, the French and British Governments would regard the entire treaty, including the portions which give Transylvania and Bessarabia to her, annulled by the action of the Rumanian Government itself.

Delbos added that he had sent a telegram to Eden at 11 o'clock last night containing proposed instructions to the French Minister in

¹⁰ January 8; not printed.

¹¹ For portions of this telegram not printed here, see p. 155.

¹² Anthony Eden, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

¹³ Ivan Micescu, Rumanian representative at the 100th session of the League of Nations Council, January 25–February 2, 1938.

¹⁴ Treaty between the United States, British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, and Rumania, signed December 9, 1919; League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. v, p. 335.

Rumania directing him to call on King Carol and on Goga and to repeat as emphatically as possible the statements that he and Eden had made to Micescu. He had requested Eden to instruct the British Minister in Rumania to make an exactly similar *démarche*. He had not yet received Eden's reply but was confident the Bulgarian Government would act with the French Government in this matter.

He asked me if there might be a possibility that the United States would wish to associate itself with such an action. I replied that in spite of the fact that our Government had great sympathy with persecuted minorities everywhere we were not parties to the treaty guaranteeing the rights of minorities in Rumania and I considered it out of the question for our Government to take any such action.

Delbos said that he had been unable to obtain any definite promises from Micescu but that he had left Geneva with the definite impression that Goga would go slow in his attacks on the Jews.

3. I had been informed by Delbos' most intimate assistant that he had had a highly acrimonious discussion with Litvinov¹⁵ in Geneva as a result of his suggestion that his policy of *rapprochement* with Germany might establish an atmosphere of peace in Europe which would be to the ultimate advantage of the Soviet Union as well as France and Germany.

Delbos said that this was indeed true. Litvinov had displayed the greatest hostility to the idea of a *rapprochement* between France and Germany; and the French Communists, on orders from Moscow, would certainly oppose such a *rapprochement*.

BULLITT

740.00/292

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] February 1, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador¹⁶ called to see me this morning in consequence of the statement he had made to me a few nights ago that he had not had the opportunity of talking with me for some time and that he felt it would possibly be helpful if he could give me his impressions of the present policies of his own Government. I had replied that I would be most happy to have such an opportunity.

The Ambassador said that he was instructed by his Government to state that the policy of the Italian Government with regard to

¹⁵ Maxim M. Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and Soviet representative on the League of Nations Council.

¹⁶ Fulvio Suvich.

the hostilities between Japan and China¹⁷ was one of complete neutrality. He emphasized his next statement, which was that the only reason why the Government of Italy had joined the Anti-Communist Pact¹⁸ with Japan and Germany was because it would have been absurd for Italy, whose determined opposition to communism was well known as an integral part of its national policy, not to join in an international pact which had for its sole purpose the opposing of the spread throughout the world of communism. He stated most emphatically that the agreement into which Italy had entered had no other purpose than this and that it contained no provisions which could in any way be construed as being in the nature of a military alliance between the countries involved. The Ambassador then went on to say that his Government, from the commencement of these hostilities, had been animated by the belief that because of the military superiority of Japan, it was in the interest of China herself to make peace as quickly as possible for Italy was convinced that no other country would render any effective assistance to China and that the action taken by the League, both recently and last September, had merely offered encouragement to China on false premises and had led her to believe that material assistance would be forthcoming. It was for that reason, the Ambassador said, that Italy had also encouraged direct negotiations at all stages. The Ambassador then continued by referring to the Brussels Conference¹⁹ and said that the attitude of the Italian representative at that Conference had been assumed in accordance with the policy which he had above indicated; that the only reason why the Italian representative had not expressed Italy's willingness to join in efforts to mediate between the two belligerents was because of the fact that Italy knew that such an offer would be rejected by Japan, and that inasmuch as all of the governments represented, except Italy, had already condemned Japan as a treaty violator, it could hardly have been supposed that Japan would welcome mediation by the powers attending the Conference.

I took this opportunity of saying to the Ambassador that theoretically I could understand the arguments advanced by Italy in favor of this policy, but that I was led to ask whether Italy as a member of the Nine Power Treaty,²⁰ into which it had entered voluntarily as one of the great powers of the world having an interest in the Far East, had now determined to consider as obsolete the agreement upon the maintenance of the integrity of China and those principles

¹⁷ See vol. III, pp. 1 ff.

¹⁸ See *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 605 ff.

¹⁹ See *ibid.*, vol. IV, pp. 1 ff.

²⁰ Signed at Washington, February 6, 1922, *ibid.*, 1922, vol. I, p. 276.

of the open door and of the right of equal opportunity for peaceful trading in China on the part of foreign nations upon which the Nine Power Treaty was based. The Ambassador replied, "Certainly not." I then went on to say that the policy assumed by Italy with regard to the violation by Japan of the provisions of the Nine Power Treaty would lead the average observer to assume that the violation of the Nine Power Treaty provisions by Japan was condoned by Italy. I added that to this Government it would seem that there was no more important principle to be salvaged in modern international relations than the recognition of the sanctity of treaty obligations with the similar recognition that any party to a treaty which considered the provisions of a treaty unduly onerous or obsolete should have the full right to request the other parties to the treaty to consider such facts with the possibility that existing treaty obligations might be modified by the unanimous consent of the parties concerned. The Ambassador replied that in the case of Japan, the Italian Government took cognizance of the fact that Japan was a country increasing very rapidly in population with a physical need for expansion and with a physical need for obtaining the means of livelihood for its nationals. He said that that statement led him to the question of the recognition of Manchukuo. He stated that the action taken by the Italian Government in recognizing the independence of Manchukuo had been taken because of its belief that it was an accomplished fact which could not now be disregarded; that the quiet of the inhabitants of Manchukuo at the outbreak of recent hostilities had made it clear that there was no real opposition on the part of the inhabitants of Manchukuo to their present autonomous form of government, and that inasmuch as Italy knew that Japan would insist as a prerequisite to peace terms with China upon recognition by the latter of the independence of Manchukuo, such action by a great power like Italy before peace negotiations had commenced would probably make it easier for any Chinese government to convince its own nationalistic public sentiment that such action was imperative.

I said to the Ambassador that I had been particularly interested in his reiteration of the attitude of complete neutrality on the part of Italy between China and Japan because of certain rumors which had recently reached me, and that I was now, purely in an individual and personal way, going to mention one of these rumors to him. I said that I had been told that the Italian Government was sending fifty experienced and veteran aviators of the Italian military service with a large number of military planes to Japan to take part in the Japanese aviation service, and that I wondered if the Ambassador knew if there was any truth in this report. The Ambassador looked somewhat confused and said that he did not know of any such report, but

that the fact that he was not advised of it did not necessarily mean that it was not true. He said, however, that if the report were true, he could call attention to the fact that the newspapers had printed only recently a story showing that a considerable shipment of Italian munitions and military supplies had been delivered to the Chinese authorities at Canton, and that he saw no reason why, in accordance with its policy, his Government should not sell munitions and military supplies to both sides. I merely remarked that the sending of aviators of the Italian military service as alleged in the report would hardly seem to be on the same footing as the sale of munitions, but I did not pursue the subject.

The Ambassador then brought up the subject of press attacks in the United States press against Italy and the policies of the Italian Government. He said that of course he knew that the press in this country was entirely free and could not be controlled, but that he regretted very much the harmful effect on relations between our two countries which these constant press attacks were creating. I replied that I deplored the effect as much as he did, but that in all candor I must say that it was equally well known that the press in Italy was not free but was responsive to governmental influence and that for that reason the recent diatribes in the Italian press against this Government and the policies of the present Administration were having an even more harmful effect because they so clearly represented the desires of the Italian authorities themselves. I remarked that in my own personal belief there was nothing more helpful towards really friendly and cordial relations between countries than for the respective governments of the world to refrain from criticizing or condemning the purely domestic and internal aspects of the policies of other foreign governments. I stated that the principle of non-intervention and non-interference in other countries, which was a cardinal feature in the foreign policy of this Government, supported my belief in this regard. The Ambassador quickly said that unfortunately high officials of this Government, and in particular Secretary Ickes,²¹ apparently lost no opportunity of inveighing in the most severe terms against the purely domestic policies of the Italian Government and that obviously both the Italian authorities and Italian public opinion had been greatly concerned by speeches of this character. I replied in turn that it seemed to me that although foreign governments should refrain in every way from appearing to interfere with the domestic policies of other governments, nevertheless, they had every legitimate right to consider and to remark upon the international policies of other governments. To this the Ambassador agreed. I con-

²¹ Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior.

cluded this phase of our conversation by stating that I felt there was very little to be gained and a great deal to be lost by constant press recriminations in one country and then the other, and that I hoped the time might soon come when the particularly friendly feeling which had always existed in this country for Italy and in Italy for the United States might once more become predominant.

I then asked the Ambassador if he could give me any information as to the present situation in Europe and specifically whether any progress had been made in the conversations between Italy and Great Britain. The Ambassador said that he felt in fact that some progress had been made and referred specifically to the agreement on the part of both Governments that they would refrain from radio propaganda to the Arab populations in the Near East and in Northern Africa. He said that he knew that his Government was anxious to undertake and to conclude an agreement with Great Britain as soon as Great Britain was willing to move. At the present time he believed that the British Cabinet was divided into two factions, the one, headed by Mr. Chamberlain,²² urgently desirous of proceeding with these conversations, and the other, headed by Mr. Eden, anxious to postpone them. I asked if he wouldn't clarify the position of his Government with regard to what it desired to achieve through such conversations. He said that he would very gladly do so.

The Ambassador stated that he was now speaking with the authority of a man who had been for more than three years at the head of the Italian Foreign Office and who had earnestly desired a *rapprochement* with Great Britain throughout these past three years. He stated that Italy desired the recognition by Great Britain of the Italian Empire, namely, the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. In that connection, he said, there had apparently been very considerable misunderstanding in the United States as to Italy's position. The Ambassador said that in the treaty of 1889²³ Italy had been granted an effective protectorate over Abyssinia including among other things the sole right to represent Abyssinian interests abroad. He stated that the defeat of Italy in 1896 at Adowa, which had been solely due to the lack of national spirit in Italy at that time and to her extreme national poverty, had checked what otherwise would have been an accepted fact by all the great powers of Europe, including Great Britain, namely, the domination of Ethiopia as a colony of Italy. He himself mentioned the fact that the action taken in 1935 by Italy²⁴ had been in contravention of her contractual League obligations, but he said

²² Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister.

²³ Treaty of Friendship and Commerce Between the Kingdom of Italy and the Empire of Ethiopia, signed May 2, 1889; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. LXXXI, p. 733.

²⁴ See *Foreign Relations*, 1935, vol. I, pp. 662 ff.

that, nevertheless, there was this treaty background which he had mentioned as being in the nature of a justification of a legal character for the conquest.

The Ambassador then went on to define the points which Italy desired to obtain in negotiations with Great Britain. (1) It desired that the Mediterranean be kept open to peaceful trade and commerce. In that connection he said that Great Britain physically could close the Suez Canal, but on the other hand, Italy through fortification of Sicily and the islands adjacent thereto and of the coast of Libya could physically close the middle of the Mediterranean. He said that it should be in the interest of both England and Italy to keep the Mediterranean open and to commit themselves not to attempt to impede navigation in any way or at any time. (2) He stated that Italy had no desire for any further territorial acquisitions in the Mediterranean and that she was now "completely satisfied". (3) He reiterated the willingness of Italy to guarantee the integrity of Spanish territory, including the Balearic Islands, and the unwillingness of Italy to see any portion of Spanish territory alienated by any power including Italy. (4) He stated that the French colonies in Northern Africa in their present status were entirely acceptable to Italy, and that the present integrity of Egypt was entirely acceptable to Italy. (5) He stated that Italy had no desire to have Great Britain reduce the fortifications which it now possessed in the Mediterranean either in Malta, Cyprus, or Gibraltar, and that Italy was willing to give guarantees on all the above-mentioned points provided the present Italian Empire was recognized by Great Britain.

In response to a remark which I had made that world appeasement, both political and economic-financial, was obviously the great objective towards which the great powers of the world today must strive and that if world appeasement of a major character appeared feasible, this Government, within the limitations of its traditional policy of non-involvement in political entanglements, would of course be prepared to consider what it could do to further such an objective, the Ambassador said that while a bilateral arrangement of the character he had indicated between Great Britain and Italy was indispensable to world appeasement, nevertheless, it was not in itself sufficient. He said that Germany was not satisfied, as Italy was, and that unless Germany could be satisfied, no solid foundations for the "new day" for which he hoped could be laid. I asked him what he considered the essential satisfaction for Germany might be. He replied, "Colonial compensations and commercial and financial assistance through the transition period which would be required before Germany could return to her pre-war status".

I asked the Ambassador if he believed that Germany had any further aspirations, specifically in Central Europe or Eastern Europe. The Ambassador answered, "If you mean Austria, I can tell you definitely not." He said, "Remember that I myself was born an Austrian subject and that the interests of Austria are therefore peculiarly close to my heart. Remember also that in 1934 Mussolini instructed me to come to the rescue of Dollfuss²⁵ at the most critical period in Austria's post-war history and that the assistance then given by Mussolini to Dollfuss saved the day." I said, "Am I to understand that your Government considers the independence and integrity of Austria as being an integral part of Italy's foreign policy?" The Ambassador told me that I could so regard his statement. He went on to say that he felt that conditions in Austria were far more satisfactory than they had been and that the most significant thing that had recently occurred had been the official disavowal by the German Foreign Office of the recent Nazi disturbances in Austria. The Ambassador said that his Government had only recently been reiterating to the German Government its belief that an independent Austria was far more in the interest of Germany than an Austria which was merely a German province both for economic considerations as well as by reason of the fact that an independent Austria on close and friendly terms with Germany would constitute herself a liaison between the Danubian and Balkan states and Germany which was the indicated field for peaceful economic and financial penetration on the part of Germany. I remarked to the Ambassador that, as I had said before, under present conditions rumors of one kind or another were constantly in circulation and that one rumor which was being sedulously repeated was that Germany intended to make some *démarche* of one kind or another against Austria in the not distant future. The Ambassador said that he was confident that no such move was contemplated, and repeated verbatim that the independence of Austria was a cardinal point in Italian policy.

The Ambassador concluded our conversation by talking for some time on the subject of armaments. He reminded me of Mussolini's interview to the United Press²⁶ last summer in which he had expressed the hope that the President of the United States might take the lead in checking the increase in armaments and that, while that was not to be considered as an official invitation on the part of the Italian Government, it was nevertheless the sincere expression of Mussolini's belief. He stated that it was his own intimate conviction that Great

²⁵ Englebert Dollfuss, Austrian Chancellor, 1932-34; three agreements known as the Rome Protocols were concluded between Italy, Austria, and Hungary on March 17, 1934; see League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CLIV, pp. 281, 287, and 297.

²⁶ See telegram No. 244, May 25, 1937, noon, from the Ambassador in Italy, *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 655.

Britain would not now agree to accept any move of that character, but that he believed that the British rearmament program should be completed to a reasonable extent by next autumn and that when that time came, he felt that some agreement on armaments by the great powers was within the bounds of possibility. I asked the Ambassador what grounds there could be for any agreement as to the limitation of armaments in a world in which the very basis of international understanding, namely, the conviction that treaty obligations would be respected, was non-existent. The Ambassador replied, "I quite agree with you but if the world can obtain the type of appeasement which we have been discussing, the time will have come to forget the past and to look forward to the future and if an appeasement of a political and economic character, founded on justice, can be obtained, the nations of the world can once more try and agree upon the essential principles upon which a new civilization can be built."

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

740.00/329

*Memorandum by the Military Attaché in Germany (Smith)*²⁷

[February 1, 1938.]

A German general staff officer recently expressed the opinion in a private conversation that it was German bayonets which were making possible the Japanese conquest of China, just as in 1935 and 1936 German bayonets had made possible the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. The officer in question by these remarks did not mean to imply that Germany approved Japanese or Italian action. He was merely stating what he considered to be a fact: that the German rearmament had altered the balance of power in Europe and in so doing had prevented Great Britain from opposing Japan in Asia.

The interrelation of European and Asiatic factors in determining the course of developments in the Far East, is no doubt now fully appreciated in Washington. That England's inactivity in Asia is due to her worries on the European continent and in the Mediterranean must be as apparent on one side of the Atlantic as on the other. That also in her dilemma, she is seeking to induce the United States to take the lead in East Asia and maintain the white man's position there, is a matter of gossip in every European capital.

In German military circles, it is the firm belief that under no circumstances will Great Britain weaken its military position in Europe or on the Mediterranean by any diversion of its strength to East Asia,

²⁷ Copy transmitted to the Department by the Ambassador in Germany in his despatch No. 1, March 4; received March 21.

no matter whether America becomes involved with Japan or not. In other words, if a major war is to come in East Asia, Great Britain's contribution will be purely nominal—that is about on a par with Great Britain's participation in the Tsingtam [*Tsingtao*] expedition of 1914.

So marked are Britain's and France's fears of European developments, if they become involved in East Asia that it is fair to speak of a paralysis of their foreign policies in the latter part of the world. Both fear that Germany and Italy will use the opportunity to strike a deadly blow in unison, once they themselves have become involved in the Far East.

This fear of England and France may or may not be correct. Nevertheless it is today the governing factor in the world political situation.

It therefore becomes advisable to examine the possible courses open to Germany under the assumption Great Britain becomes involved in East Asia. This is necessary in order to understand the reasons for English passivity in the face of Japanese aggression against the British position in China.

The same examination of possibilities should be done no doubt in the case of Italy, but this cannot be done with any authority by an observer in Berlin.

The German Hitler foreign policy and attitude in the present situation appears in its larger outlines fairly clear.

Germany on February 1, 1938, is out to benefit herself and to extract such profit as she may from the Asian embroilment. Hitler is not himself interested in either Japanese aggression or Chinese resistance. German commercial interests in the Far East, while large, also do not influence his political thinking. He is thinking in terms of Europe. He realizes Germany is no world power and cannot be a world power until Germany's European position is secure. Therefore, if he concludes an anti-communist alliance with Japan, he is not thinking of Asiatic matters, but purely of the effect of this treaty on Russia's European position.

Were Great Britain to become seriously involved in Asia, it is axiomatic that her position in Europe will be weaker and that this weakness will in turn communicate itself to France's position. If we assume a Great Britain involved in China, we can accept for granted that France would be less likely to take up arms in favor of Czechoslovakia or Austria, were Hitler to proceed to liquidate these states. That is the case at the present time. The above hypothesis is not intended to suggest that Hitler will release the German armed forces, at the moment England sends its fleet to Singapore. Hitler might well decide to lay low for a time and strengthen his own finances and economic position, and await the gradual weakening which England would inevitably undergo, if she really seriously put forth her

strength in Asia. Whether Germany would seek her profit by military or financial measures remains undetermined. But that she intends to come out of an entanglement of Britain in an Asiatic war stronger than she is today, is as certain as any political fact can be. This England knows full well. Uncertain is only how Germany would seek to profit from England's distress. In all English political calculations there is ever in the background that powerful German military force which is gradually coming to be the most powerful army in the world.

In the present crisis when English interests in Asia are receiving one body blow after another and America gives no sign that she will take up the fight in British behalf, the European diplomatic world awaits with interest the next British move. To all it seems axiomatic that Britain will continue to lose ground in Asia until she has secured her European base of operation. This she can achieve by an understanding with Germany, Italy, or perhaps with both together. This is the true meaning of the Halifax visit in December [*November*]²⁸ and will be equally the true meaning of the German-British conversations, which may be expected to begin not later than the middle of March.

An English-German understanding is Hitler's first principle of diplomacy in 1938, just as it was in 1934, or in 1924 when he wrote *Mein Kampf*. Four years ago England could have had Germany for a bagatelle. Today she must pay through the nose. The question of 1938 is merely the question of price. The next four months should settle the question of an English-German understanding and undoubtedly decide whether Europe is to have peace for a decade.

If no agreement is reached, it may be today estimated with fair certainty that England's Asiatic position will be destroyed without any corresponding strengthening of her European position.

740.00/287 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, February 7, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received February 7—6:45 p. m.]

207. Chautemps, Delbos, and Léger²⁹ lunched with Hugh Wilson,³⁰ Edwin Wilson³¹ and me today. The conversation on the subject of

²⁸ Viscount Halifax, Lord President of the Privy Council, while in Berlin in an unofficial capacity, November 16-22, 1937, engaged in conversations with Chancellor Hitler and other German officials; see telegram No. 751, December 3, 1937, 8 p. m., from the Chargé in the United Kingdom, and memorandum by the Under Secretary of State, December 15, 1937, *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 183 and 195, respectively.

²⁹ Alexis Léger, Secretary-General of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

³⁰ Ambassador in Germany.

³¹ Counselor of Embassy in France.

a Franco-German *rapprochement* brought out in striking fashion the different conceptions and tendencies of those in control of French foreign policy in their approach to this problem. Chautemps is thoroughly realistic and intends to leave no stone unturned in an effort to come to a settlement with the Germans in the hope of obtaining the assurance of at least a few years of peace. Léger on the other hand is extremely cautious and while declaring that the essential point in French foreign policy is a settlement with Germany, nevertheless is negative when it comes to ways and means of accomplishing this end. Between the two stands Delbos.

Delbos hopes that the proposal which has been made for an agreement to cease bombing civilian populations in Spain may lead to negotiations with Germany to generalize the application of this principle in time of war. He hopes that out of some such small beginning may grow further helpful discussions, for example, on the question of a limiting construction of heavy bombing planes. The important thing in his view is to get Germany to sit down at a conference table with the other powers in the hope that discussions of relatively minor matters may lead to discussions of the essential problems of European peace. He is encouraged by the fact that while the proposal for ending bombardments of civilian populations in Spain at first met with an unfavorable press in Germany, later press reaction under the guidance of the German Government has shown a more favorable tone.

Delbos said that Von Welzsch, the German Ambassador, had called upon him to state under instructions of his Government that the recent changes in the direction of the army and the Foreign Office in Germany did not in any way signify a change in German foreign policy. The information far from complete which the French Government has so far received regarding these changes in Germany seems to indicate that Hitler has engineered a compromise between the Reichswehr and the party.

Léger stated and Chautemps and Delbos agreed that he felt that Von Neurath³² had not been shelved but on the contrary would continue to have influence in the conduct of Germany's foreign relations. He felt that Von Ribbentrop³³ would not be allowed to run wild at the Foreign Office and that the establishment of the secret council on foreign affairs composed not only of rabid party men such as Goering, Hess and Goebbels but also of more moderate men such as Von Neurath, Lammers and the heads of the Reichswehr and the navy would mean that Hitler would get sounder advice in arriving at decisions on

³² Baron Konstantin von Neurath, German Minister without Portfolio, and former Minister for Foreign Affairs.

³³ Joachim von Ribbentrop, German Minister for Foreign Affairs.

crucial points in foreign policy than when he had consulted only his intimates of the party.

Léger said that from such information as he had received he did not put stock in the story that Von Fritsch and other generals had conspired against the regime with the idea of restoring the monarchy in Germany.

Chautemps said that while the British would probably proceed with talks with the Italians he felt that nothing would come of these talks. In exchange for recognition of the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia the British would demand (1) withdrawal of Italian troops from Libya, (2) cessation of propaganda in the Arab countries, and (3) withdrawal of Italian troops from Spain. To accept these demands would mean a capitulation on the part of Mussolini and the latter obviously could not grant them.

BULLITT

762.63/489½

*Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State (Messersmith) to the Secretary of State*³⁴

[WASHINGTON,] February 18, 1938.

It occurs to me that you may be interested to have my reactions on the recent developments in Austria and particularly as to how they may affect the general situation.

I believe it is still too early to determine what the ultimate effect of recent events may be but I can only see the general situation as further deteriorating as the result of them. It is just about a year and a half ago that Austria and Germany made their agreement of July 11,³⁵ after which Hitler indicated in a public way the recognition of Austrian independence. A few days ago he sent this peremptory message to Schuschnigg³⁶ to come to Berchtesgaden and, according to our reports, Hitler received him with three Generals behind his back, including General Reichenau, whose views we well know. In no uncertain terms he made demands which, if carried through, would leave Austria without any shred of real independence.

In the past Hitler has frequently said that if Germany has broken agreements they have been arrangements which were put upon her by others through pressure and force and as a defeated nation and are therefore promises which he is not bound to keep. If anyone

³⁴ Transmitted to President Roosevelt by the Secretary of State; photostatic copy obtained from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N. Y.

³⁵ For correspondence relating to this agreement of July 11, 1936, see *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, pp. 180 ff.; for text, see *German Documents, 1918-1945*, ser. D, vol. I, p. 278.

³⁶ Kurt von Schuschnigg, Austrian Federal Chancellor.

would have any doubt as to his intention to keep agreements which he himself has made, the recent events at Berchtesgaden should leave such without any further illusions. I have myself never been able to understand why these illusions should persist when Hitler himself in his book and in the statements which he has made privately and semi-publicly has never left any doubt as to his political practice according to which agreements are valid only as long as he believes they should be kept. It would seem that recent events should, therefore, convince a certain group in England, which has been fostering such agreements, how utterly futile and fatal is any idea that they may have that they can make lasting and binding agreements with Germany under present conditions. And yet there would seem to be indications that English policy is more than ever orientated in the direction of such agreements.

We do not yet have full information as to what conditions are actually being imposed upon Austria, but I think we know enough to realize that whatever they are they are such as will mean her rapid absorption into Germany unless there is some great change in the major European picture. In the conversations which Ambassador Bullitt had with General Goering, and reported by him to the Department,³⁷ General Goering made no concealment that their objective involves the disappearance of Austrian independence. In this respect I can assure you that in conversations which I have had in the last three or four years with high ranking members of the Party in Germany they left no doubt that this is their objective although in the press and in official statements they may cover this over. We do not know what the result of the Vienna-Berlin conversations is but I think that a vestige of hope must remain for I know from my contact with Schuschnigg that he would not remain as Chancellor if he did not believe there was reason for holding on. He does not want to let go until the last ray of hope is gone for he is a genuine patriot. I am not sure, however, that if he does stick he will not meet the same fate as Dollfuss.³⁸ I had a letter this morning which indicates that during the last few months he has had good reason to know that his life has been in constant danger.

In my opinion whatever we may see emerge from the present situation, we can take it that the independence of Austria is gone in fact although its outward form may be retained for the present, unless there is a major change in the European picture which we cannot see now. I still feel that if France and England had spoken in any definite way that the present catastrophe would have been avoided, for

³⁷ Despatch No. 1267, November 23, 1937, enclosure 6, *Foreign Relations, 1937*, vol. I, pp. 162, 170.

³⁸ Dollfuss was assassinated on July 25, 1934.

Hitler is not yet ready to go to war. England and France have not spoken above a whisper and I do not see how Benes can hold on in Czechoslovakia for more than four or five months. There is no doubt but that Czechoslovakia is just as much an objective as Austria and in the last year it was always a question as to whether Czechoslovakia or Austria should come first. I think if Germany were to take action with respect to Czechoslovakia today, as she has done with Austria, France would probably still move, but Hitler, who has an uncanny sense of such situations, realizes that if he will wait four or five months the situation will have further disintegrated in that time and to the point that he can confront Czechoslovakia with the same demands as he has now put upon Austria and that the chances are then that France will not move. I think we must definitely face the fact that if this movement continues, which it shows every promise of doing, there is no small country in Southeastern or in Northern Europe which can have any further illusions as to its security. If, for example, Belgium and Holland and Denmark have any sense of security under these circumstances it is in my opinion a very dangerous delusion. Belgium and Holland and Denmark may, for example, be faced at any time in the not distant future by the same sort of a situation as Austria had to confront a few days ago. There would naturally not be such great political demands at the outset but there would be demands of an economic nature which would be just as destructive of real independence, and under the present circumstances and those which are increasingly developing it is doubtful whether England and France would support these small countries in case the demands are only economic.

It is difficult for some to realize that Germany is proceeding on a fixed course and on a definite policy which has not altered since the regime came into power. What they do not realize adequately is that Germany needs today economic relief which will enable her to continue her program toward mastery in Europe. When Hitler saw Schuschnigg the other day, according to one of our reports, he said to him that Germany had a mission in Europe to get together the 80 million Germans into one nation which would make Germany the master of Europe. Such language surely can leave no illusions and is nothing new to some of us who have known continuously what he is after. One of the principal reasons for the pressure on Austria at this time is that Germany needs the iron from that country and Austria has refused to deliver without payment. Similarly, the relatively good financial situation in Austria is something which Germany has wished to exploit for her own purposes for some time and the strong resistance of the Austrian Government and the National Bank was becoming exasperating. She also wishes to get other raw materials and agricultural prod-

ucts so as to strengthen her difficult home position. The process of peaceful penetration in Austria was not going fast enough and Hitler felt that the internal program as well as the external one did not permit of further delays.

Although there are a number of elements that enter into the recent showdown with the Army in Germany, I am convinced that one of the principal factors was the desire of Hitler to make it possible to proceed with a show of force against Austria. The Army had consistently taken a stand against force or a show of force against Austria just as it had put its foot down on further contingents of men to Spain. If there was to be a showdown with Austria, Hitler realized that the Army had to be put in a position of acquiescing. The Army changes made it possible for Hitler to receive Schuschnigg with three Generals behind him and with two divisions mobilized on the Austrian frontier ostensibly for maneuvers. We know the result. I am convinced that the restraining influence on external policy of the Army in Germany while not altogether gone has practically disappeared.

It is difficult to see how the disintegrating movement in Southeastern Europe can be stopped. According to a telegram we have this morning,³⁹ the German Minister in Belgrade told our Minister that Yugoslavia would shortly be faced by the same situation as Austria. The steps may be fairly slow, but I do not think we can tell. Now that the last step in internal coordination in Germany has been taken through making the Army an instrument of the Party, events may take a much more rapid course. If Germany is able to continue this extension of control through Southeastern Europe, even though in some directions the movement will manifest itself first in economic demands, she will be able to be in a position to get a good part of the raw materials and agricultural products which now make it impossible for her to make war. Through the fortification of the Western frontier, which has made rapid progress, she will soon be able to hold England and France there, and any blockade of the North coast by the English and French fleets will not be so serious for Germany as she will have most of the things which she needs in the areas in Southeastern Europe over which her control is extending. In other words, in my opinion, which I have expressed to you before, if Germany gets economic or political control, or both, of Southeastern Europe she will be in a position to put England and France into a secondary place in Europe and practically immobilize them. This can only mean the gradual disintegration of the British Empire and all this is something which I believe we in this country cannot look upon with unconcern. I am confident that in the end we would have our troubles in South

³⁹ Telegram No. 20, February 17, 6 p. m., p. 399.

America where Germany, Italy and Japan are already so active and where they have their definite objectives—particularly Germany. With England and France in a purely secondary position and with the Empire disintegrated, we in this country would stand practically alone, and that our troubles would come a little later does not give me any comfort. The failure of public opinion in this country to understand all the implications of the developing European and Far Eastern situations for us is, I think, the most difficult problem with which we now have to deal.

I cannot understand the English attitude. There seems to be still a group which believes that they can purchase security through giving Germany a free hand in Southeastern Europe. There was reason to believe that this group was decreasing in power. It now looks as though it has the upper hand. It would be well if they realized that Germany with a free hand in Europe has a good deal freer hand in the rest of the world. No concession has yet satisfied Germany and none will satisfy her. Those in control in the country will themselves admit that.

So far as Italy is concerned, in Party circles in Germany it was realized at the outset that Mussolini was bound to be a secondary partner in German-Italian cooperation. He is playing very much second fiddle now and it is an interesting picture when we consider Mussolini's reactions during the last few days and compare them with his firm stand at the time of the Dollfuss murder when within an hour after he had the news he had several divisions on the frontier. It is too early to say just what the Italian position is, but in Southeastern Europe he has lost immensely in prestige and I think in many ways the Austrian debacle may prove just as significant for him as it is for Austria.

I do not think that Hitler's speech on Sunday, whatever he may say, will mean much. He may make some very reassuring statements on Austrian independence but the fact is that he has removed the basis for such independence. Whatever he says must be viewed in the light of the fact that 18 months ago he openly came out in recognition of that independence which he is now directly violating. His statement to Schuschnigg that he has a mission to bring together the 80 million Germans into a nation which will dominate Europe is the real key to the situation and, if that domination may not be so purely political at the outset in some directions as it will probably be in Austria, it will be nevertheless real in its consequences.

The developments have a very real interest to us for these countries in Southeastern Europe have been looking forward to trade agreements with us as a part of a constructive movement towards economic

peace. Our negotiations with Czechoslovakia ⁴⁰ have been very closely followed and in every one of these countries it was hoped that negotiations with us would soon follow. The Germans knew this and they knew too that under political and economic pressure from both Germany and Italy all these countries were getting closer together and that problems which had separated them for generations were being put into the background. Germany feared our trade agreements program in Southeastern Europe and now that she is embarking upon this course of expansion, I see small prospect for our progress in Southeastern Europe. Even though we negotiated agreements they would have very little value for what is the use of our making arrangements between independent States when an international gangster at the point of a gun is forcing economic subjection? I see the trade agreements program in general seriously menaced for these events in Southeastern Europe will have a disturbing and upsetting influence generally.

There is a strong tendency on the part of some to minimize the recent developments between Austria and Germany. The retention, for example, of Dr. Skubl as the State Secretary under the new Nazi Minister for Public Safety is considered as a guarantee for order. I know that the new Minister of Public Safety is a close friend of the Chancellor and a good Catholic, but I know too that he is a Pan-German and that that is a more important part of his political philosophy than anything else. He will take his orders from Berlin and the fact that he and Chancellor Schuschnigg have been friends for many years will mean little. The German steam roller is at work and he will be the operator of it for Hitler, Goering and Himmler ⁴¹ in Austria. Dr. Skubl will be able to make feeble resistance. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Schmidt, is an opportunist of first water and while he knows what all this means for Austria, his principal endeavor will be not to aid the Chancellor in maintaining the situation but in trying to save a position for himself. The National Socialist movement has known how to utilize in Germany and elsewhere the lowest instincts and motivations which we have as human beings, and it is not failing to use them in this Austrian development. Whether *Anschluss* comes now openly or later is not material. As the situation we now see developing is consolidated, Austria will be just as much a part of Germany, politically and economically, as if it had been done through a solemn treaty or a plebiscite. Austrian agricultural products and Austrian raw materials, which Germany has looked upon with jealous eyes for the last few years, will now flow freely over the frontier.

⁴⁰ See vol. II, pp. 223 ff.

⁴¹ Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police.

It is, of course, impossible to tell what Hitler will say on the twentieth in his Reichstag speech and to foresee how far he will lift the veil. That there will be lip service to Austrian independence is, I think, fairly certain, but I believe there will be enough to indicate rapid expansion of and increase in German pressure to the South-east. I have not in this memorandum to any degree touched on the internal situation in Austria but I think we may take it that in order to quiet the fears of the Austrian people Hitler will say something to reassure them and this will probably take the form of some statement on the religious question. The great majority of the Austrian people do not want the Nazification of the country and the great majority are good Catholics who know what has been happening to the Catholic Church and others in Germany. Certain leaders of the Catholic groups in Austria, however, have been of the opinion that they could bring influence to bear on the Church struggle in Germany and in order to get Catholic sentiment behind him as far as possible in Austria Hitler may say something which would indicate a lessening of tension in the Church struggle. My own feeling, however, is that the coordination of the Church into the Party as a servile instrument is one of the primary policies of National Socialism and that any relaxation in the movement against the Churches announced now will be of a temporary nature.

The Italian and British position, in view of these developments, is difficult to estimate and the quiescent attitude of Italy cannot be explained on the information we now have. Of course, we know that Mussolini has been trying to get a military alliance with Germany, especially since he has realized how definitely a secondary part he plays in the Rome-Berlin arrangements, and has found England so adamant. The German Army has been against such a military alliance with Italy while the Party in Germany has been for it. It may be that Italy's quiescent attitude may be explained on the ground that now that the German Army has been subordinated to the Party, Hitler is holding forth promises of or actual entering into a military alliance with Mussolini. I venture to predict that if such an alliance is entered into, it will be, like other agreements into which this Germany has entered, one which will last just as long as the present leaders in Germany consider it useful to their purpose.

One of the factors in recent developments which cannot be neglected is that it is clear that the influence of Himmler in Germany has come to the fore and he may be now the man next in power in Germany to Hitler. He seems to have the ascendancy over Goering, who had in some respects sided with the Army chiefs whose power outside of purely technical Army matters now seems fairly well gone.

Himmler is definitely in favor of the expansionist program toward the Southeast and of rapid action.

In spite of its length this is still a very unsatisfactory and sketchy résumé of the situation which, however, I thought I should dictate at this moment as I feel that these thoughts may be of some interest to you at this time.

G. S. MESSERSMITH

762.00/164 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, February 21, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 9:15 p. m.]

278. Chautemps lunched with me alone today and made the following remarks with regard to the present situation :

He said that he had been shocked by the frankness of Hitler's speech but he was grateful to Hitler for stating so clearly his objectives. It was now certain that Hitler intended to incorporate both the Austrians and the Germans of Czechoslovakia in the Reich. It seemed certain also that Hitler would support Franco to the limit. It also seemed certain that Hitler would reply to criticisms in the press of democratic countries by the most vigorous measures.

In the face of Hitler's statement he, Chautemps, would like to form a National Government in France. The present government was based on too small a group to have the necessary authority. He did not however consider it possible at the present time to form such a national government.

There were three alternatives. If he should attempt to form a national government he would insist on the exclusion of the Communists. He felt certain that Blum and the Socialists would refuse to participate in a national government which did not include the Communists. He would have to base his government therefore on the Radical Socialists and the parties of the Right. That would not be an effective national government because it would leave out the chief representatives of the working classes. It would be menaced constantly by strikes if it did not follow a policy approved in Moscow. He would not include Communist ministers in any government which he might form because they would report every conversation to Stalin. Moreover, the British were opposed to the presence of Communists in the French Government. Chamberlain had telephoned him that Paul Reynaud's statement that he, Chamberlain, favored the inclusion of a Communist in the French Government and military conversations between the French and Russian general staffs was the exact contrary of the truth.

The second alternative was that Blum should form a national government. Blum would insist on including the Communists. The parties of the Center and Right would refuse to enter any government which included the Communists. Blum might form a government including Communists, Socialists and some Radical Socialists but it would not be a national government and it would soon fall.

The third alternative was that Herriot should form a national government. It seemed to him just possible that Herriot might be able to succeed. The Communists had such confidence in Herriot that he could say to them that he would carry out their policy although no member of the Communist Party should be in the government and he might be able to include in his government representatives of the Socialists, Radical Socialists, all the Center parties and some of the Right parties.

The danger of a national government of this sort would be that the Communists would demand from Herriot the immediate inauguration of military conversations with the Soviet Union and immediate public military support to the Government of Spain. He, Chautemps, feared that this would produce a declaration of war by Germany.

Chautemps' final conclusion was that France was not yet sufficiently alarmed and aroused to make it possible to form a genuine national government and that he would have to go on governing with his present cabinet for some time to come. He added that Delbos was so completely discouraged that the one thing he desired was that the present government should fall as soon as possible and that he should be released from his duties as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Chautemps said that he considered the position of Austria hopeless. He could see no way to prevent Hitler from swallowing Austria in the relatively near future. I asked him if it were true that on February 18 the French Ambassador in London Corbin had proposed to Eden a joint *démarche* of the French and British Governments in Berlin on the following lines:

- (1). Reaffirmation of their interest in the independence of Austria.
- (2). Reservation of their right to examine whether or not the Berchtesgaden agreement had in fact already violated Austrian independence.
- (3). Declaration that any future action upsetting the *status quo* in Central Europe would meet with united and firm opposition of Great Britain and France.

Chautemps replied that it was indeed true that he had permitted Delbos to send an instruction of this sort to Corbin. He had done so for purely domestic reasons in order that Delbos might go before the parties of the Front Populaire with the instruction and show them that France had attempted to do something. He had

not been under the illusion that England might join France in such a *démarche*.

Eden had taken up this proposal with Chamberlain and Chamberlain had replied that he would consider making such a joint *démarche* only if Italy should be ready to participate with France and England. In order to achieve a basis of relations with Italy which would make such joint action possible Chamberlain had proposed to push rapidly conversations with Grandi.⁴²

The British Government had promised the French Government that it would not offer to recognize the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia except after a promise by Italy to cease anti-French and anti-British propaganda and withdraw Italian troops from Spain. Chamberlain had ignored this promise and had suggested to Grandi that Great Britain would recognize the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia in return for a general promise of good behavior on the part of Italy plus a declaration with regard to Italian volunteers in Spain.

Mussolini had replied at once that Italy was prepared to discuss the withdrawal of her troops from Spain and Chamberlain wished to go ahead on negotiations with Italy on the basis of this assurance. Eden felt that Chamberlain was gulled by Mussolini and had insisted on resigning. Hitler's declaration in his speech with regard to Spain seemed to make it entirely clear that Germany and Italy were determined to support Franco until he should be victorious; thus apparently proving that Chamberlain was naive in trusting Mussolini.

For France, the fate of Spain was more important even than the fate of Central Europe. In the utmost confidence he could inform me that the French Government was doing a great deal at the present time to assist the Spanish Government to carry on the war against Franco and the single measure which seemed appropriate to meet Hitler's threats was to increase such support.

So far as Central Europe was concerned he was most pessimistic. Every Frenchman with whom he had talked during the past ten days had recalled to him the example of Sadowa and had suggested to him that if France should permit Austria and Czechoslovakia to fall into German hands and Hungary and Rumania to slip into German hands the power of the Reich would be so enormous that France inevitably would be destroyed within a few years. He felt nevertheless that Hitler would be clever enough to give France no opportunity to intervene to protect Czechoslovakia. Hitler would act as

⁴² Dino Grandi, Italian Ambassador in the United Kingdom.

he had acted in the case of Austria. As soon as Austria should be firmly in Hitler's hands Benes would feel obliged to enter upon conversations with Hitler. Those conversations would probably result in autonomy for the Sudeten Germans of Bohemia. The definite incorporation in the Reich of both the Sudeten Germans and Austria would be simply a question of time.

Now that Chamberlain had eliminated Eden,⁴³ Vansittart⁴⁴ and Cranborne⁴⁵ the three Englishmen closest to the Quai d'Orsay it seemed certain that England would be inclined to make ever-increasing concessions to Germany. He believed indeed that Chamberlain contemplated with relative equanimity the control by Germany of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania.

Under the circumstances France had a clear choice of policies. She could either go on with her present party disputes in discussing production and financial difficulties, or she could pull herself together under a national government with all classes ready to make enormous sacrifices from the poorest to the richest in order to maintain the French position in Central and Eastern Europe. Frankly he regarded the latter possibility as extremely remote.

It seemed probable to him that Central and Eastern Europe would slip into the hands of Germany without war; that the overwhelming power of Germany would then bring together all the other states of Europe just as the states of Europe had been united to oppose Napoleon. The end of the phase of German domination might well come after years through conflict between Germany and the Russian colossus supported by the other states of Europe.

Chamberlain had telephoned to him immediately after Eden's resignation to inform him that there would be no change in British policy. This was polite but not important. The tragedy of France's external position was that the nation which kept its word—the United States—could not act in Europe and the nation which could act—Great Britain—could not keep its word. The tragedy of his present domestic position was that at a moment when France needed the unity which could only be given by a national government representing all classes it was impossible to form such a government.

BULLITT

⁴³ Anthony Eden resigned on February 20, 1938.

⁴⁴ Diplomatic adviser in the British Foreign Office.

⁴⁵ Parliamentary Under Secretary of State.

740.00/299 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State*PARIS, February 21, 1938—midnight.
[Received February 22—11:40 a. m.]

280. I talked this afternoon with Delbos who was in acute depression. He said that the entire policy he had attempted to carry out for the past two years had been destroyed. There was nothing for him to do but give up his shoes. He could not think of any constructive policy. The British Government had made it clear that Britain would do nothing to prevent the absorption of Austria by Germany. France could not alone attempt to protect Austria.

It was clear therefore that Austria within a very limited time would fall into the hands of Germany.⁴⁶ It would then be the turn of Czechoslovakia.⁴⁷ He did not believe that Germany would attack Czechoslovakia directly but believed that Germany would become so threatening that Benes would be obliged to give autonomy to the Sudeten Germans.

The situation in Spain was even more tragic. The German and Italian intervention in Spain directly menaced France's communications with her African colonies. But if France should intervene in Spain today England would not support her and France would be left alone to fight Germany and Italy. The most that could be done would be to send additional military supplies to the Spanish Government.

Delbos showed me a note which he had just received from Chamberlain in which it was asserted that there would be no change in British policy. He commented that this note was of course valueless. The fact was that England had embarked on a policy of turning over central and eastern Europe to Germany in spite of her obligations under the League of Nations. It would be possible for France now to retire behind the Maginot line, develop her own defenses and let the rest of Europe fall into Germany's hands. He himself would continue to oppose such a policy; but it was a policy which in default of a better one was likely to be adopted. France was isolated.

No other great power would assist her and France alone could not establish collective security.

He would of course abandon his intention to make a speech in favor of "humanization of warfare". In view of present events a speech on such a subject would be ridiculous. He was being urged on every side to make a strong address. He did not wish to make any address. He considered words entirely valueless. The world had now reached the stage in which force and force alone counted.

⁴⁶ See pp. 384 ff.

⁴⁷ See pp. 483 ff.

Delbos made it entirely evident that he desired to be out of office as soon as possible. I derived the impression that Chautemps will find it difficult to prevent his resignation and in consequence the fall of the government.

Daladier⁴⁸ dined with me this evening. He said that he would support Herriot⁴⁹ in the formation of a national government but indicated that he would like to form a national government himself.

He said that if Germany should attack Czechoslovakia he would order French mobilization at once. He believed that nothing effective could be done to save Austria.

He was most concerned about Hitler's statements with regard to Spain. He desired to send an expedition at once to seize the Balearic Islands in order to remove the threat to the communications with her north African colonies. He expressed the belief that if the threat to these communications should be removed France would be able to live safely behind the Maginot line no matter what might happen in central and Eastern Europe. It was the estimate of the general staff that one soldier behind good fortifications on the defensive was worth four attackers.

BULLITT

741.65/479 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 1, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received March 1—8 p. m.]

320. Delbos' most intimate collaborator told me today that Delbos and the Foreign Office are deeply depressed over the turn events are taking. Chamberlain has not revealed to the French Government exactly what he has in mind for the Italian negotiations. The French Government believes in Chamberlain's friendship for France but also believes that he sees himself in the role of the British statesman predestined to give peace to the world; that while he is negotiating with the Italians the "constant contact" between the British and French Governments to which he referred recently in the House of Commons will probably consist of a few crumbs of routine information about once every two weeks; and that finally the French Government will be faced with an Anglo-Italian settlement which will leave France little leeway to work out a settlement with Italy satisfactory to French interests.

⁴⁸ Edouard Daladier, Vice President of the French Council of Ministers and Minister of National Defense.

⁴⁹ Edouard Herriot, President of the French Chamber of Deputies.

The Foreign Office believes that the Anglo-Italian negotiations concerning Spain will result in an arrangement for reestablishing control at the frontiers. This will mean that the Republicans will be deprived of the essential aid they are now getting from France; the Italians proposed to send military supplies on Italian Government vessels to Nationalist ports; the granting of belligerent rights will enable Franco to blockade the Republican ports; and the final result will be the collapse of the Republican Government, the victory of Franco, and the establishment of a regime unfriendly to France on the frontier of the Pyrenees and across its lines of communication with North Africa.

To add to the depression at the Foreign Office had come the announcement by the Balkan Entente states of their intention to recognize the Ethiopian conquest and to accredit representatives to Franco. The French Government was informed before the announcement of the decision but this obviously cannot mitigate the sense of discouragement and failure with which the French Government is witnessing the throwing overboard of policies to which it has been consistently devoted in the past but which it is no longer in a position to impose.

WILSON

740.00/307 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, March 2, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received March 2—2:35 p. m.]

19. Night before last I was received by President Benes who confirmed the view expressed in my telegram 18, February 26,⁵⁰ that he has no expectation at present of military attack from Germany or of European war. He believes neither Germany nor Italy will start a war at present because they cannot be certain of its length and while both could increase their man power neither has money, raw materials, or equipment for a long conflict. He believes Germany will want to negotiate and he is ready to negotiate within the framework of complete loyalty to England and France who would be informed of every step and the reservation that the negotiations shall not involve intervention in Czechoslovak internal affairs. The latter would be resisted to the point of war if necessary. The Schuschnigg speech⁵¹ and the declarations of Chautemps and Delbos and vote of the French Chamber on Saturday have given great satisfaction and encouragement. The President regrets loss of Eden but believes Chamberlain

⁵⁰ Not printed.

⁵¹ Delivered by Kurt von Schuschnigg, Austrian Chancellor, on February 24, at an extraordinary session of the Bundestag.

may succeed with the Anglo-Italian negotiation which would strengthen the Central European countries. If those negotiations should fail, however, he expects a new government which would assume a firmer attitude toward the totalitarian powers. He regards the maintenance of Franco-Czech relations with Russia a necessity to block Germany's efforts to isolate Russia and afterwards endeavor to effect a Russo-German agreement which if made would [threaten?] the independence of the Central European States and be highly injurious to the democratic powers. He regards Czechoslovakia as the keystone of this policy. He believes there is slightly more cohesion among the Little Entente since Hitler's speech.

The decrease in anxiety and tension continues. Despatch follows.⁵²

The President and Madame Benes are attending the dinner I am giving at the Legation for Hoover⁵³ Saturday evening.

CARR

793.94119/4011

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[Extract]

[WASHINGTON,] March 3, 1938.

The British Ambassador called to see me this morning and left with me for purposes of information copies of confidential instructions that had been sent by Mr. Eden to Sir Robert Craigie, the British Ambassador in Tokyo, under dates of February 4 and February 15. These instructions had to do in part with the possibility of good offices being extended in the Chinese-Japanese hostilities by Great Britain and by the United States⁵⁴ and made it evident that the suggestions made in this regard by the Japanese Ambassador in London were not supported by the Japanese Government. The Ambassador asked if I would return these documents to him, which I said I would be glad to do after I had an opportunity of showing them to the Secretary of State and to one or two other officials in the Department.

The Ambassador then said that his Government wished us to be advised that the Prime Minister had determined to push actively for an understanding with Germany and to this effect had instructed Sir Nevile Henderson, the British Ambassador in Berlin, to seek immediately an interview with Hitler for the purpose of ascertaining what the German position might specifically be with regard to two matters: first, the precise extent and nature of Germany's colonial ambitions

⁵² Despatch No. 93, March 2, p. 410.

⁵³ Herbert Clark Hoover, former President of the United States, visited Prague, March 4-6, 1938.

⁵⁴ See *aide-memoire* from the British Embassy, April 11, vol. III, p. 139.

and, second, the precise extent and nature of Germany's attitude with regard to a permanent Central European appeasement. The Ambassador emphasized that Sir Nevile Henderson was not instructed to make any commitment on the part of the British Government but was merely to undertake an exploratory conversation for the purpose of obtaining information with regard to the German point of view. The Ambassador said that his instructions further told him to assure us that all developments with regard to these conversations would be reported to us so that we might be closely informed of what was going on. I told the Ambassador that we had received a cable from Mr. Kennedy reporting the conversation which the latter had had with Lord Halifax yesterday,⁵⁶ in which Lord Halifax had said that the Prime Minister was sending an emissary to Germany to see Hitler. The Ambassador said that his own instructions were very clear and made it evident that the conversations were to be handled through the British Ambassador in Berlin but that he thought it possible that the British Foreign Office might be sending an official to accompany the British Ambassador to the conversations which he was to have with Hitler.

The Ambassador said that he had another matter of interest to report to me which was that in the pouch he had received from London last night there had been a copy of a cable sent by Lord Perth, the British Ambassador in Rome, to the British Foreign Office on or about February 21 or 22, immediately after the resignation of Mr. Eden. In this telegram Lord Perth had reported his very strong belief that unless the British Government moved quickly, the Italian Government might throw itself completely into the arms of Germany for fear of the results of German expansionist moves in Austria and in Eastern Europe and that, in that event, any possibility of reaching an agreement between England and Italy would be minimized. I said to the Ambassador that it had been assumed in many quarters that the understanding between Italy and Germany had been very much closer during the past two months than it had been prior to that time. The Ambassador replied that on this point he was not sufficiently informed to offer any suggestions, but that from the text of Lord Perth's telegram it would certainly seem that as of that date no such complete identification of German and Italian policy and interests had been made effective as to prevent separate negotiations between Italy and Great Britain on the one hand and Germany and Great Britain on the other.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

⁵⁶ Telegram No. 176, March 2, 6 p. m., not printed.

740.00/322 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 12, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received 6:50 p. m.]

387. Following message from Ambassador Biddle.⁵⁶

My several conversations with authoritative Polish and Italian circles in London and Paris bring to light the following essential points which have an important bearing on conceivable developments in Central Europe in terms of the immediate and long range outlook: (1) The following set of circumstances have caused Chamberlain to shift temporarily at least his aim from a four power conference to bringing about a revised Stresa front;⁵⁷ (2) British Ambassador to Berlin, Henderson, had reported to London Hitler's insistence on (a) Germany's claims in colonial domain; (b) a free hand for Germany in Austria and Sudeten Deutsch.

Moreover during recent Halifax-Ribbentrop conversations⁵⁸ Ribbentrop in outlining his envisaged foreign policy stated his intention to attach himself closely to a Nazi foreign policy which dealt with two fundamental questions: (a) unity of Germanic peoples; (b) colonial expansion having regard for raw materials, population problems, shipping, et cetera.

In connection with colonial demands British perceive that an underlying factor contributing to Germany's desire for colonies is Germany's aim to make them a reason for a larger navy, on grounds her sea traffic requires protection. Hence a condition British would demand of Germans in return for colonial concessions would be that the naval increase question not be raised. Ribbentrop moreover emphasized Hitler's insistence on the return of former colonies and his refusal to accept any compromise or diminution of claims. In emphasizing his aim for unity of Germanic peoples Ribbentrop stressed Hitler's conviction that the Germans of Central Europe should be granted the right to establish racial, cultural, and economic connections with the Reich.

3. Halifax had replied in effect that Ribbentrop's representations had put a new complexion on the problem as a whole. Halifax would have to take up the matter with the Cabinet. Moreover Halifax pointed out emphatically that he considered the colonial question a part of a general settlement and involving other powers.

⁵⁶ Anthony J. Drexel Biddle, Jr., American Ambassador in Poland.

⁵⁷ Effected at Stresa, Italy, April 11-14, 1935, between France, Italy, and the United Kingdom; see *Foreign Relations*, 1935, vol. I, pp. 170 ff.

⁵⁸ London, March 1938.

Moreover Halifax, realizing that Hitler's insistence on above described three points would prove too much for British public opinion to stomach at the time and that it would only alienate democratic public opinion in general, had told Ribbentrop that if Hitler did anything precipitous which might serve to alienate British public opinion Hitler might conceivably torpedo jointly Chamberlain's efforts to bring about a general settlement of grievances without resort to war. Halifax moreover cautioned against the risk of precipitating fresh anxiety on the part of British public opinion over any sudden attempt to deal with minority questions by short-cut methods.

4. The result of the foregoing conversations leads the Poles to expect Britain to concentrate on negotiations with Rome, shoving German negotiations into background for the moment for Halifax realizes Hitler's insistence on the three above-mentioned points would make it difficult to come to grips and to find a common ground for Anglo-German negotiations. Poles also feel that British current tactics envisage bringing Italy into line at the earliest possible moment. Also the British hope an Anglo-Italian agreement will serve to hold Hitler down and make Hitler eventually more amenable to trading on a more reasonable basis.

In this connection British Ambassador to Rome, Perth, when recently in London had informed his Government that Mussolini had urged Great Britain to hasten the negotiations and try to have an Anglo-Italian agreement a *fait accompli* before Hitler's May visit to Rome. Mussolini had given as his reason therefor that he was concerned over evidences of Hitler's increasingly leaning more in the direction of the more radical Nazi element. Moreover at outset of current negotiations Mussolini had made it clear he was not to be expected to break or endanger his arrangements with Germany and stated that during the Anglo-Italian negotiations it would be helpful if the British Government could prevent the British press from attacking Hitler and Germany for the absence of such attacks would help negotiations in view of Hitler's Rome May visit.

According to my informants, both British and Polish reports from Berlin indicated Hitler very cocky and that he means (a) to do business in connection with Czechoslovakia and (b) consolidate German position in Austria. Poles moreover feel Hitler is now in the mood wherein he feels "there is nothing he can get from Britain at this time". (Besides previous to Eden's resignation French had been urging him for British cooperation in event of German move against Czechoslovaks. Eden had not been able to acquire Chamberlain's approval thereon before resignation.)

Poles moreover are of the opinion that if Germany succeeded in confusing the issue in the event of a move vis-à-vis Sudeten Deutsch

neither Great Britain nor France would march. Great Britain at the moment was neither in position nor mood to risk war through active intervention, and France would not initiate independent military action. Vigorous diplomatic protests and a tense period might be expected to be met by immediate German assurances of guarantees in respect to integrity of Czechoslovak territory which would contribute toward serving as face saver for protestants, but there would be no war, for Poles feel that a "Sudeten annexation" would not in the final analysis be considered by the British Government and consequently the French Government as the question over which democracy should go to war.

Indeed the Poles feel Great Britain would succeed in persuading France that they both should raise their sights to a longer range objective and keep their powder dry for the day within the next two years when according to British apprehension both Great Britain and France might conceivably be challenged by an ambitious Germany for the control of the whole of Europe.

Judging the reality of events and from the substance of my various conversations I do not look for a general conflict to result from the current situation. Nor do I look for a war to result from a German move vis-à-vis Sudeten Deutsch providing the Germans succeed in confusing the issue, for Great Britain is neither in position nor mood to engage in war over a German move in Sudeten Deutsch at this time and I do not believe France would initiate independent military action. As for Poland I look for her (a) to sit tight in the event of the aforementioned move (b) and believe she might conceivably demand autonomous administration for the Polish minority in the Teschen District. [Biddle.]

WILSON

863.00/1471 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 14, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 9:30 p. m.]

403. I had an hour's talk with Léger this afternoon. He set forth the French position in the Austrian crisis⁵⁹ as follows:

The French Government had no objection [*obligation?*] legal or moral to go to the assistance of Austria. For reasons of general security in Europe, however, and to prevent a situation which would make the defense of Czechoslovakia more difficult the French Government was prepared to go to any limit even to the extreme of war to

⁵⁹ See pp. 384 ff.

defend Austria provided that France did not find herself alone, in other words, provided that England and Italy or at least England would go with her. He said that the French Government had on four separate occasions proposed to the British Government strong representations in Berlin. The first time was just before Eden's resignation. The proposal was renewed a short time thereafter and on March 11 the French Government twice proposed to the British that the strongest possible representations be made in Berlin.

The British Government on March 11 after most careful examination of the matter called in the Austrian Minister and told him frankly and loyally (this was after the news of the second ultimatum to Schuschnigg was known) that the British Government could not urge Schuschnigg to resist since the British Government was not in a position to go to his assistance. Later at 10:00 o'clock that night the British Government advised the French Government that they had instructed their Ambassador in Berlin to make the representations which as Léger said were merely formal and for the record. In view of the Italian refusal and of the British attitude the French Government had merely made the same formal representations after the event as had the British.

As regards Czechoslovakia⁶⁰ the case is very different. France has definite commitments and absolutely will live up to them. Léger said that the occupation of Austria by Germany makes the problem of the defense of Czechoslovakia much more difficult from the viewpoint of the general staff. Now that Germany has a clear passage over the Brenner in Italy it means that if France goes to war to protect Czechoslovakia she will have to face German troops on the Franco-Italian frontier. There is no Maginot Line on this frontier. In the event of German aggression against Czechoslovakia France of course cannot put troops directly in Czechoslovakia. What she can do is to attack Germany on what is the German Maginot Line thereby diverting as large a number of troops as possible from Czechoslovakia. It is realized that Czechoslovakia would be overrun in short order as happened to Servia during the 1914 war but the hope would be that at the close of a victorious war against Germany and Italy Czechoslovakia would be restored.

Léger said that yesterday and again today the French Government had stated to the British Government in the most categorical terms possible that in the event of aggression by Germany against Czechoslovakia France would go immediately to war. He described the French declaration to the British in practically the same words as those used by Osusky⁶¹ to me (see my telegram No. 394, March 14, 11 a. m.⁶²).

⁶⁰ See pp. 483 ff.

⁶¹ Stefan Osusky, Czechoslovak Minister in France.

⁶² *Post*, p. 483.

He said that the French Government had stated to the British Government: we do not ask you for any promise. We simply want you to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that if Germany attacks Czechoslovakia we shall immediately go to Czechoslovakia's assistance. We believe that if this occurs you will inevitably be drawn into the war. Think it over.

Léger said that the attitude of the British Government would be important, perhaps decisive, in this question. At that very moment the British Government was making a statement in the House of Commons but the French Government did not yet know what that statement contained.

I asked Léger if he believed that Germany might move soon against Czechoslovakia. He said that this would depend upon certain factors: If Hitler felt that England would not go to Czechoslovakia's aid and if he felt that the French Government was weak and unable to rally France to support Czechoslovakia then he might be tempted to move quickly. In one respect the situation was very like 1914 when the English were hesitant about stating their position in case Belgian neutrality was violated and the German Government finally acted upon the assumption that England would do nothing. If the British Government would today declare categorically that they would not permit aggression against Czechoslovakia then there would be no aggression. If they appear uncertain, this will be a temptation to Hitler. Léger said that there were certain disquieting features: First, Hitler had sent three army divisions into Austria many more troops than are needed for policing purposes; second, Germany has proposed to Czechoslovakia that both countries withdraw their troops 15 kilometers from the frontier. This proposal may be made in bad faith, and in view of the speed with which motorized detachments move these days, a withdrawal such as was proposed might facilitate a treacherous attack by Germany. Third, the German Government had called in the Czechoslovak Minister and given him assurances, widely published, that Germany had no aggressive intentions against Czechoslovakia. The purpose of this statement might be to lull opinion in England. Léger said that he did not know what were the motives behind these German moves, but that his opinion was that Hitler was getting himself into a position so that if circumstances seemed favorable he could strike suddenly. Everything would depend upon the way circumstances developed.

I asked Léger if he felt Russia would go to Czechoslovakia's assistance. He said that he had not received sufficient information concerning the effect of the recent trial and revelations in Moscow⁶⁸

⁶⁸ See *Foreign Relations*, The Soviet Union, 1933-1939, pp. 527-528, 532-533, and 545-546.

to determine whether the Russian Government was capable today or was willing if capable to furnish effective assistance to Czechoslovakia. He said that the Soviets should be able if they so desired to give important assistance in airplanes. Frankly he did not know what Russia could or would do.

I referred to his statement that if France went to Czechoslovakia's aid she would find German troops on the Franco-Italian frontier and asked if he was convinced that Italy was irrevocably tied up with Germany. He said that he was absolutely convinced of this and had been convinced of it from the moment of the establishment of the Rome-Berlin Axis. He said that there was not the slightest question that there was a definite understanding between Germany and Italy under which Germany was to dominate Central Europe and Italy was to receive support from Germany in the establishment of an Italian Empire. Unfortunately there are still people in England who do not believe this, such as Perth,⁶⁴ who is honest but lost in illusions and Chamberlain and Halifax who are honest but unable to see through Italian diplomacy. He said that Germany has now cashed in her side of the bargain through Italy's acquiescence in the seizure of Austria. Italy holds only a draft on the future and the sole way in which she can cash this draft is through war which would result favorably for Germany and Italy and would enable Italy to take Egypt and French possessions in North Africa. I asked why in that case Mussolini had desired to negotiate with England. Léger said that about two months ago Italy began to have the most serious difficulties in Ethiopia. The natives began to rise again against the Italian occupation. It is not generally known how serious this situation became for Italy but the French Government through officials in Djibouti and secret agents in Ethiopia was aware how serious it was. The native chiefs had been encouraged to revolt because of the non-recognition of the Ethiopian conquest by other powers. It became essential for Mussolini to obtain recognition or promises of recognition. The real question before the British then was: If we negotiate with Mussolini and help him out of his Ethiopian difficulties what use will he make of his recovered liberty of action? Eden was willing to negotiate. But only upon receiving satisfactory assurances that when Mussolini recovered liberty of action he would not use it to provoke war. Chamberlain most unfortunately agreed to negotiate on the basis of recognition of the Empire without receiving any assurances as to Italy's future actions. It is significant that in preparing the ground for these negotiations Italy refuses to

⁶⁴ British Ambassador in France.

consider any reference to Central Europe. Italy has already derived great advantages from the mere announcement of England's willingness to negotiate with her. The Balkan Entente States and Belgium had immediately announced their intention to recognize the Empire.⁶⁶ What is certain to happen, Léger said, is that once Italy has derived all the advantages she can hope for from her negotiations with England she will again revert to efforts to embroil Europe in a war out of which she will expect to receive the profits accruing her under the Rome-Berlin agreement.

WILSON

851.00/1818 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, March 18, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received 4:15 p. m.]

431.

I asked Bonnet for his personal opinion whether France would march to Czechoslovakia's assistance if the latter were attacked by Germany. He said that if Great Britain promised to support France then France would certainly march. In the absence of a British promise of immediate support he felt it would be suicidal for France to embark alone on war against Germany and Italy with merely the hope that the Russians would send some aeroplanes. He said that facts had to be faced. In such a war France would find enemies on three frontiers and the only action she could take for Czechoslovakia would be to attack the German counterpart of the Maginot line. He reiterated that in the absence of a promise of support from Great Britain it would be impossible for France to go to Czechoslovakia's aid. He said that this was his personal and confidential opinion. Publicly he would have to state the opposite just as others now in office stated the opposite although he believed that most of them agreed with his conviction that under existing conditions a prudent policy is the only conceivable policy for France.

Bonnet said that he felt there was little danger of the French Government embarking on the dangerous adventure open intervention in Spain. The Spanish conflict is rapidly drawing to a close and there is not enough time left for the present government even if it so desired to

⁶⁶ i. e., recognition of the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia.

send men and munitions in sufficient numbers to save the Spanish Government.

WILSON

760F.62/170 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, March 23, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received March 23—3:45 p. m.]

241. My 235, March 22, 8 p. m. and 231, March 21, 5 p. m.⁶⁶ Lord Halifax told me today that he had a long interview late last night with the French Ambassador regarding the statement to be made in the House of Commons tomorrow by the Prime Minister. The British have about decided to say they will make no further commitments but they will insinuate that if France is drawn in they will be in too. Lord Halifax said that he thought the French were satisfied with this understanding.

Lord Halifax also told me that he had talked with the Italian Ambassador last night and today. He says that Mussolini is very sore over the Austrian matter and very anxious to make a deal with the British. I asked him if the Spanish situation would cause trouble and he said that of course there are still some hurdles to be taken but he is of the opinion that the Italians will not stand on the Spanish impasse as a method of breaking off the negotiations. Halifax realizes, and said so, that the British know they must bring in a successful negotiation with Italy to save their political faces and they are going to make every effort.

Are you and the President getting all the confidential information which the Foreign Secretary agreed with me on my arrival here would be made available, covering all British movements of importance in different parts of the world? We discussed the matter again today and he said that instructions have been given to the Foreign Office that confidential information for the use of the President and yourself regarding important British moves should be made available not only here but in their missions abroad also. If you are not getting this information satisfactorily, let me know. I understand that Lord Perth is keeping Ambassador Phillips fully informed of the details of the Anglo-Italian conversations in Rome.

KENNEDY

⁶⁶ Neither printed.

740.00/334: Telegram

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Davies) to the Secretary of State

Moscow, March 24, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received March 24—12:25 p. m.]

87. For the President and the Secretary of State.

Following is a brief summary of the viewpoints of this Government as voiced by Litvinov to me yesterday.

(a) There will be a period of calm now in Europe but the issue of either war or a virtually complete Fascist domination of Europe would positively be determined this summer.

(b) Germany would later in the summer aggressively press Czechoslovakia because even though this might not precede within Hitler's immediate program the Sudeten minorities would force his hand.

(c) Czechoslovakia might succumb to the strongest pressure because of Czechoslovakia's lack of confidence in France and because of the lack of confidence with which both France and the Soviet Union regard each other.

(d) Europe was confronted with the extreme probability of Fascist domination as a *fait accompli* in which case the only independent states left would be Great Britain and the Soviet Union; that nothing but an immediate reversal of policy by Great Britain would prevent this because the smaller states are slipping surely into the Fascist orbit.

(e) Chamberlain probably would make peace with Italy but it will be only a façade establishing another gentlemen's agreement as to the Mediterranean, agreeing to discontinue Italian anti-British propaganda "which it could resume later" and withdrawal of troops in Libya.

(f) The Polish-Lithuanian situation was settled for the time being but only time would tell whether Poland would continue her aggression there.

(g) Germany is opposed to Poland's alleged designs on Lithuania because she, Germany, is "greedy" for Lithuania and the Baltic States herself.

(h) Hitler would soon take over the Polish Corridor and Memel and will pay Poland nothing therefor; in support of this Litvinov quoted a statement made to him recently by a high German authority personally.

1. The League of Nations is dead and he, Litvinov, will not return to Geneva for the Council session in May unless some definite proposals are agreed upon in advance.

2. Of course it suits the foreign policy of this Government to see European peace through a glass darkly because its interest requires that it arouse the Baltic and other smaller states and the democracies to antagonism toward and fear of the Soviet's arch enemy Hitler.

3. With reference to the Sino-Japanese conflict he stated that Japan has a million men in China and 300,000 in Manchuria; Japanese aggression against the Soviet Union is out of the question now because China is causing Japan too much trouble by her unexpected military successes.

Detailed memorandum follows.⁶⁷

DAVIES

740.00/342 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 2, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received April 2—10:45 a. m.]

523. The Rumanian Minister told me last night that "the present Popular Front Government" had been urging the Rumanian Government to permit the passage of Russian forces over Rumanian territory to go in case of necessity to the assistance of Czechoslovakia. He said that the Rumanian Government had flatly refused and that the Rumanians "would fight to the last man" to oppose Russian troops entering Rumanian territory since they knew that this would be the end of Rumania.

The Minister spoke bitterly of the efforts of the French Government to get little countries like Rumania to make sacrifices when it was only too evident that France would be unprepared or unwilling to go to the rescue of the little states. This is the first time in the two years I have known the Rumanian Minister that I have heard him speak critically of France. The Minister has a particularly close personal relationship with King Carol, having been one of the group who engineered Carol's restoration.

The Minister spoke of Czechoslovakia as "finished". He said that the best Czechoslovakia could hope for would be to become a neutralized state, abandoning any independent foreign policy which might run counter to German aims.

WILSON

⁶⁷ Despatch No. 1062, March 24, not printed.

750A.62/1 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Belgium (Gibson) to the Secretary of State*BRUSSELS, April 9, 1938—noon.
[Received April 9—9:10 a. m.]

41. I learn in strictest confidence that Luxemburg recently sought to obtain from the German Government assurances similar to those given to Belgium as to respecting its integrity (my 83, October 13, 2 p. m., 1937⁶⁸). The German Government replied that it would consider the matter only if identic assurances were given by France.

Bech, the Luxemburg Foreign Minister, went to Paris to take up this phase of the matter. Paul-Boncour⁶⁹ heaped reproaches on him for desiring German assurances as evidence of Luxemburg's readiness to align itself with Nazi Germany and said that the desired assurances could be given only if Luxemburg recognized the right of France to enter the territory of the Grand Duchy to protect it against German invasion. Bech pointed out that any such undertaking would be merely an invitation to Germany to invade the country before France could get there, but he has not yet been able to secure any French assurances although some work is now being done on a tentative draft. From the same source I am told that the powerful Nazi organization in the Grand Duchy is operating with considerable success and that there is a decided growth of pro-Nazi feeling even among the more responsible elements.

GIBSON

741.65/530 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State*LONDON, April 11, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received April 11—1:12 p. m.]

296. Personal for the Secretary and Under Secretary.

Spent last weekend with the King and Queen.

Neville Chamberlain was there with his wife. He told me that the Italian agreement was in fine shape; that the German agreement was not doing so well; he found it impossible to come to grips with them and have them state what they want. For instance, he said he had asked them what they wanted with regard to colonies and

⁶⁸ Not printed; see memorandum of October 13, by the Assistant Secretary of State, *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 145.

⁶⁹ Joseph Paul-Boncour, French Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Cabinet headed by Léon Blum, March 13—April 10, 1938.

they tossed the question off by saying that was something that could be settled in the next 6 or 10 years.

I asked him if the failure of the agreement meant to him war or like difficulty. He said "no"; that they were thoroughly convinced that Germany was in no position as regards resources or reserves to go to war and they so knew. He likened Germany to a boa constrictor that had eaten a good deal and was trying to digest the meal before taking on anything else. Therefore he saw no difficulties for the time being.

KENNEDY

741.65/549 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 25, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received April 25—2:40 p. m.]

650. The British Ambassador told me today that Hore-Belisha⁷⁰ who left here at noon for London was enthusiastic over his Rome visit. He said that Mussolini had been most cordial and that the atmosphere had completely changed as regards Italian feeling towards England. He said that he had found genuine apprehension in Rome regarding future relations with Germany. He had gathered the impression that the Franco-Italian discussions were going satisfactorily and that after Ciano's return from Albania they would be concluded without difficulty.

A friend who saw Hore-Belisha off at the air port was told by him that in his talk with Daladier last night he had urged that the French be as reasonable as the British in forthcoming negotiations and that he had in mind particularly negotiations with Germany.

Copies to London, Berlin and Rome.

WILSON

740.00/371 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 26, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received April 26—7:50 p. m.]

656. Daladier⁷¹ and Bonnet⁷² leave tomorrow afternoon by plane for London. They will be accompanied by Léger, Secretary General

⁷⁰ Leslie Hore-Belisha, British Secretary of State for War.

⁷¹ Edouard Daladier, President of the French Council of Ministers. The Ministry was formed April 10, 1938.

⁷² Georges Bonnet, French Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Daladier Cabinet.

of the French Foreign Office and Rochat, former Chef de Cabinet of Delbos and now Chief of the European Section at the Foreign Office.

Rochat has just informed me that there is no set agenda for the London talks. He said that they will discuss the obvious questions: the Anglo-Italian agreement, the negotiation of a French agreement with Italy, and since future relations with Italy are conditioned on a satisfactory solution of various aspects of the Spanish problem, they will of course discuss Spain. "Above all" they will discuss Central Europe. He said that Henlein's⁷³ demands at Carlsbad⁷⁴ were "very disquieting". It seemed clear that what Hitler is aiming at for the moment at least is to "neutralize" Czechoslovakia; to render Czechoslovakia unable any longer to resist the expansion of German political and economic influence which would flow over Czechoslovakia into Eastern Europe. I asked whether it was not possible that the British might be prepared to sacrifice Czechoslovakia if by so doing they thought that they could obtain a general settlement with Hitler guaranteeing peace in Europe. Rochat said that he did not think the problem presented itself in just this way. It should be possible for the Czechoslovak Government to accept some of Henlein's demands. There were others, however, which clearly could not be accepted. Rochat said that the Czechoslovak Government had prepared a far-reaching program of concessions which it was prepared to make to the Sudeten minority. (See my 637, April 22, 5 p. m.⁷⁵) This program had been shown confidentially to the French and British but had not yet been submitted to the Sudetens. The question is likely to present itself to the British in the sense of whether in their judgment the concessions which Benes is prepared to make are reasonable and if so at what point Benes should be supported in declining to go any further in making concessions.

I said that I assumed there would be discussion in London regarding an approach to the matter of a general settlement with Germany. Rochat stated that the British Government had said nothing to the French Government on this subject as yet. He thought, however, that they would inevitably discuss this question but that the approach to it could open up only after a meeting of minds had been reached with the British concerning Czechoslovakia.

I asked if Blondel⁷⁶ who arrived in Paris this morning had reported anything of interest regarding the negotiations with Ciano. Rochat said that he had not yet seen Blondel but that the reports received

⁷³ Konrad Henlein, leader of the *Sudetendeutsche Partei* (Nazi Party) in Czechoslovakia.

⁷⁴ April 24, 1938; see *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 157, pp. 182-186.

⁷⁵ *Post*, p. 488.

⁷⁶ French Chargé d'Affaires in Italy.

from him up to his departure from Rome indicated that no serious difficulty had arisen in the negotiations. There would be delay due to Ciano's visit to Tirana so that the negotiations probably could not be concluded before Hitler's visit to Rome but it was hoped that they could be concluded before May 9.

I spoke of the reports circulating in Paris to the effect that Daladier would discuss in London the question of a loan to the French Government for rearmament purposes or at least financial assistance in the purchase of airplanes in the United States. Rochat said that so far as he knew the Foreign Office had not been consulted on these points although it was possible that they had been discussed directly with Bonnet.

Repeated to London. Copies Berlin and Rome.

WILSON

740.00/372 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 26, 1938—9 p. m.
[Received April 26—7:55 p. m.]

658. Since March 1936 it has been said frequently that events in Europe were at a crucial turning point. It seems to me that this has never been so true as it is today. Great Britain and Italy have come to an agreement facilitated by the German assault on Austria.⁷⁷ A settlement between France and Italy is now in sight. The Spanish conflict has ceased to be a danger to European peace. It may be assumed that anyone possessing the courage and determination which Chamberlain showed in tackling the Italian question will now turn to the problem of a settlement with Germany. In this effort Daladier and Bonnet may be counted upon to make a positive contribution so long as there is any hope of reaching a reasonable understanding with Germany. The question of whether Hitler's aims in Czechoslovakia can be reconciled with the views of other major powers regarding central Europe will be an important factor. Ways and means of approaching the problem of collaboration with Germany are apt to prove in the long run the most important subject at the London meeting this week.

It seems, therefore, that before much longer the essential question which has confronted Europe during the past 5 years may receive an answer: namely is it possible for a regime such as Hitler's to accept

⁷⁷ See pp. 384 ff.

in good faith the principle that Europe should be organized on a basis of peaceful collaboration.

Failure this summer to reach an understanding with Germany will give a strong indication it seems to me of a negative answer to this question. Furthermore, an inconclusive result of efforts made to reach an understanding with Germany will be about as bad as flat failure. Anything short of a settlement of such nature as will make it possible to write finis to this insane struggle for armaments may prove as disastrous in the long run as no settlement at all.

WILSON

741.51/282 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 3, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 6:52 p. m.]

694. I called upon Bonnet this morning. He was delighted with the London conversations.⁷⁸ He said that there had been the most complete agreement on cooperation in military defense—army, navy and air—within the limits of the agreement of March 19, 1936.⁷⁹ General staff talks will now follow and will be actively pursued. Chamberlain had repeated Baldwin's⁸⁰ phrase "our frontier is on the Rhine". Chamberlain had stated that Great Britain was determined to defend the French and Belgian frontiers as if they were British frontiers. The cooperation in military matters is based upon the idea of defense of French frontiers.

He said that the British had shown particular interest in hastening the conclusion of an agreement between France and Italy which would bring appeasement in the Mediterranean region. The British will use their good offices in Rome if necessary to assist in smoothing out difficulties. Bonnet said that as a matter of fact he looked for no difficulties.

There were certain matters which France had had to insist upon since they were essential to French interests. Tunis was one of these matters. I asked if it was a question of obtaining Italian consent to putting into force the provisions of the January 1935 agreement concerning Tunis.⁸¹ Bonnet said that this was the case. He went on to

⁷⁸ For record of Anglo-French conversations on April 28 and 29, see *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 164, pp. 198-234.

⁷⁹ For text, see British Cmd. 5134, and League of Nations, *Official Journal*, April 1936 (pt. 1), p. 348.

⁸⁰ Stanley Baldwin, former British Prime Minister.

⁸¹ Protocol between France and Italy regarding Italians in Tunisia, signed at Rome, January 7, 1935; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. CXXXIX, p. 950.

say that he hoped that the agreement with Italy might be signed by about the tenth of this month and that an Ambassador to Rome would be named a few days after the conclusion of the agreement. The choice of an ambassador has not yet been determined. He said that even if it had been found possible he would not have favored signing the Italian agreement before Hitler's trip to Rome. Hitler's visit would have spoiled the effect. Announcement of the signature of the agreement shortly after Hitler's visit ought to create a good effect which would last for a while. He looks for no difficulties at Geneva serious enough to interfere with the program of extending recognition to the Italian Empire.

Bonnet then spoke of Spain and said that he believed matters had reached the point where an effort at mediation might be successful. He believed that if the United States would associate itself in such an effort this would contribute enormously to its success and he hoped very much that the Government of the United States would agree to do so.

I said that I recalled that some 3 or 4 months ago Delbos had proposed to Ambassador Bullitt that the United States play the role of joint mediator in the Spanish conflict: that the Ambassador had consulted Washington and had been informed that any efforts on our part to mediate in the Spanish conflict would be inconsistent with our policy of non-intervention in European affairs.²²

I asked Bonnet if he really believed that there was any possibility of successful mediation saying that it seemed to me that mediation might be possible when both sides were exhausted and the outcome of the struggle uncertain but that with Franco practically certain to win before long it was difficult to see what interest he would have in accepting mediation. Bonnet said that he agreed that the outcome of the Spanish conflict was not in doubt but he nevertheless considered that there was genuine possibility for successful mediation. He knew that the Spanish Government would accept mediation and he had reason to believe that Franco might accept it. He did not press further the matter of the United States joining in an effort at mediation and I believe that he accepted my statement as a reply to his suggestion.

Bonnet then said that Czechoslovakia was of course the crucial problem today. At London Chamberlain had begun by saying that the Czechs must be pressed to make every possible concession to avoid a situation which might result in war; that if the Germans should attack Czechoslovakia the whole business would be over in 24 hours

²² See pp. 149 ff.

and it would be better for the Czechs to give away a great deal in order to save something rather than to lose everything. Bonnet had replied that while he was in agreement, nevertheless, when it was a question of trying to conciliate the lion and the lamb, it was not enough simply to belabor the lamb. Some effort should be made to get the lion to be more reasonable. As a result of Bonnet's insistence Chamberlain had agreed that the British would make a *démarche* in Berlin in the following sense: they would call attention as a result of urging by the British and the French Benes was prepared to make further concessions; they would urge that the minority question be settled by peaceful negotiation, would offer their assistance in bringing this about, and would go on to indicate that if during the negotiations there should be an attempt to settle the matter by force, this would create a situation to which the British could not remain indifferent. I remarked that this seemed to go considerably beyond the position which Chamberlain had stated in the Commons on March 24. Bonnet replied that it did in fact go beyond that position. I said that what he had told me gave me the impression that the British would endeavor to assume the role of mediator as between Germany and Czechoslovakia. Bonnet said that this was the case. I asked when the British *démarche* would be made. Bonnet replied that it would be made after Hitler's return to Berlin. Bonnet said that the United States Government would be able to make an important contribution by counseling in Berlin that this problem should be settled by peaceful negotiation and he hoped that the United States would act in this sense. I said that I would be glad to report his views to you.

I asked Bonnet how he really felt that the Czech question would work out. He said that it was a most difficult problem. Czechoslovakia is a motley of minorities and conflicting interests. It will be necessary for Czechoslovakia to make great sacrifices if anything is to be saved. His position is that any settlement which the British will support and if necessary be prepared to defend is satisfactory to him.

I asked if there had been any indication that Chamberlain intended to explore the possibilities of a general settlement with Germany. Bonnet said that there had been none. Chamberlain would of course pursue this idea whenever the moment was opportune but the present moment in Bonnet's opinion is clearly inopportune. Bonnet said that Chamberlain had never mentioned the Four Power Pact.⁸⁸

WILSON

⁸⁸ Term applied to a possible agreement among France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

741.51/284 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, May 5, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received May 5—8:25 p. m.]

377. With reference to the précis of the Anglo-French talks of last week which was telegraphed by the Foreign Office on May 3 to Sir Ronald Lindsay for communication to the Department,⁸⁴ the following comments made this afternoon by one of the Foreign Office experts most concerned with the discussions are of interest.

1. Czechoslovakia. The British do not in any way minimize the danger of this situation which is heightened by uncertainty as to what Germany may do. No one, they think, and probably not even Hitler himself, knows what the course of events will be. On the analogy of Hitler's past record, however, they are naturally apprehensive that an unwise move on the part of the Czechs or even some unfortunate accident might suggest to Hitler an opportunity for sudden action. The Sudeten-Deutsch, according to Foreign Office information, have now become more Nazi than Hitler himself and are running ahead of Henlein. This naturally increases the possibility of serious trouble through irresponsible action. It seems that every practicable way of assisting the Czechs out of the impasse was examined with the French. The French were most anxious for Great Britain to back up their own commitments in Czechoslovakia. The Foreign Office official said, however, definitely that the British made no commitment whatever to action in Czechoslovakia if war should break, beyond the position stated by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on March 24. It was agreed however, that the British and French Minister in Praha shall make closely concerted representations to the Czech Government. No precise line was laid down for these representations. The British and French Ministers are to consult together carefully in order to avoid crossing any wires. Their representations will not be made jointly nor will they necessarily be identic. The objective of both, however, will be to impress upon Benes the necessity for finding a solution of the Sudeten-Deutsch problem within the framework of the Czechoslovak state and to give him to understand, without saying so in so many words, that it is up to Czechoslovakia to bring forward a solution which will not give Hitler any ostensible excuse for intervening. I presume of course that the British and French suggestion would not go to the extent of telling Benes that he would have to compromise the ultimate sovereignty of his state. To balance this *dé-*

⁸⁴ Memorandum dated May 4 from the British Embassy to the Department of State, not printed.

marche at Praha, the British have agreed to the far more difficult action of making an approach to Hitler. The manner of doing this of course will have to be left to the British Ambassador. The utmost tact will be necessary in order to avoid wounding German susceptibilities. The Foreign Office is not at all sure whether their approach will not receive a rude rebuff. They can give no precise instructions to the Ambassador but he will proceed along the line of the Prime Minister's policy announced on March 24 and will emphasize the profound desire of Great Britain for a peaceful solution of European difficulties and of her willingness to contribute her share. The danger in Czechoslovakia is obvious and the British will probably try to put it up to Hitler that as a member of the great European community they hope that Germany will contribute her part and show her willingness, through meeting the efforts of the Czech Government in a fair spirit, to assist the cause of continental peace. If the French and British efforts toward even a temporary solution of the Czech-German question meet with any measure of success, the British are hopeful that it may open the way in some degree toward the larger issue of an Anglo-German understanding, thus affording a small beginning toward a general understanding between the four great powers.

2. Military understandings. According to the Foreign Office, the French press in particular and in less degree the British press have exaggerated the implications regarding military conversations. In fact the British have gone no further than the agreement for staff conversations which was reached in March 1936 after German reoccupation of the Rhineland.⁸⁵ In tracing this question the official pointed out that following the agreement of March 1936 there had been certain staff contacts between the British and the French in April of the same year; that at that time the British were making feelers and efforts to get Germany into a general understanding with the other great powers. They therefore discouraged any development of these staff conversations at the time for fear of putting the Germans off. Since then the French have continually pressed for further development of these conversations and have received evasive answers from the British. Now, however, the political situation as well as the military situation in Europe has radically changed and from the larger viewpoint of policy the British feel that there could have been no better moment than the present to resume military contacts and discussions. These talks are to be carried out on the basis of the changed position in the rearmament of all the major countries and of recent political developments affecting military strength. There is no question of a military alliance but merely an exploration of what could

⁸⁵ See *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, pp. 180 ff.

best be done in the common interest in the event of certain eventualities. The British of course attach tremendous importance to air questions. The army side has greater preoccupation for the French. There was no disagreement on either side as to what they should do in their conversations and staff contacts in these two arms. The French, however, showed a most pertinacious interest in naval conversations. The Foreign Office realizes of course that the French are profoundly worried about their Mediterranean communications. They feel, however, that there also enters into the background of the French insistence for naval staff talks an element of prestige; of desire to make up for the feeling of inferiority coming from the 5-5-3 naval ratio. The British on the other hand are not so much impressed as the French with the necessity or utility of protracted naval staff talks. The army and air conversations have already begun. The naval contacts have not yet been made and no definite time has been set for them to begin. It is also definitely understood that they will be carried out by the military, air and naval attachés of the two countries in Paris and in London; that no full dress delegations will be sent across the channel in either case. Expert officials can of course be sent from London to Paris or vice versa quietly and without publicity, to assist the attachés in their talks any time it may be necessary.

3. Abyssinia. The Foreign Office is not at all sure that the procedure they are proposing at Geneva for the recognition of Abyssinia will be accepted. They can easily see the possibility of its being balked by Russia or China or someone else. They have therefore drawn up their plans so that in case of rejection each country will be set free by the League to solve the problem in its own way. Should this happen, the exact moment when recognition will be effected by Great Britain will depend on the judgment of the Government as to how far the stipulations of the Anglo-Italian agreement have been fulfilled.

4. The general impression resulting from these talks is good here though not so lyrical as, according to the French press, it has been in that country. The British are pleased and feel that the conversations were exceedingly well timed from the viewpoint of strategy. However the Rome-Berlin axis may develop, the British realize, as almost every one does, that it has been profoundly affected by the absorption of Austria and Germany. To consolidate whatever gain there is in the Anglo-Italian agreement and whatever advantage may flow from the demonstration just given of Anglo-French solidarity on matters of common interest, these accomplishments must be integrated with the projected effort to bring about a Franco-Italian understanding. Without undue optimism, the Foreign Office believes that something substantial will be accomplished in this direction even though it may be at the cost of shelving for the time being certain sharp points of

conflict in Franco-Italian interests, such as the question of Tunis. I gather that they do not feel here that it is possible for all of the major Franco-Italian issues to be included in any agreement at this time.

Copies to Paris, Berlin, Rome, Praha.

KENNEDY

762.65/439 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, May 13, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received May 13—3:45 p. m.]

106. Embassy's 104, May 10, 6 p. m.⁸⁶ In discussing with Count Ciano⁸⁷ the results of the Hitler visit he expressed great satisfaction over the solemn statement made by Hitler guaranteeing the present German-Italian frontiers. He said further that there had been no new undertakings between Germany and Italy as a result of the meeting, no documented agreements and no secret understandings. On the other hand he considered that the Rome-Berlin Axis had been fortified by the visit.

I mentioned the reference in the Duce's speech to a new regime of international relationships offering more effective guarantees of justice, security and peace, and asked whether it had any bearing upon the possible resurrection of a four or five power pact. Ciano replied categorically that it had no such reference and that no mention had been made during the conversations of any move in this direction.

In reply to my inquiry regarding the Italian attitude concerning Czechoslovakia, the Minister answered that as he had previously told me Czechoslovakia lay well outside the Italian sphere of interest. Furthermore the Praha Government had never been friendly to the Italian Government and was in fact "an enemy" of Italy's friends, namely Germany, Poland and Hungary. He expressed however his personal view that Hitler would not at present take any steps in Czechoslovakia which would lead to trouble. When I sought to obtain some reaction concerning the situation in Hungary I received only a similar expression of the Minister's personal view that "there would be no surprise move" by Germany at present and he interpreted "at present" as one or two years.

It was evident from the Minister's reply that Italy had made no concrete effort to restrain Germany in her plans with regard to Czecho-

⁸⁶ Not printed.

⁸⁷ Galeazzo Ciano, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

slovakia. In view of the free hand given by Hitler to the Italians in respect of the German minorities south of the Brenner it might have been difficult for the Italians to bring pressure to bear on Hitler in regard to German minorities in Czechoslovakia. Ciano, however, told some of my colleagues including the Yugoslav Minister that it had been suggested to Hitler that any rash move in Czechoslovakia might be extremely dangerous. In this connection it may be noted that the British Ambassador called on Ciano last week to inform him of the joint British and French *démarche* at Praha and Berlin.⁸⁸

My Czechoslovak colleague is of the opinion that the fundamental plans of Germany envisage the breaking up of the French-Soviet-Czech Association which can best be achieved by pressure on its weakest link, Czechoslovakia. The Minister believes that Hitler will not undertake any military move but rather continue to insist upon the granting of autonomy to the Sudeten Germans. Having once secured this they will find opportunities to complain that the Czechoslovak Government has failed to fulfill its promises to them and will then be in a position to demand before the world their admission to the German Reich. In such eventuality the Czechoslovak Government will be in no position to resist and a new frontier will have to be found.

Ciano's reference to the fact that no new undertakings had been entered into between Germany and Italy would seem to indicate that the Italians had declined to commit themselves regarding military assistance in the event of a conflict arising out of possible German action in Czechoslovakia and I find among my colleagues a general belief that there is no immediate danger of precipitate action or conflict there.

The impression seems to prevail that the members of Hitler's staff were disappointed by their visit although it is not believed that Hitler himself shared this view. He appears to have been immensely gratified by the Italian acceptance of the *Anschluss* and by the splendor of his reception and to have been so emotionally impressed by the spectacle of Italy's power and the grandeur of Rome that he has returned to Germany with a different conception of the Italian people.

In short, the visit would appear to have reaffirmed the solidarity of the Rome-Berlin Axis following the *Anschluss* and the Anglo-Italian agreements and to have secured for Italy, without the necessity of further commitments on its part, the reiteration of Hitler's guarantee of the inviolability of the Italian-German frontier.

PHILLIPS

⁸⁸ See telegram No. 226, May 6, 7 p. m., from the Ambassador in Germany, p. 492.

741.62/270 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, May 16, 1938—11 p. m.

[Received May 16—4:35 p. m.]

412. I had lunch today with Sir Warren Fisher.⁸⁹ He told me that the British Secret Service had unquestionable evidence that Germany is definitely getting a great advantage out of the war scare episodes in that they are all arming themselves as fast as they can with Germany selling them the arms, the profits and exchange for these transactions being so great as to make the burden of German rearmament very small. He also said that German war plans are on the supposition that if war were declared on Great Britain the issue would be decided within 30 days and that Germany is building an air force designed to demolish London completely in one fell swoop. Fisher said further that all departments of the British Government have been advised that they must go ahead independently on their war plans without looking for any support or help from America; if such support should come for any reason at all it must be considered as a windfall and nothing else.

KENNEDY

760F.62/419

The Minister in Hungary (Montgomery) to the Secretary of State

No. 1084

BUDAPEST, June 2, 1938.

[Received June 14.]

SIR: I have the honor to inform the Department that in a conversation with Dr. Tibor Eckhardt⁹⁰ a few nights ago I told him that I was giving considerable thought as to

- 1) whether there is any agreement between the Hungarian Government and the German Government with regard to Czechoslovakia,
- 2) whether Hungary will attempt to send its Army into Slovakia should the Germans enter Bohemia,

and that although Mr. de Kánya⁹¹ had repeatedly given me assurances, I still wondered whether there was not some secret understanding, the knowledge of which was being withheld from me. I thereupon asked Dr. Eckhardt frankly if he would tell me the real truth. Dr. Eck-

⁸⁹ Permanent Secretary of the British Treasury and head of the British Civil Service.

⁹⁰ Leader of the opposition in the Hungarian Parliament.

⁹¹ Koloman de Kánya, Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

hardt assured me that there was no secret understanding of any kind, that he had discussed this question with the Regent, Prime Minister Imrédy, and Foreign Minister de Kánya and that it was the agreed policy that Hungary would remain completely neutral in the event of a war and would take no action towards Czechoslovakia that would disturb the peace of Europe. Dr. Eckhardt further told me that this policy was based upon the following three points:

- 1) Yugoslavia and Rumania are bound under the Little Entente agreement to aid Czechoslovakia in case of attack by Hungary, and Yugoslavia in particular is not averse to taking over some Hungarian territory should the occasion therefor arise;
- 2) Hungary cannot afford to go into any war and desires to remain neutral. To act in conjunction with Germany would make her an ally of that country, which would be extremely dangerous, and if war resulted Hungary would be dragged into it;
- 3) In case of the breaking up of Czechoslovakia, Slovakia would naturally return to Hungary. Poland desires a common frontier with Hungary and would use every influence to that end. If Hungary does not disturb the peace of Europe her chances of getting back some of its lost provinces are better than if she involved herself at the start.

A few days after my conversation with Dr. Eckhardt a member of the staff of the Legation called on Baron Apor⁹² and questioned him on the same subjects and he, like de Kánya, denied that there is any agreement between the Hungarian and German Governments, stating that "the moment Hungary made any agreement with any large power, from that day on Hungary would be dominated by that power", and then added most emphatically, "No, Hungary must make no agreements, we must play a lone hand."

I am convinced that the above represents the present policy of the Hungarian Government and that unless pressure of public opinion forces it to do otherwise, or there should be some change in the Government, it will not take any hasty or ill considered action.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN F. MONTGOMERY

740.00/417: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

LONDON, July 6, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received July 6—12:01 p. m.]

598. I saw Mr. Chamberlain last night. He told me that the situation had been very troublesome here, more particularly as concerns

⁹² Baron Gabriel Apor, Secretary General of the Hungarian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

politics internally than external conditions but that there is no prospect of any such thing as new election or change of Government.

As to the Czechoslovak situation he says they are still devoid of any real information; the Czechs tell him they are making real concessions to the Sudetens and the Germans tell him the Czechs are doing practically nothing. However, he is convinced that nothing is going to happen unless some unfriendly incident occurs such as the shooting of a couple of Germans or Czechs at the borders. Regarding the political negotiations he now feels that there is no real prospect of difficulty for some time at least.

The Spanish situation gives him a great deal more concern. He feels that while the bombing of British ships has been slowed down he anticipates it may start again any time and of course if people continue to read in their papers every day that British ships are being bombed his hand may be forced. He says the French front is closed and is hopeful that, if the Non-Intervention Committee can work fast, some kind of an armistice may be worked out, but is not very encouraged. He said Mussolini is in a very bad mood; he is constantly baiting the French and when the English ask him to do business with the French he resents the British attitude. Chamberlain of course is inwardly very sore that he has to take all this nonsense from Mussolini but he reiterates again and again, "my job is to try to keep England out of war if I possibly can; therefore I am doing a lot of things that are difficult for me to do." He is hopeful that Mussolini's attitude may change and that he can exert some pressure to help on the Spanish settlement. He said that Mussolini assures him that since the English agreement he has not shipped any men or ammunition to Spain. Chamberlain has no reason to disbelieve this although he would not bet his life on it.

He is deeply appreciative of the reports I gave him of my talks with you and the President and said that he needs a moral uplift now more than at any time before. I was impressed by his seeming cheerfulness but underneath there is great concern over the pressure that is being brought to bear on him.

KENNEDY

740.00/480 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, July 26, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 7:38 p. m.]

1167. In the course of a conversation with Secretary Morgenthau⁹⁸ and myself today the Minister for Foreign Affairs gave a brief sum-

⁹⁸ Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury.

mary of his views on the present international situation. He said that there were two points of danger to peace in Europe at the present time. The first was Czechoslovakia. A few months ago this situation had appeared to be desperate because the British had refused to interest themselves in the fate of Central Europe. He had succeeded in persuading the British to take the initiative with regard to the settlement of the Czechoslovak-German dispute and he was most hopeful that the mission about to be undertaken by Lord Runciman⁹⁴ would produce an appeasement. It would be impossible for Runciman to satisfy either party to the dispute completely but all the weight of Great Britain would be thrown into the scale to compel either the Germans or the Czechs as the case might be to accept Runciman's proposals.

For the first time therefore he saw a ray of light. It was his personal opinion that war during the next two months was no longer to be feared.

He felt moreover that Germany and Italy were now at the peak of their military strength. They had used their gold reserves and the personal reserves of the people of Italy and Germany to build up immense armaments. It would be exceedingly difficult for Germany, and impossible for Italy to continue to replace these armaments.

In France and England on the other hand although the governments might encounter financial difficulties individual citizens were still immensely rich—with investments both at home and abroad. These riches could be used to build up the armaments of France and Great Britain to such an extent that if it should be possible to preserve peace during the next 12 months Germany and Italy would be unable to attack with any hope of success.

He added parenthetically that he felt that the chief danger to peace at the moment was Mussolini who was so completely aware that he would be unable to maintain the present military strength of Italy that he desired war at once.

With regard to the Soviet Union Bonnet said that he believed that the recent "purges" of army officers and civilian leaders had so weakened the structure of the Red Army and the government that it would be impossible for the Soviet Union to contemplate war beyond its frontiers. It was his policy to attempt to strengthen the relations of France not with the Soviet Union but with Poland and Rumania. To this end he was attempting to obtain assurances from the Soviet

⁹⁴ Walter Runciman, Lord President of the Council, 1938-39; for correspondence on his mission to Czechoslovakia in connection with the Sudeten question, see telegram No. 699, July 29, 6 p. m., from the Ambassador in the United Kingdom, p. 537.

Government that if war should come in Central Europe the Soviet Union would positively not attempt to march armies across the territories of Poland and Rumania and would not send airplanes across those territories but would confine its assistance to the furnishing of munitions and implements of war to the Polish and Rumanian Governments.

With regard to the situation in the Far East Bonnet said that he felt the Japanese were so deeply involved in China that there was no real danger that Japan would dare to attack the Soviet Union or the Island of Hainan or any French possession in Asia. China was proving to be such a formidable enemy that the Japanese could not afford to take on new enemies.

He read to us a telegram which he had received this morning from the French Ambassador in Moscow recounting a conversation with Litvinov in which Litvinov declared that the Red Army would remain in occupation of the positions recently seized at Changkufeng and that the Soviet Government had no fear whatsoever that the Japanese would dare to attack.

In conclusion Bonnet said that he thought that the action of the British in taking the lead in the settlement of the Czechoslovak-German dispute and the recent action of the French Government in developing close relations with Turkey marked the beginning of the end of the German thrust through Central and Eastern Europe.

With regard to Spain—the second danger point—Bonnet said that his position had been peculiarly difficult because while France on the whole was most favorable to the Barcelona Government the British on the whole were most favorable to Franco. To maintain close collaboration with the British was the basis of French foreign policy. It was therefore difficult to take a clear line with regard to Spain. He felt that the policy of non-intervention unsatisfactory as it might be was the only one to be. Franco had given categoric assurances to both Great Britain and France that if he should be victorious neither the Italians nor the Germans would be left in the possession of any strategic position whatsoever in Spain. The British furthermore had promised the French to go to war if necessary to eject the Italians and the Germans from any strategic position they might have acquired, and might refuse to give up.

Bonnet finally said that although he had been extremely pessimistic until recently he was now definitely optimistic and did not expect war this summer.

740.00/436

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] August 1, 1938.

The French Ambassador ⁹⁵ called on his own request before sailing for home the middle of this week for a two months' vacation.

The Ambassador inquired about the possibilities of neutrality legislation by our Congress next winter. I replied that we were not unmindful of all the important phases of the neutrality problem; that we could not forecast the state of mind of Congress when it convenes in January; that we were, however, making a study of every phase of the neutrality question and assembling a large assortment of information and data pertaining to the subject, as stated. I left the matter in this form.

The Ambassador had nothing new to offer relative to the peace situation in Europe. He expressed the view that any trade agreement between this country and Great Britain ⁹⁶ would have a fine moral influence on the European political situation, as well as the economic situation.

I again repeated to him the extreme importance of thirty-five or forty nations getting behind our eight or ten point program with renewed earnestness and activity. I said that the moral influence of this course on countries like Germany and Italy would be greater than any other influence short of force; that there could not be permanent stable conditions of peace or economic well-being, or law and order in and between the nations in Europe and elsewhere unless our broad basic program is subscribed to in spirit and, in fact, by the important nations everywhere; that our program naturally is a long-view program; that it, therefore, does not consider, either pro or con, any steps for temporary peace in a locality or region, or steps intended to avoid a dangerous crisis; that our program simply says in effect that, in the long run, there can be no stable peace, business prosperity or order based on law unless these principles are subscribed to. The Ambassador seemed clearly to understand that I was not passing in any sense, either pro or con, on any of the present reported steps looking toward temporary peace in Europe, and hence to the avoidance of dangerous crises.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

⁹⁵ René Doyne de Saint-Quentin.

⁹⁶ See vol. II, pp. 1 ff.

760F.62/542

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] August 2, 1938.

The French Ambassador called to see me this morning to make a "tour of the horizon" as usual, but in this case a prolonged one, since he is sailing tomorrow for France for a vacation.

The Ambassador read to me a good many communications which his Government had sent him informing him of the reports and opinions of French diplomatic representatives in Europe. None of them contained anything of importance beyond what our own missions had reported to the Department, with the exception of a very long and extremely interesting report sent to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs by Monsieur François-Poncet, French Ambassador in Berlin, under date of July 19.

In this report Monsieur François-Poncet stated that Hitler had instructed the General Staff to take steps to place the German Army in a state of preparation such as to make immediate mobilization possible. At the meeting of the Council at which these orders were given, General Goering and Ribbentrop had supported Hitler's view as to the desirability of these orders, but the Generals of the General Staff and Dr. Goebbels⁹⁷ had been opposed on the ground that the western fortifications were not yet completed and that there were certain deficiencies in munitions which rendered any immediate action on the part of the German Army inadvisable. Hitler, nevertheless, insisted that the orders must be carried out.

François-Poncet went on to say that Hitler was passing through a very disquieting mental and moral condition. He said that Hitler was filled with venom on account of the loss of prestige which he and his Government had suffered on May 21st, and that he was determined that a "miserable little country"—as Hitler is alleged to term Czecho-slovakia—should not be able to put Germany in such a position. François-Poncet then went on into an analysis of Hitler, and made the significant comment that while Hitler at times was frightened by the idea of a general European war, at other times he was allured by such a prospect when visioning Germany as triumphant and as dominating the whole of Europe. François-Poncet said that Hitler was completely unreliable and thoroughly double-faced, as he had been proved as a result of the Austrian occupation when at the same time that he was making professions of good faith to the Austrian

⁹⁷ Josef Goebbels, German Minister for National Enlightenment and Propaganda.

Government, he was completing every military arrangement for the military occupation. François-Poncet insists that Hitler is pursuing the same line now; that at the very moment that he is sending an emissary⁹⁸ to London to urge better relations between Germany and England, he is completing in every detail his military arrangements for the occupation of Czechoslovakia and is merely endeavoring to persuade England and British public opinion that he wants peace in order to make it more difficult for Great Britain to move with rapidity when he makes his attack upon Czechoslovakia.

Monsieur François-Poncet then continued with an analysis of the German situation. He said that there was noticeable an increasing apathy on the part of the German public towards the Nazi party and growing discontent on the part of the German people in general. He called attention to the ever-increasing unfavorable German trade balance, to the increasingly unsatisfactory state of the mark and of exchange, and to the fact that so many Germans were occupied in munitions factories, in public works, and in "artificial industries" as to have resulted in an actual shortage of farm labor this year, so that the German crops would be decidedly less than what they otherwise might have been. He concluded his estimate of the situation by stating that in the military sense Germany would not be prepared for war for another year, and as a postscript to his report added that upon the insistence of the German General Staff the order for near mobilization upon which Hitler had insisted had been revoked by Hitler twenty-four hours after the original order had been given. François-Poncet had insisted, however, that Hitler had revoked this order with the understanding that the order would be once more issued before the end of August, and François-Poncet stated that he was convinced that Germany would move against Czechoslovakia before the date of the Nuremberg Conference.

I asked the French Ambassador if he had any word which would show that Monsieur François-Poncet had revised his estimate as a result of the visit of the British King and Queen to Paris and as a result of Lord Runciman's trip to Prague. He replied that François-Poncet was now on vacation at Gastein and that subsequent reports had come from the French Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, all of which had indicated a more optimistic point of view.

The Ambassador discussed the Spanish and the Far Eastern situation, but had no information with regard to either of them. He spoke at some length about the Italian situation and informed me that not only Suvich, the Italian Ambassador here, but also all the members of his staff, as well as Count Fumasoni Biondi, the representative in Washington of the Stefani press service, had expressed themselves

⁹⁸ Capt. Fr. Wiedemann, retired, personal aide-de-camp to Adolf Hitler.

in no guarded terms to him and to the Counselor of his Embassy as being absolutely opposed to Mussolini's newly announced policy of persecuting the Jews and of antagonizing the Vatican. He said he took this as an indication that Italian public opinion in general was becoming more and more unfavorable to the recent policies which Mussolini and Count Ciano had adopted.

The Ambassador spoke of the pending negotiations between France and the United States regarding the treaty with Morocco,⁹⁹ of which the Ambassador had spoken with Mr. Murray, and regarding the trans-Atlantic aviation service. He said he hoped that upon his return to Washington on October 15 these two matters might be taken up.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

740.00/446 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, August 12, 1938—midnight.

[Received August 13—9:40 a. m.]

1267. I discussed the general situation with Bonnet this evening. His optimism has disappeared.

He said he had had a series of reports during the past few days from Germany that worried him greatly. The German Government was taking every preliminary step that it was possible to take to prepare a country for immediate war. Personally he still believed that Germany did not intend to declare war in the immediate future and that these steps were designed to produce the impression that Germany would support the demands of the Sudeten by force of arms. But it might be that Hitler and Mussolini had decided to have war this summer.

Bonnet added that he was confident Runciman could keep the Czechoslovak question comparatively quiet for another 2 weeks and that war would not begin until September at least. He had today permitted the French Minister to Praha to leave for a 2 weeks' vacation.

Runciman's first reports had reached London yesterday and the British Government had informed him that they contained nothing of importance.

In any event he felt certain that there would be another most serious crisis sometime in September. The question of Czechoslovakia was basically insoluble so long as nothing could be permitted which would infringe upon Czech sovereignty throughout all the territories now

⁹⁹ See vol. II, pp. 846 ff.

composing the Czechoslovak state. It seemed certain, therefore, that the eventual proposals of Runciman would have to be supported by a readiness to fight.

Hitler was continuing to say to the few visitors who saw him that he did not intend to go to war over Czechoslovakia but invariably added "unless Sudeten blood should flow."

I asked Bonnet if the French Government intended to attempt to have any direct conversations with Hitler while Runciman was in Praha. He said that he himself believed that the French Government should send someone to Hitler immediately. The difficulty was that Hitler did not like to talk to Ambassadors or statesmen. He was willing to receive generals. It might be advisable to send some French general to talk with him before the Czech affair should reach another crisis.

Mussolini was behaving in a manner which suggested either that he desired immediate war or that he had lost his mental balance. His latest act was to refuse to permit Italian tourists to visit France and he was sending constant reinforcements to Spain.

The financial situation of France was rapidly becoming untenable. France had been losing gold from the equalization fund at the rate of 2,000,000 pounds a day although today only about a million and a half pounds had been lost. He had just been informed that the British had lost no less than 8,000,000 pounds today. It was entirely clear that unless it should be possible to come to an agreement for limitation of armaments in Europe it would be impossible for France and England as well to maintain their moneys at their present levels. France this year would have to increase greatly her expenditures for armaments especially for airplanes and the money to pay for these new weapons of war simply was not to be found.

If the Czechoslovakian crisis which he anticipated in September should pass over peacefully he intended to make an immense effort in the month of October to bring about an agreement for the limitation of armaments in Europe.

On behalf of the French Government he would transmit to the British Government through the British Chargé d'Affaires here at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning a note saying that the present pressure on the franc was entailing grave consequences for the equalization fund and the French Treasury. The French Government felt that it was acting in the spirit of the Tripartite Agreement¹ in informing the British Government that if the pressure on its money should continue it could not be sure of prolonging very long the sacrifices necessary to defend the present level of the franc. The French Gov-

¹ For text of the Agreement, see statement by the Secretary of the Treasury, September 25, 1936, *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, p. 560.

ernment therefore considered it necessary that the governments signatory to the Tripartite Agreement should seek together methods of combating the attacks which were affecting the principal European moneys. It must insist especially on a common denial of the rumors which continue to circulate with regard to an impending modification of the Tripartite Agreement and of the monetary level now existing.²

Bonnet gave me a copy of this note in which he changed the words "Government of Great Britain" to the words "Government of the United States" and asked me to consider it an official communication to be transmitted at once to my Government.

Before the message containing the text of this note had been encoded Bonnet telephoned me and asked me please not to telegraph the text to my Government but to consider it merely an *aide-mémoire*. He explained that he had conferred with Daladier after talking with me and that they had decided not to send any written communication on this subject either to the United States or to Great Britain but to let Marchandean³ handle the matter verbally. Since Bonnet said this to me over the telephone I could not obtain further explanations.

I informed Secretary Morgenthau by telephone with regard to the note I had received and its cancellation as a formal document.

Bonnet went on to say that if France should have to continue to arm at the present rate it would be necessary to regiment the entire country placing the civilian population on soldiers wages and soldiers rations. In no other way could the present level of the franc be maintained and the essential military expenditures made.

Bonnet's shift from relative optimism to great anxiety is typical of the present state of mind of all the officials of the Quai d'Orsay with four of whom I have talked today.

BULLITT

760F.62/580 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 18, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received August 18—5:50 p. m.]

794. My 787, August 17, 10 p. m.⁴ When I saw the Soviet Ambassador last night he outlined at some length his views on what he considers the concrete objectives of Nazi Germany for expansion.

² See memorandum of August 12, by the Assistant Adviser on International Economic Affairs, vol. II, p. 288.

³ Paul Marchandean, French Minister for Finance.

⁴ *Post*, p. 547.

While the ideas he expressed have been voiced before and contain no particular novelty, the Ambassador plainly implied that he was not giving merely personal opinions but was expressing the prevailing view held by the Soviet Foreign Office. I repeat them for what they may be worth. The picture he drew is also of interest as part of the background which, provided this account is a sound one, must presumably have great influence on the mind of Hitler in any decision he will have to make regarding the solution of the Czechoslovak question. For, according to this theory, if Hitler loyally accepts a peaceful settlement between the Czechs and the Sudeten Deutsch for a regime which will fully maintain the sovereignty of Czechoslovakia as it now exists, he will have accepted the most serious single impediment to Nazi plans for German expansion in southeastern Europe.

According to Monsieur Maisky the dispute with Czechoslovakia is being used as simply the opening wedge in Germany's struggle for continental domination. If Hitler succeeds, whether by force or by so-called peaceful methods of pressure, in mutilating Czechoslovakia and reducing what is left to a position of political and economic vassalage he will have opened the door to the creation of a solid bloc of states extending to the Black Sea, which will be in complete subservience to Germany both politically and economically. He will thereby have gained access to Rumanian oil and the wheat fields of Hungary which will make Germany largely self-sustaining. Furthermore with Czechoslovakia out of the way the Danubian and Balkan countries will be unable to resist the pressure which Germany will bring to bear upon them. Maisky said that he did not mean to imply that Germany would attempt to incorporate those states politically into Germany but he says that Hitler envisages the inclusion of Hungary, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Bulgaria in a strict customs union with Germany, to be further implemented by military conventions designed to give the German General Staff complete control of their armies. Provided Hitler accomplishes his purpose in Czechoslovakia, Maisky sees the accomplishment of his Mitteleuropa scheme as more or less a 5-year job, provided of course there is no intervening world war. Following the consolidation of this accomplishment which would make Germany overwhelmingly the strongest power in Continental Europe, Italy, whether within the German customs union and military bund or without, would be reduced to a position of complete subservience. Also, in Maisky's opinion, it would be difficult to escape the conclusion that the position of France would be little better.

Germany, however, would not stop there, he thinks, and the question arises whether her next move would be to the east or to the west. A move to the east could only be directed against Russia and he thinks

this is improbable for the following reasons: Russia has notoriously throughout past history proved a very difficult if not impossible problem for any military invader from the west. He cited historic examples and pointed out that on those occasions the military forces of Russia were immeasurably inferior to the invaders'. Such will not be the case when and if Germany attempts to invade and conquer Russia. Speaking with considerable zeal he said that the Russian military forces are even now better than they ever had been in the days of Imperial Russia and that their mechanization is progressing at a rapid pace. By that time (5 to 10 years hence) Russia will have completed the third of her 5-year plans and her powers of resistance to armed invasion will be immensely increased. Of these factors he says no one is better aware than Germany herself. Furthermore the Germans would find that the very large blocs of Slavic peoples in southeastern Europe incorporated in her Mitteleuropa organization, while powerless to maintain their own independence in the face of Germany, would prove from a purely military point of view a distinct liability to Germany in any attempted invasion of Russia as the sympathies of the Slavic peasants could be counted upon to be with their Russian brothers rather than with the dominant German. Any invading German army coming from the southeast could be sabotaged in the rear. On the most sanguine expectation of what Germany might be able to accomplish in an attack on Russia, he said that she could get no more than a few of the border provinces. The western provinces of Russia he says are poor and would not be worth what they would cost Germany, while the profitable portion of the Ukraine lies too far east for Germany to hope to hold it even if it were conquered. He spoke with the utmost confidence of Russia's ability to hold her own against Germany and pointed out that even if Germany did conquer those few provinces, there would still remain an immense Russia with an enormous population and great resources. It would be only a question of time before the German invaders would be shoved out. In view of these considerations therefore, Maisky thinks that the long term German strategic plan would, following formation and consolidation of Mitteleuropa, turn to Belgium and Holland, with their rich tropical colonial possessions. Then, provided there is no world war in the meantime, France and Great Britain will be squarely up against it with Germany having the major resources of continental Europe, outside Russia, at her back.

Maisky's idea that Czechoslovakia is the key to the whole situation in Central Europe is of course shared by nearly all commentators. The idea that Maisky was working on however, was that as far as Germany's future plans are concerned it is not so much a question of whether she attempts to settle the Czechoslovak issue at once by force or whether

she accomplishes the same purpose by other means. It is in the accomplishment of the purpose that the danger to the future lies. He was emphatic in expressing his conviction that Hitler should not be allowed to destroy Czechoslovakia and that the time to prevent that destruction was now. At the same time he said efforts should be made by the western powers within the limit of possibility to lessen the growing burden of dependence on Germany which is now falling on the Danubian countries, none of whom want to be sucked into the German maelstrom. He thought Great Britain and France could assist in this process by economic aid and facilities to Rumania and Yugoslavia particularly, and that as soon as possible the same thing should be done in Bulgaria where German influence is rapidly increasing and which sends 50 percent of its exports to Germany. Greece also he mentioned casually and said that 40 percent of Greek exports are now going to Germany. In the case of Czechoslovakia he was of the opinion that economic aid at present would be of negligible account and that the problem was almost exclusively a military and political one.

JOHNSON

760F.62/580

The Assistant Secretary of State (Messersmith) to the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] August 20, 1938.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I take the liberty of drawing your particular attention to Ambassador Kennedy's confidential telegram no. 787 [794] of August 18, of which a copy is attached hereto,⁵ in which he recounts a conversation he has just had with the Soviet Ambassador in London in which the Soviet Ambassador expresses what Mr. Kennedy believes to be the views of the Soviet Foreign Office with regard to German objectives. There might be a tendency to minimize the views expressed in this telegram coming as they do from a Soviet Ambassador. I would like to say that in my opinion I believe that the Soviet Ambassador has given a fairly correct view of what the real German objectives are. I base this opinion on my long experience and considerable personal contact with leaders in the present German Government. The objectives which the Soviet Ambassador has attributed to the present German Government accord with those which I have heard high ranking officers of the German Government express to me directly or by implication from time to time.

The emphasis which I believe the Soviet Ambassador places upon the importance of the German objectives in Czechoslovakia is not too

⁵ *Supra.*

great. The first part of the comprehensive German program involves domination of Austria and Czechoslovakia so as to open the way to Rumanian oil, without which Germany cannot make war, as well as free access to the raw materials and agricultural products of South-eastern Europe. The first step in the German program is domination of Southeastern Europe as this is necessary if any further progress is to be made. This is the reason why I consider, and have considered for the last four years, that the German objectives in Czechoslovakia are definite and unalterable. If Germany should accept any solution of the Czechoslovak problem which does not give her domination and control of that country her whole program for expansion in any direction is stopped.

As I have indicated, I think the objectives which the Soviet Ambassador has attributed to the German Government are correctly stated from the German Nazi Party point of view. I think he has somewhat underestimated the German interest in the Ukraine in which those German Party leaders whom I have known have always indicated they have a direct interest. I am inclined to think, however, that he is correct that, after accomplishing the aims in Southeastern Europe, the plan of the German Government would be to secure economic and political control of Belgium, Holland and Denmark. This, I think, is the second major objective after the first one in Southeastern Europe would have been accomplished. It is my own view that, once these objectives would have been realized, France and England would be in such a secondary position that Germany in practically every part of the world would be in a position to be either a disturbing or dominant factor except in this hemisphere. It is interesting that the Soviet Ambassador in his conversation with Ambassador Kennedy did not raise the question of the German objectives in the Western Hemisphere concerning which there can in reality be just as little doubt as with respect to those which they have in Europe and in other parts of the world. I think we have already adequately concrete information to indicate how definite their objectives in this hemisphere are.

I have taken the liberty of expressing these views to you at this time again, although I have in my letters during the past few years to you expressed them in a much more complete form, as I am convinced that Czechoslovakia has for Germany a primary importance and that, if she fails in her objectives there, it means a stoppage of her whole program. As the present regime cannot change any of its objectives without its whole program falling down and as the Czechoslovak objective is among all these the most vital, I see no letup on the pressure on Czechoslovakia and the danger of war over this question constantly present and not to be minimized.

G. S. MESSERSMITH

751.62/472 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, August 23, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received August 23—3:50 p. m.]

1335. Guy La Chambre, Minister for Air, said to me today that he had had a full report yesterday from General Vuillemin, Chief of the French Air Force, on his trip to Germany. Hitler's conversation with Vuillemin had been confined to the weather and a few pleasant remarks.

Hitler had said that he loved France and that never would Germany attack France. Hitler had also said that he would like very much to visit the areas in France in which he had fought as a soldier.

I asked La Chambre if Vuillemin had immediately issued an invitation for such a visit and he replied that Hitler's remarks had been more an expression of courtesy than an expression of a real desire to make such a visit.

Vuillemin's talk with Goering⁶ had been more to the point. Goering had said that there were no direct points of dispute between Germany and France but that the most serious consequences might follow their differences of opinion on Spain and Czechoslovakia. Vuillemin had replied that non-intervention offered a way out of the Spanish difficulty. With regard to Czechoslovakia he could inform Goering officially that if German troops should cross the Czech frontier France would declare war at once. Goering, according to Vuillemin, had stamped his foot in fury and had said that Germany would not permit the Czechs to murder Sudeten women and children.

Vuillemin had been much impressed by the German airplane production facilities. He had returned convinced that the Germans were producing at least 350 armed planes a month and that they had facilities for trebling this production immediately. Vuillemin had reported also that the Germans had abandoned the production of heavy bombing planes because they were convinced that heavy bombers with comparatively slow speeds could be shot down very easily by modern antiaircraft artillery. Their own experiments had shown that this was possible even at night when the artillery was able to fire accurately at the sound of the airplane motors.

La Chambre said that the Germans were now concentrating on fast pursuit ships, bombers which released bombs during dives, and fast planes for offensives against infantry.

⁶ Hermann Goering, German Minister for Aviation.

La Chambre expressed confidence that Daladier's proposals with regard to the 40-hour law would not produce a serious rising of labor and would not cause the downfall of the government.

I am not so sure.

BULLITT

740.00/456 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, August 25, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 1:45 p. m.]

215. Charles, British Chargé d'Affaires here, has shown the Embassy a draft of a summary from his point of view of the present Italian position vis-à-vis the international situation. He is telegraphing this summary to his Government. The summary in question slightly amplified by subsequent conversation follows. Charles finds that Italian policy has recently encountered many reverses. The quick decision hoped for in Spain has not materialized, Ethiopia is not paying dividends, the internal economic situation with particular reference to the wheat harvest is not satisfactory, propaganda to the contrary notwithstanding. Most important of all, according to Charles, Italy has definitely become the junior partner in the Rome-Berlin Axis and at present is in no position to resist German diplomatic pressure. For these reasons Charles considers that Mussolini is extremely anxious to render valid the Anglo-Italian Pact as soon as possible and is also courting Hungary and Yugoslavia in order to free his hands. Charles does not envisage a breakup of the Rome-Berlin Axis which is proving valuable to both partners but sees a desire on Italy's part to restore the 50-50 basis rudely upset by the *Anschluss*. Although admitting always latent Franco-Italian hostility he sees the present press campaign against France as the result of German pressure to bring about a division of French attention during the present Czech crisis. In this connection he states that Blondel, French Chargé d'Affaires, informed him that when Blondel saw Ciano on May 8th the last day of Hitler's visit in Rome, Blondel's reception was so markedly cold in comparison with a previous meeting of a few days before that temporarily Blondel was at a complete loss to explain it. Charles does not believe that Italy wants war, is in a position to make war, or will seriously back Germany in any Central European adventure. He believes that there is still time not to break the Axis but to restore it to its proper proportions through a gesture from Britain notably putting

into effect the Anglo-Italian Pact.⁷ He also hopes Franco's reply to the Non-Intervention Committee's note⁸ will not be summarily dismissed but will serve as a basis for further discussion. He fears, however, that France may tie Britain's hands in this. He entertains little doubt as to the durability of Italian promises but feels that temporarily they can be trusted until a better bargain arises for Italy. In the meantime Italy's "nuisance value" is worth placating. He feels that Berlin is of the same opinion except that momentarily Germany is in a position to exploit rather than placate the value last named. He does not exclude the possibility that an Italy checked at all points and rendered desperate might completely throw in her lot with Germany and if successful be content with a junior partner's share in the profits. Finally he entertains little doubt of Italian reinforcements to Spain and read telegrams from British agents in Bengasi, Tunis and Naples on that subject. Bengasi and Tunis reported substantial withdrawal of garrisons from their respective areas while Naples claimed clandestine shipping of troops. To sum up Charles recommends to his Government a favorable opportunity to restore equilibrium in the Rome-Berlin Axis thus deterring Central European ambitions of Germany although Britain should not expect through this a lasting solution of Anglo-Italian issues.

PHILLIPS

862.248/179 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 22, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received 8:20 p. m.]

997. I venture to repeat below the substance of an interesting talk I had yesterday with Colonel Lindbergh regarding the present relative air strength of the great European powers as he sees it, which he has confirmed today in a memorandum. Lindbergh has had unusually favorable opportunities to observe the air establishments of the countries he discusses and has in fact just returned from a trip to Russia. You may feel that this confidential expression of his personal opinion may be of interest to the President and to the War and Navy Departments.

⁷ The Anglo-Italian agreement was signed at Rome, April 16, 1938; for text, see League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. cxcv, p. 77; for correspondence, see *post*, pp. 133 ff.

⁸ See telegram No. 1034, August 23, 5 p. m., from the Counselor of Embassy in Spain, p. 236.

"Without doubt the German air fleet is now stronger than that of any other country in the world. The rate of progress of German military aviation during the last several years is without parallel. I feel certain that German air strength is greater than that of all other European countries combined, and that she is constantly increasing her margin of leadership. I believe that German factories are now capable of producing in the vicinity of 20,000 aircraft each year. Her actual production is difficult to estimate. The most reliable reports that I have obtained vary from 500 to 800 planes per month. The quality of German design is excellent and the extensive research facilities which have been built in that country are a guarantee of continued progress in the future. The Germans long ago established their ability in the design, construction and operations of aircraft. I believe they have the greatest ability of any European nation in the field of aviation. In fact I believe that the United States is the only country in the world capable of competing with Germany in aviation. At present however, Germany is rapidly cutting down the lead we have held in the past. In numbers of fighting planes she is already ahead of us. In time of war, her weakness would undoubtedly lie in her supply of raw materials.

Germany now has the means of destroying London, Paris, and Praha if she wishes to do so. England and France together have not enough modern war planes for effective defense or counter attack. France is in a pitiful condition in the air. England is better off but her air fleet is not comparable to Germany's. France is probably now building in the vicinity of 50 planes per month; England probably in the vicinity of 200 first line aircraft. I understood that France hopes to have about 2500 first line planes by the spring of 1940.

Czechoslovakia has no completely modern aircraft except those obtained from Russia. I saw a number of Russian built bombers on the field at Praha. The Czechoslovakians have excellent machine guns and anti-aircraft guns.

It is not possible to estimate the Russian air strength. The Russians have copied American factories and purchased American machinery of the most modern type. If operated on American standards these factories might place Russia next to Germany in military aviation. The production is certainly much less on Russian standards. Judging by the general conditions in Russia, I would not place great confidence in the Russian air fleet. However, Russia probably has a sufficient number of planes to make her weight felt in any war she enters. Her aircraft are not the best but their performance is good enough to be effective in modern warfare. I believe the Russian weakness lies in inefficiency and poor organization.

German military strength now makes them inseparable from the welfare of every civilization, for they have the power either to preserve or to destroy it. For the first time in history a nation has the power either to save or to ruin the great cities of Europe. Germany has such a preponderance of war planes that she can bomb any city in Europe with comparatively little resistance. England and France are far too weak in the air to protect themselves."

KENNEDY

740.00/465½ : Circular telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Greece (MacVeagh) *

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938—4 p. m.

We should be interested in receiving a brief telegraphic report as to what may be expected to happen in Greece in the event of a general war in Europe, as well as your comment on any special problems that are likely to arise in connection with the protection of American citizens there.

HULL

740.00/468 : Telegram

The Chargé in Egypt (Merriam) to the Secretary of State

ALEXANDRIA, September 28, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 11:50 a. m.]

74. Department's circular September 27, 4 p. m. If Germany only were involved no serious problems would be likely to arise immediately. If Italy should fight on the side of Germany Egypt would probably be invaded from Libya. The chief towns and irrigation works as well as the canal would assumedly be bombed. Generally speaking the burden of defending Egypt would devolve upon the British forces.

Situation might develop whereby it would be unsafe to evacuate nationals by sea except on our warships or by land through Palestine owing to troubles there. Section of Egypt-Palestine railway is torn up at the moment.

Immediate problem would be to secure protection from gas and explosive bombs. It is practically certain that sufficient gas masks would not be available for the general population. Legation is instructing consular officers to obtain technical advice from appropriate authorities and to formulate plans offering the greatest possible protection to our citizens.

Legation would not be inclined to advise citizens to depart on commercial vessels until and unless this method of conveyance were found safe.

Commander of our squadron at Villefranche has been informed of the essentials in case question of evacuation should arise.

MERRIAM

* The same, *mutatis mutandis*, to the American diplomatic missions in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Morocco, and Turkey, and to the Consulates at Beirut, Calcutta, Jerusalem, and Tunis.

740.00111/1 : Telegram

The Minister in Venezuela (Gonzalez) to the Secretary of State

CARACAS, September 28, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 2: 35 p. m.]

89. In the event war breaks out in Europe the President of Venezuela wishes to issue an immediate proclamation concerning the rights and duties of belligerents in this country which would roughly parallel the action taken by the United States in this respect. The President is especially anxious to restrict the visits of war vessels of belligerents in Venezuelan waters and to prohibit absolutely their entry at the port of Caripito which he considers very vulnerable. He has requested me to ascertain the Department's view as to the expediency and practicability of this measure and would appreciate a reply by cable as promptly as possible.

GONZALEZ

740.00/467 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Turkey (MacMurray) to the Secretary of State

ISTANBUL, September 28, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received September 28—12: 10 p. m.]

67. Your circular telegram of September 27, 4 p. m. Turkish Government thus far displays conspicuous indifference to European developments seeming to take it for granted that it will not become involved unless in what Turkish officials consider the unlikely event that Bulgaria should attack one of the members of the Balkan Entente. Present indications are that for the foreseeable future Turkey would remain neutral although strongly sympathetic with Great Britain. We do not at this time foresee any special problems of protection of American citizens.

MACMURRAY

740.00/471 : Telegram

The Minister in Greece (MacVeagh) to the Secretary of State

ATHENS, September 28, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received September 28—2: 55 p. m.]

57. Department's circular telegram September 27, 4 p. m. The Prime Minister confirmed to me this morning that in case of a European war this country desires to remain neutral and added that it could not depart from this attitude without consultation with its Balkan

allies and Turkey which he said also desires to remain neutral. The Prime Minister was pessimistic about the possibility of averting war in Central Europe but inclined to think that Italy would find some way at the last moment of staying out. If she does not the problem of Greece's [neutrality?] will become a very difficult one on account of her harbors.

My British colleague told me the other day that if war breaks out Greece "will have to give us the use of her harbors". On the other hand the Prime Minister said this morning "I do not know the English plans but if England has to fight Italy she will certainly never force us to provide her with bases against that country without first finding some means of protecting us, for this would be to require an intolerable sacrifice and expose us to immediate death". I asked "From the air" and he replied "Certainly from the air".

In case hostilities do not involve Italy protection of American citizens should not be too difficult although this office will receive an additional burden as clearing house for evacuation of Americans coming from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Turkey and even Czechoslovakia. Consequently the most urgent problem will be passenger facilities on steamships leaving for the United States. If this situation becomes critical I may later request Department to arrange for American Export cargo boats to carry passengers in addition to express liners.

However should Italy enter, communications from Greece would probably be cut off. Americans then here could be protected from actual physical danger by removal to suburbs and provinces but food, medicines and other supplies would soon become very scarce.

For past 10 days consular officers have advised inquiring Americans to return home if they have no compelling reasons for remaining.

MACVEAGH

740.00/472 : Telegram

The Consul General at Beirut (Palmer) to the Secretary of State

BEIRUT, September 28, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 28—4 p. m.]

Department's September 27, 4 p. m. High Commission authorities do not anticipate any serious trouble within or from outside Lebanon, Syria or Hatay. They regard internal situation as satisfactory and minimize dangers of attack air or sea but they consider their military forces fully prepared to deal with local disturbances should any arise and they have completed arrangements to insure adequate food supplies. I believe that their confidence in the efficacy of measures taken

and plans made is justified and I do not foresee any special problems in connection with the protection of American citizens. But I am keeping in touch with the President of the American University, the head of the American Mission and the head of the Socony Vacuum Oil Company for this territory with a view to carrying out, if an emergency should arise and with such modifications as might be necessary, the program outlined in Consul General Marriner's despatch No. 132 of December 28, 1936.¹¹

PALMER

760F.62/1227 : Telegram

The Chargé in Latvia (Packer) to the Secretary of State

RIGA, September 28, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 28—1:40 p. m.]

83. My 82, September 28, 4 [2] p. m.¹¹ The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed scepticism as to *bona fides* of Hitler's renunciation of further territorial aims in Europe and indicated he thought Danzig and Memel would be next in order after settlement of Sudeten question,¹² with resulting complications in the Polish Corridor. He does not anticipate early involvement of Latvia should war occur and said that Latvia would remain neutral to the last moment and would resist by force any attempt to cross her boundaries.

Military Attaché reports divided opinion in Latvian military circles as to whether Latvia should side with Germany or Soviet Union.

PACKER

740.00/469 : Telegram

The Consul in Charge at Calcutta (Groth) to the Secretary of State

CALCUTTA, September 28, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received September 28—2:30 p. m.]

Referring to the Department's circular telegram of September 27, 4 p. m., it is extremely difficult to predict what may be expected to happen in India in the event of a general European war because of the many conflicting elements involved.

Bengal Government officials do not contemplate any serious political difficulties in the event of war and stated definitely that adequate steps have already been taken to cope with any should they arise. Officials further stated that the only immediate effect of a general European

¹¹ Not printed.

¹² See pp. 483 ff.

war here would be the granting of wide powers to those in authority on the basis of a Defense of the Realm Act which would immediately bring into force certain regulations governing enemy shipping.

The Congress Working Committee which has been meeting in Delhi has thus far failed to make definite declaration of its attitude in the event of war and one is not expected to be made until the trend of European affairs becomes definitely known.

Opinion in Calcutta is to the effect that the conservative element in Congress would support Britain but only on the immediate fulfillment of promises which would be exacted leading to greater self-government or full Dominion status. The left wing of the Congress it is expected might endeavor to cause disturbances but these it is felt would not be long lived.

Indian National Congress High Command is faced with the paradox of having approved the party's declaration of non-violence and non-cooperation with Great Britain in any imperialistic war but of having expressed strong sympathy for Czechoslovakia.

The Moslem League has offered its support as has the Premier [*sic*] of the Punjab from which Moslem province over 70% of the Indian army is recruited.

Many of the Princes have already offered the Government their full support.

So far as it is now possible to determine no special problems are likely to arise in the immediate future in connection with the protection of American citizens.

Consul General White now in Simla has been requested to ascertain views of Central Government, Bengal Government officials and these will be forwarded as soon as received.

GROTH

740.00/470 : Telegram

The Vice Consul at Tunis (Springs) to the Secretary of State

TUNIS, September 28, 1938—11 p. m.
[Received September 28—9:02 p. m.]

Department's September 27, 4 p. m. Tunisia will give her support to France in the event of a general war in Europe. There is great uneasiness due to the absence of adequate protection against gas. In the event that Italy should oppose France the protection of American born children of Italian parents will be a problem.

SPRINGS

740.00/479 : Telegram

The Consul General at Calcutta (White) to the Secretary of State

CALCUTTA, September 29, 1938—9 a. m.

[Received September 29—8:30 a. m.]

Reply to the Department's circular. India to take [omission?] participation which is likely to consist of supplies more than of troops, may be jeopardized by subversive Nationalist activity and possibly Japanese submarines, et cetera.

Nationalists confident war will effect rapid autonomy. Congress Party leaders plan of action not known, they do not have the support of either Moslems or Princes. Troops loyal to the Government of India which is confident of maintaining order. If advisable constitution will be suspended in disloyal provinces.

In the last war high price of raw materials brought prosperity in which American business shared. I foresee no special difficulties for American citizens except suspected Germanophiles.

WHITE

740.00/478 : Telegram

The Chargé in Iraq (Satterthwaite) to the Secretary of State

BAGHDAD, September 29, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received September 29—7:13 a. m.]

34. Department's circular September 27, 4 p. m. The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me that in the event of a general war Iraq will carry out fully its obligations under Article IV of its Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain¹³ as well as those under the League Covenant and the Saadabad Pact.¹⁴ The four Foreign Ministers of the latter are now in Geneva and can consult there. Public sympathy seems to have turned toward Great Britain and the Government has not even mentioned the Palestine situation to the British Embassy in assuring it of support.

I anticipate no disorders and think American citizens here and in the Persian Gulf will be quite safe. There are ample food supplies.

SATTERTHWAITE

¹³ Signed October 10, 1922; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. **cxix**, p. 389.

¹⁴ Signed at Teheran, July 8, 1937, by Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey; League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. **cxv**, p. 21.

740.00/474 : Telegram

The Consul General at Jerusalem (Wadsworth) to the Secretary of State

JERUSALEM, September 29, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 11:40 a. m.]

Department's September 27, 4 p. m. Authorities here generally believe that in the event of Italy entering war against Great Britain, Mediterranean would be bottled, Palestine becoming outpost canal defense with strong British garrison and ruled under martial law as was effectuated during last war. Acting Attorney General goes further and considers proclamation protectorate for period of hostilities not unlikely.

As a corollary the Arab revolt would be firmly suppressed if not called off as in 1936 on advice of rulers neighboring Arab countries who it is believed would remain loyal to treaties with Great Britain.

Provisioning of the country which is far from self-supporting (for example half annual wheat consumption of 140,000 tons must be imported) would necessarily be from the east.

In these circumstances I envisage no especial problem in connection with protection of American citizens except possibility that a considerable number might wish to return to the United States in which case it might be that the Department would be able to facilitate arrangements for the despatch of ocean transport to Suez or Basra.

WADSWORTH

740.00/478 : Telegram

The Chargé in Morocco (Doolittle) to the Secretary of State

TANGIER, September 29, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received September 29—5:26 p. m.]

15. Your confidential circular telegram of September 27, 4 p. m. French Morocco will immediately be on a war footing. Control of native population will probably prove adequate. No special measures for protection of Americans there seem necessary.

In Tangier events would depend on modification of position of Nationalist Spain which in turn might be influenced by Italy's action.

Since my despatch No. 1386 of the 10th;¹⁵ forces in Spanish zone have been brought to about 30,000 men. They are reported to have orders in case of attempted French occupation of zone to seize Tangier and defend it together with Tetuan and Ceuta abandoning balance of

¹⁵ Not printed.

territory. However, responsible Franco sympathizers are against entanglement in European war and Tuesday's joint Spanish-Portuguese declarations of friendship in Burgos may be significant in view of Portuguese-British alliance.

Tangier authorities planning suppression of any local disturbances in divided Spanish colony or against Italians. In event of war international administration would continue to operate Tangier zone as neutral territory although functionaries of unfriendly powers would have to leave.

There are no known Americans in Spanish zone and protection of few in Tangier not believed to present special problems unless by reason of supposedly unfriendly occupation mentioned the city might be directly involved in war by attempts to dislodge occupants.

In such eventuality American naval evacuation would be imperative. In any case provisioning of zone will be difficult.

DOOLITTLE

740.00/481 : Telegram

The Chargé in Iran (Moose) to the Secretary of State

TEHERAN, October 1, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received October 1—12:30 p. m.]

103. Referring to the Department's circular telegram September 27, 4 p. m., in the event of a general European war there appears to be no reason to expect immediate disturbances in Persia or new difficulties except possibly of a financial or economic nature.

MOOSE

740.00111/1 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Venezuela (Gonzalez)

WASHINGTON, October 1, 1938—3 p. m.

56. Your No. 89, September 28, 1 p. m. Neutrals are at liberty under international law to restrict the entry of belligerent war vessels into their territorial waters. See for example Section 8 of the Neutrality Act of May 1, 1937.¹⁶

I would prefer not to comment at this time on the expediency or practicability of the specific measures referred to in your telegram, but should war break out I would be glad to cooperate with the Government of Venezuela by giving my advice, should it be requested, on any matters of this kind.

HULL

¹⁶ 50 Stat. 121.

760F.62/1622

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] October 3, 1938.

The Minister of Rumania called to see me this morning primarily to greet me upon my return to the Department. The Minister asked me what my impressions as to the future in Europe might be and I replied in general terms, expressing the overwhelming relief of this Government that war had been averted and my own personal hope that the statesmen of Europe would seize this opportunity to seek, in a spirit of equity and justice, the immediate solution of the other controversies existing in Europe which have for so long threatened the peace of the Continent. I said I hoped also that the Far Eastern question might prove susceptible to a peaceful solution. In that way I said I thought the world could move forward with the limitation and reduction of armaments and the placing of international economic relations on a healthy basis. The Minister said he thoroughly concurred and felt optimistic.

The Minister then asked if we had any information indicating that Hungary would seek the cession by Rumania of the Hungarian minorities within Rumania to Hungary. He indicated that there was a strip along the Rumanian-Hungarian frontier within Rumania which was populated in its large majority by Hungarians and that he believed Hungary would seek such a cession of territory. I said I had no reports whatever to such effect. The Minister said that as a result of the recent situation the relations between Yugoslavia and Rumania had become extraordinarily close and that the present relationships between the Regent of Yugoslavia and the King of Rumania were exceedingly intimate. He said the relations between Rumania and Germany were good, owing in part he believed to the fact that when he was Air Minister he had arranged for the purchase by his Government from Germany of various naval vessels and airplanes. He seemed to take the threatened Hungarian demand with equanimity and so far as I could gather had no objection to some solution.

The Minister complained somewhat bitterly about the attitude of the press in this country in continuing to inveigh against Hitler and Mussolini and said that at this time above all others a reasonable attitude on the part of the dictators could only be brought about by the press in the democracies refraining from all personal and unjustifiable attacks against them. I reminded the Minister of the liberty of the press in this country. The Minister said that insofar as his own Government was concerned the press in the United States

had been much fairer recently, due in a large part he thought to the tolerance which had been shown by his Government in recent months towards the Jews and other minorities in Rumania.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

740.00/484 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, October 3, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 6:25 p. m.]

1680. Bonnet has just informed me that the French Government will appoint an Ambassador to Rome on Friday or Saturday of this week. (Incidentally Daladier said to me today that he believed that diplomatic relations with Italy should be resumed at once). Bonnet said that the three leading candidates were François-Poncet, now Ambassador to Germany, Noel, now Ambassador in Warsaw, and François Pietri, member of the Chamber of Deputies. He insisted that the choice between them had not yet been made. Bonnet went on to say that he felt that it was going to be possible to draw Italy quickly into the French-English camp. In the late crisis Mussolini had been most uncertain as to whether or not it was in the interests of Italy to march with Hitler and French information at the moment indicated that Mussolini was ready for a compromise on Spain. He, Bonnet, was confident that the Spanish situation would be settled by mediation within 3 months.

Bonnet said that he thought the moment was also propitious for the initiation of immediate conversations with Germany on financial, economic, and disarmament questions. He hoped that if the first initiative taken by the French should be well received the United States would participate in the conversations for disarmament and the recreation of economic life which might follow.

I asked Bonnet if France would denounce the Franco-Polish alliance¹⁷ in view of Poland's recent conduct. Bonnet replied that he did not expect any change in the Franco-Polish alliance although the most that could be said for Poland's action was that Poland had warned France in advance. I asked Bonnet what would become of the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance. He replied that he did not anticipate any immediate change in this pact but that he did not know what the future might bring forth. All his information indi-

¹⁷ Treaty signed at Paris, February 19, 1921, League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. xviii, p. 11.

cated that the Soviet Union was on the verge of an intense internal crisis. Litvinov had been in Paris in hiding during the critical days of the decisions with regard to Czechoslovakia. On the morning of the expiration of the Polish ultimatum to Czechoslovakia when it appeared certain that Poland would attack Czechoslovakia he (Bonnet) had had a private and secret conversation with Litvinov and had asked Litvinov point blank whether or not if Poland should attack Czechoslovakia the Soviet Union would attack Poland in accordance with the promises made to Praha by the Soviet Government and the public announcements to this effect made by the Soviet Government. Litvinov had replied that the Soviet Government would do nothing in support of Czechoslovakia.

Bonnet was of the opinion that the success of the efforts which he hoped to be able to undertake to improve relations with Germany and Italy would depend entirely on whether or not there should now be a rebirth of national spirit in France which would permit a great strengthening of French production especially in the field of aviation. He said that he believed that the Chamber of Deputies should be dissolved at once and new elections held. He thought that it would be impossible to produce a revival in France so long as every life [*sic*] was dependent on Communist votes. Incidentally Daladier said the same thing to me today and added that he hoped the results of the elections, which he intended to bring about, would be the complete elimination of the Communists from the Government majority.

I asked Bonnet what measures he thought would be taken in the financial field and he said that he thought Marchandeu intended to suggest some kind of very limited exchange control and added that he believed Marchandeu had received the full approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Morgenthau, for the institution of a small measure of his control. I said that I had no information whatsoever to this effect and Bonnet replied that the negotiations between Marchandeu and the Secretary of the Treasury¹⁸ had been conducted by the French Financial Attaché in Washington. I asked Bonnet what this would carry and he replied that he was uncertain. Bonnet was still in a state of intense relief engendered by the disappearance of the danger of immediate war and was most optimistic with regard to the future.

BULLITT

¹⁸ See vol. II, pp. 256 ff.

740.00/486 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, October 5, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received October 5—3 p. m.]

1699. Rochat, Chief of the European Division of the Foreign Office, has just confirmed to me that François-Poncet will be the new French Ambassador to Rome and that he will proceed there very shortly.

When I congratulated Rochat upon his participation in the Munich conference he replied that congratulations were hardly in order and that there was nothing very glorious for France in what had taken place recently in Central Europe. All that could be said was that war had been prevented. France who had been on top of the heap for nearly 20 years would now have to go to work to recreate her position in Europe. The story of the future will be indicated largely by events in France over the next few months: if the country gets hold of itself, shows discipline, produces enough, it will be able to treat with Hitler on a proper basis; if it fails to do this then it may expect to be confronted with further ultimata.

WILSON

741.00/202 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 12, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received October 12—6:30 p. m.]

1167. I spent an hour and a half with Halifax¹⁹ this afternoon drinking tea in front of his fireplace while he outlined to me what I think may be the future policy of His Majesty's Government. First of all, Halifax does not believe that Hitler wants to have a war with Great Britain and he does not think there is any sense in Great Britain having a war with Hitler unless there is direct interference with England's Dominions. The future of England, as he sees it, is to strengthen herself in the air, and "by the way France should do the same," so that nobody can get fresh with them from the air. Then after that to let Hitler go ahead and do what he likes in Central

¹⁹ Viscount Halifax, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Europe. In other words, there is no question in Halifax's mind that reasonably soon Hitler will make a start for Danzig, with Polish concurrence, and then for Memel, with Lithuanian acquiescence, and even if he decides to go into Rumania it is Halifax's idea that England should mind her own business. He contends again that England would never have got into the Czechoslovak situation if it had not been for France. Therefore, he sees the future of England lies in her maintaining her relations in the Mediterranean, keeping friendly with Portugal, he hopes Spain, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Palestine—he almost burnt himself drinking his tea when he mentioned the latter—plus England's connections in the Red Sea, fostering the Dominion connections, and staying very friendly with the United States, and then, as far as everything else is concerned, Hitler can do the best he can for himself. Halifax said they have information from Mussolini that he regards the pact with England as especially important and that is why he is so anxious to get it closed up but with Germany right on his border, he is not going to get very fresh with Hitler unless he knows his allies, whether they be England or anybody else, are going to be strong enough to help him. I asked him in that event what are the possibilities of Germany and Russia getting together. He said he did not think it likely under Hitler but he thought that the German Army might some day think it was a good move and for that reason England was going to try and keep as friendly as she could with Russia. He thinks that the world will recognize that air battles and air victories will never be decisive and that countries will protect themselves with all sorts of defenses like the Maginot line.

He also emphasized what the Prime Minister told me about Hitler's personality; that he was uncouth and certainly not the kind of fellow one would like to go around the world with on a two-wheeled bicycle. Mussolini, on the contrary, he felt, was quite a different type.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1750

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

No. 391 Political

GENEVA, October 12, 1938.

[Received October 22.]

SIR: As of possible interest to the Department, I have the honor to submit a summary of the views and impressions prevailing at Geneva concerning the general European situation following on the Munich Agreement.²⁰

²⁰ Signed at Munich, September 29, 1938, between Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy, *German Documents, 1918-1945*, ser. D, vol. II, p. 1014.

In attempting to sum up opinion in Geneva in regard to the present European situation immediately following the Munich Agreement, one is handicapped by the fact that opinion here is generally based upon widely varying guesses or interpretations of a number of unknown (at least in Geneva) factors. Among the factors upon which there is no authentic information available may be mentioned: (1) the actual amount of resistance passive or otherwise encountered by Hitler from the Reichswehr or from the German people when he was poised upon the edge of an outbreak of hostilities in Central Europe; (2) how exact was the report of widespread unrest in Italy and what credence may be put in such reports as the one which was current here to the effect that the King had refused to sign an Italian mobilization order; (3) is England as weak militarily as many reports would indicate; (4) how much effective military assistance was Russia willing or able to give in the event of French hostilities with Germany; and (5) was it because France was unable to count on immediately effective aid from Russia and England that she was forced, in spite of the opposition of certain members of the Cabinet and of a section of French public opinion, to desert Czechoslovakia and thus jeopardize the whole system of collective security and the network of collective alliances, including the one with Russia, which she had built up with such care since 1918. Another question which is "guessed at" from various angles is whether the four statesmen in Munich agreed upon or even discussed a basis for a general European settlement which would lead eventually to general disarmament and European economic and political appeasement, or if the conversations were confined only to the immediate matter at issue.

The first universal reaction here following the Munich Agreement was one of tremendous relief that war had been averted at a time when the situation was generally considered as hopeless. Following this first surge of relief there has now become apparent a tendency more carefully to evaluate the consequences of the Agreement.

Practically all observers agree that at the time of the Munich meeting things had gone so far that unless France and Great Britain were prepared to meet the substance of Germany's latest demands, war was inevitable. Faced with this situation and with an issue that was a "bad cause" particularly in Great Britain, it is generally thought that an even greater sacrifice of Czechoslovakia was the only possible way out in the circumstances. In speaking of the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia as a sacrifice, it is pointed out that in spite of all denials to the contrary, the German occupation of Czechoslovakia in some cases goes even further than the Godesberg line set out in the "unacceptable" German ultimatum and that the only German concessions from the Godesberg ultimatum that can be ascertained are: (1)

a delay in the occupation of the areas demanded; and (2) permission to the Czechs to remove some of their movable property from the occupied areas. It is felt that from whatever direction the results of the Munich Agreement are viewed, they can only be assessed as a personal triumph for Hitler, a diplomatic defeat for France and Great Britain, and a great step forward for a Germany which is expanding so fast that no one can foresee the limits of this movement or when or where the next blow will fall.

As to events leading to the Munich Agreement, there are wide divergences of views as to whether or not a firm attitude on the part of France and particularly of Great Britain for even the last six months, as opposed to Mr. Chamberlain's policy of appeasement by negotiation beginning especially with the Anglo-Italian Agreement, would not have prevented Hitler from ever pushing things to the point that war or a "backdown" were the only alternatives left. There is even wider divergence as to what the policies of the democracies of Europe will be in the future.

With regard to the first point, most observers feel that neither Hitler nor the German people wanted war and that if the danger of war could have been clearly and forcefully brought home to Hitler before he had gone so far that a retreat was difficult if not impossible, he would never have brought matters to the crucial point. Many observers of this school of thought believe also that in the event France and Great Britain were not prepared to fight for the integrity of Czechoslovakia, they should have made this clear to the Czechs well in advance of the crisis, whereupon the Czechs would have been in a position to make their own terms directly with Germany, with the probability that they would have been able to reach a much less drastic settlement.

As regards the second point, some feel that the Munich Agreement is the forerunner of an attempt on the part of Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany progressively to settle all of the major causes of friction in Europe and that from now on a new era, permeated with the "spirit of Munich", is about to dawn. These observers point to the statement signed by Hitler and Chamberlain at Munich²¹ following the signature of the Agreement itself; to the renewed conversations between France and Italy and the appointment of a French Ambassador to Rome; to the probability that the Anglo-Italian Agreement will go into effect following a partial withdrawal of Italian volunteers from Spain; to Chamberlain's speeches indicating that the Munich Agreement is only the beginning of a move for some general European settlement; to signs that mediation in Spain may be be-

²¹ September 30, 1938; *German Documents, 1918-1945*, ser. D, vol. II, p. 1017.

coming more and more possible; to the general opposition to war on the part of all peoples concerned, including the Germans and Italians; and finally they emphasize the important fact that for the first time since 1918 the states who "have" have been shocked into the realization that the only way to avoid war is to settle by speedy and friendly negotiations the just demands of the states that "have not".

Another group of observers regard the situation following the Munich Agreement as at best only a temporary *détente*. When they speak of Hitler's assurances that with the acquisition of the Sudeten area in Czechoslovakia his last territorial ambition in Europe is satisfied, they enumerate the many previous occasions upon which Hitler or one of his lieutenants had given similar assurances after having carried out some new and dangerous policy which resulted in a further expansion of the influence or prestige of the German Reich. They point to the recent German loan to Turkey, the series of economic conversations in the Balkans and Hitler's Sarrebrück speech as indications that he will pursue the same policy in the future as in the past and say that if France and Great Britain will not fight for Czechoslovakia there is a strongly decreasing probability that they would fight for Memel for example or for Danzig or the Polish Corridor, or for Rumanian oil and wheat or even for the Ukraine, although this last might bring on a conflict with Russia with incalculable consequences. Before Czechoslovakia was dismembered, they say, France and Great Britain had every chance of winning a long war. Without Czechoslovakia, with Russia retiring more and more from European affairs and with the small states in Central Europe coming increasingly under German political and economic domination, when some issue immediately vital to Great Britain and France does arise, will they not find that the odds have decisively turned in favor of Germany even in a long war? This group feel that the odds are in favor of the rapid expansion of German influence and strength and that as a result, Germany will become the dominant power on the Continent. France, bereft of her allies in Central and Eastern Europe and more and more divorced from Russia, will rapidly sink to a third-class power, while Great Britain, forced to acknowledge German supremacy on the Continent, will have to make the best deal possible under the circumstances and await the slow forming of the inevitable balance of power which has historically followed the overexpansion of any one power or group of powers in Europe. As a further indication against the probability that any general settlement by negotiation is possible under the present circumstances, these observers also emphasize the continued and feverish plans for rearmament not only in Germany, but also in France and Great Britain. They feel that unless these powers are able to

agree to stop pouring billions of dollars annually into rearmament, no settlement with any hope of permanent success is possible. This type of opinion sees only few factors as a possible barrier to the rapid expansion of German power to an almost unlimited extent, the most likely being the possibility that Italy may be "bought out" of the axis. In this case, German expansion not only might be slowed down but even definitely checked. Observers point to Hitler's continued references to his great, good and only true friend, Mussolini, as an effort to keep Italy in line until something can be found to give her an acceptable pound of flesh in return for services rendered and disappointments suffered in the service of the axis.

As regards Russia, qualified observers here regard one of three alternatives possible: (a) that Russia will withdraw almost entirely from European affairs and will devote herself increasingly toward the Far East; (b) that a Russo-German alliance, the result long dreaded by France, will take place; or (c) some of this group believe that Hitler's final aim is to attack Russia when he feels secure enough in the West to do so in the belief that German efficiency and organization will be more than a match for Russian numbers and resources.

Italy's position following the Munich Agreement is the subject of considerable speculation. The majority of people feel that Italy has received very little and even that there is little that Hitler can give her that will satisfy her for her recent disappointments. Mussolini has undoubtedly obtained much personal prestige for his part in the Munich arrangement, but certain observers feel that with increasing unrest and hardship in Italy, Mussolini must either receive something very substantial from Hitler, or must gradually break away from the axis in the hope of substantial financial assistance from Great Britain and possibly France.

With regard to Spain, it is generally thought here that either mediation will become possible once foreign volunteers can be withdrawn from both sides, or that some means will be found so to strengthen the Nationalists that they can bring the present war to a speedy and successful conclusion.

In regard to the foregoing views, while there are no indications here as to what Germany's next move will be, it is presumed that a number of specific questions will be dealt with before even discussions of a general settlement will be possible. Should the situation develop so far as to permit such discussions, however, it is believed here that early in any negotiations toward a European settlement, Great Britain and France will be called upon to make important concessions to Germany and Italy, the most likely of which appears to be colonies. In return for such concessions, Great Britain and France could ask for (1) a return of Germany and Italy to the Geneva system; (2) a limi-

tation and eventual reduction of armaments; (3) a return of Germany and Italy to normal economic relations with the rest of the world. A return of Germany and Italy to Geneva would appear to be out of the question for the present and even if possible, would probably be meaningless unless it were followed by a substantial reduction of armaments. Many observers here believe that Chamberlain's objective is to secure a limitation and reduction of armaments and it is pointed out that the strain on Germany and Italy of their present rate of armaments is becoming serious. On the other hand, it is believed that Germany would make any agreement concerning armaments contingent upon similar action by Russia, while Russia in turn would not agree to any reduction or even limitation so long as the present situation in the Far East continues. Any immediate hopes for substantial action in the field of disarmament would therefore appear to be very dim. Finally, a great many observers believe that Germany will not reverse her policy and endeavor to re-establish normal economic relations with the rest of the world, as the autarchical process has already been carried too far, and in view of the recent increase of German economic power, it offers too great a promise for success for Germany to make the many sacrifices and dangerous readjustments which would be involved in a return to normal economy. It is believed, however, that there is some hope of persuading Italy to adopt this course. If a settlement of the Spanish question can be obtained, it is believed that Italy could gradually be brought into the European economic system. It is pointed out that Italy obviously does not have the resources for successfully developing a closed economy. As the poorer of the two countries of the axis, the strain of the present armaments program coupled with the enormous expenditure on the Ethiopian campaign has placed Italy in a desperate position. It is not thought, however, that the Rome-Berlin axis would be openly broken, but rather that Italy would gradually become a partner with France and Great Britain in opposition to German economic expansion in the Balkans. The recent German loan to Turkey is said to have caused great concern in Italy and there would appear to be little prospect of Germany's conceding the exploitation of any substantial portion of the Balkan area to Italy. Italy's rôle for some time is seen here as likely to be that played by Mussolini at Munich, namely, while ostensibly maintaining the Rome-Berlin axis, Italy will endeavor to act as mediator between France and Great Britain on the one hand, and Germany on the other, and will endeavor to collect from both sides for any agreements achieved. This is far from a recreation of the Stresa front, but it is believed here that it offers some hope of keeping the expansion of German power within certain limits.

For my own part, while it is difficult and perhaps somewhat dangerous to make predictions regarding a situation which is continuing to develop so rapidly, I am inclined to the opinion that under existing conditions the Munich settlement can only lead to a temporary *détente*, and that we may expect a recurring series of crises within the relatively near future which may or not lead to war in Europe. Many factors may unexpectedly affect or even completely change the existing situation. There are, for instance, the personal factors affecting both Hitler and Mussolini, who after all may well disregard what public opinion exists in Italy and Germany and be governed entirely by personal ambitions, leading their countries into courses they would not follow if the people were free to decide, courses contrary even to the national interests. Among these factors I have already discussed the views held here concerning the possibility of detaching Italy from the axis. Another uncertain factor of fundamental importance is Russia and the future relations of Russia with other states of Europe, particularly Poland. Due to fear of Bolshevik power and influence on the part of important elements of public opinion in Western Europe, in the Balkans, and in countries bordering on Russia, the latter has not played the rôle in the European balance of power which that country would have played under other conditions. The Balkan countries which in normal circumstances would have been expected to look to Russia for protection against Germany have, through an aversion to the Soviet régime, been loath to establish intimate relations with that country. The right, and even the liberal elements in England and France, not only have been uncertain of Russian fidelity, but also have been averse to soliciting her assistance under any circumstances. This has tended to paralyze these countries in any attempt to take a strong stand against Germany. Naturally any development which brought about a change in this attitude toward Russia might radically alter the entire international situation. In this connection, the importance of Polish-Russian relations is difficult to overestimate. A *rapprochement* between Poland and Russia, either through German pressure on Poland, a change of government in Poland, or an evolution of the régime in Russia, would likewise greatly modify the political and military situation. At the moment, therefore, the developing international situation can only be viewed with guarded pessimism, but always with the hope that Germany's legitimate aspirations may be gradually and peacefully satisfied by negotiation and that a strong and determined policy on the part of Great Britain and France, a policy made absolutely clear before other crises occur, may yet serve to prevent demands so exorbitant that even a world war is considered preferable to their acceptance.

Respectfully yours,

HOWARD BUCKNELL, JR.

740.00/491

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] October 14, 1938.

The Ambassador of Poland called on his own request. He had just returned from Warsaw. He said that conditions in Europe were serious and uncertain in more ways than one; that he thought his Government had come out of the situation with increased prestige. He said nothing about how this was accomplished. Our conversation was interrupted before I had a chance to comment on these phases. The Ambassador said he would be glad to return during the coming week and complete his conversation with me.²² I inquired what he knew about just when Hitler decided that he could announce his ultimatum. He replied that his own Foreign Minister Beck had informed him that Hitler decided during the middle of September he could get what territory he wanted without fighting for it. I then inquired whether, in the judgment of the Ambassador, Hitler would be content to carry out his announcement that he wanted no more territory. The Ambassador replied that he did not believe a word of it. I inquired as to whether the Polish Government was apprehensive about the future of the Corridor and Danzig. He replied that Danzig was 80% German; that it had self-government in virtually every desirable sense and, in his opinion, the German Government would not be disposed to interfere with this situation.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

751.62/490 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, October 21, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received October 21—5:19 p. m.]

1798. Bonnet told me this morning that when François-Poncet went to Berchtesgaden to say goodbye to Hitler, the latter without making any definite proposal or going into details indicated clearly his desire to bring about an improvement in Franco-German relations. I asked if there was a possibility of Franco-German declaration mutually renouncing war along the lines of the Chamberlain-Hitler declaration at Munich. Bonnet said that this was "in the air" but that there was absolutely nothing definite as yet. He expects Hitler to make definite proposals later. He said that the French Government for its part would not neglect any opportunity to improve relations with Germany and he had genuine hopes that something might be

²² See memorandum of November 3, p. 97.

accomplished. He believes that France can make greater progress in this direction with Germany than with Italy. Incidentally he told me that the agreement of the German Government for Coulondre as French Ambassador at Berlin had been received this morning.

Bonnet said that contrary to what is generally believed Hitler's position had not been strengthened in Germany by his success in the recent crisis. I expressed some skepticism. Bonnet insisted, however, that the German people were aware of how closely they had been led to the brink of war and that their disapproval of the risks involved in Hitler's policy outweighed satisfaction at the results obtained. He stated that it might be difficult for Hitler to embark the German people on another risky adventure and that Hitler realized this.

Bonnet said that France had lived too long shut off from normal contact with Germany, Italy and Spain. It is essential for France to reestablish reasonable relations with these countries and the Munich Agreement now affords an opportunity to make the effort. He said that of course to talk effectively with Hitler, it will be necessary for France to have given unmistakable proof that she has learned her lesson from the recent crisis and has gone to work with a will to improve the economy and finances of the country and strengthen armaments. I asked whether this effort had really gotten under way as yet. Bonnet said that he believed so. Much will, of course, depend upon the nature of the decree laws. Bonnet said that frankly he knew very little of what Daladier intended to include in these decree laws (another member of the Cabinet remarked to me at luncheon today that Daladier had evidently been impressed by Hitler's method of working because since returning from Munich Daladier had shut himself up about as completely as Hitler is accustomed to do at Berchtesgaden and had not consulted members of the Cabinet regarding the preparation of the decree laws).

I asked Bonnet if he thought there was a possibility of successful mediation in Spain. He said that with the withdrawal of Italian troops which has already taken place and with further withdrawals expected it should be possible to declare the Anglo-Italian agreement in effect next month. Under these conditions he believes that there will be a potential opportunity for mediation. He stated that the French Government is not considering sending a diplomatic agent to Burgos at this time.

Bonnet said that he had no idea how the dispute concerning the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia would be settled. He said that Beck had gone to Rumania with the definite purpose of obtaining Rumanian consent to the establishment of a common frontier between Poland and Hungary. The Rumanian Government had informed the

French Government that they had disapproved this proposal. Bonnet said that as far as he knew direct diplomatic negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia had not yet been resumed. He said that delay, of course, made Imrédy's²³ position increasingly more difficult.

Speaking of the Far East Bonnet stated that while the Japanese invasion of South China²⁴ was a cause for worry he believed that the danger was much greater for the British with Hong Kong than for the French with Indo-China.

He remarked that nothing could be done regarding this situation without the active cooperation of the United States and added that he intended to have Saint-Quentin discuss the matter with Secretary of State.

I asked Bonnet about the domestic situation. He said that there will be no immediate dissolution of the Chamber. Daladier will wait to see the effect produced by the decree laws. If the effect is favorable and he believes that he can obtain a further grant of full powers then the idea of new elections will be abandoned. If on the other hand there should be opposition to the decree laws and it should appear that there would be difficulty in obtaining further full powers from the present Chamber then Daladier might demand dissolution and go to the country on his program for rehabilitating France.

WILSON

740.00/501 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 28, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received October 28—3:34 p. m.]

1260. I have just had a talk with Halifax and he showed me the confidential report that Bonnet had given to Phipps²⁵ on François-Poncet's talk with Hitler.^{25a} Bonnet told Phipps that nobody in France had seen it except himself, Daladier and the President.²⁶ It had not been circulated at the Quai d'Orsay and Halifax told me he had shown it only to the Prime Minister and not to the Cabinet. It is very interesting in that there is no mention of Hitler's denouncing the British naval agreement²⁷ which Hugh Wilson reported as having

²³ Bela de Imrédy, Hungarian Prime Minister.

²⁴ See vol. III, pp. 273 ff.

²⁵ Sir Eric Phipps, British Ambassador to France.

^{25a} For further documentation on François-Poncet's talk with Hitler, see *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, 3d ser. vol. III, pp. 244-245; 618-619.

²⁶ Albert Lebrun.

²⁷ June 18, 1935; see *Foreign Relations, 1935*, vol. I, pp. 162 ff.

been told him by the French Counselor, but it is very clear that evidently a lot of things were said about which they neglected to advise Hugh. First of all, Hitler said that he wanted to make a Franco-German agreement to set out definitely the French borders against which there never would be any aggression. He wanted to make a Franco-Anglo-German agreement setting out the Belgian borders. He wanted to have a meeting of economic experts to discuss trade and finance. He assured the French that he wants nothing in Spain, although he expects Franco to win and feels that his victory is much more to France's advantage than the opposition's victory. He is very bitter at the attack made on him in the British Parliament and feels that after all Munich has not accomplished very much. He did not request that the Franco-Russian agreement be called off. He felt that the British and French had made a mistake in guaranteeing the Czechoslovak borders without knowing what the borders were to be. He was disgusted with the Polish and Hungarian demands against the Czechs but he prided himself on the fact that he had kept a four power meeting from being called, which would have added fuel to an already smouldering fire because he and Mussolini would have had to side with the Poles and Hungarians and the French and English with the Czechs and this was something he did not want to happen. He is for limitation in the use of bombers and is perfectly willing to make an agreement against open town bombing. He would be agreeable to reasonable limitation of arms at once. On the question of colonies he said that, as he had already said publicly, there was no hurry; a matter of 3 or 4 years would be satisfactory. He asked Poncet to give these statements to the French and the English and said he would give them to the Italians.

Halifax also discussed the question of colonies with me. He said they are in a turmoil about the possibility of giving up the colonies. If they give them up and put the missionaries and the anti-Germans and different classes of people who are unfriendly to Germany back into the hands of the Germans, they will have another mess on their hands. I judge from what he said that they have no great objection to turning back colonies to the Germans, but the basis on which to do it is disturbing them very much. One plan has been that they will put up to the Germans that it be left to arbitration and there is nobody they believe could arbitrate except the President. Halifax admits that it is a rotten job for the man who takes it and that he personally would not like any part of it. Then, as to whether they would give the east or west part of Africa and they are also concerned about the road to India and Australia, particularly if trouble should ever crop up with Mussolini and lose the Mediterranean. Halifax told me that

when he visited Hitler, the latter told him he considered the granting of colonies to Germany would serve as a hostage to future peace, because as long as the Anglo-German naval treaty was in effect, they would never have strength enough to be serious contenders in such a far off place.

Incidentally at Berchtesgaden Hitler insinuated to Chamberlain a similar condition might possibly arise that would make it necessary for him to renounce the naval treaty, but Chamberlain turned it aside and started to talk about something else.

Halifax enjoined me very carefully to ensure that my message was only seen by the President and Secretary.

KENNEDY

740.00/508

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] November 3, 1938.

The Ambassador of Poland came in at his own request, his previous call having been interrupted.²⁸ He had nothing specially in mind except to express very deep concern about the Jewish problem in his country and a desire to talk in some detail with Mr. Messersmith²⁹ in regard to it and kindred phases. He spoke generally about the European situation, saying that his country came out of the recent crisis with more prestige than some of the others. This was a repetition of what he had said in the beginning. He was desirous that his country and Hungary might have a common boundary, as indicated by the press reports and for the reasons therein set forth. I remarked that it appeared his Government would not get that, at least for the present. He stated that he considered Russia as increasingly less dangerous, and, in fact, he minimized Russia's military importance more than at any time heretofore. He thought that while Germany would seek to dominate most of the other smaller countries in that area, she would not undertake seriously to impose upon Poland because she knew that Poland would be more disposed to fight than any other country, even Czechoslovakia, and would be more capable of fighting than Czechoslovakia. He made some inquiry about my appraisal of the Munich situation. I promptly replied that this Government has kept entirely aloof from every phase of the questions involved in the recent crisis, including their final consideration at Munich; that this Government has, therefore, not undertaken to com-

²⁸ See memorandum of October 14, p. 93.

²⁹ George S. Messersmith, Assistant Secretary of State.

mend or criticize any other government in connection with the manner in which it was dealing with such questions; that it was my individual view that the big fact brought out relating to the crisis was the lack of adequate military preparations by some of the countries immediately concerned; that in the event of such adequate preparations there would have been less liability of a crisis of an acute or dangerous nature. I finally added that much or most of the matters of difference in that crisis were of a political nature with which this Government does not involve itself. The Ambassador said he agreed entirely with the attitude of the Government as I had expressed it.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

751.62/495 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, November 10, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 7:46 p. m.]

1899. Bonnet said to me at luncheon today that he believed it should be possible before long to arrive at an agreement with the German Government regarding nonaggression and consultation on all questions which might divide the two countries. He said that he was not pressing the German Government on this matter because if they thought the French Government was too eager for such an agreement they would of course raise their price. For the moment he is not considering discussions with Germany on other matters believing that if an agreement could be announced on nonaggression and consultation this would have an excellent effect on the international situation.

He said that many people were skeptical of the value of a nonaggression declaration with Germany citing the numerous treaty violations by the latter. He on the contrary believes that such an agreement would be of positive value. While Germany has violated the Treaty of Versailles and other agreements growing out of that treaty she has sought to justify such action on the ground that Versailles had been imposed upon her. Bonnet professes to believe that it would be a different matter with an agreement now entered into freely by a Germany which had cast off the injustices of Versailles. He believes, moreover, that a nonaggression agreement would be of value to France because if it should be violated by Germany such violation would at once bring world opinion to France's side.

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WILSON

740.00/516 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, November 22, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received November 22—5:38 p. m.]

1347. I just saw Halifax to check up on what is going on. He had just finished talking with the author of the non-intervention report who reports that Franco will not agree to the non-intervention plan unless he receives belligerent rights. Halifax says that the Prime Minister has decided that here in England it is impossible to make the concession and that therefore things look very bad in Spain. If Mussolini would play ball they might be able to work something out but they are not at all hopeful and they are going to take this up with the French tomorrow but they believe that the final decision will be that the war goes on as is—no intervention.

On the German situation their Government reports and also their secret service reports give some hope that the attacks on the Jews is to take away attention from a rather pressing undercurrent of feeling about which Goering and Hitler are very uncomfortable. Halifax says of course with the storm troopers working the way they are and arresting everybody who might possibly be a sounding board for a disgruntled opinion they failed to see how anything can work out of it. He said it is his own speculation but I think it is a secret service report that Hitler has made up his mind to push on to the Ukraine at the first turn of spring. There is unquestionably amongst the authorities a very bitter hatred starting against Great Britain.

As to the Japanese, while they are thinking of what is to be said to the Japanese regarding the Yangtze River, he told me, off the record, that they would do whatever the United States would do but they would not take the lead in any plan. In other words, he feels that if the United States and England decide upon economic difficulties in the way, the situation might adjust itself, but Great Britain definitely will not do anything unless America tells them what they propose to do.

Regarding Palestine, he believes that nothing short of the Archangel can bring any order out of this chaos. He had a conference today on the subject and it is MacDonald's ³⁰ plan to first talk with the Jews and then with the Arabs and then bring them together. Halifax and MacDonald have been advised by their representatives that the only basis on which the Arabs will settle is restricted immigration

³⁰ Malcolm MacDonald, British Secretary of State for the Colonies, and for Dominion Affairs.

for the Jews and possibly a separate Arab state and if not an Arab state, a partition for the Arabs ruled by Jews, Arabs, and the British Government and this prospect, says Halifax, makes him ill.

As far as the French are concerned, the Franco-German agreement³¹ was almost ready for signature when either the Germans pulled back a little or the French decided to hold it for a more auspicious time for launching, but, at any rate, it is held up. Halifax said he has told Bonnet by all means to go ahead and sign the agreement. When Bonnet said that a great many people felt that if the French signed it it might mean that the English and French were not quite so enthusiastic about each other, Halifax told him that he would begin to worry about the French when the French began to worry about the English. As far as he could see they were both tied together, whether they liked it or not, and he was not at all upset for fear that the French would leave the English tie up and go with the Germans.

He said that the main reason for the trip was for the sake of appearance, to ginger up the French because they were in a very low state, and third to bring pressure on them to buy airplanes; this is the most important. On the whole the prospect, everywhere he looks, including his own political situation here, is very dull and drab.

I do not know just what information you need to fill in any impressions you have there about these situations but if there is anything in particular that you are missing from here, if you will cable me, I will try to get it on his return from France.

KENNEDY

751.62/499 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, November 23, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received November 23—3 p. m.]

1982. I have just had read to me at the Foreign Office the text of the declaration which has been agreed upon between the French and German Governments.³²

It is in three paragraphs the first being in the nature of a preamble expressing interest in the maintenance of peaceful and neighborly relations between the two Governments. In the second paragraph the declaration is made that as between the two countries there is now no longer any question of a territorial character and the two countries solemnly recognize that the frontiers between them as they exist today

³¹ See telegram No. 1982, November 23, 5 p. m., from the Chargé in France, *infra*.

³² Signed December 6, 1938, *German Documents, 1918-1945*, ser. D, vol. IV, p. 470.

are definitive. In the third paragraph the two Governments oblige themselves under reservation of their particular relations with third countries to concert on all questions interesting the two countries and to consult together if the further development of these questions could lead to internal difficulties.

The agreement takes the form of a declaration between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of France and Germany.

Bonnet is seeing the press at 6:30 this afternoon after having met Chamberlain and Halifax on their arrival in Paris and he will presumably furnish certain details regarding the declaration to the correspondents. I am informed, however, that the text will not be published for the time being and it is therefore requested that the details concerning the declaration as given above be regarded as strictly confidential.

I am also told in confidence that Ribbentrop will probably come to Paris next Tuesday, November 29, for the purpose of signing the declaration at which time the text would be made public.

WILSON

741.51/312 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, November 25, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 7:10 p. m.]

1994. I saw Bonnet this afternoon. He said that he was satisfied with the talks with the British yesterday. There had been complete agreement on "most" of the matters discussed.

He said that they had agreed to try to do something helpful for the political refugees from Germany.³³ The idea first is to have a meeting in Holland between Rublee³⁴ and a representative of the German Government with representatives of the British and French Governments present. Bonnet said that the French Government would probably have a proposal to make to our Government within a few days on this subject.

Bonnet talked at length regarding the Franco-German declaration. He said that complete agreement had been reached between the German and French Governments concerning the declaration on November 7 and it had then been intended to announce it about November 10. The shooting of vom Rath³⁵ and the subsequent persecution of the

³³ See pp. 758 ff.

³⁴ George Rublee, Director of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees.

³⁵ See last paragraph of telegram No. 601, November 8, 6 p. m., p. 815.

Jews in Germany had made it necessary to defer the announcement. Bonnet said that he hoped that the true significance of this agreement would be understood in the United States. It, of course, did not mean that France was turning away from the democracies. It simply meant that Hitler liberated from the *diktat* of Versailles was of his own free will pledging himself to renounce any claim to Alsace-Lorraine and to respect the French frontiers. It would be absurd for France to refuse such an offer. Bonnet said that he was now convinced that France had no reason to fear an attack from Germany. Making all allowances for the fact that Hitler had violated undertakings before and might do so again he would certainly not have agreed to this declaration if he had had any intention of attacking France in the near future. The agreement would, of course, be known to the public in Germany; it stated that there were no questions in dispute between Germany and France; it would therefore be very difficult for Hitler to convince the German people who had shown uneasiness over the imminence of war last September that some new question had arisen which would warrant making war on France.

Bonnet said that in negotiating for the declaration he had persuaded the Germans to drop two important points which they had raised. One was the matter of colonies: France had given no promise or assurance whatsoever on the colonial matter. The second point concerned France's alliances with other countries: this position had been protected by the reservation in the declaration of special relations with third countries.

Bonnet said that there were people in France who urged him to have no relations with Italy because Italy was Fascist; to have no relations with Germany because of Hitler; to have no relations with the Burgos Government because of Franco; and to limit France's friends to Red Spain, Mexico, and Soviet Russia. Bonnet said that it was impossible for the French Government to carry out a foreign policy on such principles; that it was necessary to get rid of ideological prejudices and in the world as it exists today employ the type of diplomacy which seeks to have as useful relations as possible with every country and to derive from those relations the maximum of benefit for one's own country.

Bonnet said that it was absurd to pretend that the Franco-German declaration had irritated the British. He had kept the British fully informed and on November 7, the date the Germans agreed, he had notified Phipps thereof. He said that Chamberlain had assured him personally that he was greatly pleased over the declaration as an indication that France and Germany were coming to better terms.

I remarked that the impression that the British might have been irritated perhaps arose from the circumstance that the announcement

had been made hastily while the British were en route to Paris. Bonnet's only reply to this was that when Coulondre presented his letters to Hitler on November 22 he inquired when signature of the declaration could take place; Hitler replied that Ribbentrop could go to Paris any time between November 28 and December 5 and expressed the wish that the earlier it was done the better.

Bonnet said that it had been a question in his mind whether Ribbentrop should come to Paris or whether he, Bonnet, should go to Berlin for the signature. Since Hitler, however, desired that Ribbentrop should come to Paris he saw no reason why the French Government should decline to receive the visit of a German Foreign Minister who wished to sign an agreement in Paris renouncing any claim on Alsace-Lorraine. I remarked that there might be some disagreeable incidents during Ribbentrop's visit. Bonnet said that this was true but he hoped nothing would happen.

Bonnet said that he had discussed with the British the question of guaranteeing the new Czech frontiers. It had been decided to inquire of the Czechoslovak Government exactly what countries they desired to join in the guarantee. It was for Czechoslovakia to say for instance whether Russia should be included.

I inquired regarding discussion of national defense matters with the British. Bonnet replied that cooperation in defense had been agreed upon between Great Britain and France after the occupation of the Rhineland,³⁶ and particularly in recent months there had been demand for closest contact maintained between the two Governments in this matter. In the discussions yesterday it had been a case of reviewing plans and extending them. I asked if he believes that the British might establish a ministry of supply. He replied that he did not believe so.

I inquired whether the signature of the declaration with Germany might result in slowing up plans for French rearmament. Bonnet said that it would have no effect whatsoever in this field and that the British and French were determined to pursue their effort at rearmament. I asked if there had been any discussion with the Germans regarding limitation of air armaments. Bonnet replied that there had been nothing on this point since Hitler mentioned it to François-Poncet at their last meeting. Bonnet said, however, that he knew the Germans had this in mind and that it might well come up later as a second step after Munich. He believed, however, that there would be no air limitation until France had achieved in large measure her program of rearmament.

I asked if in fact the French Government was determined to make a great effort for air rearmament despite the financial sacrifices required.

³⁶ March 7, 1936; see *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, pp. 180 ff.

Bonnet replied that the French Government was in fact determined to do this.

Referring to the Far East Bonnet said that the French and British had agreed to take the same position which the United States had adopted in relation to the Japanese declaration that a new situation had arisen in the Far East. I pressed Bonnet to be more explicit on this point but he was vague and gave me the impression of not having gone into it thoroughly. He added that the British and French had agreed to instruct their ambassadors to discuss further with the State Department questions concerning the Far East; he mentioned specifically the Yangtze navigation problem.³⁷

Regarding Spain Bonnet said that it had been agreed with the British that there could be no question of granting belligerent rights to Franco at present and that the provisions of the London Committee's plan should be followed in this matter. I referred to his earlier remark regarding relations with Burgos and asked if the French Government was planning to send a representative there. Bonnet said that he would like to do so and the British would like to have him do so but no decision in this sense could be taken for the time being.

WILSON

751.62/500 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, November 26, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received November 26—10:30 a. m.]

2001. Personal for the Under Secretary. Reference to my telegram No. 1994, November 25, 7 p. m. Bonnet asked me to send you a personal word of his hope that you would understand and sympathize with the reasons which moved him to conclude the declaration with Germany.

WILSON

740.00/520 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, November 26, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received 7:05 p. m.]

2003. I had a conversation this morning with the British Ambassador regarding the Chamberlain visit.

On the Jewish refugee problem he said that the British had informed the French that they were admitting a number of these refugees in

³⁷ See vol. iv, pp. 143 ff.

England and in Australia but they were not advertising the fact in order to avoid any growth of anti-Semitic feeling in those countries. They also informed the French of plans to establish refugees in British Guiana and Tanganyika. They requested the French to urge Ribbentrop when he visits Paris to cooperate in this matter by allowing the refugees to take out a larger percentage of their funds. The British suggested that once the billion mark fine³⁸ had been paid the balance of Jewish money in Germany might be used as a pool to facilitate the emigration of refugees.

Regarding the Far East Phipps said that everyone had agreed that the situation was extremely gloomy. There was agreement to seek the closest cooperation with the United States in an effort to protect rights in China.

The Ambassador said that the discussions on national defense problems had been very important. The British had urged the French to increase their production of airplanes and had been assured that next spring would see a substantial improvement in French production. The French had informed the British that they were planning to purchase 1,500 airplanes in the United States³⁹ to fill the gap before French production reaches the desired rate. Sir Kingsley Wood the British Air Minister will be in Paris on December 2 and Phipps is arranging a small dinner that night for him to meet La Chambre and General Vuillemin to discuss coordination of airplane production.

I inquired whether England would establish a national register for service in time of war. Phipps said that he believed this would be done. There was no possibility, however, of conscription. Great Britain was making a tremendous effort to maintain the fleet and to build up the air force and it would be impossible to extend this effort at the same time to universal service in the land army.

The Ambassador said that the British were genuinely pleased that the French had consented to this agreement with the Germans. Chamberlain had expressed this view to him personally. The Ambassador said that the atrocious treatment of Jews in Germany had of course shocked opinion in England as it had in America and it had slowed up the effort at appeasement with Germany. When a country, however, had determined upon a definite line of foreign policy as the French had there was nothing to do but to go ahead with it. He said that it seemed clear that the German tactics were to try to dissociate France from Great Britain. The maneuver, however, was too apparent and there was no possibility of it succeeding.

Regarding Spain the Ambassador said that it had been agreed that the British would request Mussolini to urge Franco to agree

³⁸ Assessed against the Jews in Germany in retaliation for the killing of Ernst vom Rath.

³⁹ See vol. II, pp. 297 ff.

to a cessation of hostilities. It was perhaps a forlorn hope but the British intended to try. He said that it had been agreed that there would be no departure from the London plan as regards belligerent rights.

The British had said to the French that when King Carol of Rumania was in London he had urged that the British Legation in Rumania be raised to the rank of an embassy. The British told the French that they knew the latter had received a similar request but hoped the French would postpone action. The French had replied, however, that they understood that the Germans intended to raise their legation in Rumania to an embassy very soon; the French did not wish to be placed in the position of following the Germans, although they desired to accredit an ambassador to Rumania at an early date. The British agreed that under these circumstances the French should go ahead.

The British had asked the French what the position would be under the Franco-Soviet pact in case there should be an uprising in the Ukraine fomented by Germany. The French had replied that they would not feel called upon to take any action whatsoever. The Franco-Soviet pact would apply only in the case of overt German aggression against the frontiers of Russia. The Ambassador said that the British had believed that this would be the French position but they were glad to have it stated definitely.

WILSON

761.62/483 : Telegram

The Minister in Rumania (Gunther) to the Secretary of State

BUCHAREST, November 30, 1938—12 p. m.

[Received November 30—6:50 p. m.]

141. Dr. M. W. Fodor, Central European correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News* tells me that he feels satisfied that a non-aggression pact has recently been privately offered by Germany to Russia. His information is that the latter has not yet answered but he interprets the recent Russo-Polish declarations and the *Izvestia* article urging closer collaboration with us as indirect replies à la Russe.

May I invite your attention to Fodor's current series of articles in the *Chicago Daily News* on German economic penetration in the Balkans.

GUNTHER

751.62/435 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in France (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, December 5, 1938—8 p. m.

912. Your 2045, last paragraph.⁴⁰ On November 28 the French Ambassador⁴¹ called and communicated to me in memorandum form official statements on the part of the French Government with regard to the agreement between the French and German Governments which he said was to be signed in the near future in Paris. He then expressed to me the very earnest hope of his Government that when the agreement was made public the Government of the United States would indicate in whatever manner it saw fit its approbation of the agreement reached, or at least indicate to the press its belief that the agreement would serve a useful purpose.

I told the Ambassador two days later that this Government did not feel itself able to make any public statement with regard to the signing of a Franco-German agreement. I explained to him *inter alia* that in view of the strained relationships existing between the United States and Germany it would be very difficult for this Government, out of a clear sky, to express approbation of an official act on the part of the German Government which inherently involved the question of the latter's foreign policy. The texts of my memoranda of conversation are going to you by mail,⁴² but this brief summary may be helpful to you in conversations with French officials.

WELLES

751.62/510 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, December 6, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received December 6—9 : 40 a. m.]

693. The French Chargé d'Affaires tells me that the Franco-German agreement will briefly embody three features: mutual respect of existing boundaries, consultation as envisaged by the Munich arrangement, and political understanding without invalidating of the political treaties or special relationships of either party with third states. He pointed out that the Franco-Soviet treaty was thereby touched.

⁴⁰ Telegram dated December 3, 1 p. m., not printed; the paragraph under reference reads as follows: "Bonnet spoke at length of his disappointment at the reception given in America to the Franco-German declaration. He said that he had instructed Saint-Quentin to discuss the French point of view thoroughly with you." (751.65/435)

⁴¹ René Doynel de Saint-Quentin.

⁴² Instruction No. 1207, December 7, 1938, not printed.

He said that he had information which he himself was satisfied was true that the Italian Embassy here had under instructions twice protested against Germany's making this agreement with France before French-Italian relations had reached a settlement but that Ribbentrop had told Attolico⁴³ as coming from Hitler that although Berlin felt very friendly toward Rome "Berlin's policy was Berlin's policy and that it would be pursued." He interpreted the demonstrations in the Rome Chamber as part of an attempt to torpedo the agreement.

I may say that it is very difficult to appraise the foregoing. There is naturally much talk here as to the meaning of this Franco-German development in terms of great power relationships but I encounter nothing which is not apparently based on pure speculation. From the German angle, however, I myself see this as consistent with a Berlin policy to seal her western frontiers while remaining open to the east. To the extent that this is effective it naturally has a bearing on the politico-military strategy of the western world with particular reference to Great Britain and perhaps and possibly to a degree to the United States.

Ribbentrop left last night for Paris accompanied by an unexpectedly large entourage of about 30 persons. Among these were the directors of the economic and the press sections of the Foreign Office. The Chargé is of the belief that special endeavors will be made in Paris for an augmenting of Franco-German commerce and that presumably among other questions press relations would be discussed. Any developments of a concrete nature which the meeting might produce beyond the formal agreement might he felt be embodied in joint declarations.

Repeated to Paris and Rome.

GILBERT

740.00/532

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

No. 839

WARSAW, December 7, 1938.

[Received December 27.]

SIR: In conversation with Minister Beck on various aspects of Polish foreign policy, he emphasized that, from Poland's angle, maintenance of the delicate balance between Moscow and Berlin was more difficult and even more important than maintenance of the balance between Berlin and Paris. Equilibrium in Polish policy between her two major neighbors was particularly difficult, mainly due to Berlin's inherent misunderstanding and mistrust of Moscow. On the other

⁴³ Bernardo Attolico, Italian Ambassador to Germany.

hand, however, Poland found it measurably easier to balance her relations between Berlin and Paris, in that the passage of time had served to mitigate Paris' first flush of resentment over the Polish-German Non-Aggression Agreement;⁴⁴ in fact, in recent years Warsaw had found that fundamentally the Polish-German Non-Aggression Agreement had ceased to have an unfavorable bearing upon the Polish-French Alliance. On the other hand, Berlin had accepted the Polish-French Alliance as representing no hindrance to the Polish-German Non-Aggression Agreement.

Turning to Poland's and France's respective relations with the Soviet, and more particularly their comparative appraisals of the Soviet's potential military strength, Minister Beck remarked that in 1922, when he, as Military Attaché at the Polish Embassy in Paris, had remarked to General Foch that the Soviet Army (then in the course of reorganizing) would bear watching in terms of potential strength and European balance, Foch had manifested distinct annoyance with Beck's remark, adding that such an idea was illusory and preposterous. At that time, and subsequently, Poland, always in a better position than France to watch closely and appraise realistically Soviet internal developments, was aware of the Soviet's mounting military strength. Minister Beck then remarked that it had been with a combined sense of amusement and interest that years later General Gamelin⁴⁵ had loudly acclaimed the Soviet Army as an outstanding force and as a potential balance in the European politico-military arena. The Minister then stated his opinion that, while Poland had kept abreast of military developments in the Soviet during past years, hence realizing its mounting strength, Poland had taken full account of the immediate and long-range bearing of certain weaknesses in the structure resultant from a series of "purges" over past years. Therefore, Beck felt Poland was apt to evaluate the Soviet Army's potential strength more realistically than France, which was apparently inclined to over-rate Soviet's strength.

Turning then to the subject of the French-German declaration signed December 6, Minister Beck remarked with a sense of satisfaction that M. Bonnet had advised Polish Ambassador Lukaszewicz well in advance of France's undertaking and had kept him abreast of negotiations. At the same time Bonnet had pointed out that his Government considered the French-German declaration would work no hindrance either to the Polish-French Alliance or the Polish-German Non-Aggression Agreement.

⁴⁴ Signed January 26, 1934, *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. cxxxvii, p. 495.

⁴⁵ Gen. Maurice Gamelin, Chief of General Staff in the French Army.

About the same time, Chancellor Hitler had advised Polish Ambassador Lipski that Germany intended to join in a declaration with France and that he likewise considered that this declaration would have no unfavorable bearing upon the Polish-French Alliance and the Polish-German Non-Aggression Agreement. It was significant to me that Hitler failed to mention the possible effect of the then forthcoming French-German declaration upon the French-Soviet Alliance. In fact, I interpret this to mean that Hitler deliberately eliminated mention of the latter pact as a means of evidencing his non-acceptance thereof.

In response to Bonnet's aforementioned message to Beck through the Polish Ambassador in Paris, Beck had replied he was in accord with M. Bonnet's opinion that the French-German declaration would not affect the Polish-French Alliance nor Poland's Non-Aggression Agreement with Germany. In fact, he added his belief that France's action now removed any existent differences of views between Poland and France. In other words, the German-French declaration in effect had placed Poland's and France's respective relations vis-à-vis Germany on the same level.

Though Beck has not expressed it in so many words, I gain the impression he is not inclined to look for either France or Britain, in terms of the long-range outlook, to base with any degree of permanency their respective foreign policies on the declarations with Germany. Minister Beck imparted his high esteem both for M. Daladier and M. Bonnet. He felt that of the two M. Bonnet had a clearer grasp of the fundamentals governing Polish policy. On the other hand, he felt that M. Daladier's political activities had been so confined to the internal affairs of France that he had had little time to keep abreast of problems confronting Polish policy. Beck had learned with sincere regret that, due to a combination of rapid post-Munich events, M. Daladier was inclined to be annoyed with Poland—especially in connection with Poland's action vis-à-vis Prague. Beck particularly regretted this in view of his belief that M. Daladier had perhaps failed to grasp the whole picture from Poland's own objective standpoint.

By way of further clarification of Poland's position, the Minister pointed out that at no time during the past year had he or his close collaborators believed that either France or England would march for Czechoslovakia or that Czechoslovakia would fight Germany single-handed. (My conversations with Minister Beck, Marshal Smigly-Rydz and Chief of Staff, General Stakiewicz over the past year bear out Beck on this point.)

Minister Beck continued that meanwhile both London and Paris had vigorously pressed Warsaw to commit Poland to a line-up with France and Britain vis-à-vis Germany.

During the period leading up to the Munich Conference, and in response to London's request that Warsaw suppress its violent press attack on Prague Beck had stated that he would rather be criticized for acting tactlessly at that moment than to be accused three months hence of having "let down" Czechoslovakia.

Here Beck emphasized that, with the conviction in the back of his mind that Paris and London would seek to negotiate rather than fight over Czechoslovakia, he had interpreted London's pressure for his commitment in the light of an attempt to use Poland's desired declaration of alignment in the nature of a "big stick" vis-à-vis Berlin. In other words, he foresaw that :

(a) London's immediate objective envisaged possibly trying to bring Berlin to terms by pointing out that with Poland and Czechoslovakia in the East and Britain and France in the West Germany faced a conflict on two fronts;

(b) London's possible longer-range objective envisaged, in event of bringing Germany to terms, calling a four-power conference to the exclusion of Poland. Moreover, Beck had foreseen that a four-power conference entailed potential dangers for the smaller powers; in other words, that the latter might possibly become the victims of "peaceful settlements" between the major powers. Moreover, he reiterated with emphasis his former statements to effect that Poland, whose claims for the Teschen district had pre-dated and were more justifiable than Germany's claims for the Sudetenland, had from the very outset consistently voiced her insistence upon equal and non-discriminatory treatment of Polish claims—and had so notified the capitals of the four major powers. Hence London's and Paris' agreement to advance the scope of treatment of Germany's claims for the Sudeten territory from autonomy to cession, in which deliberation Poland had had no part, had placed Poland in a position whereat there was no alternative other than to settle her claims in her own way. (I am aware that Beck and his collaborators were faced not only with a question of prestige in the light of their internal political arena but also with what they considered the necessity of "*showing*" Germany they were willing to *fight* for what they considered their rightful objectives.)

(c) the recent French-German declaration would undoubtedly have the effect of "putting to sleep" the French-Soviet Alliance. Moreover, Beck felt this declaration placed Poland's and France's respective relations with Germany on the same level. Hence, there should be little if any difference of views now between France and Poland.

From the foregoing and other conversations with Minister Beck, I gain the distinct impression that he has a sincere desire of clarifying Poland's position with Messrs. Daladier and Bonnet towards a better understanding and amelioration in relations between Poland and France.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. DREXEL BIDDLE, JR.

751.62/514 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, December 8, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received December 8—2:50 p. m.]

2076.

In conversation with Coulondre French Ambassador at Berlin I inquired what value, in the event of Italian pressure on France, could be attached to that part of the Franco-German declaration which refers to consultation but makes a reservation of special relations with third countries; Coulondre replied that in such event France could only hope that Germany would seek to exercise a restraining influence on her ally.

The Counselor of the German Embassy with whom I talked, was quite frank on various points. Regarding the Italian claims against France, he said that Ribbentrop had stated that, while Germany had no direct interests in the Mediterranean, she nevertheless was indirectly interested because of the Rome-Berlin Axis. He said that Ribbentrop had taken particular pains to stress the fact that the Axis was as solid as ever, and that he had expressed the view that a permanent settlement of questions relating to the Mediterranean could be arrived at if Italian claims were considered "sympathetically".

With regard to Spain the Counselor said that Ribbentrop had declared categorically that in Germany's view a victory by Franco was essential; moreover, he said that the French "had agreed with this". I expressed some doubt on this point but the Counselor reiterated his statement.

One of the head men of the Havas Service said to me: "The conversations have been a complete fiasco from the French point of view".

The impression made on me by the reception at the German Embassy was not a happy one. In the corner of one room Daladier was for some time left alone with Gentin his Minister of Commerce no one paying any attention to him. In the adjoining room Ribbentrop was literally holding court with a large section of Paris society paying tribute while in the background the French Minister of Foreign Affairs hovered uneasily and unnoticed. The Germans were jubilant and noisy while the members of the French Government and French Foreign Office officials seemed ill at ease and depressed.

WILSON

751.65/448 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, December 15, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received December 15—4: 52 p. m.]

2120. Reference my 2117, December 15, 2 p. m.⁴⁶ After speaking of the refugee problem Bonnet talked at length of the Italian demands on France and the German attitude thereto. He said that he knew the report had circulated that Ribbentrop's attitude in this matter had caused concern to the French Government. He, Bonnet, did not hold this view. It was true that Ribbentrop had spoken of the solidarity of the Rome-Berlin Axis. At the same time Ribbentrop had said to him: "Why should I come to Paris to sign an agreement renouncing any claim to Alsace-Lorraine if I intended tomorrow to go to war with France for the purpose of satisfying Italian claims to Tunis, Corsica and Nice?" Bonnet said that while he was convinced that Germany would not go to war for Italian territorial claims on France he fully expected that Germany would give diplomatic support to Italy for claims such as Italian participation in the administration of the Suez Canal and a modification of rates on the Djibouti Railway. I remarked that the German press campaign supporting Italian territorial claims while Ribbentrop was in Paris seemed unfortunate. Bonnet said that he believed this was another example of the play of conflicting forces within the German Government. He believed that Ribbentrop was annoyed by this press campaign and that it was undertaken by Goebbels as much for the purpose of annoying Ribbentrop as for any other purpose. Bonnet added that he had said to Ribbentrop just what he stated before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber yesterday that France would go to war with Italy rather than give up an inch of French territory.

Bonnet said that the situation which would be created if Italy in fact should press territorial claims on France would be very different from that created by German claims on Czechoslovakia. In this latter case if he had wished to go to war to preserve Czechoslovakia he would have had half of France against him. If it were a question of going to war to prevent Italy seizing French territory the French people would march to the last man.

I asked about his discussion with Ribbentrop on the Spanish situation which, as he had mentioned, had occupied a good share of their private conversation the afternoon of December 7. Bonnet started to say something, hesitated and then stated merely that the conversa-

⁴⁶ *Post*, p. 871.

tion on this point had been satisfactory and that the German attitude towards Spain constituted no threat to French interests. (In this connection please refer to my 2076, December 8, 3 p. m., reporting what the Counselor of the German Embassy had said to me. It is also of interest that after the discussion of the Spanish question which evidently took place on December 6 in the presence of other members of both delegations Bonnet should have discussed this problem in private and at some length with Ribbentrop the following day). Bonnet added that he believed it would be most important if the Pan American Conference at Lima⁴⁷ could be prevailed upon to address an appeal to both sides in Spain for an armistice. He said that he had instructed Saint-Quentin to discuss this with you and he read me a few lines from a telegram received from Saint-Quentin to the effect that you had stated that the matter was under consideration at Lima and that you would inform him later.

I asked Bonnet what developments he expected in the Ukraine question. He believed that there would be no early developments; the Soviet and Polish Ambassadors had told him that they also held this view. He stated that the ultimate solution of the Ukraine question would depend upon the strength and stability of the Soviet and Polish Government. If the Soviets are as strong as they claim to be and as willing to fight as they asserted they were in September to support Czechoslovakia, then there would be no change in the status of the Ukraine.

I enquired regarding Memel. Bonnet said that he did not expect serious difficulties over this question. He understood that the German and Lithuanian Governments were discussing the matter, and while he did not know what they had in mind (Ribbentrop had not mentioned this matter) he believed that whatever solution Germany desired would be accepted by Lithuania.

WILSON

⁴⁷ See vol. v, pp. 1 ff.

DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REGARDING PROPOSAL FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROMOTE WORLD PEACE ¹

740.00/2763

Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Welles) to President Roosevelt ²

[WASHINGTON,] January 10, 1937 [1938].

Step No. 1

Take up confidentially the proposal with the British Government in order to secure the latter's support at such time and in such manner as may seem desirable to this Government.

Norman Davis ³ believes that we should simultaneously communicate our intention of making such proposal to the French, German and Italian Governments for their confidential knowledge in order that we may thus make the effort to secure the assurance of their willingness to lend support and in order to avoid any belief on their part that any secret and prior agreement as to the nature of the recommendations to be formulated had been entered into between Great Britain and ourselves.

Step No. 2

The President calls in the diplomatic representatives of all nations to meet with him at the White House in order to hand to them copies of the proposal. The proposal is immediately thereafter made public.

Step No. 3

Should the replies to the proposal prove to be satisfactory, the President will direct the Secretary of State to proceed as follows:

(a) Request the governments of the other American republics to cooperate by selecting two individuals, nationals of two American republics other than the United States, whom they consider most qualified to collaborate in the formulation of the recommendations listed in the proposal.

¹ See also section entitled "Proposal for Concerted International Effort to Reach Common Agreement on the Principles of International Conduct to Maintain Peace," *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. i, pp. 665 ff.

² Photostatic copy obtained from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N. Y.

³ Mr. Davis held no official position at this time. He had been American delegate to International Economic and Disarmament Conferences, and to the Brussels Conference of November 1937, regarding the crisis in the Far East; see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. iv, pp. 1 ff.

(b) Request each of the following governments to designate a representative to take part in such formulation :

Sweden	Switzerland	Turkey
The Netherlands	Hungary	
Belgium	Yugoslavia	

In order to avoid delay and to obtain the benefits resulting from personal interchange of views between the individuals so selected, it is urgently recommended that the nine individuals so designated be invited to meet in Washington with the representatives of the United States.

(c) Inform simultaneously the Governments of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia that this Government will keep them closely advised of all developments throughout the formulative period in order to receive such suggestions and to hear such views as they may desire to express.

Step No. 4

Upon the completion of the formulation of the recommendations listed transmission of such recommendations to all governments.

It is my belief that the proposal in itself will lend support and impetus to the effort of Great Britain, supported by France, to reach the bases for a practical understanding with Germany both on colonies and upon security, as well as upon European adjustments. Great Britain and France are now equally persuaded that no approach to Italy is feasible unless this prior understanding with Germany is successfully attained.

Should this practical readjustment be discussed and pushed during the period when the recommendations envisaged in this Government's proposal are being determined, it is obvious that each of the two parallel negotiations will be guided in part by the decisions arrived at in the other; this Government serving as a channel of information, and no more, insofar as the negotiations between and among the great powers of Europe are concerned. It is however probable that the influence of this Government with regard to the problem of limitation of armaments in both parallel negotiations would be helpful.

In this connection it is important to remember that in the Hitler-Halifax conversations⁴ Hitler expressed his willingness to agree immediately to the elimination of offensive armaments. It is equally important to recall that Mussolini six months ago publicly suggested that the President take the leadership in a move for immediate limitation and eventual reduction of armaments.⁵

⁴ In November 1937; see telegrams No. 279, November 23, 1937, 2 p. m., from the Ambassador in Germany, and No. 735, November 24, 1937, 8 p. m., from the Chargé in the United Kingdom, *Foreign Relations, 1937*, vol. I, pp. 159 and 177. See also *German Documents, 1918-1945*, ser. D, vol. I, pp. 39 ff.

⁵ See telegram No. 244, May 25, noon, *Foreign Relations, 1937*, vol. I, p. 655.

Step No. 5

It is impossible at this time to forecast with any precision beyond this point. Should the procedure indicated in Step No. 4 prove successful, the governments of the world will need do little more than ratify formally their approval of the recommendations formulated as the result of the President's proposal, since their agreement in principle will have been made plain during the course of the negotiations. This formal ratification might be undertaken through diplomatic channels or through a general conference called specifically for that sole purpose.

If the German and Italian Governments do not reach a practical understanding with Great Britain and France as a result of their parallel negotiations above mentioned, it is possible that they will not acquiesce in the recommendations formulated as a result of the initiative of the United States. In such event, which would seem to be the worst of possible contingencies, this Government would at least have obtained the support of all of the governments of the world, other than those inseparably linked with the Berlin-Rome axis, for practical recommendations which would insure world peace and which would safeguard modern civilization. The rallying of public opinion on a world scale to those policies which alone can make for peace and economic progress would in itself be productive of practical good because of its inevitable repercussions on the German and Italian populations, as well as upon those smaller countries of Europe which have been feeling increasingly during these past three years that the great democracies have surrendered their leadership and that consequently they themselves, as a means of self protection, must align themselves with Rome and Berlin.

Finally, if Germany and Italy solve their practical problems with Great Britain and France it would seem probable that their present support of Japan will be very greatly weakened—at least to an extent sufficient to obligate Japan to make peace with China upon terms not inconsistent with the principles of the Nine Power Treaty.⁶

740.00/264a

The Under Secretary of State (Welles) to President Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, January 14, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The British Ambassador ⁷ has just given me the attached message to you from the Prime Minister. I have shown it to the Secretary, and he feels that you will wish to give this

⁶ Signed February 6, 1922, *Foreign Relations*, 1922, vol. I, p. 276.

⁷ Sir Ronald Lindsay.

your personal thought before we meet with you tomorrow at lunch time.

Faithfully yours,

SUMNER WELLES

[Enclosure]

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE PRESIDENT

JANUARY 14, 1938.

I appreciate most highly the mark of confidence which the President has shown in consulting me in regard to his plan.⁸ I am also greatly encouraged to know that world affairs have been engaging his attention so directly and that he is willing to take so courageous an initiative. The objects which he has in view correspond of course to the aims and hopes of His Majesty's Government and I am most grateful to him for his vigorous initiative which is designed to work as an action by the United States Government parallel to the effort which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are making with the Central Powers.

He has been impelled to make this proposal by consideration of what he has described as progress of deterioration in international relations and consequent danger of general conflagration. No one who has followed closely recent developments can fail to be impressed with the great dangers that beset the world. On the other hand it may be permissible to look forward to some improvement in immediate future. From my correspondence with him last summer⁹ and from information which has since reached him, President will be aware of the efforts which His Majesty's Government for their part are making to bring about a measure of appeasement. He will be interested to know that recently His Majesty's Government received an enquiry from the Italian Government as to when conversations could be re-opened with His Majesty's Government and that in the last few days I have agreed with the Secretary of State that the latter should on January 16th discuss with the French Minister for Foreign Affairs in Geneva the possibility of making a fresh approach towards reconciliation with Italy that might bring appeasement to the Mediterranean region at least.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have realised that if such appeasement is to be achieved it will not be upon the basis of bargaining in which each side seeks to weigh up what it will get against what it will be asked to give. Our plan (both as regards

⁸ The President's proposals appear to have been communicated on January 12 to the British Prime Minister.

⁹ Reference may be to exchange of letters, July 28, and September 28, 1937, *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 113 and 131, respectively.

Germany and Italy) rests upon the view that we and they are in a position each to make a contribution towards the objective we both desire to obtain. There would be no need to discuss whether our contribution were greater or less than theirs. What is needed is to ensure that the contribution of each will, taken with the contribution of the other, make up an agreement which will bring appeasement. Thus in the case of Italy His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would be prepared for their part, if possible with authority of League of Nations, to recognise *de jure* Italian conquest of Abyssinia¹⁰ (by which Signor Mussolini sets great store) and to take certain other action if they found that Italian Government on their side were ready to give evidence of their desire to contribute to the restoration of confidence and friendly relations. I am hopeful that French Government may be willing to join us in this effort.

In another direction, and adopting the same basis, viz. that all parties can and should make their contribution His Majesty's Government are about to embark on a study of the situation revealed by Lord Halifax's visit to Berlin with a view to seeing in what measure German aspirations might be satisfied so that they too could make their contribution to a general appeasement and although this is a very difficult and complicated subject I trust that before long we may be able to begin our conversations with Germany.

I mention these facts so that President may consider—what has occurred to me—whether there is not a risk of his proposal cutting across our efforts here. It is probable that the Italian and German Governments of whom we should have to ask a contribution that they will be none too ready [to] give, might excuse a refusal to continue negotiations on the ground that the subjects under discussion—which for the most part will be specific and concrete in character—seemed all merged in the wider problems which the President contemplates tackling as a whole. It would I feel be regrettable if what I am sure the President intends to be, as he himself describes it, action taken by him parallel to the efforts which we are making, were found to be capable of being used to block progress in the directions which over recent months we have laboriously worked out and for which we feel the stage has at last been set in not too unfavourable a manner.

This leads me to ask the President to consider whether it would not be wiser to consider holding his hand for a short while to see what progress we can make in beginning to tackle some of the problems—see my letter of May 23rd.¹¹ This would not of course prejudice any larger effort that President might be willing to make later.

¹⁰ See pp. 133 ff.

¹¹ Not found in Department files.

I venture to submit these considerations to the President, not because I differ in any way from his objective, still less because I fail to appreciate the motives which led him to put forward his proposals, but solely in order to obtain the benefit of his opinion as to the timeliness of his proposed action. My fear is that if the President's suggestions are put forward at the present time Germany and Italy may feel constrained to take advantage of them both to delay consideration of specific points which must be settled if appeasement is to be achieved, and to put forward demands over and above what they would put forward to us if we were in direct negotiations with them.

I hold myself in readiness to consider immediately any observations which the President may make on the foregoing and I shall do my utmost to give them consideration and to reply to him without delay.

740.00/264b

The Under Secretary of State (Welles) to President Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, January 17, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am submitting herewith your suggested reply to the Prime Minister. The Secretary approves the draft. In accordance with our conversation on Saturday I notified Sir Ronald Lindsay that I would be able to give him a written message from you this afternoon. If the suggested message is satisfactory to you, will you let me have it back, and I shall then give it to the British Ambassador. If there are changes you wish made in it, please let me know accordingly.¹²

Faithfully yours,

SUMNER WELLES

[Enclosure]

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE PRIME MINISTER

I appreciate greatly the very frank and friendly spirit in which the Prime Minister has replied to the confidential message I sent him with regard to the proposal I contemplated making. The full and detailed information which the Prime Minister has been good enough to send me as to the steps already taken and at present contemplated by His Majesty's Government has been particularly helpful to me. The Prime Minister fears that if the suggestions which I have had it in mind to make to the other nations of the world are put forward at

¹² The original of this letter was returned to the Department by the President with the notation "O. K. F. D. R." (740.00/264½)

the present time, Germany and Italy may take advantage of them both to delay consideration of specific points which must be settled between Great Britain and France and Germany and Italy, if appeasement is to be achieved, and to put forward demands over and above what the latter powers would put forward if direct negotiations between them and Great Britain and France were all that was in progress.

In view of the opinions and considerations advanced by the Prime Minister, I readily agree to defer making the proposal I had intended to make for a short while as he suggests in order that His Majesty's Government may see what progress they can make in beginning the direct negotiations they are contemplating.

I must confess that I am concerned by the statement of the Prime Minister that His Majesty's Government under certain contingencies "would be prepared for their part, if possible with authority of the League of Nations, to recognize the *de jure* Italian conquest of Abyssinia". I take it, of course, for granted that the Prime Minister has given due consideration to the harmful effect which this step would have, especially at this time, upon the course of Japan in the Far East¹³ and upon the nature of the peace terms which Japan may demand of China. At a moment when respect for treaty obligations would seem to be of such vital importance in international relations, as proclaimed by our two Governments only recently at the Brussels Conference,¹⁴ and at the time when our two Governments have been giving consideration to measures of cooperation in support of international law and order in the Far East, as well as of their respective legitimate and legal rights in China, I cannot help but feel that all of the repercussions of the step contemplated by His Majesty's Government should be most carefully considered. A surrender by His Majesty's Government of the principle of non-recognition at this time would have a serious effect upon public opinion in this country. Public opinion in the United States will only support this Government in measures of pacific cooperation with the other peace-loving nations of the world, provided these measures of cooperation are destined to reestablish and maintain principles of international law and morality. The recognition of the conquest of Ethiopia, which at some appropriate time may have to be regarded as an accomplished fact, would seem to me to be a matter which affects all nations which are committed to the principles of non-recognition and which should consequently be dealt with as an integral part of measures for world appeasement, in which all the nations of the world have previously demonstrated

¹³ See vol. III, pp. 1 ff.

¹⁴ See *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. IV, pp. 1 ff.

their common interest and their willingness to bear their individual responsibility.

Finally, in view of the statement which the Prime Minister was good enough to make that he would be glad to consider any observations which I might desire to make upon his message and to give immediate consideration to them, I will express the hope that he may be good enough to keep me advised of developments with regard to some aspects of the direct negotiations with Germany and Italy which he now has in prospect. With regard to the political features of these negotiations, this Government of course has no connection. I feel, however, that it would be most helpful to this Government to be apprised of those features of the negotiations which would have a material effect upon the maintenance of those international principles and upon the policies of world appeasement which this Government endeavors to support, and in particular of those questions which have to do with treaty rights and economic and financial questions in which this Government, like other governments, may be directly concerned.

865D.01/385

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] February 2, 1938.

The British Ambassador called to see me this afternoon. The Ambassador stated that Mr. Eden¹⁵ had spoken to him on the telephone yesterday afternoon and had asked if the Ambassador could give him any indication whether the President had reached any decision with regard to going ahead with the plan which had been discussed with the British Government. After this telephone conversation with Mr. Eden the Ambassador had spoken to me on the telephone with regard to it and I told him that it would be impossible for me to give him any reply until I had spoken with the President. I now told the Ambassador that I had spoken to the President this morning and that the President had asked me to let the Ambassador know for the information of his Government that he expected to be able to give some indication to the British Government within the next few days of what his plans would be and that for the immediate moment the President had nothing more definite to say.

The Ambassador then asked whether the President had anything further to say on the subject of the recognition by the British Government of the conquest of Ethiopia in connection with the statements made by Mr. Chamberlain in his second personal message¹⁶ to the

¹⁵ Anthony Eden, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; resigned, February 20, 1938.

¹⁶ Not found in Department files.

President. I replied to the Ambassador that it had seemed to me that the position of the President was set forth with complete and entire clarity in the President's personal message to the Prime Minister and that in view of that message from the President there was obviously nothing which could be added to it. The Ambassador said that this was his own opinion but that he merely wanted to be sure that his own understanding was accurate. The Ambassador added that there was obviously extreme pressure being brought to bear on Mr. Eden to renew the conversations with Italy and reminded me that the Prime Minister had very clearly indicated in his last message to the President that the negotiations envisaged would undoubtedly be long protracted and that obviously no announcement of the British Government's basis for negotiations would be made public for a considerable time to come.

The Ambassador then said that Mr. Eden had told him that he had had the conversation with M. Delbos, the French Foreign Minister, at Geneva which had originally been scheduled for January 16 as referred to in the first message from the Prime Minister to the President on the subject of negotiations with Italy. Mr. Eden had told Sir Ronald that the conversations with M. Delbos had been entirely satisfactory and that the French Government would support the position of the British Government in the course of the projected conversations with Italy to the fullest extent. The Ambassador remarked that the relations between France and Italy at the present time were so bad that the two Governments were actually not on speaking terms and that for Great Britain to have to enter these conversations carrying the load of France on her back constituted a very serious obstacle. He said, however, that no appeasement of the Mediterranean area was possible without the conclusion of a satisfactory agreement between Italy and France as well as between Italy and Great Britain, and that, therefore, this was indispensable.

I took this occasion of speaking to the Ambassador with considerable frankness of the conversation I had had with the Italian Ambassador yesterday¹⁷ in so far as our conversation related to the Mediterranean. The Ambassador listened with great interest and said that he thought that Suvich still possessed the entire confidence of Mussolini and had spoken with authority. He himself did not indicate with any precision, however, what the British attitude would be in the projected negotiations beyond stating that the British wanted a great deal, and merely itemized defortification of Libya, disarmament in the Mediterranean, and assurances that any government that might exist in Spain would not be the catspaw of Italy. He added that this latter point, he assumed, would be the crux of the negotiation. He expressed

¹⁷ See memorandum by the Under Secretary of State, February 1, p. 6.

surprise at the attitude of the Italian Government as conveyed by the Italian Ambassador in London to Mr. Eden and which conformed to what Suvich had said to me, namely, that the recognition of the conquest of Ethiopia was practically all that the Italians desired, and referred to this as being satisfied with what was purely "tinsel".

The Ambassador gave me further to understand that the British intended now to press actively ahead with concurrent conversations with Germany.

In conclusion I said to the Ambassador that the President had told me that he would send word to the Ambassador of whatever decision he might reach with regard to the matter above referred to, and that until that time there was nothing further I could communicate to the Ambassador on that subject.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

740.00/290½

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[Extract]

[WASHINGTON,] February 9, 1938.

The British Ambassador called to see me this afternoon at my request. I told him that in a conversation which I had had with the President this morning the President had asked me to say to the British Ambassador, for the information of his Government, that the President had further delayed taking the action envisaged in the plan which he had discussed with the British Government because of the recent acute situation which had developed in Germany and that until that situation should appear a little clearer than it as yet did, the President felt it would be unwise to go ahead. He desired the British Government to know, however, that he intended proceeding in accordance with his plan in the relatively near future and would send further word on this matter later on to the British Government.

The British Ambassador said that he fully understood the circumstances and that he knew that his Government appreciated these reasons without being told and undoubtedly had had these factors in mind; but that he would immediately transmit the President's message and that he appreciated greatly the President's courtesy in sending it.

I then asked the Ambassador if he had any further word as to what progress, if any, had been made in conversations between the British Government and the German or Italian Governments. The Ambassador said that he had had no further word with regard to the conversations with Italy since he and I had last spoken on that subject, but that from certain instructions he had received of an informative char-

acter he gathered that Sir Nevile Henderson, the British Ambassador to Berlin, had spent the past week in London reporting on the progress which had been made with regard to the conversations with Germany and that he understood that the conversations were actively proceeding. He did not feel, however, that any precise comments had been made on either side, and said that it would still be a considerable period, even if all went well, before a stage could be reached where bases could be agreed upon with any precision.

I then reminded the Ambassador that I had made it clear to him some two weeks ago that this Government would gladly receive any commitments or specific suggestions that the British Government might care to make with regard to the President's plan or any of the features thereof. I said that the silence of the British Government in this regard might possibly be construed as an indication of apathy on the part of Great Britain, and that I wondered if he had any impressions on that point which he cared to communicate. The Ambassador reminded me that he had told me with the most complete frankness everything that had gone on between the receipt by the President of Mr. Chamberlain's first message¹⁸ and the receipt by the President of the second message,¹⁹ and that he had confided to me the split in the Cabinet which had occurred between Sir John Simon,²⁰ on the one side, and Mr. Eden, on the other. He said, however, that he did want to assure me in the most positive manner that the decision of the British Government had been reached as communicated to the President and that the British Government was committed to support with every means within their power the successful realization of the President's objectives. He said that we could count upon his Government's carrying out this commitment with the utmost loyalty and energy. The Ambassador said that he had always assumed that the suggestions which the British Government might desire to make would be made after the President's proposal had been made public and that they would relate possibly to the governments which the British Government thought the President might consult advantageously and to the specific points to be taken up for consultation in elaboration and implementation of the general problems specified by the President in his proposal. I told the Ambassador that if that was the thought of the British Government, I need merely reiterate the fact that we would be very happy to have such comments or suggestions as they might desire to make at any time they might care to make them.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

¹⁸ January 14; p. 118.

¹⁹ Not found in Department files.

²⁰ British Chancellor of the Exchequer.

760F.62/1314

The Under Secretary of State (Welles) to President Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, March 8, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am enclosing a memorandum of a conversation I had with the British Ambassador yesterday evening. I think that whatever misapprehension existed in the mind of Lord Halifax²¹ has now been cleared up as a result of a cable which Sir Ronald said he would send him last night. In view of the importance of the rest of the message, I thought you would probably want to read this memorandum.

Faithfully yours,

SUMNER WELLES

[Enclosure]

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Welles)

[WASHINGTON,] March 8, 1938.

The British Ambassador called to see me late yesterday evening. He had been instructed by telegram from Lord Halifax to convey a message²² to this Government which he then communicated to me.

The message the Ambassador was instructed to communicate to me commenced with the statement that Lord Halifax was very much gratified to know that the President and the Government of the United States considered the procedure of the British Government in its efforts to find a political appeasement "to be right" and that the new British Foreign Secretary was encouraged in the thought that in its effort the British Government had the sympathy of the United States.

At this point I interjected to say to the Ambassador that I assumed that this message was the result of a telegram which the Ambassador had probably sent after his conversation with me of March 3²³ and that it was not the result of any statement made to the Ambassador by the President or by the Secretary of State directly. The Ambassador said that I was correct in that belief. I then said that I felt it necessary in the most friendly way to make it clear that I had never indicated in our previous conversation that the President or any responsible officials of this Government had undertaken to determine or much less to say to the British Government that they considered its procedure "to be right". I had said that this Government was, of

²¹ Successor to Anthony Eden as British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, March 1, 1938.

²² Text not printed.

²³ See memorandum by the Under Secretary of State, March 3, p. 31.

course, adopting an attitude of contemplation and that it hoped that the British Government in its endeavor to find a solid foundation for a political appeasement in Europe would meet with a complete measure of success. I said that as the Ambassador knew from his knowledge of the proposal which the President had had under consideration for some time that the President frankly recognized that certain political appeasements in Europe with which this Government had no direct concern and in which this Government could not participate were evidently an indispensable factor in the finding of bases for world peace; that in that sense and in that spirit I had said to the Ambassador that this Government trusted the negotiations for these political appeasements would prove completely successful, but that I wanted to make it very clear that this Government had not attempted to pass upon the methods of approach determined upon by Mr. Chamberlain nor in any other way to offer advice or counsel as to the manner in which the negotiations were being conducted.

The Ambassador frankly admitted that he had probably over emphasized what I had said to him in our previous conversation and that Lord Halifax in turn had over emphasized what the Ambassador had communicated to him. The Ambassador said that he himself had been so deeply concerned by the attitude of the American press with regard to Mr. Chamberlain's policies and by the distortion of the real issues involved in the conflict which had arisen between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Eden that he had been particularly gratified to know from his conversation with me that the Government here was viewing the question dispassionately and objectively, and was regarding the ultimate objectives sought by Mr. Chamberlain as that which they in fact were—the desire to find through peaceful negotiation a settlement of political disputes in Europe so that the world might return to a condition of normality. He stated that I had no conception of the number or the nature of the letters which he had been receiving from private American citizens inveighing against the present policy of his Government and alleging that the British Government was now endeavoring to bolster up the European dictatorships. The Ambassador remarked, "It is not that we like the dictators nor that we want to associate ourselves with them, but since we are confronted with a world in which there are dictators, we have reached the conclusion that the only thing to do in order to prevent war is to try and find a basis for peaceful understanding with them".

The Ambassador then went on to give me the rest of the message from Lord Halifax. Lord Halifax said that the British Government was compelled to tackle their European problem piecemeal and that they had commenced with Italy because the rapid and continuing deterioration of relations between Italy and Great Britain was be-

coming increasingly serious and the British Government hoped that restoration of confidence and friendship between Italy and England might produce a satisfactory and lasting appeasement in the Mediterranean and adjoining regions. He went on to reiterate what Sir Ronald Lindsay had communicated to me in an earlier conversation, namely, that the British Ambassador in Berlin had been instructed to see Hitler on March 3 and that as a result of that conference the British Government hoped to be able to appraise the prospects of advance in that quarter in order to devise a measure of appeasement in Central and Eastern Europe. The British Foreign Secretary emphasized the fact that both negotiations would be attended by many difficulties but that if these "regional agreements" could be secured, he hoped that any danger of conflict could be avoided at least for a period.

At the conclusion of the communication which Sir Ronald Lindsay was instructed to make, Lord Halifax mentioned his belief that in order to secure any real and lasting betterment of the situation it would undoubtedly be necessary to try and obtain some scheme of general cooperation in Europe not only political, but likewise economic, and said that if the United States Government could at any time see its way to assisting or encouraging such a development, that would undoubtedly be of the greatest value. For that reason Lord Halifax again desired to inform this Government fully of the progress of the British negotiations so that the United States could, should it so desire, offer advice or criticism as to the progress of the negotiations and so that the President could, should he be so disposed, determine whether at any point it might be opportune for him to take "independent but correlated action". The message concluded with the expression of the hope that should the President at any time determine that it was desirable for him to take such "independent but correlated action", the British Government might be advised beforehand of such intention on the part of the President.

I asked the Ambassador if he had any instructions which would make it possible for him to clarify exactly what the British Government had in mind in the latter part of Lord Halifax's message. I reminded the Ambassador that the President had made it emphatically clear that this Government did not intend to participate in any way in the questions of European political appeasement and that the only initiative which the President had contemplated was that concerning which the British Government had been fully informed. I said that for the time being the President had determined to hold that initiative in abeyance as the British Government had already been advised and that as the Ambassador had been informed, the British Government would be informed should the President at some subsequent date

determine that it was desirable to take any action of the kind which he had previously contemplated.

The Ambassador said that he had no instructions whatever in clarification of the points concerning which I inquired. He said that to him the meaning was very clear and that was that if the political appeasements which the British Government was now seeking were successfully concluded, undoubtedly economic and financial measures would have to be determined upon as supplements and complements to the political appeasements. He said that of course both Germany and Italy, if they decided to move outside of their present autarchic system as a result of satisfactory political adjustments, would find themselves in a very difficult transitional state, both commercially and financially, and that the British Government hoped that the other great powers of the world who were seeking to further peace would then consider how they individually might help in the restoration of normal commercial and financial relationships. He said that up to the present time, in the judgment of his Government, the only constructive program which had been put forward during the past five years had been the Hull trade agreements program and the existence, or rather the continuation and enlargement of the scope of that program, would in the opinion of the British Government be the most effective way that had yet been devised of assisting Italy and Germany through the transition period back to normal relationships with the other powers of the world. I reminded the Ambassador that it apparently had taken the British Government a good many years to comprehend the truth of what he was now saying to me but that, of course, it was clear that if the British Government desired the effective cooperation of the United States through the trade agreement program, the British Government's own sincere and wholehearted support of that program, particularly after the conclusion of the British-American trade agreement,²⁴ would necessarily be all important. I further said to the Ambassador that the President's plan had obviously taken the factors which the Ambassador had mentioned to me specifically into account in as much as one of the points which the President would have indicated he was willing to consult other nations upon was the devising of methods for the freeing of restrictions upon trade between nations and the most effective manner of promoting an opportunity for all nations to participate in the processes of world trade on a basis of equality of treatment.

In concluding this part of our conversation I said to the Ambassador that it seemed to me exceptionally important that there be not the shadow of misapprehension on the part of the British Foreign Office of the attitude of this Government nor as to the limits of activity be-

²⁴ See vol. II, pp. 1 ff.

yond which this Government could not and would not go. I said that I appreciated and I was sure the President and the Secretary of State would appreciate the particularly friendly nature of Lord Halifax's message but that I wished to assure myself that the precise position of this Government was clearly understood by Lord Halifax. The Ambassador repeated that if there was any misapprehension it was undoubtedly due to the way in which his earlier telegram to Lord Halifax had been worded and that he would see that there was no further misunderstanding even with regard "to the shading or interpretation" of words.

The Ambassador then spent a short time in discussing the situation with regard to the incidents which had arisen in connection with Canton Island and the other Pacific islands.²⁵ He said that he had just received a cable which he would communicate to the Department in writing today indicating that the British proposals would be made in the immediate future so as to provide a solution of this difficulty. I asked when these proposals were expected and he said that he did not know and that any delay that might ensue would be due solely to the intransigent attitude of the Australian and New Zealand Governments. He told me that he had acted as quickly as he possibly could in communicating with the Governor of Fiji so as to avoid the possibility of any physical difficulty when the American colonists arrived at the islands and that he thought he had acted just in time but that one never knew what New Zealanders might do when confronted with a situation of this character.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

740.00/3241

The British Embassy to the Department of State

A TELEGRAM FROM LORD HALIFAX OF MARCH 11TH

My interview with Herr von Ribbentrop²⁶ duly took place on March 10th. The main features of this conversation were as follows.

I expressed to His Excellency the disappointment of His Majesty's Government at the attitude of Herr Hitler towards their conciliatory and constructive approach but at the same time indicated that this disappointment made no difference to our firm desire for a better understanding with Germany. But if we were to succeed that could not be by unilateral effort on our part and all must make their contribution. In particular the Colonial question could not be treated by this Country in isolation. With regard to Central Europe we had not tried to "block" Austria but had rather tried to steady European opinion

²⁵ See vol. II, pp. 77 ff.

²⁶ Joachim von Ribbentrop, German Minister for Foreign Affairs.

shaken by the Berchtesgaden interview. Moreover we were using our influence at Prague to promote a peaceful settlement there. But we should be less than frank if we did not make it clear to the German Government the danger we saw in the expression that responsible leaders in Germany were giving in public to German policy and to the spirit in which that policy was being pursued. The suggestion was being created that something more than a fair treatment of minorities was involved. This seemed to put back the chance of reaching a peaceful settlement and to hold out very dangerous possibilities for Europe. The last thing we wanted to see was a war in Europe. But if once war should start in Central Europe it was quite impossible to say where it might not end or who might not become involved and it was clear the language used in Germany of late might lead to some act which in its turn might, contrary to the intention of the German Government, precipitate a general conflict.

In this connection it was in my opinion of great importance that proposed Austrian plebiscite should be carried out without interference or intimidation.

Herr von Ribbentrop who had previously condemned Dr. Schuschnigg's²⁷ action in holding this plebiscite in strong terms then said that if I would allow him to say so he thought the most useful contribution we could make would be to use our influence with the Austrian Chancellor to cancel it. I replied that it seemed astonishing to me to assert that the head of a State should not have a plebiscite if he wanted one. Even if as Herr von Ribbentrop suggested it was a case of a minority Government imposing an unwelcome solution on a majority it was quite evident in my opinion that pressure of events would bring their own solution and that only harm could result by an attempt to impose short cuts in a situation that was highly charged with ugly possibilities.

Today the Prime Minister and I met Herr von Ribbentrop at lunch when we began to receive reports of a German ultimatum to Austria. We both spoke to him most seriously, emphasising the repercussion which such action might have in Europe and on our own efforts to bring about a settlement.

Subsequently at 5:15 p. m. I myself saw Herr von Ribbentrop again and spoke to him even more strongly in view of more definite news regarding German action. At the same time of telegraphing we understand that the Austrian Government have been forced to capitulate before an ultimatum demanding the displacement of the Chancellor within a time limit and the acquiescence of the Austrian authorities in various other measures incompatible with the con-

²⁷ Kurt von Schuschnigg, Austrian Chancellor.

tinued independent existence of Austria. Further reports are to the effect that German troops have actually crossed the frontier.²⁸

I have already explained why we felt it was best to tackle the problem piecemeal. We have found the Italian Government in an accommodating mood and I think we were justified in hoping that conversations might develop favourably and result in a good understanding. That may I hope yet prove to be the case.

Our approach to Germany was not encouraging; but we were prepared to exercise patience though we agree to recognise that the German Government appeared reluctant to discuss with us a peaceful settlement of their alleged difficulties. In any case they have now proceeded to take action which I fear renders further negotiation with them impossible, for some time to come at all events. Their brutal disregard for any argument but force shows the difficulty of reasoning with them and must cast doubt upon the value of agreements reached with them. His Majesty's Government felt bound to protest to the German Government about their procedure, but they are under no illusion that this will have any useful result. The world has been faced with a *fait accompli*: it is extremely doubtful if any threat could have averted it; and certainly no threat which those making it were not prepared to support by force. And any threat supported by force, if ignored, would have had to be followed up by action which would have plunged Europe into war. In these circumstances I am bound to confess that one of the twin efforts which His Majesty's Government were anxious to make to prepare the way for an appeasement, and on account of which we asked the President to postpone his initiative, has failed.

[No later correspondence has been found in the Department's files regarding the President's proposed peace plan.]

²⁸ For correspondence regarding the annexation of Austria by Germany, see pp. 384 ff.

ANGLO-ITALIAN AGREEMENT SIGNED APRIL 16, 1938;
STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT REGARDING
THE AGREEMENT

700.00/182

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] January 17, 1938.

The British Ambassador¹ came in upon the Department's request to talk about the commercial relations of this Government with the Government of Australia.² Before the Ambassador and I touched upon this subject, I said to him that there was a matter very deeply in my mind which I desired first of all to bring to his attention, as follows: that this Government, of course, very fully understands the serious difficulties and problems confronting the British Government in Europe and especially in the Mediterranean area, sympathizes with those difficulties and is anxious to see them solved or alleviated at the earliest practicable date; that naturally this Government has not the remotest disposition to inject any views or comment whatsoever into the conferences or communications between Great Britain and Italy relating to the affairs between those two governments. I then said that of course this Government is profoundly concerned about the Japanese movement and plan to abolish and for an indefinite time destroy the operation of the spirit and principles relating to the sanctity of international treaties and international law and, in fact, relating to all the laws of war and humanity as well, which laws are being violated on a wholesale scale; that our opposition to this entire movement of destruction in one-half of the world rests primarily on moral concepts and considerations and, in turn, upon the sanctity of agreements and the preservation of international law, both of which rest upon this moral foundation; that, of course, in addition we are strongly opposed to the course of Japan in violating all laws of war and of humanity, the wholly unjustifiable and outrageous nature of which is patent to both the thinking and the unthinking; that the principle of non-recognition has been very carefully kept alive by this and certain other governments during recent years, including the British; that if any important country like Great Britain suddenly should abandon

¹ Sir Ronald Lindsay.

² See vol. II, pp. 120 ff.

that principle, to the extent of recognizing the Italian conquest of Ethiopia, for example, such would be capitalized by desperado nations and heralded as a virtual ratification of the opposing policy of outright treaty violation, and treaty wrecking, and the seizure of properties by force of arms; that, if the British should feel constrained to recognize the Ethiopian conquest at this critical juncture, the repercussions in the Pacific area might be very serious in many ways; and that while I could not foretell with certainty, it need not be surprising to see the American people let down and give away very noticeably in their present support of the policies of this Government in the Pacific area, which policies I did not need to repeat to the British Ambassador; that this condition might develop, to say nothing of the extent and manner to which the Japanese Government would capitalize such recognition of its right to ignore and destroy solemn treaties and to make that a universal precedent at this time. I said that the League of Nations at present is understood to consist largely of Great Britain and France, so that if the Italian regime in Ethiopia should be recognized by Great Britain through some intervention by the League at Geneva, the precedent at this critical juncture would still be very bad, not to say destructive. I went on to say that this Government fully realizes the difficulties which the policy of non-recognition presents as a policy of indefinite operation, but we here have assumed that the policy is of universal importance as a factor and agency in the restoration and stabilization of international law and order, and that the whole question of when and how the permanency of this policy might be interrupted or modified by some general arrangement or understanding entered into by all or most of the nations of the world proceeding in a peaceful and orderly manner could be left to the future. The Ambassador did not take issue with anything I said on the general merits of the matter. I concluded by saying that as soon as the Ambassador could get these facts before his Government and if and when he should receive a reply, we would be much interested to hear further from him. The Ambassador said that the British have been contemplating taking this very question up first with the French but since the French have no government just now it will be delayed, and furthermore that the League Council has adjourned for a week or ten days which will further delay the matter.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

741.65/455 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, February 4, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received February 4—6:10 p. m.]

98. Mr. Hugh Wilson³ and I met with Mr. Eden⁴ and Sir Alexander Cadogan⁵ at lunch today. The conversation naturally turned upon matters with which the Secretary of State is preoccupied. He said that he has no doubt of the genuineness of the Italian desire to effect a *rapprochement* with this country. He frankly admitted the difficulty in the way of an approach which is offered by the question of *de jure* recognition of the Italian empire in Abyssinia.⁶ The British, however, although recognizing this reality, are not prepared, aside from legal difficulties attending the recognition of Abyssinia, to take such a step without a substantial and real contribution from Mussolini himself. There are from the British point of view also certain preliminary necessities which must be met; they must have from Italy a definite understanding regarding the peace and security of the Mediterranean in connection with which Mr. Eden mentioned the Italian garrisons in Libya and the security of Egypt. The Italians must cease their anti-British propaganda in the Moslem world. Mr. Eden said that he felt also that from the viewpoint of general European settlement it is essential to secure from Mussolini a satisfactory understanding with regard to Spain. The problem of a practical approach to this question is now causing him great concern. The impression he gave was that in the British view there can be no general solution of Mediterranean problems which would exclude Spain from its scope and that therefore a definite understanding with regard to Italy's intentions in that country should [be?] a necessary preliminary to an Anglo-Italian *rapprochement*.

Respecting the Rome-Berlin Axis, the Foreign Secretary remarked that although Mussolini was by far a greater immediate difficulty than Hitler there was no question that, as far as a general European settlement was concerned, Germany presented the real problem. There is no intention on the part of the British not to give reasonable consideration to German demands but again he is not disposed to take the promises of dictators at their face value and feels that Germany must herself make positive contributions accompanied by guarantees. What this contribution should be, he sees as including an agreement for reduction of armaments, in which of course all would participate,

³ Appointed Ambassador to Germany, January 17, 1938.

⁴ British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

⁵ British Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

⁶ See vol. II, pp. 723 ff.

and effective guarantees from Hitler that the peace of Central Europe would not be disturbed. Mr. Eden feels there is good ground for belief in the practical possibility of peaceful settlement of German-Czechoslovak difficulties and that Dr. Beneš⁸ will contribute his part. The colonial demands of Germany are receiving serious study in the Foreign Office (see my No. 59 of January 25, 6 p. m.⁹) and in this connection Mr. Eden said to Mr. Hugh Wilson that he believed it would be helpful if he, when he got to Berlin, could convey as his own opinion that the British were sincere in their approach to this problem and were not "stalling" which Mr. Eden said they were in fact not doing. Mr. Eden gave the impression throughout his conversation that he regarded the immediate problem of the betterment of Anglo-Italian and Anglo-German relations as but the initial step in the larger issue of European appeasement and settlement and further that in his view, in securing a general settlement, it was essential that the authoritarian governments must make their contribution, and that he regards the promises of those governments without effective guarantees as of little value.

He mentioned the trade agreement negotiations between the United States and Great Britain¹⁰ and said that he regarded them as of vital importance; that this evidence of American interest in the problems of Europe and of the American desire to ameliorate world conditions and to bring about a general appeasement was having a favorable effect throughout Europe; and further that the mere fact that the United States was manifesting an energetic interest in world problems was having a visible and salutary effect.

JOHNSON

741.00/153 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

LONDON, February 15, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received February 15—6 : 50 p. m.]

131. My 128, February 14.⁹ A Foreign Office official gave me last night in strict confidence certain clarifying information with respect to the divergence of views in the Cabinet on the aspects of foreign policy outlined in my 98, February 4, 8 p. m. As the information was given under the pledge of secrecy I earnestly request that this telegram be given only very guarded distribution.

⁸ Eduard Beneš, President of Czechoslovakia.

⁹ Not printed.

¹⁰ See vol. II, pp. 1 ff.

Mr. Eden has, he said, pressed strongly for the adoption of the views and methods outlined in that telegram. Lord Perth¹¹ from Rome, however, has been urging an immediate and direct approach to Italy, leaving the question of Spain and anti-British-Italian propaganda in the Moslem world to be settled subsequently. This view it seems has appealed to Mr. Chamberlain¹² and has had the support of the armed service departments. The view of the service departments I was told is that it is essential for Great Britain at once to detach at least one member of the German, Italian, Japanese anti-Comintern combination. Their view apparently is based on reasons of national safety as they believe if a war should break out Great Britain cannot cope with a combination of all of those powers; it becomes vitally necessary for her to settle her differences with at least one of them. Mr. Eden's view seems to be based on the line of thought that no possible credence can be given to any promise made by Italy or Germany and that they must make some positive concrete contribution as well as Great Britain. The Spanish situation in Mr. Eden's view would be corollary to this in that he believes there can be no real Mediterranean settlement which excludes a clearing up of Italian intentions for the future with respect to Spain. From several sources I gather that the present Foreign Office view supports Mr. Eden. This view sees the wisest approach to Anglo-Italian and Anglo-German relations as a slower process involving the satisfactory elimination of certain material causes of friction as stated in my 98, February 4, 8 p. m. But this view by no means excludes the conclusion of a *rapprochement* with Germany as well as Italy. Needless to say this whole controversy has taken place within the four official walls and with no authentic publicity.

My informant told me that on this cleavage of opinion Mr. Eden actually sent in his signed resignation some 10 days ago, that it caused a good deal of excitement and considerable pressure was brought on him to withdraw it, which was done.¹³ There is no indication yet, however, that any clear-cut decision has been reached by the Government, that is the Prime Minister and the Cabinet in Council, on the issues involved. A well informed and disinterested outside source states that the role of Vansittart¹⁴ in this matter is somewhat obscure. His anti-German feelings are of course well known and there is some reason to believe that his views are along the line of those of Lord Perth.

JOHNSON

¹¹ British Ambassador to Italy.

¹² Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister.

¹³ Mr. Eden finally resigned on February 20, 1938.

¹⁴ Sir Robert G. Vansittart, Chief Diplomatic Adviser, British Foreign Office.

740.00/2991

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] February 25, 1938.

The British Ambassador called to see me this morning.

The Ambassador inquired what my reactions might be to the events of the past few days in England. I said that I could only answer in very general terms, namely, that I trusted that the realistic and energetic efforts which the British Prime Minister was making towards reaching a peaceful solution to the various political adjustments in Europe might meet with success and that there might result therefrom the opportunity for a general world appeasement which would once more make possible the reestablishment of those principles of international conduct to which this Government is so firmly committed and without which it did not believe any permanent peace could be found.

The Ambassador spoke with a good deal of feeling about the debate between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Eden. He said that he was really at a loss to understand the position which had been assumed by Mr. Eden inasmuch as he could not see that any question of principle was involved. He had listened to Mr. Eden's speech which had been rebroadcast by the British Broadcasting Company of this country and had gathered from that speech that Mr. Eden intended to convey the impression that his resignation was due to the fact that he would not agree to conversations with Italy until and unless Italy would give overt evidence of her willingness to withdraw voluntarily from Spain and to cease anti-British propaganda.

The Ambassador stated that just after he finished listening to this address his official mail had come in from London, including memoranda of the conversations which Mr. Eden himself had had in London only the week before with Count Grandi, the Italian Ambassador, and that in these conversations Mr. Eden had evidenced his own desire to reach an agreement through the negotiations now proposed by Mr. Chamberlain and that the Ambassador would judge from these memoranda that Mr. Eden himself was morally and officially obligated to exactly the same course as that which Mr. Chamberlain had now announced. The Ambassador made it entirely plain that he felt that Mr. Eden's resignation was in no sense due to any difference on principles but to other causes which were partly personal and partly differences of opinion as to methods to be employed.

The Ambassador expressed the opinion that there now seemed to be some real prospect of success. He said that he believed that the recent changes in the Nazi government which Hitler had been forced to make had shown that there had existed a situation in Germany far

more serious in character than that so far indicated in the press and that Hitler today, for reasons of domestic policy, is far more desirous of reaching a prompt agreement with Great Britain and France through Italy than at any previous time. The Ambassador emphasized his belief, however, that an agreement with Italy on the part of Great Britain would necessitate a simultaneous agreement with Germany and did not seem to feel that an agreement with Italy was feasible as an isolated agreement rather than as a part of a four-power agreement between Germany, Italy, France and Great Britain.

I inquired of the Ambassador if he had any recent word from his Government and he said nothing other than a copy of the message sent to this Government by Chamberlain and transmitted by our Embassy in London.¹⁵ He said, however, that he would take particular pains to keep me closely informed of any information which he received from his Government as to the progress made in the prospective negotiations.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

741.65/488: Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 8, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 3 p. m.]

49. The Embassy was shown last night the text of the memorandum which Lord Perth proposes to read to Count Ciano¹⁶ this afternoon inaugurating the Anglo-Italian conversations. The two conditions which the British Government recognizes as essential to the successful outcome of the negotiations are:

(1) "Early and rapid progress in Spain." This factor is considered of vital importance by the British Government in view of the necessity of demonstrating that the Anglo-Italian negotiations will bring a positive contribution to world appeasement. Although in accordance with the Italian suggestion the application of the scheme relating to the withdrawal of volunteers has been left to the London Non-Intervention Committee the British Government suggests that some such concrete evidence of the Italian intentions as withdrawal of troops from the Balearic Islands might be given at an early date.

(2) On the other hand the British Government will give a formal undertaking to take steps at Geneva with a view to removing the existing obstacles in the way of recognition of Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia. The British Government considers that recognition must be settled by the League as well and therefore agrees to raise the matter at the May session of the Council. Lord Perth explained that

¹⁵ Not found in Department files.

¹⁶ Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

this delay would also give time to show progress in the withdrawal of the volunteers from Spain.

After stressing the importance of these conditions as well as of an agreement relating to propaganda the British Ambassador proposes to continue discussions with Ciano along the following lines, the purpose being to reach agreements which will become effective at the time of recognition of the Empire.

1. Reaffirmation of the Mediterranean agreements of January 1937¹⁷ with the provision that paragraphs 4 and 5 relating to the *status quo* shall be opened to the accession of other Mediterranean powers.

2. Assurances that the Italian garrison in Libya will be reduced and full exchange of military information between the two Governments relating to the Mediterranean and Red Sea areas.

3. The British Government proposes to ask the Italian Government if it is now prepared to adhere to the London Naval Treaty of 1936.¹⁸

4. The British Government is asking for a cessation of propaganda creating difficulty for it in the formulation of its policy toward Palestine or in its administration of the mandate, as well as recognition by the Italian Government that any changes in the status of the mandate would not be construed as affecting the *status quo* in the Mediterranean. Similar assurances are being requested in respect of Syria. With regard to Arabia the Italian Government is being asked to respect the *status quo* and to agree that neither Government will seek a privilege position in the Red Sea.

5. With respect to anti-British propaganda in the Italian press a formula is to be worked out putting an end both to anti-British and anti-French propaganda. In this connection Lord Perth will explain to Ciano that the Prime Minister has issued an appeal to the British press to refrain from articles or editorials of a character hostile toward Italy.

6. After *de jure* recognition by Great Britain of Italian conquest of Ethiopia has taken place the British Government proposes to conclude a final settlement of the Sudan Kenya and British Somaliland frontiers. It is also requesting a reaffirmation of the assurance given to the League on June 29, 1936, to the effect that Italy is willing to accept the principle that no other military duties shall be required of the Abyssinian natives except those relating to policing and territorial defense. In other words Italy is being asked to reaffirm its commitment not to raise a native army in the conquered territory. A reaffirmation of the previous Italian undertaking to respect British interests in the Lake Tsana region is likewise being sought as well as an agreement on the part of Italy to afford facilities to missionaries in Ethiopia without distinction of nationality or religion; in other words to apply

¹⁷ British Cmd. 5348, Italy No. 1 (1937) : *Declaration by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Italian Government Regarding the Mediterranean* [With an Exchange of Notes Regarding the Status Quo in the Western Mediterranean Dated December 31, 1936], Rome, January 2, 1937.

¹⁸ Signed at London, March 25, 1936; see *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, pp. 22 ff.

the provisions of article 11 of the Treaty of Saint-Germain[-en-Laye] of September 11 [10], 1919,¹⁹ to Abyssinian territory. The British Government also desires to extend its commercial treaty with Italy to Abyssinia thereby guaranteeing freedom of travel and communications and fair treatment to British trade in the Italian colonies.

Prior to the *de jure* recognition by Great Britain of Ethiopia the British Government proposes a declaration on the part of the two Governments that in their relations with respect to the colonies the policy of the "good neighbor" will be followed. The British Government is likewise requesting some indication of the Italian intentions with respect to the future of Ras Tafari.²⁰

Lord Perth expects that some difficulty may be experienced in connection with the delay in recognition but hopes to conclude the negotiations within a fortnight and to publish a communiqué outlining their general provisions. Perth further said that he hoped that advantage will be taken of the interval between the conclusion of the negotiations and the entry into effect of the agreements after the League Council meeting early in May to permit similar negotiations between Italy and France.

The British Ambassador has promised to keep me informed of the progress of the negotiations and has suggested, evidently under instructions, that the Embassy might be the best channel through which the American Government could be kept informed.

Repeated to London.

PHILLIPS

741.65/489 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 10, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received March 10—6:50 p. m.]

56. My telegram No. 49, March 8, 1 p. m. The following account of Perth's conversation with Ciano on March 8 has been given the Embassy in strict confidence.

The British Ambassador read to Ciano a memorandum outlining the various points mentioned in my telegram under reference and was informed in reply that the Italian Government for the present had no other questions to add to the agenda but would reserve its right to do so subsequently. Ciano promised to refer the points raised to the Duce and it was agreed that the conversation should be considered as having a purely preliminary character.

¹⁹ *Foreign Relations*, 1928, vol. I, p. 437.

²⁰ Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia.

The principal questions which apparently may give rise to certain difficulties are: (1) the extension of the Mediterranean agreement to other powers and (2) the Spanish question.

With respect to the first, if the pact is to be open to accession, by means of a unilateral declaration, of the other Mediterranean powers the question will arise as to the inclusion of Spain. Any Mediterranean pact without Spain would seem in Italian opinion incomplete; and Italy would not apparently be willing to accept the adherence of both Spanish Governments while on the other hand Great Britain would not be prepared to exclude the Republican Government.

While Ciano expressed considerable disappointment over the necessity of the delay in recognition by Great Britain of the Italian conquest in Abyssinia he seemed to attach more importance to the Spanish question and remarked that "a settlement of the Spanish question might postpone the conclusion of the agreement beyond the May Council." Ciano asked the British Ambassador to determine what the British Government required as evidence that satisfactory progress had been made in Spain. He pointed out that in the matter of withdrawal from the Balearic Islands there were no Italian land forces there but only a certain number of Italian airplanes with some Italian and some Spanish pilots. He thought that it might be difficult to do anything about this since the question of airplanes had not been raised at the London Committee, but promised to look into the matter. He also wished to know whether the conclusion of an Anglo-Italian agreement was dependent upon the practical application of the British formula for the withdrawal of volunteers which had been agreed to by the Italian Government as the preliminary to begin the conversation and if so exactly what was meant by "practical application". In this connection Ciano gave formal assurances that Italy had every intention of loyally implementing its acceptance of the British formula. It was thereupon agreed that the British Ambassador would seek further instructions on these points the solution of which would remove the greatest obstacle to the satisfactory conclusion of the negotiations.

In discussing the question of propaganda Ciano pointed out that the anti-British propaganda in the Italian press had practically ceased; that such propaganda was a consequence and not a cause of Anglo-Italian difficulties and that it could easily be handled if an agreement were reached.

In the matter of Italy's adherence to the London Naval Treaty Ciano gave the impression that provided other matters were settled this subject would present no practical difficulties.

The British Ambassador informs me that Ciano spoke with the greatest possible earnestness to the effect that the Anglo-Italian settlement would be the greatest step toward peace in Europe which

could be taken at the present time; and from other sources it appears that the Italian Government is most anxious to conclude an agreement as early as possible—possibly before Hitler's arrival in May.

PHILLIPS

741.65/499 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 13, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 6:25 p. m.]

64. My 56, March 10, 7 p. m. With regard to the British-Italian negotiations Lord Perth has informed me that he has suggested to Count Ciano the advisability of laying aside for the present two of the points under consideration: (1) The Spanish question, and (2) the adhesion of other governments to a Mediterranean pact, and to proceed to discuss all the other points involved. Count Ciano readily consented to this procedure and on Tuesday next the conversations will be continued along these lines.

Lord Perth feels that it may be difficult for the Italians to withdraw unilaterally from Spain but inasmuch as they are sincerely anxious to do so it would not be fair to them to let the negotiations drop merely because Moscow may be the stumbling block in the plan for the more general withdrawal of volunteers.

PHILLIPS

741.65/536 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, April 15, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received April 15—4:22 p. m.]

319. For the Secretary and the Under Secretary. Following personal and confidential letter dated April 14 just received from Lord Halifax.²¹

“You will remember that we spoke together the other day on the subject of the conversations now proceeding between my Government and the Italian Government with a view to the settlement of all matters outstanding between them. I am glad to say that these conversations are now reaching their final stage and I have every reason to believe that an agreement will be signed by Lord Perth, our Ambassador in Rome, and the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs within the next day or two.²²”

²¹ Successor to Anthony Eden as British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, March 1, 1938.

²² The Anglo-Italian agreement was signed on April 16, 1938; for text, see League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. cxcv, p. 77.

As you know we have through our Embassy in Washington been trying to keep the President in touch with the developments of these conversations and I think perhaps it might be useful if I were to attempt to give you some account of the contents of the agreement which we hope shortly to sign.

A number of instruments forming part of the agreement will be annexed to a protocol which will provide that they shall come into force at a date to be determined together by the two Governments and that upon their taking effect negotiations will be opened (the Egyptian Government being invited to participate where necessary) for the purposes of dealing with certain questions such as frontiers and trade, affecting their relations in East Africa. In this connection there is to be in the meantime a 'bon voisinage' agreement which the United Kingdom, Italy and (in respect of the Anglo-Egyptian Soudan) Egypt will sign.

The instruments annexed to the protocol will comprise (a) a reaffirmation of the declaration signed by the United Kingdom and Italy on the 2d January 1937 regarding the Mediterranean and of the exchange of notes between them of the 31st December 1936 respecting the *status quo* in the Western Mediterranean; (b) an agreement for the periodical exchange of military information in regard to the two parties' forces in certain parts of Africa, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and providing for advance information regarding decisions to provide new naval or air bases in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Red Sea or its approaches; (c) an agreement providing that there shall be no conflict between their respective policies in certain areas in the Middle East, more particularly Saudi Arabia and the Yemen; and (d) a declaration providing that one party shall not engage in propaganda against the other. There will also be declarations on certain African matters of particular interest to His Majesty's Government such as the sources of the Nile in Ethiopia (Lake Tsana), the undesirability of raising large native armies and the treatment of missionaries in Ethiopia. A declaration reaffirming the intention of the United Kingdom and Italy to abide by the Suez Canal Convention of 1888 will also be made.

Other subjects will be dealt with by exchanges of letters. These will include the reduction by Italy of her forces in Libya by 1000 men a week until peace time strength is reached and her accession to the London Naval Treaty of 1936. In regard to Spain Count Ciano will send Lord Perth a letter confirming the Italian Government's full adherence to the United Kingdom formula for the proportional evacuation of the foreign volunteers from that country and pledging the Italian Government to apply such evacuation on conditions to be determined by the Non-Intervention Committee on the basis that formula. He will reaffirm an assurance previously given to His Majesty's Government that if this evacuation had not been completed at the termination of the civil war all remaining Italian volunteers will forthwith leave Spanish territory and all war material be withdrawn. He will also reaffirm a previous assurance that the Italian Government have no territorial or political aims and seek no privileged economic position in Spanish territories (including Spanish zone of Morocco) and do not intend to keep any armed forces there. In reply to this letter Lord Perth will take note of these assurances and will state that His Majesty's Government regard a settlement of the

Spanish question as a prerequisite of the entry into force of the agreement reached between themselves and the Italian Government. In the same letter he will then turn to the subject of Ethiopia and will inform Count Ciano that His Majesty's Government being desirous that such obstacles as may at present be held to impede the freedom of member states as regards recognition of Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia should be removed, intend to take steps at the forthcoming meeting of the Council of the League of Nations for the purpose of clarifying the situation of member states in this regard.

I should add that while the agreement will be signed as we hope very shortly it will not as you will notice from the account of the protocol given above, enter into force until 'such date as the two Governments shall together determine'. You will have seen that we have given assurances in Parliament that we shall not conclude this agreement until we are satisfied regarding a settlement of the Spanish problem and so far as we are concerned we shall determine the date when the agreement shall enter into force by reference to the Spanish question. On their side the Italian Government will no doubt determine that date by reference to the steps we may take regarding the recognition of Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia.

From what I have said you will see that the agreement is a fairly comprehensive one and it was in fact our object to try and dispose of all questions outstanding between the two Governments.

The Prime Minister and I hope very much that the President will share our view that this agreement embodies a real contribution towards world appeasement. The state of the world is such that in our opinion it is essential to try and get rid of all removable causes of friction. There are, alas, so many causes which are not easily removable, e. g., deep-seated cleavages due to ideological convictions and ultra-nationalistic sentiments, that we are the more bound to do what lies within our power to get rid of those that are removable. But to do so means looking facts in the face and this we have attempted to do in the present agreement. Our hope is that we may get more than is written into the protocol and agreements, through a genuine improvement in the relations between the two countries, and by a real cooperation between them, which may lead to better things in the future.

Should the President share these views I need hardly say how grateful both the Prime Minister and myself would be should he feel able to give some public indication of his approval of the agreement itself and of the principles which have inspired it."

KENNEDY

765.84/52963

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] April 18, 1938.

The Chinese Ambassador²³ called to see me this morning and informed me that he was instructed by his Government to inquire what the attitude of the United States might be with regard to the initiative

²³ Chengting T. Wang.

taken by the Government of Great Britain in assembling a meeting of the Council of the League of Nations to take up the consideration of the recognition of the conquest of Ethiopia by Italy.

I told the Ambassador that it was, of course, not necessary for me to remind him that this Government was not a member of the League of Nations and was therefore not in a position where it had to determine its policy with regard to the initiative taken by the British Government. I reminded the Ambassador that he well knew that this Government for some years past had taken a consistent position with regard to the non-recognition of the acquisition of territory secured through the exercise of force and that this Government had become a party to an Inter-American agreement based upon this principle. I said that it would seem to be clear that this Government, consequently, had believed in the principle at issue and had in many practical ways made its position with regard thereto very plain. I said that in so far as the immediate question was concerned, this Government had reached no determination and intended to make no departure from the attitude which it had hitherto assumed until after the nations members of the League of Nations had determined what their own policy would be with regard thereto. I said that of course I did not wish to intimate to the Ambassador that the United States would not consider the question in its broadest aspect nor that it would not weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the problem should the United States independently reach the conclusion that the recognition of the Italian Empire was an essential and integral part of a measure for world appeasement.

The Ambassador then inquired what the feeling of this Government might be with regard to the recent signed accord between Great Britain and Italy. I replied that this Government had upon several occasions officially stated the principles by which it was guided in its international relations; that among these principles in which it believed was the solution through pacific negotiation of controversies and difficulties which arose between governments as opposed to the solution of controversies through the exercise of force. I said, consequently, that in as much as the British-Italian agreement was obviously the result of an effort on the part of those two governments to reach a friendly solution of the difficulties which had arisen between them through pacific negotiation, the result was viewed with sympathy by the United States and with the very earnest hope that the accord when it went into effect might prove to be a factor in the furtherance of world peace.

I inquired of the Ambassador what the opinion of his own Government might be. He told me that the Chinese Government and he himself viewed the reaching of the Italo-British agreement with the utmost satisfaction; that the Chinese Government felt that it not only

marked a point where peace in Europe might be more likely of attainment, but also that it made it possible for Great Britain to be relieved of pressure within the European scene and that Great Britain consequently would from now on be enabled to take a far more active part in the furtherance of peace in the Far East.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

741.65/536a

President Roosevelt to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, April 18, 1938.

I have just read Halifax's communication to Kennedy—and I suppose the last paragraph needs some answer. Will you talk to me about this at your convenience.

F[RANKLIN] D. R[OOSEVELT]

741.65/536a

The Acting Secretary of State to President Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, April 18, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: With reference to our telephone conversation of this morning, I am enclosing herewith for your consideration a suggestion of what you might wish to say at your press conference tomorrow with regard to the British-Italian Agreement.²⁴

I have spoken on the telephone to the Secretary and he is in accord with the general lines of this suggestion.²⁵

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

SUMNER WELLES

741.65/541b : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, April 19, 1938—7 p. m.

160. The President made the following statement at his press conference this afternoon:

“As this Government has on frequent occasions made it clear, the United States, in advocating the maintenance of international law and order, believes in the promotion of world peace through the

²⁴ See telegram No. 160, April 19, 7 p. m., to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom, *infra*.

²⁵ See “Statements by the Secretary of State”, Department of State, *Press Releases*, May 14, 1938, p. 575.

friendly solution by peaceful negotiation between nations of controversies which may arise between them. It has also urged the promotion of peace through the finding of means for economic appeasement. It does not attempt to pass upon the political features of accords such as that recently reached between Great Britain and Italy, but this Government has seen the conclusion of an agreement with sympathetic interest because it is proof of the value of peaceful negotiations."

WELLES

741.65/633

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] April 20, 1938.

The French Ambassador called to see me this evening to inquire the purport and meaning of the statement made yesterday by the President with regard to the signing of the British-Italian accord. I told the Ambassador that it would seem to me that the statement of the President spoke for itself; that the President had made it clear that this Government was in no sense passing upon nor weighing the merits of the political features of that agreement and had merely expressed the gratification of the United States upon the finding of a solution through pacific negotiation of controversial questions which had arisen between two friendly governments. I made it clear to the Ambassador that it was the method of finding this solution which the President had expressed sympathetic interest in and not the contents of the agreement itself.

The Ambassador inquired whether this Government had reached any decision with respect to recognition of the Ethiopian conquest. I replied to the Ambassador that the position of this Government was exactly the same as it had been during the past two and a half years; that the nations members of the League of Nations were to determine their own attitude at the meeting of the Council scheduled for May 9 next and that this Government would subsequently determine whether it would modify in any manner the position it had assumed. I said to the Ambassador that this Government had been outstanding in its support of the principle of nonrecognition of the acquisition of territory through force and the consideration of any deviation from that stand could only be undertaken if in the independent judgment of this Government it believed it desirable to do so as an integral part of a major world appeasement.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

I. INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ASPECTS¹

852.00/7162: Telegram

The Ambassador in Cuba (Wright) to the Secretary of State

HABANA, January 5, 1938—noon.

[Received 4:05 p. m.]

2. Embassy's despatch No. 374, December 20.² I have just received a note dated December 30 from the Cuban Secretary of State in which he refers to his *note verbale* dated October 21 inviting the Government of the United States to join with the other American countries in extending good offices to the warring factions in Spain.³ The Secretary of State informs me that 11 American nations have supported his gesture; 6, while expressing hope for its success, regret that they cannot associate themselves with it because of their policy of nonintervention; and 2 condition their acceptance on a prior consultation with the parties directly interested in the Spanish problem. After expressing thanks for the welcome given the Cuban initiative and pointing out the special ties between Spain and the American peoples of Spanish origin, the Secretary of State announces that the Government of Cuba will consult the Government of the Spanish Republic and General Francisco Franco confidentially concerning whether they would be disposed to accept the tender of its good offices.

WRIGHT

852.00/7226

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

No. 290

BARCELONA, January 5, 1938.

[Received January 20.]

SIR: During the course of an interview a few days ago, the Minister of National Defence, Señor Indalecio Prieto, expressed to me his satisfaction with the outcome of the Government's unexpected offensive

¹ Continued from *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 215-469.

² *Ibid.*, p. 466.

³ See telegram No. 82, October 20, 1937, 1 p. m., from the Ambassador in Cuba, *ibid.*, p. 428.

against Teruel. He stated that he hoped that the operations there would serve to correct the impression abroad that the Government had been reduced to impotence and was merely awaiting the final blow of the enemy, and expressed the conviction that the Government's drive has definitely disarticulated the long heralded rebel offensive.

In this connection, Señor Prieto spoke with regret of the inability of his Government to purchase military supplies in the United States, and remarked that our attitude and that of other nations from whom a different treatment might have been expected, had almost "strangled" the Government. As a result, it was reduced to the expedient of negotiating with intermediaries, some of whom were mere adventurers and all of whom exacted enormous profits. In addition to the generally objectionable features of such dealings, the Government could not stabilize its plans or make long-term military calculations, since it never knew when its supplies would arrive or in what quantities or qualities. Nonetheless, thanks to Russia and to Mexico, the essentials were acquired in a fairly satisfactory manner—although he had detected a growing diffidence on the part of Russia "who was fearful that what all the world already knew would be discovered, namely, that she was selling arms to the Government". He added that contrary to the belief in some quarters, Spain receives no favors from Russia, since she pays the full market price for all that she obtains from that country.

It is felt by many observers that Señor Prieto is the vital element in the present Government, and that his energetic and purposeful direction of affairs is responsible for much of the improvement that is believed to be taking place in the loyalist forces.

Respectfully yours,

WALTER C. THURSTON

124.52/219

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

No. 292

BARCELONA, January 10, 1938.

[Received January 27.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to my despatch number 289, of January 4, 1938,⁴ and to report that the Secretary General of the Ministry of State has now informed me as follows with respect to the recent refusal of the President of the Council of Ministers to receive me:

Following our conversation, Señor Ureña⁵ went personally to the

⁴Not printed.

⁵Secretary General of the Ministry of State.

Presidential office, where he received confirmation of the opinion he had expressed to me—namely, that Señor Negrín's refusal to receive me was not based on personal grounds but rather on a fixed policy. He stated that the Spanish Government is becoming increasingly displeased by the continued residence abroad and in Madrid of members of the diplomatic corps accredited to it, and that as a means of giving point to his views about the matter, Señor Negrín has determined that he will not receive any Chargé d'Affaires ad interim whose Ambassador or Minister is deliberately and continually residing elsewhere than Barcelona. Señor Ureña added that prior to my last interview with Señor Negrín, in Valencia, he had already refused to receive the British Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, Mr. J. H. Leche, and thereafter (as reported in my first despatch) he had refused to receive the French Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, Mr. Payard—who, incidentally, was so incensed that he threatened to return to France at once. In order to be consistent, Señor Negrín has now felt it necessary to refuse to receive me. At this point I expressed to Señor Ureña my regret that I had not been apprised of the situation immediately and in an appropriate manner—instead of being permitted to make repeated requests for an audience, only to be told at last that Señor Negrín was too busy to see me. Señor Ureña replied that this of course was much regretted and was not to be attributed to Señor Negrín but to his subordinates.

During this conversation, Señor Ureña further informed me that the Ministry of State has notified the members of the diplomatic corps still residing in Madrid that they must come to Barcelona.⁶ Those who have alleged as the reason for their failure to leave Madrid that they have refugees in their Missions have been assured that they may bring their refugees with them and continue to grant them asylum here. As is reported in my confidential telegram of this date (No. 858)⁷ one of the purposes of the new general evacuation order is to bring pressure on such Missions to come to this city.

As the Department is aware, France has established its Embassy in Barcelona, and the new Ambassador, Mr. Labonne, has now taken up residence here. The British Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Leche, has been given the rank (perhaps local only) of Minister, and the Ambassador, Sir Henry Chilton, has left Hendaye—presumably not to return. It obviously would be highly advantageous to the Government if it could bring about the removal of Ambassador Bowers from Saint-Jean-de-Luz to Barcelona, and I am inclined to believe that its suc-

⁶ An Executive Order dated January 3, 1938, and published in the *Gaceta* of January 5, 1938, made compulsory the evacuation of Madrid within 30 days of all persons "who cannot justify their continued presence there by virtue of military service or indispensable war service." (124.52/211)

⁷ January 10, 7 p. m., not printed.

cesses in the cases of the British and French Embassies may have induced it to bring the matter to our attention in the inept manner described.

I have, at the moment, no information with respect to the decisions that may have been reached by the several diplomatic missions in Saint-Jean-de-Luz and Madrid with respect to the desire of the Spanish Government that they establish themselves in Barcelona.

Respectfully yours,

WALTER C. THURSTON

852.00/7254 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, January 25, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received 6:40 p. m.]

135. In the course of our conversation last night, Delbos⁸ said there was one welcomed step toward peace in which he hoped the United States might now be ready to participate.

It was evident today that the war in Spain would go on for a long time. The Government was stronger than it had ever been. Franco was also strong. In addition, there had been an intensely interesting development on the government side. Communist influence had diminished enormously and at the moment the Spanish Government, while radical, was by no means Communist and was definitely hostile to Moscow.

In view of the probability that the war would drag on for an indefinite period with increasing destruction and suffering throughout Spain and in view of the fact that neither Franco nor the Government had any hope of a speedy victory, he believed that the time had come when mediation might be acceptable to both sides.

There was only one form of mediation, however, which he believed might be effective. That would be an appeal to both sides issued either simultaneously or jointly by the President of the United States and the Pope. He recalled that he had spoken to me in this sense many months ago (see my telegram No. 1080, July 30, 1 p. m., 1937⁹). At that time the situation had not been nearly so favorable to mediation as it was today. He was certain the Pope would be ready to offer mediation at any minute and he would like to know whether or not the President might consider simultaneous or joint action with the Pope.

He added that simultaneous appeals from the President and the Pope would be splendid but that a joint appeal would be much more powerful.

⁸ Yvon Delbos, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

⁹ *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 367.

Delbos said that he was confident that the French Government had sufficient influence to persuade the Barcelona Government to accept mediation and added that he believed the British Government had sufficient influence with Franco to persuade him to accept mediation.

Delbos asked if I could ascertain from my Government if there were any possibility that the President might be disposed to take action along this line. I said that I would ask for instructions but requested Delbos to refrain from discussing this matter with anyone except Chautemps¹⁰ and to refrain from sending telegrams on this subject in any direction. He agreed that this was wise, added that Mussolini certainly had the French codes and might act to forestall any such action if one contemplated and the matter must not become the subject of gossip in the French Government or the Quai d'Orsay. He added that he felt that if the President should be interested in exploring the idea further he could arrange with the Papal Nuncio in Paris to have any communications to and from Rome handled not by telegraph but by courier.

I should be glad to have your views with regard to this matter tomorrow if possible as Chautemps is to lunch with me on Thursday January 27 and may wish to discuss the question.

BULLITT

852.00/7254: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, January 26, 1938—6 p. m.

40. Your 135, January 25, 2 p. m. I do not feel that the President would be interested in exploring the idea suggested by Delbos for an appeal to both sides in the Spanish conflict to accept the President's mediation, either alone or in conjunction with the Pope. In fact, we have on two occasions been pressed by Latin-American countries to join them in a similar move, but have declined on the ground that it was inconsistent with our policy of nonintervention in European matters. All told, the possibility of mediation in a conflict between ideologies holds out little hope of success and would inevitably be regarded by public opinion in this country as injecting us into the European picture.

I have discussed this telegram with the President, who has signified his concurrence.

HULL

¹⁰ Camille Chautemps, Prime Minister of France.

852.00/7288 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, January 31, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received February 3—9 : 11 a. m.]

870. An official statement places the number of deaths from yesterday's air raids at 150 as of last night. Unofficial estimates place them at twice that figure.

The statement also asserts that the Government's offer to desist from raids in cities in the far rear guard, quoted in my 867, January 29, 10 a. m.,¹¹ has been rejected by a speaker over the Salamanca radio.

THURSTON

852.00/7278 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, January 31, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received January 31—3 : 30 p. m.]

79. I was called to the Foreign Office and informed that Mr. Eden¹² would be grateful if I would inform you of the following:

The recent intensification of air bombardment of towns in Spain had moved Mr. Eden to draft a telegram to both parties in Spain without taking the matter up first with the Non-Intervention Committee as was done last June when the Committee addressed communications to the two parties through British representatives.¹³

The telegram points out that the British public is deeply stirred by the recent bombings and recalls the above-mentioned communications of the Non-Intervention Committee of last June urging that both sides abstain from the destruction of all open towns and villages and other objectives of a non-military character, whether by bombardment from the air, or by land or sea, or any other means. The telegram points out that this is based on universally accepted principles and that the killing and injuring of civil population is inadmissible. The telegram adds that the British Government realizes the difficulties which exist in determining what is a military objective. The telegram states that if the two parties in Spain would desire it the British Government stands ready to extend its good offices with a view to the amelioration of the suffering of the civil population. In conclusion the two parties are informed that the telegram will not be made public until their replies are received.

¹¹ Not printed.¹² Anthony Eden, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.¹³ See *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 296-332.

Mr. Eden hoped the Secretary of State would be willing to make a public statement to the effect that the United States Government understands that the British Government views with great concern the recent intensification of air bombardment of towns in Spain; that the United States Government likewise understands that the British Government is contemplating an approach to the two parties in Spain having in view the greater security of the civil population; and that this has the sympathy of the United States Government.

In conveying the foregoing the Foreign Office said that naturally Mr. Eden would be glad if the United States Government might feel in a position to make a similar approach to the two parties in Spain.

JOHNSON

852.00/7283 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, February 1, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 10:25 a. m.]

4. Referring to my telegram of January 31, 11 a. m.,¹⁴ the press announces this morning that General Franco signed a decree January 31 by which Nationalist Government is constituted as follows:

Presidency, General Franco; Vice Presidency and Foreign Affairs, General Francisco Gomez Jordana; Justice, Tomas Dominguez Arevalo; National Defense, General Fidel Davila y Arrondo; Public Order, General Severiano Martinez Anido; Interior, Ramon Serrano Suner; Treasury, Andres Amado; Industry and Commerce, Juan Antonio Suances; Air [*Agriculture*], Raimundo Fernandez Cuesta y Melero; Education, Sainz Rodriguez; Public Works, Alfonso Pena y Boeuf; Syndicates, Gonzales Bueno.

First session of Government and swearing in will take place Wednesday February 2. Ambassador informed.

BAY

871.4016 Jews/82 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

[Extracts]^{14a}

PARIS, February 1, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received 4:46 p. m.]

170. I discussed with Delbos a number of matters:

2. *Spain.* Delbos said that he and Chautemps and indeed every one in France was horrified by the most recent bombardment of Barcelona.

¹⁴ Not printed.

^{14a} For portions of this telegram not printed here, see p. 5.

He was having prepared at the present moment a statement for Chautemps to make on this subject in which there would be a condemnation of such acts of barbarity.

He had suggested to the British Government last night that the London Committee should be summoned at once and should issue an appeal to both belligerents in Spain to refrain from the bombardment of open towns and civilian populations. He added that he had also suggested to Eden that it would be most desirable, if possible, to obtain the adherence of the Pope and the President of the United States to this appeal. I gave no encouragement to this suggestion.

Delbos went on to say that he intended to make a speech on the 11th of February on the general subject of foreign affairs in which he would suggest an immediate agreement between all nations to eliminate from warfare the bombardment of open towns. He added that he was certain that Hitler would support this proposal and he hoped that the negotiation which might arise from this speech would improve the general atmosphere in Europe.

In this connection he said that he hoped that if the President or the Secretary of State should intend to make a speech on or about the 11th of February it might be possible in that speech to have the idea expressed that the bombardment of open towns should be eliminated from warfare. He said that he understood fully that the United States would not wish to enter into any joint action; but that he felt that a mere expression of opinion from the United States in the same general sense as his words, entirely independent and seemingly unconnected, would have an immense effect. He added that if either the President or the Secretary of State should consider it at all possible to include a remark of this sort in a speech on or about February 11 he would be glad to submit to me in advance the text of the speech which he would make on or about that date.

I replied that I had no idea whether either the President or the Secretary of State might be thinking of making an address on or about February 11.

I venture to suggest that if either the President or yourself should intend to make such a speech a condemnation of the practice of bombing open towns might be of considerable assistance in Europe and could evoke nothing but approval in the United States.

I also informed Delbos with regard to the substance of your No. 40, January 26, 6 p. m. He said that his latest information from Spain indicated that Franco had again become extremely confident and that he himself did not now believe that any mediation might be successful.

852.00/7278 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, February 2, 1938—6 p. m.

49. Your 79, January 31, 7 p. m. You may inform the Foreign Office that I shall take an early opportunity to deplore on behalf of the American public recent bombardments from the air of undefended and thickly populated cities.¹⁵ For your information, I think it wiser to make such a statement complete in itself without relation to expressions on the same subject by either the British or French Governments.

HULL

852.00/7289 : Telegram

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary
of State*

BARCELONA, February 3, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received 9:15 p. m.]

874. My 867, January 29, 10 a. m.¹⁶ A further statement on air raids issued today by the Minister of National Defense says that in view of the fact that the British and French Governments now have under consideration the initiative of January 28th, and despite its rejection over the Salamanca radio, orders have been given to the air forces to abstain from all far rear-guard raids and canceling the preparations being made to retaliate for last Sunday's bombardment of Barcelona. The statement concludes with the assertion that while the British and French negotiations are in progress the Republican air forces will confine their activities to cooperation at the front with the army and to vigilance and reconnaissance operations over the rear-guard.

Mr. Lazarescu, en route to France on courier service, was caught in an air raid at Figueras this morning. He telephoned from Perpignan that he had seen the remains of an American ambulance. I have been informed by the Ministry of State, after an investigation by the Ministry of National Defense, that no American was killed there.

THURSTON

¹⁵ Similar instructions were sent to the Ambassador in France in telegram No. 59, February 2, 6 p. m.

¹⁶ Not printed; but see his telegram No. 870, January 31, 11 a. m., p. 154.

852.00/7308 : Telegram

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State*LONDON, February 5, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received February 5—3:45 p. m.]

104. Sir George Mounsey¹⁷ sent for me this afternoon to convey the following information orally on behalf of Mr. Eden, who particularly desired for you to be advised before an official announcement was made:

Since the Nyon Agreement¹⁸ was put into operation its results in suppressing piracy in the Mediterranean have been, until very recently, satisfactory. The recent recrudescence of piracy, however, has shown the necessity for strengthening the naval patrols and causing them to operate under more drastic instructions. Mr. Eden has been in consultation this week with the French and Italian Ambassadors. As a result of the agreement they have reached, instructions are being sent this afternoon to the British naval commanders engaged on this patrol duty to sink any submarine that shows itself on sight. This order becomes effective at midnight tomorrow, February 6. The French and Italian Governments have agreed to issue the same orders at once to take effect at the same time. Both parties in Spain are being advised this afternoon. Mr. Eden will make a full statement in Parliament on Monday.

Mounsey said Mr. Eden realized that this situation was not one in which we are directly concerned but felt that the decision taken was so important from the general shipping point of view that our Government ought to be advised.

JOHNSON

741.65/456 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State*ROME, February 7, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received February 7—4:21 p. m.]

27. My No. 20, February 3.¹⁹ I learn today that the Duce received Lady Austen Chamberlain several days ago and assured her of his earnest wish for the resumption of the friendly relations with England which he desired to reestablish, also a testimonial to her husband. He told her that he was willing to have the British Government select the

¹⁷ British Assistant Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

¹⁸ British Treaty Series No. 38, 1937, *International Agreement for Collective Measures Against Piratical Attacks in the Mediterranean by Submarines, Nyon, September 14, 1937.*

¹⁹ Not printed.

time and place for the conversation and asked her so to inform the British Ambassador.

In a conversation with Lord Perth²⁰ today he expressed the belief that the Duce's conversation with Lady Chamberlain represented a certain amount of progress and that there now remained only two obstacles which should be cleared up probably through the Italian Ambassador in London before the negotiations could take place.²¹ The more important of these obstacles concerned the Spanish situation since there was still uncertainty in both London and Paris whether the Duce would send further reinforcements on a large scale to aid Franco. At the present time it is known that the two opposing forces in Spain with the exception of the air forces in which Franco has superiority are appropriately [*approximately?*] equal. Neither side can make much progress without further foreign assistance. Should the Duce give satisfactory assurance that no more Italian troops will be sent, Perth considers the main obstacle to the conversations would be removed. However, any decision in this respect apparently has not yet been made.

The lesser of the two obstacles related to propaganda. Inasmuch as the Italians have almost as good a case against the British as British have against the Italians the Ambassador considers that it will not be difficult to cancel the mutual complaints.

Perth said further that while Eden was reported to have made some statement to the effect that recognition of the Empire had been demanded by the Italians as a condition precedent to the opening of negotiations Perth himself now felt that this was not wholly correct and that the question could form part of the general settlement.

It may be of significance in this connection to note that the Italian press for the past two days has reflected the change in tone which is alleged to have taken place in the British press regarding relations between Rome and London although it is said in some quarters that this improvement may have been caused by uncertainty in England as to the results of the new changes in Germany. See Embassy's telegram 26, February 7, 6 p. m.²²

PHILLIPS

124.52/221a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France

WASHINGTON, February 11, 1938—5 p. m.

B-411. After full consideration of the pros and cons we have decided that the time has come when your continued residence outside

²⁰ British Ambassador to Italy.

²¹ For correspondence concerning the Anglo-Italian agreement, see pp. 133 ff.

²² Not printed.

of Spain and outside the territory under the jurisdiction of the Government to which you are accredited is no longer advisable and that our interests would best be served by having you return and take up residence in Spain. Naturally we would not wish you to reside in the city of Barcelona under present conditions, but to establish the Embassy in some suburb of your choice, or other Spanish city far enough away to avoid the danger of an aerial bombardment but near enough for you to maintain close and constant contact with the Spanish Government. A telegram giving administrative directions regarding this move will be sent to you shortly, but meanwhile please let us know when possible where you believe you could best establish the Embassy, and how soon you could close up the office in St. Jean de Luz.

HULL

124.52/225 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, February 21, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received February 21—5:25 p. m.]

454. Am prepared to go to Barcelona on your orders and after arrangements can be made following receipt of the further instructions promised. However, you should have a clear picture of the significance of the change. In making inquiries at Barcelona regarding Embassy site Thurston accepts the order as a "change in major [policy?]," as open to such interpretation and thinks it a mistake particularly at this time. He advises that such change should be "most carefully timed". Colonel Fuqua, Military Attaché, wires me from there today: "Suggest no change. Your view is sound." This refers to my view of the inevitable interpretation at this juncture. Whoever, if anyone, is advising you about this Embassy is not of it and clearly not in touch with the undercurrents here.

As matters stand we have maintained our neutrality and the respect of both sides. In the case of the *Nantucket Chief* and the Fernandez case²³ I have just demonstrated the functioning of the Embassy here and our need here when such matters rise. A change at this moment would make no real contribution to the Government and would create hostility on the other side. At this critical juncture in events it does not appear prudent to change a policy to which we have adhered to so long. Have hesitated to send this lest it be misinterpreted but in a

²³ See pp. 262 ff.

matter involving policy affecting our relations with both sides I conceive it my plain duty to tell you what I think.²⁴

BOWERS

852.00/7424

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] February 23, 1938.

The Spanish Ambassador called upon me this morning and said that he had two matters to take up with me, one unimportant and one important. The latter, he said, was his desire urgently to obtain an audience with the President. The Ambassador said that recent developments in Europe had, of course, filled both his Government and himself with increased and renewed anxiety and that the Hitler speech indicating the intention of Germany to secure a victory for the Nationalist regime in Spain had only too soon made itself felt in a practical way. The Ambassador said that he had just had a cable from his Government informing him that in the recent engagements around Teruel the Franco aviation forces had been very greatly augmented through the addition of German planes of the most modern type and that the confidential agents of the Loyalist government had verified the fact that these planes had gone directly to Nationalist Spain from Germany, flying over France during the night hours. Furthermore, important importations of heavy artillery from Germany had been reaching Nationalist Spain in great quantities during the past ten days or so and it was perfectly evident that Germany today was taking a more active participation in the Spanish war than at any previous time. The Ambassador, I have learned from the Mexican Ambassador, has been considering for some time the possibility that the President might consider anew an offer of mediation between the two contending factions in Spain on the part of this Government. The Ambassador today did not specifically confirm his intention in this regard but limited himself to stating that in view of the increasing gravity of the situation in Europe, he felt he should be accorded an opportunity of laying the situation of his Government before the President for the latter's consideration. I told the Ambassador that the President had not yet returned to Washington but that I would lay his request before the President as soon as possible after his return.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

²⁴ By telegram No. 425, February 23, the Secretary of State informed him that the Department would delay sending him further instructions pending a clarification of the situation.

852.00/7468 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, March 8, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received March 9—11: 25 a. m.]

459. Defeat in first naval battle and loss of the *Baleares*, the flag and star ship of insurgents, severe blow to Franco's prestige, and rebel papers thus far have suppressed the slightest references to it. Prieto's claim to have created a new navy as well as army not improbable. Government now has advantage in ships and if crews and officers are now trained effect on the war far reaching.

2. Understood here that 5,000 more troops from Libya just landed at Cadiz, half from Italian hospital ship *Gradisca*, half from warships including destroyer flotilla. These said to have been sent to Guadalajara front. Bay may be able to verify since troops would have gone through Seville.

BOWERS

852.00/7510 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, March 16, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received March 16—3: 53 p. m.]

462. Thompson, British Embassy, informs me abundant evidence of arrival of very large number of German artillery officers; that secret service and police in insurgent territory are under German and Italian control; that the present offensive was planned and is directed by staff officers from Germany and Italy. Thompson from Foreign Office and in charge of Abyssinian affairs there until assigned here.

BOWERS

852.00/7512 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 16, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received 8: 40 p. m.]

418. I have just seen Massigli.²⁵ He said that the succession of victories gained by the Nationalists over the government forces in Spain after the first battle of Teruel has been due entirely to their superiority in aviation and artillery all of which has been furnished

²⁵ René Massigli, Director of Political and Commercial Affairs, French Foreign Office.

by Italy and Germany. He said that beginning with the end of December and continuing through January there have been a marked increase in the number of Italian and German airplanes observed in Spain. He said that while the French Government had no absolute proof that the Germans and Italians had shipped planes to Spain in the past few days there were indications that this had in fact taken place.

Massigli read me a telegram just received from the French Chargé d'Affaires at Rome. This telegram reported reliable information to the effect that at the last meeting of the Fascisti Grand Council Mussolini had declared that he had been given definite assurances by Hitler of complete support for the achievement of Italian objectives. The telegram went on to say that there were unmistakable indications that Mussolini had been deeply impressed by Hitler's success in Austria²⁶ and that he would attempt to follow Hitler's tactics in achieving Italian aims. The Chargé reported that before long it could be expected that Mussolini would proclaim himself the protector of Italians living outside of Italian frontiers, this being aimed particularly at Tunis. The Chargé reported his conviction that Mussolini would use the British negotiations as a means of gaining time, while the victory of the Nationalists in Spain was completed and the establishment of Italian forces in Spain and the Balearics made secure with the deliberate intention of provoking war in the Mediterranean when circumstances were most favorable.

Massigli said that the Chargé d'Affaires on the basis of observation made on the ground in Italy had thus arrived at the same conclusion which the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs had reached sometime ago as being the correct interpretation of the significance of the Rome-Berlin Axis as applied to Italian objectives. See my 403, March 14, 7 p. m.²⁷ reporting conversations with Léger.²⁸ There were people in the government who believed that if war was now inevitable with Italy it would be better to cease immediately the farce of non-intervention and to eject the Italians from Spain and the Balearics rather than to have the war take place a short time hence when Italy had firmly established her forces in these places. He said, however, that as yet there had been no decision to abandon the non-intervention policy. The British were urging caution and he spoke bitterly of the facility with which the British allow themselves to be duped when it is a matter concerning the essential interests of France.

He stated that the situation was very serious.

WILSON

²⁶ See pp. 384 ff.

²⁷ *Ante*, p. 35.

²⁸ Alexis Léger, Secretary-General of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

852.00/7645

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

[Extracts]

No. 1463

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, March 20, 1938.

[Received March 30.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that it is absolutely known, if not admitted by spokesmen of the British Government, that there has been a vast accession of military stores along with the very latest and most powerful of German artillery and bombing planes, and also an increase in the number of Italian guns and planes, in use on the Aragon front. This comes to me from correspondents who have been on the Aragon front. There is no doubt of it.

Whether, as charged specifically, Germany has also sent to Spanish waters a number of her submarines to join the Italian submarines that have been operating for many months, I have no way of knowing.

One fact is beyond question,—that at this hour Germany and Italy are acting openly and on a very large scale in Spain, and that the Government deprived of the artillery and the planes for which she has always been prepared to pay in gold, cannot compete. Man to man, the loyalist army can hold its own; but when the rebels are backed with the latest mechanical instruments of destruction on a great scale no army can stand against such odds.

This is all due absolutely to the Non-Intervention scheme of the British which has tied the hands of France and the other Democracies while making no pretence to enforcing the agreement upon the Fascist Powers.

With a European war seemingly unavoidable within the next year or two, the dominating of Spain from Berlin and Rome, thus surrounding France on all sides with dictatorial enemies becomes a matter of life and death to the French. The French Embassy here admits that there is great excitement in Paris.

There appears to be no doubt that the French Government has proposed to the British the ending of the scandal of "Non-Intervention", and that Mr. Chamberlain²⁹ is ready to break with France and to pin his faith on the good will and veracity of Germany and Italy. All this bears out what I have reported from the first days of the war regarding the attitude of the British Government. I hope that these despatches, merely realistic, have not created the impression that I have been motivated by antipathy for England, for the very opposite is true. In fact I am positive, basing my opinion on a careful reading of all the debates in the Commons and on the tone of the greater part

²⁹ British Prime Minister.

of the English press, that the English people are as faithful to the principles of democracy, to the sanctity of international law and treaties, as ever in their history. . . .

The effect on France is evident in the sharp manner in which she departed from her policy of taking no position until she had consulted with the British Government in the case of Czechoslovakia. The Paris Embassy no doubt is reporting fully on this phase. But from the French Embassy here and from conversation with Frenchmen here and in Biarritz I know that France feels that she has been let down by England. With Chamberlain's idea of holding the European war off two years or so at any cost to principle she can have no sympathy if the two years are to be utilized by her enemies in building up a powerful combination against her. Should Spain become fascistic, and under the domination of German and Italian policy, France will be completely surrounded by enemies and with the Spanish frontier unfortified. The activities of the Germans along the French frontier has caused great uneasiness. I have just driven along the frontier for the first time in several weeks and I find evidence of considerable military activity on this side of the border. There are far more soldiers, and at the place midway between the border and Saint Jean de Luz where on my last visit there was one anti-aircraft gun and a searchlight, there are several guns, more searchlights and the place now swarms with soldiers. Every Frenchman with whom I have talked speaks of mobilization as an event that may come at any moment.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.00/7584

Statement Issued by the Secretary of State on March 21, 1938

Reports from Barcelona leave no doubt of the appalling loss of life among civilians, men, women and children, as a result of the recent air raids.

I have on several occasions stated the position of this Government with respect to the bombing of civilian populations from the air. This position is based first on considerations of humanity and secondly on the consideration that no theory of war can justify such conduct.

On this occasion, when the loss of life among innocent non-combatants is perhaps greater than ever before in history, I feel that I am speaking for the whole American people when I voice a sense of horror at what has taken place at Barcelona, and when I express the

earnest hope that in future civilian centers of population will not be made the objectives of military bombardment from the air.

[For text of a letter from the Secretary of State to Mr. Raymond Leslie Buell of the Foreign Policy Association, dated March 21, 1938, regarding the revoking of the Proclamation of May 1, 1937, relating to the export of arms, etc., to Spain, see Department of State, *Press Releases*, March 26, 1938, page 398.]

124.52/230 : Telegram

The Chargé in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, March 22, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 11:50 a. m.]

911. Your 430 March 18, 6 p. m.³⁰ In view of the dislocation of government and other contacts, and virtual paralyzation of consular services through lack of transportation facilities for public, that would result as well as the insuperable transportation problem that would be created for the personnel, I have been reluctant to leave Barcelona. I have felt that no unwarranted risk was run thereby whereas a degree of danger would attend the unavoidable and frequent journeys into and out of Barcelona through its industrial outskirts. Since the recent bombardments, Embassy and Consulate work has been carried on at our joint residence in Tibidabo, a reasonably safe quarter. I shall now, however, make arrangements to remove both official and residential quarters outside Barcelona.

THURSTON

852.00/7581 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 23, 1938—noon.

[Received March 23—8:55 a. m.]

71. Under instructions from his Government the British Ambassador has pointed out to Count Ciano³¹ the deplorable effect upon world public opinion and the danger to the continuance of the policy of non-intervention which the aerial bombardment of Barcelona is creating. While at first Ciano replied that the Italian Government had

³⁰ Not printed; it contained instructions to make arrangements to transfer the office and residential quarters of the Embassy and Consulate General staff to some place outside Barcelona (124.52/229b).

³¹ Galeazzo Ciano, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

no control over the actions of General Franco's army he is said to have been impressed by the arguments advanced by the Ambassador and to have promised to use his influence to "prevent that sort of warfare". He also assured Lord Perth that not a man, gun, airplane, or ship had left Italy for Spain during the past month.

The Embassy has also been informed that the French and British representatives to the Vatican have requested the Vatican's assistance in endeavoring to put an end to aerial attacks upon centers of civilian population.

PHILLIPS

852.00/7603 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 25, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received March 25—10:30 a. m.]

73. In the course of my conversation with the Foreign Minister yesterday I mentioned the Secretary of State's press statement showing the attitude of the American Government with regard to the recent bombing of Barcelona. Ciano argued that there were two points in regard to Barcelona which should be borne in mind: one, it was not an "open" city, it was not only the center of the "Red" Government but also the center of large military supplies, men, and ammunition; and two, the Italian Government had no authority or direction over Italian planes operating in Spain which were directed exclusively by General Franco. Ciano then added, however, that the Italian Government had advised against the continuance of this method of warfare and called my attention to the fact that bombardments had ceased.

PHILLIPS

852.00/7690

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1472

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, March 28, 1938.

[Received April 5.]

SIR: I have the honor to submit certain facts and conclusions regarding the rebel offensive in Aragon.

1. It is admitted from every source that the rebels have an unprecedented number of pursuit and bombing planes and artillery but recently brought in from Germany and Italy, and that the planes and artillery are operated by German and Italian officers.

2. It is admitted, and in insurgent circles even boasted, that high officers of the General Staffs of the German and Italian armies are on the Aragon front in absolute control of the strategy and in actual command of the operations.

3. There appears to be no doubt of the accuracy of Prieto's report that within the last two or three days seven German merchantmen with a convoy of one battleship, thought to be the *Admiral Scheer*, and two destroyers, all German, have been seen off Almeria, thought to be headed to the Balearic Islands where recently the Germans, as well as the Italians, have established their base.

4. From several people who have recently returned from the Catalan border, I hear that some things are going in to the loyalists from France, but these are described as in "small boxes marked food", and as probably containing nothing more than cartridges. Certainly no planes or artillery have crossed.

5. Under all these circumstances Mr. Chamberlain, who now manipulates the so-called Non-Intervention Committee, sees to it that there shall be no meeting of this committee which has not met since the recent influx of German and Italian material began; and it appears from the press that Mr. Chamberlain is determined that there shall be no meeting of the Assembly of the League to consider the situation.

6. It is reported from Barcelona that a unification for war purposes of the U.G.T.,³² the socialist union, the C.N.T.,³³ the syndicalist union, and the Anarchists, has been effected.

Observations.

Unless the ban against selling arms or ammunition, even to anti-aircraft guns to the Spanish Government is lifted by the European Democracies, the loyalist army cannot possibly compete against the odds piled up by the unchallenged and open flooding of the Franco army with material from the Fascist Powers. Unless the Government can get planes and artillery to offset the present advantage, the rebels should win in the present offensive without difficulty and very soon.

The admission by the British Ministry that not one word has been said in reprimand or protest to Germany or Italy for their violations of the Non-Intervention Pact they signed since in late September, 1936, needs no commentary. During the intervening period this Committee has been most zealous in enforcing the pact against the Spanish Government. That this policy is to continue there can be no reasonable doubt.

The so-called unification of the two big unions and the anarchists in Barcelona does not impress me as a favorable development for the Government. There never has been any real cooperation between the two unions and I do not think there ever will be. I know from such men as Viscount Mambias, representing Franco, that for months there have been frequent conferences in Biarritz between representatives of the syndicalists and the Falangists, looking to an amalgamation; I know that the insurgents have counted confidently on the ultimate assistance of the syndicalists; and I know that the syndicalists are against the Spanish constituted authority.

³² Unión General de Trabajadores.

³³ Confederación Nacional de Trabajo.

The purported unification appeals [*appears?*] to me as something to make more effective the treachery of these people at a time when it will count the most. By the "unification" it will be possible in the event of the treachery of the syndicalists to throw the whole defence into confusion at the most critical moment. And that which is true of the syndicalists is even more true of the anarchists.

The attempt to whip a Catalan army into shape at this late hour is mere mockery. The Catalans have made no contribution to the cause of the Government at any time during the war; and when Catalan regiments have been engaged, they invariably have shown themselves to be cowards or treacherous. In other words, if the defence of Catalonia is up to the Catalans the fight is lost before it begins. I have no doubt but for the presence of the National Government in Barcelona the Catalans would run up the white flag soon after the rebels cross into Catalonia, and I am not at all sure that even the presence of the Government in Barcelona will prevent it.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.00/7624 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, March 29, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 3:05 p. m.]

921. In a very frank conversation last night Zugazagoitia, the Minister of Government, stated to me that the military situation is in fact hopeless and that the end is merely a matter of weeks unless outside aid should materialize. He believes this utterly unlikely despite the fact (as he apparently believed it to be) of the continued arrival of German and Italian war material in quantities far beyond those required to complete the destruction of the Government army.

He states that notwithstanding their realization of the hopelessness of their position, this Government will not enter into any negotiations with Franco but will continue the war as long as possible. I received the impression that when further resistance cannot be made the Government will depart—probably leaving a junta of some sort in control to maintain order through the period of transition.

With respect to the question of possible Communist or Anarcho-Syndicalist movements Zugazagoitia stated that the Government is determined that there shall be no disorders and feels that it can prevent them. He added that if these must prove to be the last days of the Republic the Government will at all costs see to it that they are not marred by any further outrages such as those which occurred at the beginning of the war and last May.

THURSTON

124.52/233 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, March 31, 1938—10 p. m.

[Received 11:58 p. m.]

926. Your 430, March 18, 6 p. m.³⁴ Owing to the restricted area that is suitable and the limited accommodations therein, which for months past have been heavily taxed by the arrival of war refugees, Government personnel, and refugees from Barcelona following intensification of air raids in January, it has proved to be difficult to find adequate quarters for Embassy and Consulate General residence and office purposes outside Barcelona.

It is hoped, however, that negotiations can be concluded yet for a house at San Andres de Llavaneras,³⁵ near Caldetas and about 25 miles from Barcelona, which will meet all requirements—including communications, and accessibility to the sea with a view to possible evacuation operations by Navy. Should this arrangement fail I shall then take over a small British-owned hotel at Tossa, some 25 miles further up the coast—at which point telephone, telegraph and highway communications also exist and which likewise is a suitable place for embarkation in launches.

I shall require a special rental and gasoline allotment in either case which at the maximum will aggregate \$250 per month. While it is of course impossible to forecast such matters it is probable that these arrangements will not extend beyond a period of six months and perhaps much less.

THURSTON

711.52/119 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, April 1, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received April 1—1 p. m.]

17. A letter from the office of General Queipo de Llano³⁶ has been received this morning which in translation reads as follows:

“The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the National Government in Burgos has requested me to inform you that in order to discuss various questions an interview with the chiefs of that Ministry would be con-

³⁴ Not printed.³⁵ By telegram No. 927, April 2, 1938, 11 p. m., he reported that arrangements for the San Andres de Llavaneras property had been concluded and that he expected to establish the Embassy and Consulate General offices there on April 3 (124.52/236).³⁶ Nationalist general in command of Seville area.

venient. He desires that the interview take place in Burgos and that he be informed of the date of your arrival in that capital.

In communicating the foregoing it is requested that you indicate to me for communication to the mentioned authority when you shall make the trip."

Will the Department inform me what answer should be made to this communication?

BAY

852.01/344a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

WASHINGTON, April 2, 1938—11 a. m.

12. Your 17, April 1, 1 p. m. You are authorized to proceed to Burgos for informal and unofficial conversations in connection with protection of American interests with authorities at Burgos. Report fully on conversations upon your return to Seville.

For your own information this Government does not recognize the Franco regime, nor is your visit to Burgos to be construed in any way as such recognition.

Report date of departure and return to your post. Transportation expenses and \$6.00 per diem authorized subject travel regulations chargeable "Transportation Foreign Service Officers, 1938".

HULL

852.00/7671 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, April 3, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received April 4—12:59 a. m.]

929. For the Secretary and the Under Secretary. Alvarez del Vayo³⁷ called on me this evening apparently at the request of Premier Negrín for the purpose of conveying the following message:

It has been reported to the Spanish Government by way of [apparent omission] that the President is favorably disposed toward the movement now under way in the United States for the abolition of our neutrality law and that the Secretary also is favorably disposed but feels that as a practical matter any change in our policy at this time is inadvisable since the Government cause is now nearly lost. It is understood that a discussion of this matter will take place Tuesday. As the Spanish Government feels that a policy founded upon

³⁷ At this time he held no office in the Spanish Government; he was appointed Minister of State in the reorganization of April 5, 1938.

the belief that any action of the kind described would be too late is not warranted by the facts it desires to submit its views for consideration at the impending conference.

Alvarez del Vayo stated that, while what is tantamount to a collapse occurred on the Eastern Front due to incompetence and treason, the situation has been remedied and the Loyalist forces are now fighting effectively. As a result of the reorganization of the higher army commands and the mobilization of new resources this resistance is expected to be maintained, although it is conceded the Rebel forces probably will succeed within the next few days in cutting through to the sea at Tortosa and in capturing and progressing beyond Lerida. Notwithstanding his apprehension the Government can continue its resistance for at least 3 or 4 months (within which it is still apparent the Government expects European developments to bring relief) even though Barcelona should be cut off from the French border or, he said, itself be captured.

In anticipation of the Rebel advance to the sea, a directive organization has been established in the southern part of Loyalist Spain which will begin to function immediately upon its isolation from Barcelona. Military supplies and foodstuffs have been stored there sufficient for a period of several months including food for Madrid for 1 year. A survey has been made at all major centers such as Albacite, Ciudad Real, Valencia and Madrid which has shown that the officers and troops in that area are enthusiastic and determined to continue the war. As to Catalonia, he affirms that Company's⁸⁸ exhortations have stimulated the Catalonians and that they are putting all energies into the struggle.

With respect to the Government, Del Vayo informed me that he had "heard" (identical rumors are on the street) that it is to be reorganized. Among the changes said to be contemplated are the transfer to Negrín of the Ministry of War, with Prieto remaining in the Cabinet as minister without portfolio; the retirement of one of the two Communist Ministers; and Alvarez del Vayo's own return to the Ministry of State.

I told Del Vayo that I would, of course, report his statements.

While I am disposed to credit Senor del Vayo and the Government with the determination to continue the war that is implicit in the foregoing statements I am not convinced that in the absence of new factors not at the moment visible the Loyalist forces are likely to withstand the pressure of the efficient and abundantly equipped Rebel military machine with any measurably greater success in the future than they have during the past 3 weeks. I have discussed this point tonight with the Military Attaché who is of the same opinion and

⁸⁸ Luis Company, President of the Catalan Generalidad.

believes that the Rebel advances are now virtually irresistible and that unless the Rebels themselves slacken their operations their final triumph in this area is but a matter of weeks. Other factors such as the food situation and widespread rear guard disaffection (despite recent reorganization of the Popular Front to include the CNT, UGT and FAI³⁹) are adverse, and I doubt that the reorganization of the Government itself will be especially helpful.

I do not, of course, know what considerations of major policy may be before you at this time. Should we abandon our present position of neutrality, however, the fact alone (apart from the flow of war material) would unquestionably have an incalculable psychological effect here and might affect the outcome of the war. It would at the same time, however, in all probability be generally construed as an act tantamount to intervention in the Spanish conflict with the obvious reaction in Germany, Italy and Nationalist Spain and perhaps affect (in the event of a Rebel victory) our large investments, frozen exchange accounts and trade in Spain.

THURSTON

852.00/7688 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, April 5, 1938—noon.

[Received 1:29 p. m.]

931. My 906, March 17, 4 p. m.⁴⁰ Unconfirmed but credible reports imply a serious conflict of opinion within the Government based upon the contention of some members that the time has arrived to capitulate while there is a possibility that terms can still be obtained and the opposition of others who prefer to continue the war. It is said that Prieto is in the first group and Negrín in the latter. It is also reported that the reorganization mentioned in my 929, April 3, 11 p. m. [*a. m.*], may take place today.

While superficially Barcelona is calm and order prevails there is much uneasiness. Both foreigners and Spaniards have expressed to me the fear that anarchistic elements may become active should further military reverses or other factors weaken governmental authority. These fears appear to be justified by editorial references in the anarcho-syndicalist press to the necessity for the "liquidation" of rebel sympathizers in the rear guard and the "elimination" of the fifth column.

THURSTON

³⁹ Federación Anarquista Ibérica.

⁴⁰ Not printed.

852.00/7697 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, April 6, 1938—noon.

[Received 6:15 p. m.]

932. The expected reorganization of the Government was effected last night. The new "Government of National Union" is constituted as follows:

President of Council of Ministers and Minister of National Defense, Juan Negrín Lopez—Socialist; Minister of State, Julio Alvarez del Vayo—Socialist; Interior, Paulino Gomez Saiz—Socialist; Justice, Ramon Gonzales Pena—UGT; Agriculture, Vicente Uribe—Communist; Public Instruction and Health, Segundo Blanco Gonzales—CNT; Finance and Economy, Francisco Mendez Aspe—Left Republican; Public Works, Antonio Velao Onate—Left Republican; Communications and Transport, Bernardo Giner de los Rios—Union Republican; Labor, Jaime Aguade—Catalan Left Republican; Ministers without portfolio, Jose Giral—Left Republican, and Manuel de Irujo—Basque Nationalist.

A statement has been made by the new government "proclaiming its absolute decision to continue the war for the independence of Spain until it is freed from the presence of those who have attacked and invaded it with the most monstrous international complicity that has ever existed". The statement refers to the fighting spirit of the armies in the south and the east to the support of Catalonia and to the fact that the new Government has granted powers to Negrín to apply sanctions against "traitors and cowards". It also refers to a note addressed to the British and French governments (a copy of which I shall endeavor to obtain) and concludes with the assertion that the Government of the Republic "from this moment becomes a Government of war".

While this development again turns the Government to the left it presumably strengthens it politically for the supreme effort to prosecute the war it seems determined to make by resting it solidly upon the entire Popular Front.

Barcelona remains outwardly calm despite defective light and power services assumed to result from loss to rebels of inland power plants. Uneasiness continues, however, and I have apparently reliable information to the effect that should the war be lost the Anarcho Syndicalists contemplate the liquidation of class enemies and perhaps destruction in Barcelona.

The British ships *Hood* and *Repulse* have visited Barcelona separately within the last few days and I am informed that a ship will soon be stationed off Caldestas.

THURSTON

852.00/7695 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 6, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received April 6—12: 55 p. m.]

544. An official of the Foreign Office has confirmed the press report that the Spanish Embassy at Paris delivered a note last night to the French Government reviewing the situation in Spain, particularly with regard to nonintervention, and requesting the permission of the French Government to buy arms in France. The official stated that the Foreign Office was studying this matter prior to deciding what reply to make.

He indicated that this request was embarrassing to the French Government due on the one hand to the pressure of left political parties here to have France intervene in Spain and on the other hand to the attitude of England in support of nonintervention.

WILSON

852.00/7671 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston)

WASHINGTON, April 7, 1938—6 p. m.

437. Your 929, April 3, 11 a. m. We know of no steps under consideration to repeal or amend legislation prohibiting exportation of arms, ammunition and implements of war to Spain. Repeal of Joint Resolution of Congress of January 8, 1937⁴¹ which specifically prohibits such exportations during existence of present state of civil strife in Spain, would require congressional action, probably including preliminary hearings before committees. Such action is not in prospect.

HULL

852.00/7702 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 7, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received April 7—3 p. m.]

558. Reference my 544, April 6, 4 p. m. An official of the Foreign Office has informed the Embassy that the French Government will reply to the Spanish note stating that it will continue to follow the policy of nonintervention.

This official stated that the French Government would have preferred to try some sort of mediation between the opposing forces in

⁴¹ 50 Stat. 3.

Spain in which attempt it might possibly have been able to obtain the support of the British Government, but that Negrín refused to attempt to make any compromise and insisted upon fighting to the end.

WILSON

852.00/7721 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, April 9, 1938—noon.

[Received 8:15 p. m.]

936. Alvarez del Vayo informed me this morning that although the military situation is still grave it is improving and that a possibility now exists that the rebel advance toward the sea can be stopped. The central (Lerida) forces also are holding their lines but those to the north in the neighborhood of Tremp are still disorganized and giving ground. Seasoned forces, however, are being sent to that sector where it is expected the lines also will be stabilized. With respect to the political situation Del Vayo expressed the opinion that the reorganization of the Government has greatly improved matters and that Loyalist Spain is now assembled in a "sacred union". Drastic measures are being taken with respect to recruiting, draft evaders, and the food problem. Concerning public order he stated that the incipient wave of anarchism, which has produced more than a score of murders similar to those at the outbreak of the war, has been checked and that there will be no further trouble on this score since the members of the Popular Front now will maintain discipline within their own ranks.

Zugazagoitia, the former Minister of Interior, has been made Sub-Secretary of National Defense. Comorera, the Catalan Communist leader, is to become Commissar for Fortifications, and a member of the UGT will become General War Commissar.

As to the international aspect of the situation Del Vayo appears to be optimistic. He did not mention the present situation in France but seemed to regard the activities of the Labor Party in England and the resignation of Harold Nicolson⁴² as developments of significance. He again referred to the attitude of President Roosevelt. In answer to my inquiry he stated that no response has been made to the note addressed to the British and French Governments protesting against nonintervention.

THURSTON

⁴² British Member of Parliament, National Labor Party; resigned vice-chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

852.00/7758 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 13, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received April 13—2 p. m.]

597. I am reliably informed that considerable pressure, particularly from members of the Left friendly to the Spanish Government cause, was brought to bear on Daladier⁴³ to maintain Paul-Boncour⁴⁴ at the Foreign Office.

Daladier's refusal to agree to this and his appointment of Bonnet throw a light on the foreign policy which the Government may be expected to follow.

Bonnet will certainly avoid adventure in Spain and he may be counted upon to deal in a realistic manner with the question of protecting French interests in that country in the expectation of a Franco victory. It may be assumed that he will try to work closely with the British, that he will endeavor to put French relations with Italy on a sensible basis as soon as possible and that he will welcome any opportunity—if opportunity exists—to come to a reasonable understanding with Germany.

Copies to London, Rome, Berlin.

WILSON

852.00/7764 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 15, 1938—noon.

[Received April 15—7:45 a. m.]

613. We learn from Communist leaders who are usually reliably informed in this matter that for several weeks substantial quantities of airplanes and medium caliber guns have been coming from Russia, landed at Bordeaux and transported overland to Spain. The guns our informants think are obsolete but still very useful for fighting in Spain. They say that Paul-Boncour permitted transit through France and that Bonnet has intimated to them that while continuing nonintervention as a policy he will not interfere with this traffic.

One of our informants, a deputy, was recently told by Campinchi, Minister of the Navy, that the French air force numbers 1200 first line planes of all classes, half of them too slow.

WILSON

⁴³ Edouard Daladier, French Prime Minister and Minister for National Defense and War, from April 10, 1938.

⁴⁴ Joseph Paul-Boncour, French Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Cabinet headed by Léon Blum, March 13–April 10, 1938.

852.01/354

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

No. 222

SEVILLE, April 15, 1938.

[Received April 29.]

SIR: With reference to the Department's telegram No. 12 of April 2, 11 A. M., authorizing me to proceed to Burgos for informal and unofficial conversations in connection with the protection of American interests with authorities in Burgos and directing me to report fully on my return to Seville, I have the honor to inform the Department that upon my arrival in Burgos the evening of April 11th, I telephoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to learn when it would be most convenient to receive me and to whom I should present myself. 11 o'clock the following morning was designated for my visit and I was told that Señor Vidal, Chief of Political Section, would receive me. Upon presenting myself at the designated hour, I was promptly received.

Señor Vidal said that while our Consuls have been permitted to function, and he assured me they would be permitted to continue functioning, there was no agreement or understanding in regard to them. Some kind of an arrangement, he said, seemed desirable in order to prevent the possibilities of misunderstandings, and he mentioned my recent refusal to authenticate the official character and seal of an officer of the Ministry in connection with documents for use in the United States as a case that would not arise if some arrangement were in effect. At the same time, the National Government, he said, had many interests in the United States and a large number of Spanish citizens were there without representation. He suggested the designation of agents and subagents to care for the interests of each government, similar to those established with the British Government though he did not mention that country. He indicated that with such an arrangement the Franco Government would desire at least an agent at New York and at Washington. An agreement to appoint such agents, he said, might be reached informally, without even an exchange of written communications. He asked me to convey the foregoing to the American Government for consideration and to address him informally and directly when I had received its reply.

As no other subjects were brought up my visit terminated with an exchange of remarks on the latest military developments, Holy Week, and other current topics. My visit lasted about fifteen minutes in all.

Respectfully yours,

CHARLES A. BAY

852.00/7803

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division
of European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] April 21, 1938.

The Spanish Ambassador called this morning and left with me the attached note⁴⁵ which he requested me to bring to the attention of Mr. Hull and Mr. Welles.

He reiterated his thesis that the application of our neutrality law which allowed Germany and Italy to buy munitions while loyalist Spain was excluded was unfair and much to be deplored.

He said that he came across constant evidences of a feeling in this country that loyalist resistance was about over and that it was just a question of time before Franco succeeded in winning a complete victory. This view was entirely erroneous. He had been in telephonic communication yesterday with Barcelona and had been immensely gratified at the information given him and the renewed tone of confidence.

The Ambassador then developed a little further the theory he had previously expounded to Mr. Welles that, irrespective of what might happen in the war, Spain's troubles were far from over and that the next stage would be a "war of liberation". He thought that the Italians would withdraw as indicated or, at the worst, could be gotten rid of very easily. The Italians' strength lay not in arms but in diplomacy. The real difficulty as he foresaw it would be getting rid of the Germans. In counter-distinction to the Italians, the Germans had made themselves pretty popular with groups in Spain. The professional and military men had even before the Great War looked up to the Germans as masters of their trade and as having raised the position of the military to the highest status within a State. What the Ambassador feared was that there would be no nucleus anxious to take the lead in expelling them from Spain. They had meanwhile fortified the mountains behind Gibraltar and at Ceuta, thus controlling the Straits. They had in the last few months made two submarine bases at Vigo and Corunna. They had made two or three airplane bases along the north coast. As never before, they were in a position to threaten the flank of Britain's communications. For two hundred years the remark of Louis XIV that the Pyrenees no longer existed held true, but henceforth, unless the Germans were driven from the country France would have to fortify her third land frontier.

⁴⁵ *Infra.*

Quite apart from the Army, the elements of the extreme right were sympathetic with what Germany was doing in the way of organized government and hence would agree with the military in not forcing their retirement. Even the technical men, miners, factory managers, et cetera, looked up to the Germans.

The Ambassador concluded by saying that our eyes were so concentrated on the Italian that we were overlooking the more dangerous of the two "invasions" of Spain.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

852.00/7803

The Spanish Ambassador (De los Rios) to the Secretary of State

[Translation]

No. 139/08

WASHINGTON, April 20, 1938.

MR. SECRETARY: Under dates of March 31 and April 7 of the current year, I had the honor to present to Your Excellency formal notes Nos. 138/23 and 139/04,⁴⁶ in which I pointed out to Your Excellency that the Spanish war had been singularly changed since the beginning of the current year into a vast invasion of men and matériel. The Spanish Government has communicated to me, in order that I in my turn may advise Your Excellency thereof, new official data covering the same period and which strongly confirm with figures the gravity of the international aggressions directed against my country.

Your Excellency will clearly understand that the repeated acts of invasion committed in Spain represent a flagrant violation of all the pacts, treaties, and rules of international law, developed with effort during the centuries, for which reason it becomes daily morally and juridically more imperative to restore to Spain the sovereign right of unrestricted purchase of war supplies [for use] against invaders, and rebels, unless it is desired to reward the aggressors.

My Government trusts that at last the Government of the United States, because of its tradition, because of what the Kellogg-Briand Pact⁴⁷ represents, because of the international principles affirmed in the Pan American Congresses, and because of those which, since last September, have been invoked by Your Excellency and by His Excellency the President of the North American Republic, will not continue to maintain the arms embargo against the people which suffer—from those who are able to purchase in this country all the

⁴⁶ Neither printed.

⁴⁷ *Foreign Relations*, 1928, vol. I, p. 153.

armament that they desire—acts of invasion and aggression such as those shown by the following figures and data :

[The figures and data on recent arrivals in Spain of foreign troops, which here follow, have been omitted.]

Figures of foreign effectives in Spain.

100,000	Italians	
90,000	Africans	(Moroccans, Moors from Ifni, Libyans, Eritreans, Somalis and Abyssinians, all except the first being furnished by Italy.)
50,000	Germans	(counting those disembarked during the month of March in the ports of northern Spain; Bilbao, Pasajes, etc.)
30,000	Legionnaires	(Portuguese in the majority, Rumanians, Hungarians, etc.)

The total number of foreign effectives with the rebels in Spain amounts to 270,000.

I avail myself [etc.]

FERNANDO DE LOS RIOS

852.00/7874

The Spanish Chargé (De la Casa) to the Secretary of State

No. 139/12

The Chargé d'Affaires of Spain presents his compliments to His Excellency the Secretary of State and has the honor to transmit to His Excellency, in the name of the Spanish Government, the text of the political declaration made by it. This statement of policy is made at a time when propaganda with purposes of creating confusion among ill-informed minds, tries to place the Spanish Government in an unfavorable position and points out to the world the falsehood of such propaganda when, on the contrary, its victory on the political and military grounds is approaching. The Spanish Government also deems it necessary to make known to all Spaniards, wherever they may be, what its regime will be after order has been restored in the country and which will be the relations of the Spanish Republic with foreign countries

The declaration reads as follows :

For the information of its countrymen and of the world, the Government of the National Union, which has the confidence of all parties and labor organizations of Loyalist Spain and which represents all Spanish citizens under constitutional legality, solemnly declares that its war aims are :

First.—To assure the absolute independence and integrity of a Spain which will be completely free of all foreign domination of whatever character and origin, with its Peninsular and Insular territory and possession intact and safe from any attempt at dismember-

ment, alienation or appropriation and keeping the protectorate assigned to Spain by international treaties while these are not modified with the participation and consent of Spain. Conscious of the duties imposed by its traditions and history, Spain will tighten the bonds created by common roots and by the feeling of universality which has always characterized our people with countries speaking the same languages as Spain.

Second.—To free our territory from foreign military forces which have flocked to Spain since July 1936 and who under pretext of giving technical advice intervene or try to dominate Spanish economic and juridical life for their own profit.

Third.—To establish a people's Republic represented by a vigorous state based on purely democratic principles and which will exercise its action by means of a Government endowed with the complete authority given by popular vote under universal suffrage and which will be the symbol of a firm executive power at all times depending on the directions and designs marked out by the Spanish nation.

Fourth.—The juridical and social structure of the Republic will be the work of the national will freely expressed in a plebiscite to be held as soon as the struggle is over and carried out with unrestricted and unlimited guarantees and with the assurance that all who participate will be protected against all possible reprisals.

Fifth.—Respect for all regional liberties without impairing Spanish unity. Protection and encouragement of the development of the personality and characteristics of the different peoples which compose Spain as is imposed by a historical fact and by law. Far from meaning separation of the country, this means greater solidarity among its different elements.

Sixth.—The Spanish State will guarantee citizens full social and civil rights as well as liberty of conscience and will assure the free exercise of religious creeds and practices.

Seventh.—The State will guarantee legally and legitimately acquired property within the limits set by supreme national interest and the protection of production elements without lessening individual initiative. It will prevent the acquisition of property from becoming exploitation of citizens subjugating the community and deviating the controlling action of the State in economic and social life. It will encourage the development of small property, will guarantee family patrimony and will encourage all means that will lead to the economic, moral and racial improvement of the producing classes. The property and legitimate interests of foreigners who have not aided the rebellion will be respected, and the Government will examine, with a view to indemnifying, harm involuntarily caused in the course of the war. The Government of the Republic has already created the commission of foreign reclamations for this purpose.

Eighth.—Profound agrarian reform that will liquidate the old aristocratic, semi-feudal proprietorship which has always been the greatest obstacle for the development of the country's great possibilities. A new Spain resting upon a broad and solid farmer-democracy owning the land it tills.

Ninth.—The State guarantees the rights of the worker through an advanced social legislation in accord with the specific necessities of Spanish life and economy.

Tenth.—The cultural, physical and moral betterment of the race will be a primordial and basic preoccupation of the State.

Eleventh.—The Spanish Army, at the service of the nation, will be free from a tendency to a hegemony of politics, and the people will be brought to see in it a sure instrument for the defense of their liberty and independence.

Twelfth.—The Spanish Government reaffirms its constitutional doctrine of renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. Loyal to its pacts and treaties, Spain will support and continue to follow the policy symbolized by the League of Nations. As a Mediterranean power it claims its place in the concert of nations and is always ready to cooperate in collective security and in the general defense of peace. Spain will develop and intensify all its possibilities for defense.

Thirteenth.—Full amnesty for all Spaniards who desire to cooperate in the immense work of reconstruction and aggrandizement of Spain after the bitter struggle which stains our soil with blood, where the ancient virtues of heroism and idealism of our race have been reborn. Whoever fails to suppress and smother all thoughts of revenge and reprisal for the sake of the common task and of the sacrifice which all Spain's children must make will be guilty of treason to the destiny of our country.

WASHINGTON, May 5, 1938.

852.24/620a : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, May 5, 1938—5 p. m.

197. For use in connection with certain proposed legislation now pending which has as its objective the repeal or modification of existing statutes prohibiting shipment of arms, ammunition and implements of war from this country to Spain, we would like to have a telegraphic report setting forth chronologically the developments in the work of the Spanish Non-Intervention Committee since the adoption on November 4 of the formula presented by the British Government to deal with the Spanish situation.⁴⁸ We have the main lines of the British plan, which was adopted by the Committee on November 4, 1937. We are interested to have in the report above called for any information which may be available

(1) as to the difficulties of carrying out this plan resulting from the activities of any of the countries members of the Non-Intervention Committee,

(2) a report on the possibilities from the point of view of the present situation in Europe of the successful carrying out of the main objectives of the plan, and

⁴⁸ For correspondence regarding the British proposals submitted to the Non-Intervention Committee on July 14, 1937, see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. 1, pp. 359-440, *passim*.

(3) a report on the present status of the engagements undertaken by the members of the committee not to permit the shipment from or transit through their territories of arms or war material destined for Spain.

HULL

852.24/625a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, May 6, 1938—7 p. m.

260. For use in connection with certain proposed legislation now pending which has as its objective the repeal or modification of existing statutes prohibiting shipment of arms, ammunition and implements of war from this country to Spain, we would like to have a telegraphic report on an alleged decision by France (as reported in today's press) to reimpose international control along the Franco-Spanish frontier to prevent the passage of men or materials into Spain as soon as two commissions arrive to supervise withdrawal of foreign volunteers in the fighting forces. Also any other facts pertaining to the present and prospective operation of the [Non-]Intervention organization of 26 nations.

HULL

852.24/650

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] May 7, 1938.

The Spanish Chargé called at his own request. He sought for some minutes to apologize or to disclaim any connection with the attacks which supporters of his Government's cause in this country have been making on the State Department and the Government in regard to the exportation of arms and ammunition to Germany. I expressed my gratification that his Government was taking this attitude and my agreement with him that the elements in this country engaged in these attacks could not possibly be helping his Government or any other government. He then said he and his Government would be interested to know just what our attitude is on the Nye Resolution⁴⁹ and the embargo situation. I replied that this Resolution had been forwarded to the State Department under the practice of both Houses of Congress to refer appropriate bills or resolutions to the State Department for any comment it may have in mind. I then added that the Resolution called for the investigation and assembling of a number of facts; that as soon as possible we would undertake to communicate

⁴⁹ S. J. Res. 288, introduced by Senator Nye on May 2, 1938, *Congressional Record*, vol. 83, pt. 6, p. 6030.

to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations such facts and comment as we may have on this subject, if any; that we must make this report to the Senate Committee before any information about it is divulged. He seemed to understand this.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

852.00/7868 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 7, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received May 7—10:35 a. m.]

726. Your 260, May 6, 7 p. m. Embassy's 677, April 30, 7 p. m.,⁵⁰ fifth from last paragraph reported that the French Government had agreed to the reestablishment of international control along the Franco-Spanish frontier as soon as the commissions have arrived in Spain and begun the work of making a census of the so-called volunteers. This information was furnished by the Foreign Office in strict confidence and it is requested that it be so treated.

In general, it may be said that the question of reestablishment of the international control along the frontier will depend upon the action of the Non-Intervention Committee in London on the resolution submitted to the Committee on November 4 last. It will also, of course, be necessary for the two parties to the Spanish conflict to give their consent to the despatch of the census commissions to Spain.

As regards question of detail concerning the manner in which the land control may operate in case it is reestablished and question concerning the operation of the sea control, the Foreign Office suggests that since the control is international in character centered in the Non-Intervention Committee in London, information on such points can best be obtained in London.

BULLITT

852.00/7931½

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Welles)

[WASHINGTON,] May 9, 1938.

The French Ambassador called to see me this afternoon and referred to a conversation he had had with the Secretary of State on Saturday, May 7,⁵¹ in the course of which the Secretary had inquired what news the Ambassador might have with regard to the attitude of the French Government towards the Spanish situation. The Ambassador told me that he had consulted his Government and had received a

⁵⁰ Not printed.

⁵¹ Memorandum of conversation not printed.

reply contained in an *Aide-Mémoire* which he left with me and of which the following is a translation:

[Here follows text of the *aide-mémoire* of May 9, 1938, from the French Embassy, printed *infra*.]

I told the Ambassador that I was most grateful for the information which he was good enough to give me in this way and that I would take pleasure in communicating it to the Secretary of State who I knew would be most appreciative.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

852.00/8068

The French Embassy to the Department of State

[Translation]

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

WASHINGTON, May 9, 1938.

The question of the evacuation of foreign combatants from Spain presents itself for the French Government as follows:

1. The Non-Intervention Committee of London adopted, on November 4, 1937, unanimously (including the Government of the U. S. S. R.), a resolution for the evacuation from Spain of foreign combatants.

2. The evacuation assumes the preliminary enumeration of the foreign combatants by international commissions which will likewise be charged with directing, later, the withdrawal of the combatants.

3. The operations of enumeration and withdrawal of the volunteers cannot begin effectively except after reestablishment of the international control on the Spanish land and sea boundaries.

4. As soon as the international commissions shall have informed the Non-Intervention Committee that they are ready to commence effectively the operations of enumeration, the three following measures will be taken simultaneously:

- a) the control will be reestablished on the Franco-Spanish boundary of the Pyrenees;
- b) the control of the British observers will be restored at the boundary between Portugal and Spain;
- c) the maritime control will be reinforced particularly by the extension of the surveillance of the Spanish ports.

5. The international control would be suspended automatically if at the expiration of a period of thirty days (with a possible supplementary margin of ten days), dated from the commencement of the operation of enumeration the withdrawal of foreign elements from Spain should not be effectively commenced.

852.00/7881 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, May 9, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received May 10—4:25 p. m.]

483. Met Del Vayo by request in Paris to receive for transmission to Department and President elaborately prepared statement of all ships entering all Royalist ports for last 5 months to rectify impression that war material cannot enter Loyalist ports because of Franco's control of sea. Report by pouch today.

Taking advantage of personal relationship interrogated him fully and he replied with apparent frankness. He predicts war will continue for a year unless Germany attacks Czechoslovakia and withdraws her officers and material from Spain which would mean early Loyalist victory. Government in touch with all its territory constantly by wireless. Original army defending Madrid shifted to Catalonia to make Barcelona equally impregnable and Madrid defended by Miaja's second army which has been on Madrid front for months. Territory south of Catalonia teems with war factories and all self-supporting as to food save Madrid for which food has been accumulated for a full year. Curtailment of food rations in Barcelona for benefit of Madrid.

Franco's announcement of intention to deprive Catalans of autonomous right and to outlaw their language has converted a lethargic into a militant and bitterly determined people. The slaughter of civilians by bombs has played a part in this.

He reported a conversation night before with Daladier with whom he dined. Was told British in London conference tried to force France to immediate closing of frontier under international guard without any attempt to stop German and Italian shipments but France refused. Daladier's agreement when commission to count foreigners enter Spain agreeable to Del Vayo since weeks and months will be consumed in reaching satisfactory arrangement to control influx by sea and air. The consent of Spain necessary and can be withheld.

He wonders if we have calculated on the inevitable repercussions in South America on the result of Spanish war. Says in possession of positive information on propagandizing and organizing for Fascism and against American influence there by Hitler and Mussolini and says a Fascist triumph in Spain will give tremendous impetus to the Fascist movement and democratic victory would end it in its incipency.

852.01/354 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

WASHINGTON, May 9, 1938—6 p. m.

18. Your despatch No. 222 of April 15. Department is pleased to note assurances given you that American consular officers in Franco territory will be permitted to continue to function. With regard to the proposal that an exchange of agents be arranged, you should refer to the fact that this Government has taken no step which might be in any way construed as recognition of the Franco regime, and that there is no provision in our practice for the exchange of agents with a regime which has not been recognized. It may be observed in this connection, however, that Señor Juan Francisco de Cardenas, former Spanish Ambassador in Washington, has notified us that he is "acting in the United States as agent for Generalissimo Franco and his authorities". Under the existing provisions of our laws he has been permitted to remain here in this unofficial capacity.

You are authorized to make arrangements to proceed to Burgos and to convey the above information orally to the appropriate authorities. Transportation expenses and 6 dollars per diem authorized, subject travel regulations, chargeable "Transportation Foreign Service Officers, 1938".

Report results of your visit by telegraph, also pertinent dates.

HULL

852.24/631 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, May 9, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received May 9—4:30 p. m.]

387. Your 197, May 5, 5 p. m. The following is a brief chronological summary:

On November 4, 1937, the Non-Intervention Committee agreed to a resolution the main object of which was to secure the withdrawal of volunteers from Spain. This resolution was communicated on the same date to the two Spanish parties by the Chairman of the Committee. Towards the end of November replies were received from the two parties which asked for certain clarifications of the Committee's proposals but were in general considered by the Committee as being of such a nature as to enable them to continue their task. Since that date the Committee has been engaged in working out a new resolution devised to put into practice (with slight modifications) the British

proposals of July 14, 1937.⁵² The draft resolution consists chiefly of the following parts:

(a) A reaffirmation of the previous undertakings not to allow the despatch to Spain of war materials and volunteers.

(b) A scheme for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers. This involves the despatch of a commission to each side in Spain in order to count the foreign volunteers engaged.

(c) The conditions under which a limited form of belligerent rights will be granted to both parties in Spain.

(d) Provisions for the strengthening of the sea observation scheme and the restriction [*restoration?*] of the land observation scheme.

Specifically answering the three numbered queries in the Department's telegram under reference:

(1) The principal difficulties of carrying out the plan are as follows:

In the British proposals of July 14, 1937, it was provided that a limited form of belligerent rights should be granted to both sides in Spain when "substantial progress" had been made in the withdrawal of foreign volunteers. The Committee has however not yet reached agreement upon the definition of the term "substantial progress". In February 1938 the British Government in an attempt to overcome this difficulty put forward a proposal which, in effect, provides that a fixed number of volunteers should be withdrawn from the side having the smaller number of foreign volunteers, and a proportionately greater number from the side having the larger number, and that the withdrawal of this fixed number should be accepted as constituting "substantial progress". This formula has now been accepted in principle by all the powers most directly concerned but whereas the British, Italian, German and French Governments have agreed that the fixed number should be 10,000, the Soviet Government is holding out for 20,000.

Another difficulty which has arisen more recently is the question of when the revised observation scheme should be put into force. The British plan of July 14, 1937, provided that observation on land frontiers should be restored at once. The Committee's resolution, however, provided that land observation should be restored shortly before the withdrawal of foreign volunteers. Some governments maintain that the whole process of counting the volunteers would be nullified unless observation was restored before the count began. Others maintain that the resolution of November 4 has superseded the British proposals of July 14 and they accordingly desire to see observation restored at the latest possible moment before actual withdrawal begins. At the present moment negotiations are still being conducted with the object of reconciling these conflicting points of view.

A third difficulty is financial. The scheme for the observation of the Spanish frontiers is financed by the members of the Non-Inter-

⁵² British Cmd. 5521, Spain No. 2 (1937): *International Committee for the Application of the Agreement Regarding Non-Intervention in Spain, Proposals Submitted by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, London, July 14, 1937.*

vention Committee, the greater part of the cost being borne by the British, French, Italian, German and Soviet Governments. On October 7, 1937, the Soviet representative informed the Non-Intervention Board that no payment would be made on the following day or on any date thereafter. As a result of this announcement other Governments also stopped contributing. The result was that in April 1938 the Secretary of the Non-Intervention Board informed the members of the Committee that unless the Boards received further payments it would be necessary for it to be wound up by the end of the month. In these circumstances the German, Italian and British Governments agreed on April 25 to pay the subscriptions due up to December 8, 1937, the French Government having already paid up to that date. The Soviet Government refuses to contribute further. The Governments concerned are now considering whether they will go on contributing as from May 1938 in spite of the Soviet Government's refusal.

(2) There would seem to be nothing in the present situation in Europe which would specifically prevent the successful carrying out of the main objectives of the plan provided an understanding can be reached equally acceptable to Italy and France as to the exact conditions for withdrawal and for the tightening of control to prevent further influx of reinforcements.

(3) All countries members of the Non-Intervention Committee have agreed not to permit the shipment from or transit through their territories of arms or war material destined for either side in Spain. They have also undertaken to prevent their nationals from fighting on either side. The participating Governments are still bound by these undertakings. There is no precise information available as to the countries which have been guilty of infringement of the agreement not to ship arms. It is admitted and recognized, however, that there has been and in a lesser degree continues to be violation of this agreement by many of those countries who have pledged themselves in this sense.

In connection with question (1) above the Foreign Office informed me in strict confidence that the French have made actually more difficulties than anyone else. They have in the first place declined to agree to close their frontier until the census of the volunteers had been effected. To this the Italians had made the obvious reply that it would be futile to count the volunteers on both sides in Spain while reinforcements from France were coming across the frontier. The French likewise have insisted that in regard to the naval control there should be observers in the ports as well as on the ships of the naval patrol. In the view of the Non-Intervention Committee this condition is utterly impracticable as neither side in Spain would permit observers in the Spanish ports. After endless bickering the French have now agreed to close their Pyrenean frontier under the international control for a period of 30 days after the census of the "volunteers" has begun. They reserve their right to reopen it if the efforts towards evacuation of volunteers does not make substantial progress. According to French explanations made to the British, the pressure

on the Government is so great that it was not able to close the frontier unless substantial evidence can be produced satisfactory to the French public that Italian and German technicians and so-called volunteers are being effectively withdrawn. The British have now proposed a formula to the French which is designed to help the French Government save its face and make a showing to its own public. Unless the French are willing to accept this formula and to close effectively their frontier, the Non-Intervention Committee will be again faced with an impasse.

With reference to question (2) above the Foreign Office states that in reference to the withdrawal of Italian volunteers which was covered specifically in the exchange of notes attached to the Anglo-Italian Agreement on April 16 last,⁵³ the British can only proceed on the assumption that the Italians will loyally carry out their obligations and they have various indications which they say justify the belief that Italy will not obstruct a solution.

With reference to question (3) above the Foreign Office informed me that a very large amount of material has undoubtedly gone across the French frontier; some of it the Foreign Office believes to have come from Central Europe. The amount of material from Russia, which at one time was large, has greatly decreased in recent months.

In this general connection the following may be of interest:

Since the Committee was first organized Mr. Eden and later Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax⁵⁴ have repeatedly reaffirmed the duality of purpose of the British Government's policy as regards Spain namely: (a) To limit or prevent foreign intervention and (b) at all costs to prevent the internecine struggle in Spain from enveloping Europe in a general war.

For example Mr. Eden stated in the House of Commons on November 1, 1937 (see Embassy's despatch No. 3531 of November 5, 1937.⁵⁵ Hansard Col 591),

"We may have our own sentiments as to what we want to happen in this matter, but the main object has been to neutralize and localize this war and to prevent it spreading to Europe as a whole."

In support of this position Mr. Eden then quoted M. Blum's statement at Marseilles as follows:

"Call non-intervention a lie, a fiction if you like, but the fact remains that it has helped to stop a general war."

On March 24, 1938 (see Embassy's despatch No. 121 of March 31,⁵⁵ Hansard Col 1410) Mr. Chamberlain stated in the House of Commons:

"But serious as are these infringements, they do not alter the judgment of His Majesty's Government that the policy of non-intervention,

⁵³ For correspondence concerning the Anglo-Italian Agreement, see pp. 133 ff.

⁵⁴ British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from March 1, 1938.

⁵⁵ Despatch not printed.

even though infractions of this policy may take place, affords the best means of avoiding a major conflagration."

The whole question of intervention is thus seen as intertwined with efforts to preserve the peace of Europe and is therefore one of the principal points covered in the recent Anglo-Italian agreement. See remarks of Foreign Office on question (2) above. For the same reason it will doubtless be one of the principal points to be taken up in the forthcoming Franco-Italian discussions. Similarly, in any understanding which Great Britain may reach with Germany, with or without France and Italy, this question will doubtless have to be considered.

With all its faults non-intervention has contributed towards the preservation of peace in Europe. Settlement of the Spanish problem would seem to be an essential prerequisite to any scheme for general European appeasement. The injection of any new factor into this already overcharged and delicate situation, might have far-reaching consequences.

KENNEDY

851.50/164: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

[Extract ⁵⁷]

PARIS, May 9, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received May 10—12:40 p. m.]

739.

3. Daladier said that he had opened the French frontier to Spain as completely as possible. He had even done more. After the recent successful offensive of General Franco the Russians had indicated their willingness to send 300 planes to the Spanish Government if France would make arrangements for their transshipment across France to Spain. He had transported the 300 planes across France successfully in the largest trucks available although he had had to cut down many miles of trees along the sides of roads in order that the large bombers might pass.

Daladier added that when he was in London recently Chamberlain had said to him that the Duke of Alba ⁵⁸ had reported this transshipment of 300 planes to Spain and had asked if the report of the Duke of Alba were true. He had replied, "Of course it is true and I shall ship through France anything that any country wishes to send to

⁵⁷ For text of paragraph 2 of this telegram, see p. 493; and for text of paragraph 5, see vol. III, p. 164.

⁵⁸ Special agent of General Franco in London.

Spain. Moreover I shall continue this policy until the German and Italian planes have been withdrawn from Spain. The agreement for withdrawal of volunteers must be accompanied by an agreement for withdrawal of material aid."

Chamberlain had replied that the Soviet attitude would mean tremendous difficulties for the Committee of Non-Intervention as it might be easy to get agreement on the withdrawal of volunteers but it would be impossible to get agreement on the withdrawal of material. Daladier said that he had maintained his position and that Chamberlain had merely smiled and noted it.

Daladier stated that Franco had had at his disposal in his recent successful offensive 700 German and Italian planes. The Spanish Government had had only 117. The 300 plane shipment referred to above had been of such assistance to the Government that a fresh Government offensive was planned for tomorrow to coincide with the meeting of the League of Nations.

4. Italy: Daladier said that Chamberlain was extremely proud of his agreement with Italy and believed that the Italians would withdraw from the Balearic Islands. Daladier said that he had commented that if the Italians had promised to do this it was the surest indication that they probably would not and had asked Chamberlain what he would do if the Italians should not keep this promise. Chamberlain had replied that he would take action. Daladier said he had replied that he was delighted to hear the word "action" which had been somewhat infrequent in Great Britain's dealings with Italy.

Daladier said that in spite of his skepticism with regard to Mussolini's promises there was unquestionably a change in Italy's attitude toward France. He attributed this in part to the arrival of German troops on the Brenner Pass and in part to the action of God who had destroyed a considerable portion of the Italian harvests of this year. Mussolini would not have sufficient money to buy the wheat and other foodstuffs that he would need to feed his civilian population and at the same time carry on campaigns in Spain and Abyssinia. The conversations between France and Italy were proceeding most satisfactorily and Italy had offered precisely what the French wanted with regard to Tunis. There would be no more difficulties about the question of Italian nationality in Tunis. He expected a complete Franco-Italian agreement to be ready to sign the end of next week.

852.24/708

The Secretary of State to Senator Key Pittman

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1938.

MY DEAR SENATOR PITTMAN: I have received your letter of May 3, 1938,⁵⁹ enclosing a copy of S. J. Resolution 288 "repealing the Joint Resolution to prohibit the export of arms, ammunition and implements of war from the United States to Spain, approved January 8, 1937, and conditionally raising the embargo against the Government of Spain", and requesting my comment.

In recent years this Government has consistently pursued a course calculated to prevent our becoming involved in war situations. In August, 1936, shortly after the beginning of the civil strife in Spain, it became evident that several of the great powers were projecting themselves into the struggle through the furnishing of arms and war materials and other aid to the contending sides, thus creating a real danger of a spread of the conflict into a European war, with the possible involvement of the United States. That there was such a real danger was realized by every thoughtful observer the world over. Twenty-seven Governments of Europe took special cognizance of that fact in setting up a committee designed to carry out a concerted policy of non-intervention in the conflict. In view of all these special and unusual circumstances, this Government declared its policy of strict non-interference in the struggle and at the same time announced that export of arms from the United States to Spain would be contrary to such policy.

The fundamental reason for the enactment of the Joint Resolution of January 8, 1937, was to implement this policy by legislation. This Joint Resolution was passed in the Senate unanimously and in the House of Representatives by a vote of 406 to 1.

In the form in which it is presented, the proposed legislation, if enacted, would lift the embargo, which is now being applied against both parties to the conflict in Spain, in respect to shipments of arms to one party while leaving in effect the embargo in respect to shipments to the other party. Even if the legislation applied to both parties, its enactment would still subject us to unnecessary risks we have so far avoided. We do not know what lies ahead in the Spanish situation. The original danger still exists. In view of the continued danger of international conflict arising from the circumstances of the struggle, any proposal which at this juncture contemplates a reversal of our policy of strict non-interference which we have thus far so scrupulously followed, and under the operation of which we have kept

⁵⁹ Not printed.

out of involvements, would offer a real possibility of complications. From the standpoint of the best interests of the United States in the circumstances which now prevail, I would not feel justified in recommending affirmative action on the Resolution under consideration.

Our first solicitude should be the peace and welfare of this country, and the real test of the advisability of making any changes in the statutes now in effect should be whether such changes would further tend to keep us from becoming involved directly or indirectly in a dangerous European situation.

Furthermore, if reconsideration is to be given to a revision of our neutrality legislation, it would be more useful to reconsider it in its broader aspects in the light of the practical experience gained during the past two or three years, rather than to rewrite it piecemeal in relation to a particular situation. It is evident that there is not sufficient time to give study to such questions in the closing days of this Congress.

Sincerely yours,

CORDELL HULL

751.65/390 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, May 19, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received May 19—2:25 p. m.]

111. Embassy's 109, May 15, 2 p. m.⁶⁰ Since the Duce's Genoa speech ⁶¹ there has been no resumption of the Franco-Italian negotiations. According to the French Embassy, Blondel ⁶² is prepared to continue the discussions at any time that Ciano signifies he is ready to begin again and has received instructions from Paris to that end. The French Embassy admits a definite tension in Franco-Italian relations as a result of the speech but does not consider that negotiations have broken down and is awaiting some further indication of the Italian attitude. They attribute the delay and the reference to Spain in the Duce's speech to the increasing anxiety on the part of the Italians concerning Spanish question which is the most important item of discussion.

It is apparent that Franco's army is not making the hoped for progress and according to some reports there have been considerable losses suffered by the Nationalists among which have been a large number of Italian casualties but there is no indication that the Italian Government contemplates sending further reenforcements. The Italian

⁶⁰ Not printed.

⁶¹ Delivered May 14.

⁶² French Chargé in Italy.

press, however, is displaying considerable hostility toward France which is accused of continuing to send aid to Barcelona.

PHILLIPS

852.00/7803

The Secretary of State to the Spanish Chargé (De la Casa)

WASHINGTON, May 20, 1938.

SIR: Acknowledgment is made of the note of His Excellency the Ambassador of Spain, No. 139/08 of April 20, 1938, referring to His Excellency's notes Nos. 138/23 and 139/04 of March 31 and April 7, 1938,⁶³ and submitting further data communicated by the Spanish Government regarding acts of international aggression against Spain. His Excellency's note under acknowledgment expresses the hope of the Spanish Government that the Government of the United States will not continue to maintain the arms embargo against Spain.

The policy of the Government of the United States is actuated by the desire to keep this country out of war and to avoid interference of any kind in the internal affairs of another country. It was for this reason that this Government, in August, 1936, in view of the danger of serious international complications arising out of the conflict in Spain, declared its policy of strict noninterference in that conflict and at the same time announced that the export of arms from this country to Spain would be contrary to such policy. The fundamental reason for the enactment of the Joint Resolution of Congress of January 8, 1937, prohibiting the exportation of arms, ammunition, and implements of war to Spain during the existence of the state of civil strife now obtaining in that country, was to implement this policy by legislation. This Joint Resolution was passed unanimously in the Senate and in the House of Representatives by a vote of 406 to 1.

In view of the continued danger of international conflict arising from the circumstances of the present struggle in Spain, this Government would not feel justified in undertaking to change its present policy with respect to the exportation of arms, ammunition, and implements of war from this country to Spain. Such a change in policy would, moreover, require special action by the Congress in view of the express provisions of the Joint Resolution of January 8, 1937, which gave that policy legislative effect.

Accept [etc.]

CORDELL HULL

⁶³ Neither printed.

852.01/365 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, May 21, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 7 : 30 p. m.]

27. I conveyed orally to Senor Vidal on May 18 in Burgos the substance of the Department's 18, May 9, 6 p. m., the Chief of the American section being present.

Senor Vidal observed that since General Franco controlled the greater part of Spain's territory and population there was a situation in fact to be considered and while there might be no provision in the practice of the American Government to exchange agents with a regime it has not recognized, he ventured to ask if these circumstances would not warrant a practical disposition of some kind that would tend to equalize the advantages of both parties. He referred to Great Britain's arrangement which is in addition to that country's non-intervention policy. He contrasted the facilities extended our consuls with the difficulties of Senor Cardenas in New York to discharge his trust, adding that it is desired to send Nationalist ships to American ports bearing the Nationalist flag, not for the purpose of prestige but for a mutually beneficial commerce. He emphasized the situation of many Spaniards in the United States who for nearly 2 years have had need for protection in inheritance cases, passports and other services not now available to them. These observations were spontaneous and he said that a little time would be needed to formulate a complete statement of the matter.

By agreement I called at 6 p. m. the next day to receive a prepared memorandum which in translation states that an examination of the relations between the United States and Nationalist Spain, aside from all consideration of a political character, reveals a state of fact, the consequences of which might be [garbled group] of great mutual benefit.

The American Government, it states, which has not recognized that of General Franco, maintains consular representation in Spain exercising all its functions and, in contrast, the position of General Franco's agent in New York is so limited in character that he cannot protect the persons and interests entrusted to him. With a view of indicating the function of the agents of both countries, on a basis of reciprocity, the National Government, the statement adds, proposes three points:

1. Recognition of the realities and necessities of the existing situation.
2. Recognition of General Franco's agent in New York and those to be designated in other cities with functions for the protection of persons and interest coming within their authority, specifically (a)

the issuance of consular documents and the visaing of documents issued by local authorities, (b) passports, (c) notarial services, (d) recording vital statistical data, (e) documenting ships flying National flag, (g) right to use official paper and official seal, (h) access to the official centers, (i) liberty of communication by mail and telegraph.

3. Freedom of Nationalist ships to visit American ports bearing Nationalist flag and facility for the agent of General Franco to display on his residence the flag and official seal. The concluding paragraph states that for the above, American consuls in Nationalist Spain will be extended the same facilities and prerogatives exercised up to the present time.

When handing me the memorandum Senor Vidal pointed out that it contains the minimum desires of the Nationalist Government for the protection of its interests in the U. S. and that they included only the most elementary consular functions. He indicated also that agents in Burgos and in Washington were not necessary by the proposed arrangement. In the event that these proposals are not found acceptable he stated that a reconsideration of the subject would be required.

Despatch follows.⁶⁴

BAY

852.00/8089

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the
Secretary of State*

No. 417

LONDON, May 27, 1938.

[Received June 6.]

SIR: With reference to the Embassy's telegram No. 387 of May 9, 6 p. m., and previous despatches on Non-Intervention, I have the honor to report that the Chairman's Sub-Committee met again yesterday and with the exception of Soviet Russia all the Powers represented agreed to the revised British plan for the withdrawal of foreign auxiliaries from Spain. According to the communiqué issued to the Press the main provisions of the plan are as follows:

Commissions composed of three members each should be despatched to both sides in Spain to determine the number of non-Spaniards participating in the Civil War. These would be classified as belonging to Navy, Army, Air Force or civilian categories.

Supervision should be re-established over the Spanish frontiers by land and sea, strengthened above the existing scheme in the latter respect for 15 days after the adoption of the resolution, then for 30 days while the commissions are at work, and for a further 10 days should it appear that withdrawals will take place but are delayed for purely technical reasons.

⁶⁴Despatch No. 250, May 22, not printed.

When the commissions have counted the non-Spaniards a joint commission should be formed to survey reports from both sides and to agree upon further practical steps for evacuation.

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee, the Earl of Plymouth, said that the difficulties which had been encountered were largely responsible for delay in easing the international tension and urged the delegates to reach complete agreement as rapidly as possible. There was no longer time for unprofitable discussion of details.

Despite this warning the Soviet representative agreed with the rest of the Committee on only one point, namely, the fixing of the figure of 10,000 as the coefficient in the formula for determining the stage in the evacuation when belligerent rights might be granted. It will be recalled, as recorded in the telegram under reference, that whereas the British, Italian, German and French Governments had previously agreed on this figure, the Soviet Government was holding out for 20,000.

According to the communiqué, the Committee will meet next week to determine whether it can proceed with its plan in the absence of unanimity. The Committee will also try to ascertain whether its members are ready to provide the necessary funds to meet the cost of carrying out the plan which is estimated to be between £1,000,000 and £2,000,000. Meanwhile the delegates have sent, through Lord Plymouth, an urgent message to the Soviet Government suggesting that there might be a change of attitude in view of the unanimity shown by all Powers except Russia.

In the course of the meeting it was revealed that some weeks ago when the British steamer *Greatend* was bombed on her way to Valencia she sank to the water line and the Master and crew managed to land but the observation officer, an Italian, was prevented from landing by the Spanish Government authorities. Subsequently, the *Greatend* was again attacked from the air and this time set on fire. It was thereupon suggested that the observer should be transferred to another British ship "but there seems to have been reluctance to take him on board." Later the Master of the British merchant ship *Thorpeness* took him off the burning vessel only to have him seized by the authorities on shore and put into prison. The Committee yesterday determined to demand his release. The appropriate steps are to be taken by the British Government in the Committee's name.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON
Counselor of Embassy

852.00/8050

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1515

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, May 28, 1938.

[Received June 7.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that since the alleged promise was made the Vatican by General Franco to discontinue the ruthless bombing of civilians, after the bestial bombing of Barcelona, these bombings have been resumed on a large scale. When the bombing of Barcelona on a big scale was discontinued, the bombers from the Balearic Islands, Italians and Germans, turned their activities against the smaller coast towns without delay. This, presumably, on the theory that no foreign press correspondents would be found in these smaller places to report the ghastly details. No protests of any sort were made against this.

During the last week these activities have been greatly intensified in cities like Valencia and Alicante, especially, where the deaths proportionately were as great as in Barcelona. While no Governments have taken cognizance of this, the consular representatives in Alicante, including even those of Guatemala and San Salvador, entirely in sympathy with the Fascist movement in Spain, have made their resentment felt in a Note of sympathy to the Civil Governor of Alicante.

It will be observed that among the other nations represented in this protest are France, Belgium, Argentina, Cuba, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Holland, Uruguay, Finland, Paraguay, Peru, Santo Domingo and Bolivia.

Great Britain and the United States are the only nations of any consequence represented in Alicante that have not joined in this Note. Our absence is necessitated by our wise decision not to take part in joint actions, but the failure of Great Britain to join is noteworthy.

The Note follows:

"The consular representatives of the following countries, France, Cuba, Argentina, Belgium, Denmark, Czecho-Slovakia, Sweden, Holland, Uruguay, Finland, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, Santo Domingo, San Salvador, Liberia, and Bolivia, wish to express their deepest sympathy with your Excellency on the tragic results of the aerial bombardment to which Alicante was subjected this morning.

"The fact that this grievous attack was directed on the centre of the town away from all military objectives, and that therefore the many victims were of the civil population, makes your Excellency's grief the deeper, and renders our condolences, which arise not from political interest but from purely humanitarian sentiments, the more necessary. The high qualities of your Excellency are the best guarantee of the measures which will be adopted to assist the stricken population.

“To this end we have the honour to offer your Excellency our fullest support, and to express our share in the town’s mourning we will fly our flags at half-mast for three days.”

I have observed a routine course by General Franco in the matter of bombing of civilian populations over a period of many months—in fact since the beginning of the war. In every instance where his forces in the field have been unable to make progress or where his forces have suffered any reverse on the battle-field, he invariably has taken his revenge by savagely bombing the civilian peoples.

Anyone familiar with Alicante, as I am, can realize the horrors of the bombing there. The death list in proportion to the population was heavier than in Barcelona when the protests were made by Great Britain and France and when the press reported that the Vatican had exacted from General Franco a promise to discontinue that form of savagery.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.00/8065

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

No. 449

LONDON, June 1, 1938.

[Received June 10.]

SIR: With reference to the Embassy’s despatch No. 417 of May 27, 1938, and previous correspondence concerning non-intervention, I have the honor to report that at a meeting of the Chairman’s sub-committee which met yesterday, it was announced that the total cost of the plans for withdrawal of foreign auxiliaries from both sides would be between £1,750,000 and £2,250,000. Of the total amount, it is estimated that £750,000 would be required to pay transportation of auxiliaries by sea to their own countries. This would be divided between the various countries in proportion to the number of auxiliaries involved. The secretary of the committee explained that a payment of £600,000 will be required on the day the plan is adopted and even before adoption a sum of £50,000 will be needed to provide for the despatch and accommodation of the commissions of three persons to each side in Spain. The other services to which the total cost of the plan would be devoted include the transporting of auxiliaries to base camps and maintaining them there for medical examination and other preparations.

According to the communiqué issued after the meeting, the Soviet Chargé d’Affaires stated that though his Government would be prepared to contribute to the cost of sending commissions to count the auxiliaries in Spain, they would not share in the main expense—that

of transportation for the auxiliaries—on the ground that there are no Russians in Spain.

As regards the four other Powers, the Earl of Plymouth stated that Great Britain was ready to proceed with the plan, the French representative did not commit himself, and the Italian and German delegates said that they would refer the matter to their Governments.

On the day of the meeting, The *Times* published an obviously inspired leader admitting that the whole scheme of non-intervention amounts to no more than a limited control of intervention but expressing the hope that the Soviet Government will realize that half a loaf is better than no bread. The result of the sub-committee's vainly striving for perfection or alternatively simply drifting, would almost certainly mean the greater influx of material and volunteers, the indefinite prolongation of the conflict and an enhanced risk of it spreading across the Spanish frontier. The *Times* says that the country which obstructs this British proposal will be assuming a heavy responsibility. After deploring the recent indiscriminate bombing by insurgent aeroplanes, the editorial states that the character of the Spanish people is such that they will never for long accept the dominance of foreigners and that there is no doubt about the desire of the Italian Government to get their men back to Italy, in accordance with the terms of the Anglo-Italian Agreement and in fulfillment of the British non-intervention plan.

In a conversation yesterday with a member of the Embassy Sir Henry Chilton, the last British Ambassador to Spain, expressed the conviction that a Franco victory was necessary for peace in Spain; that there was not the slightest chance that Italy and/or Germany would dominate Spain; and that even if it were possible for the Spanish Government to win (which he did not believe) he was convinced that a victory for Franco would be better for Great Britain. He referred particularly to the fact that the withdrawal of Italian volunteers was holding up the Anglo-Italian Agreement.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON
Counselor of Embassy

852.00/8089

*The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the
Secretary of State*

No. 1521

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, June 2, 1938.

[Received June 14.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that in continuance of their criminal policy of bombing civilian peoples in the hope of breaking the

morale of the republicans, the Fascist Powers, allied with General Franco, reached the climax thus far in bombing the little town of Granollers, thirty kilometers from Barcelona, and killing between 350—according to some reports—and 500—according to most—women and children.

The London *Times* rather tamely offers an apologetic explanation to the effect that the bombs were intended for Barcelona but since the anti-aircraft guns there drove the Italian and German planes away they “had to drop their bombs before landing”, the presumption being that it was impossible to drop them in the open fields or any place else except a market town.

The town of Granollers ordinarily has a population of but 10,000, but because of refugees from Barcelona it is now said to contain 20,000 people.

The attempt of the Fascists to make it appear that this village has military objectives will not wash, in view of the fact that the two or three small factories were not touched and the bombs were aimed at the center of the town by the City Hall and the market place. It was market day and fifty peasant women at the stalls were mangled.

I note in the press that our Vice Consul at Valencia and the British Consul lodged protests with the Foreign Office Monday after bombs were dropped by Franco planes on Perello, twenty-five miles south of Valencia, and within half a mile of their homes. These bombs had been intended for Valencia but here again the rebel planes were driven off. Since the bombs were dropped by Franco's men, the filing of a protest with the Spanish Government's Foreign Office seems futile, and if the protest was lodged with the Foreign Office in London it does not seem probable that our Vice Consul joined. The report appears in the *Manchester Guardian*, June 1.

The bombing of the village of Granollers brings this form of outrage to within a few kilometers of the village where our Embassy is situated. Some time ago I suggested to Mr. Thurston my willingness informally to notify the rebel authorities of our presence in this village as the British have done in the case of the village where they have their Embassy, but he did not think it necessary then since the village in which our people are has no possible military value or objective.

After talking with most rabid Spanish supporters of Franco from across the border I am convinced that this bombing wholesale of villages and civilians is exceedingly distasteful to a large part of the Spaniards. They frankly expressed abhorrence of this practice and ascribe it to the insistence of the Italians and particularly of the Germans. There is no doubt that the Germans have insisted on this policy of extermination regardless of women and children from the early days of the war. A portion of the German press has recently been bitterly

denouncing the Loyalists for not surrendering, and I am personally convinced that in their anxiety to end the war—and the expense—as quickly as possible, an intensive policy of terrorism may be expected in the hope of breaking the spirit of the people behind the lines. The general effect of these bestial acts, however, has been to stiffen the resistance and to convert the indifferent into militants.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.00/8078

*Memorandum of a Press Conference, Held at the Department of State
June 3, 1938*

[Extract]

At the press conference this afternoon, Acting Secretary Welles read a statement deploring the ruthless bombing of unfortified localities. (See press release No. 269 of June 3, 1938.⁶⁵) A correspondent, referring to the statement, asked whether there was any particular reason for its being issued at this time. Acting Secretary Welles replied that he thought it was perfectly apparent to all of the correspondents that there have been incidents in the last few days with special reference to the statement made. A correspondent said he thought Mr. Welles' statement had a direct tie-up with some of the remarks which Secretary Hull was scheduled to make in his speech the same evening. (See Secretary Hull's Nashville speech of June 3, 1938.⁶⁶) The Acting Secretary said there was a very definite connection. A correspondent stated that Great Britain had recently condemned the bombing by Franco and asked whether there was any connection between our action and that of the British. Mr. Welles replied that this Government was acting entirely independently in the matter. Asked whether the statement would be sent to our representatives abroad for delivery by them to other Governments, Mr. Welles said that this was a statement made in Washington indicating the attitude of this Government and that anything sent to our representatives abroad would be informative and not for delivery. Asked whether he had discussed the statement with the President during his visit at the White House this morning, the Acting Secretary said he had done so.

A correspondent said that, taking the bombing statement and Secretary Hull's speech together, he wondered if he was correct in assuming that it was a double-barreled statement of policy. The Acting Secretary said that he had not intended it to be considered in that light and what the Secretary would say in his speech tonight

⁶⁵ Department of State, *Press Releases*, June 4, 1938, p. 642.

⁶⁶ *Congressional Record*, vol. 83, pt. 11, p. 2341.

would be the only barrel that need be used. He added that he thought it was desirable and properly useful that this Government should make known its attitude in regard to the bombing incidents of the last few days.

852.00/8086

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

No. 460

LONDON, June 3, 1938.

[Received June 14.]

SIR: With reference to the Embassy's despatch No. 449 of June 1, 1938, and previous correspondence concerning non-intervention, I have the honor to report that the Chairman's sub-committee met on June 2. According to the communiqué issued, the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires announced that his Government accepted the method of counting the volunteers in Spain in four main categories. He also accepted a limited control of the land frontiers, provided that such control should automatically lapse if no progress in withdrawal of volunteers is made, and provided also that non-intervention observers are stationed at the ports.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON
Counselor of Embassy

852.00/8086

The British Embassy to the Department of State

MEMORANDUM

His Majesty's Government are so horrified at the recent aerial bombardments of Alicante and Granollers which resulted in serious loss of civilian lives without securing any apparent military objective that they are anxious to take all possible action calculated at any rate to check such indiscriminate warfare. It occurs to them that both sides in Spain might be deterred from undertaking such bombardments if they knew that there were some independent commission at the service of either side to proceed quickly to the scene of any bombardment and report on damage done, indicating whether in their view there are any possible military objectives in the neighbourhood. The commission should give immediate publicity to their report. His Majesty's Government are therefore considering informing both sides in Spain that a small body of military officers has been set up which

would reside in France so as to be ready to proceed to either side as required on the demand of the party which has suffered the aerial attack and make a report quite impartially on the facts as they see them. Such a body should obviously be drawn from countries which are in no way identified with either side in Spain. For their part His Majesty's Government are ready to designate an officer for this purpose and they would be glad to learn as soon as possible whether the United States Government would be prepared to cooperate by sending an officer to take part in the common interests of humanity.

In the view of His Majesty's Government no political considerations enter into this question and the officers will commit no one but themselves. The object of the proposal is solely to stop, if it is possible, this appalling destruction of noncombatants. It would of course be desirable that the officers should be able to speak Spanish. It is most important that no time be lost in setting up the commission if it is considered practicable. If the United States Government agree with this idea and would nominate an officer to serve Lord Halifax⁶⁷ suggests that he hold himself in readiness to come to London in the first place for a preliminary meeting to discuss plans and procedure.

A similar enquiry has been addressed to the Swedish and Norwegian Governments.

WASHINGTON, June 3, 1938.

793.94116/463

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary
of State (Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] June 6, 1938.

The British Ambassador called to see me at my request. I discussed with him the two memoranda which he had left with me under date of June 3.⁶⁸

With regard to the memorandum in which the British Government requested that the United States through its Ambassador in Tokyo take simultaneous action with the British Government in protesting to the Japanese Government concerning the recent bombing of Canton, I said to the Ambassador that the request which had been made of us in this connection by the British Government had been drafted before the British Government had learned of the public statement issued by the Department of State on June 3 condemning the bombing of civilian populations and of undefended localities. The Japa-

⁶⁷ Successor to Anthony Eden as British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, March 1, 1938.

⁶⁸ Only one memorandum of June 3 printed, *supra*.

nese Government, of course, had at once been apprised of this public statement issued by the United States, and in fact, the spokesman for the Japanese Foreign Office on June 4 had referred to it publicly. Furthermore, I added, the Department was informed by the American Ambassador in Tokyo that he had been told by his British colleague that the British protest had already been communicated by the latter to the Japanese Foreign Minister. In view of these circumstances, I said, it seemed to the Secretary of State and to me that for this Government now after a lapse of three days to reiterate to the Japanese Government a protest of which it had already been fully aware would seem to serve no useful purpose and, in fact, in my judgment would weaken the force of the statement already issued by this Government. The Ambassador seemed to be fully in accord with these observations and expressed his acquiescence.

I then took up the memorandum in which this Government was requested to designate an officer for appointment to an international committee composed of representatives of Great Britain, Sweden, Norway, and the United States which would reside in France and which would undertake to proceed to such places in Spain as suffered bombing attacks in order to determine whether or not the localities bombed were defended or undefended, and subsequently to make public its findings.

At the outset of our discussion of this memorandum I repeated to the Ambassador what I had said to him on two or three occasions in the past, namely, that while this Government was always willing to consider most carefully any request made of it by the British Government for the purpose of cooperation in the interest of the maintenance of peace and in the attaining of humanitarian objectives, nevertheless, it was very difficult for this Government to be helpful when these requests of the British Government were permitted to become public in the press before this Government had had an opportunity of making its reply or even, as in the present instance, of ascertaining the full details of the plan which the British Government had in mind. The Ambassador at once expressed his very hearty approval of what I had said, reminded me that he had communicated these views on several occasions to his Government, and said that he was at a loss to understand why the British Government permitted such a request to be published before we had had an opportunity of making reply. He said he fully understood our embarrassment and that he would even more emphatically urge upon his Government the need for refraining from this kind of procedure in the future.

I then said to the Ambassador that the Secretary of State wished me to let him know that before this Government could make any reply to the present request it seemed necessary to ask for clarification

on certain points. I said the more important of these points were the following:

First, had the British Government received any indication either from the Loyalist Government or from the Franco regime that they would agree to the plan proposed by the British Government; furthermore, was there any other background with regard to the formulation of this request which would be helpful to this Government in formulating its decision.

Second, it was not clear to this Government how the officers selected by the four Governments named to become members of the commission could "commit no one but themselves" and we did not see either how it could be assumed that no "political considerations entered into this question".

Third, from the standpoint of practicability, I said, we were not certain that the length of time which would have to elapse before this commission could proceed from France to the scene of bombings—always provided the two factions in Spain agreed—would not give rise to the assumption that the authorities in the place which had been bombed could change the appearance of military objectives, and furthermore, whether it might not also be very difficult for the members of the commission to be permitted by the military authorities in each locality to see for themselves everything that really existed.

The Ambassador said that he would transmit these requests for clarification to his Government immediately and indicated to me off the record that in his own judgment the proposal had been hastily put together and had not been thought through. He said that so far as he himself was concerned, he could not see how officers appointed by governments to any inter-governmental commission could possibly speak only for themselves and be obligated not to commit their governments; nor could he see how no political considerations could enter into this proposal. The Ambassador said he would communicate with me as soon as he had received a reply from his Government.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

852.00/8040 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, June 6, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 3:45 p. m.]

134. I am informed by the British Ambassador that he recently received instructions to call upon Count Ciano to express the unfortunate effect which the promiscuous bombing of unfortified towns and civilian populations as well as of British merchant vessels is having upon the British Government and public and that he had requested Count Ciano to do everything he could to prevent a repetition of this aerial method of warfare. Count Ciano had replied that these were

acts directed by Franco's military advisers and that the Italians were not responsible for them. While Ciano did not admit that he could do much in this respect the British Ambassador received the impression that Ciano would use his influence with General Franco.

According to Perth, Ciano then told him that Mussolini was most anxious that the Italo-British accords should be brought into effect without further delay since the Italians were doing now even more than had been required by the agreements; for example more men had been withdrawn from Libya than required, all propaganda in Palestine had ceased and the Italians had done everything to assist the British in the Non-Intervention Committee and he asked to have Mr. Chamberlain so advised.

Perth told me that he hoped for an early decision from his Government since he felt that too long a delay might be unfortunate inasmuch as it was most important for Great Britain to retain the good will of Italy in the present European situation. He mentioned in this connection the restraining influence which he was confident Italy had exerted on Germany in the Czechoslovak aggressions. He had never been informed of results of his earlier representations in this respect (see Embassy's telegram No. 124, May 28, 6 p. m.⁶⁹) but Ciano had now assured him positively that there was no international danger in the Czechoslovak situation at present and had indicated that Italy was closely in touch with the situation.

I have also been informed that simultaneous with this action on the part of Lord Perth both the British and French Governments have approached the Vatican and have received the reply that the Vatican had been constantly exercising its influence upon Franco to prevent indiscriminate aerial bombardments. It wished, however, to keep its representations confidential as it did not desire to become associated with action taken by any other governments in this respect.

PHILLIPS

751.65/397 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, June 6, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received June 6—2:45 p. m.]

135. Embassy's telegram 111, May 19, 6 p. m. According to Italian Foreign Office sources the Franco-Italian negotiations are at a standstill for two reasons.

1. After the battle of the Ebro in Spain the end of the Spanish war had seemed in sight and at any rate Barcelona was on the verge

⁶⁹ Not printed.

of collapse. At that moment French military supplies had been shipped to Valencia and Barcelona in such large quantities that while the Loyalist forces were no longer in any position to take the offensive their resistance had nevertheless been so strengthened that they were able to put up a stiff defensive and so to prolong the war. Italian official sources allege that these supplies and reinforcements are still continuing.

2. The attitude of the French press representing that the Italians through fear of Hitler were endeavoring to make use of these negotiations to weaken the Rome-Berlin Axis has so irritated Mussolini that he is unwilling to continue the negotiations until such "misrepresentations" cease.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8091

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1525

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, June 6, 1938.

[Received June 14.]

SIR: I have the honor to enclose as part of this despatch the Note of the Spanish Government to the Foreign Offices of London and Paris⁷⁰ insisting on a statement as to what has been done to end the barbarous bombing of women and children in Spain since last February when the British Government announced that steps would be taken.

This Note was entirely justified, I think, because days had passed after the bestial bombing of women and children in Alicante without any indication that a protest would be made either by the British or the French; and because these nations by their policy of "Non-Intervention" have denied the Spanish Government the right which in common with all other countries it possesses under international law, to buy anti-aircraft guns for the protection of its civilians against this wholesale slaughter.

Since the receipt of this Note of Sr. Del Vayo's, and since the Opposition in the House of Commons have raised the point that a protest was due, especially in view of the promise of last February that steps would be taken by the British Government to end the bombing of open towns, the French and the British have made their protest on the insistence, as I understand, of Daladier.

I am thoroughly convinced that the speech of Secretary Hull and the earlier statement of Under-Secretary Welles are more effective on the Spanish supporter[s] of General Franco than anything coming from either Great Britain or France. I find distinct concern among

⁷⁰ Not printed.

the Spanish supporters of Franco over the effect of these barbarous acts in the United States. And I note, as most significant, the disposition of these Spaniards to bitterly criticize the Germans and Italians as responsible—the clear implication being that the General has been literally blackmailed into a reluctant agreement to resort to this savage method of warfare.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.00/8063 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 9, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received June 9—2:25 p. m.]

497. In brief comment this afternoon on recent bombing of British ships in Spanish waters, a Foreign Office official said that a reply had been received from Franco to the British protest, regretting any incidental loss of British lives but refusing to recede from the position that he must prevent materials carried on these ships, which he classifies as contraband, from reaching his enemies. This question of what is contraband, it was stated by the Foreign Office is the real crux of the matter as it involves items, such as coal, which are not officially contraband but which Franco maintains aid the enemy forces in carrying on the war against him. Franco's reply likewise refused to guarantee that no British ships would be bombed in the future, stating that the bombing planes have to fly so high that they can not always distinguish the nationality of ships. It is further alleged that these ships are often berthed in proximity to military objectives. Needless to say Franco strenuously denies British ships have been singled out for attack.

No decision apparently has been taken as to how this situation is to be met. The Prime Minister is still away on a short holiday and upon his return according to the Foreign Office the question will be taken up with him and put before the Cabinet.

KENNEDY

852.00/8125

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

No. 494

LONDON, June 9, 1938.

[Received June 20.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that in the course of a conversation regarding the recent statements in the press that the British Govern-

ment was considering mediation in Spain with a view to an armistice, a Foreign Office official said that even if a genuine agreement could be reached on the British plan for the withdrawal of auxiliaries, it would take considerable time before the Italian troops could leave Spain. The continuation of the civil war and the delay in reaching an agreement on the British plan made it impossible to put the Anglo-Italian agreement into effect. This was holding up appeasement among the Mediterranean Powers generally and in turn retarding any progress towards a wider European settlement.

With this in mind, the British Government had been casting about for some other scheme which might hasten a settlement and relieve the present tension, and had decided to attempt to bring about an armistice in Spain. Merely to approach the two factions and ask them to stop fighting would, of course, be futile, no matter how tired of war the Spanish people may be. If, however, Italy and France could be induced to bring pressure on General Franco and the Spanish Government, respectively, there might be some prospect of success.

Accordingly, an intimation was given to the Press that the British Government was willing to use its influence in bringing about a truce in the Civil War. As was expected, the consensus of foreign press opinion was that there was little or no likelihood that such a plan could succeed.

The Foreign Office official said that the British Government intended, nevertheless, to take up the matter beginning at Paris. It believed that the principal obstacle in the way of persuading Italy to consider such a proposal, and in fact, the stumbling block to progress with the British Non-Intervention plan as well as the cause for the break in the Franco-Italian conversations, was the recent increase in arms shipments over the French frontier. Therefore, the first step towards an armistice would be to obtain an undertaking from France not to permit such shipments, (to which she is in fact already committed but is flagrantly violating) and to agree to bring pressure on the Spanish Government to consider an armistice. If the French Government consents, the British then propose to take the matter up in Rome and endeavor to persuade Mussolini to stop Italian shipments of arms and agree to bring pressure on General Franco to consider an armistice.

Asked whether he thought there was any likelihood of such a plan succeeding, the Foreign Office official would only say that his Government felt it could do no harm and that even if it fails completely, bringing the idea of mediation before world opinion might do some good. He pointed out that in any event there was no intention of abandoning their efforts to put the British Non-Intervention plan into effect.

The Embassy finds it difficult to say what, if anything, is behind this new move, especially since there is little or no prospect of achieving concrete results. Reports of mediation may, of course, have been circulated simply with a view to counteracting criticism that the British Government is not making active endeavors to bring about a solution of the Spanish problem; and though these reports were received without any optimism they were welcomed in the press. In any event the recent intensification of aerial bombing both of British shipping and of the civil population has made the Spanish question increasingly embarrassing to the British Government.

One point in the Spanish problem does seem to stand out and that is that of the four great Powers principally concerned Germany has now become the one having a clear interest in prolonging the civil war and thus preventing the Franco-Italian *rapprochement* negotiations and postponing the coming into effect of the Anglo-Italian agreements.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON
Counselor of Embassy

852.00/8079

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, June 10, 1938.

The British Ambassador called on his own request and handed me an *aide-mémoire*, as per the attached copy.¹ This was in reply to some inquiries propounded to the Ambassador some days ago by Mr. Welles in connection with the British invitation to this Government to become a member of a commission to ascertain and publish facts concerning bombings from the air in Spain.

I thanked the Ambassador and then added that we have not been able to decide whether the proposal is entirely practical; that it has its drawbacks and undesirable phases; and that this Government is giving attention to the entire proposal, in its world-wide aspects, by reviewing the subject from all angles and assembling current facts with regard to the bombing of civilian populations from the air. I went on to say that this Government has not made any decision with respect to the situation, but is continuing to observe, with keen interest, all phases of developments with respect to the bombing of civilian populations both in Spain and China. I then added that, of course, Great Britain is becoming more and more personally concerned about the Spanish situation on account of the bombing of so many British ships, while this Government is only concerned from a humanitarian standpoint,

¹ *Infra.*

and this renders it important that we should visualize and formulate policy with regard to the situation both in Spain and in China, as already stated. With American educational buildings being razed by Japanese bombings, and no injury to American properties in Spain by similar agencies, it is manifest that we should consider policy with respect to the entire situation. I finally remarked that we would continue our investigations and assembling of facts with regard to the question presented and would consider the British *aide-mémoire* as a part of the same. The Ambassador did not take issue with what I said. I think he feels that we have virtually declined the British invitation, but are letting the matter be somewhat long drawn out in order that it may be disposed of gradually.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

852.00/8079

The British Embassy to the Department of State

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

BOMBING FROM THE AIR IN SPAIN, AND THE SUGGESTED COMMISSION

(1) It was contemplated that the Commission's sole function would be to establish and publish facts concerning bombardments from the air and it was not considered that Governments appointing members to the Commission would be committed to take action of any kind as a result of the Commission's findings. It was furthermore hoped and expected that the mere fact of the appointment of a Commission might deter the two Spanish parties from any further bombardments of the civilian population of the nature which has been taking place.

(2) It was the expectation that if either side believed that its population had been the victim of illegitimate bombardment, it would be glad to invite the Commission to investigate and publish the facts. In these circumstances any investigation carried out by the Commission would of course require the assent only of the party upon whose territory the bombing attack had been made. The Commission would not impose on either party; it would be in the nature of a facility of which either party might and possibly would wish to take advantage.

(3) It might well be hoped that the Commission will have sufficient mobility to render the removal of any substantial military objectives before its arrival on the scene of an illegitimate bombardment a matter of very great difficulty. In these circumstances it might be hoped that there would be no ground in practice for imputing partiality to any report which the Commission might render. It would however clearly be advantageous for the Commission to bear in mind the possi-

bilities in this direction both in carrying out its investigations and in preparing its reports.

WASHINGTON, June 10, 1938.

852.00/8066 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 10, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received June 10—2:15 p. m.]

498. My 497, June 9, 8 p. m. and despatch 494, June 9. Last night I saw Cadogan⁷² and asked him what his Government was planning to do in connection with the bombing of British ships in Spanish waters. He told me that the situation had the Cabinet almost distracted. It has been decided to discuss with the French the question of an armistice in Spain and this possibility has already been taken up with the French Government. They received an intimation late last night to the effect that the French were disposed to go along. If the British can get a definite answer that the French will be agreeable to stop all movements of troops and ammunition across the border, they will then ask Italy to approach the German Government with the same end in view. They realize here that it is rather a hopeless task because both the Germans and the Russians and even the French are not at all desirous that the recent Anglo-Italian agreement⁷³ shall go into effect. Cadogan said they feel that if Italy really wanted to put this agreement into effect she must use her influence to hold the Germans off in the Spanish situation.

Beyond this question of arranging an armistice, he said, the British feel they are frankly up against it. British shippers are crying for protection and the country is beginning to feel without realizing what the result might finally be that this Government is not courageous and states that England's great prestige is rapidly diminishing. Cadogan said that the Prime Minister's answer so far has been that it is much more courageous to proceed along his line of policy and take the charges of cowardice than it is to take up a position which would mean war in three or four places at once simply because Great Britain does not approve of the bombing. The British, Cadogan said, are not very proud of any solution that they are thinking about because they realize that none of these solutions reasons very well but there is a feeling that they will try any idea that anybody suggests which still adheres to the principle of not going to war.

⁷² Sir Alexander Cadogan, British Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

⁷³ For correspondence concerning the Anglo-Italian agreement, see pp. 133 ff.

Although Franco brings the charge that the bombed ships are carrying contraband, Cadogan said that the indignation of the captains of these vessels on the whole subject of attacks leads them to believe here that the ships are not gun runners but are carrying food and other non-military products. Franco would contend, however, that such materials were strengthening his enemy even though they might not be official contraband.

KENNEDY

852.00/8076 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, June 13, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received June 13—2: 05 p. m.]

143. My 135, June 6, 5 p. m. The Embassy has been reliably informed that Monsieur Badouin, a well-known French banker, has arrived unofficially in Rome in an effort to convince the Italians that the French Government has for all practical purposes closed all Pyrenees frontiers and also to ascertain whether it would not be possible to reopen the Franco-Italian negotiations. No publicity whatsoever is being given to this confidential mission of Monsieur Badouin who is also desirous of ascertaining the Italian preference regarding the person to be named as the French Ambassador.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8117

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)

WASHINGTON, June 16, 1938.

Mr. Broadmead, First Secretary of the British Embassy, called this afternoon to say that the Ambassador had received a telegram from Lord Halifax stating that he was anxious to proceed with the appointment of the Commission to investigate bombing in Spain. Sweden and Norway had now accepted. Lord Halifax, however, did not wish to make an announcement until the United States had replied one way or the other, but if a reply were not forthcoming by June 20th the presumption would be that the United States would not take part in its work.

I told Mr. Broadmead that no reply had as yet been sent, and that, as I saw the matter, there were three courses open to us: (a) to accept, (b) to decline, or (c) to return no answer, which would be considered inferentially as a declination. I said that of course we wished to do

nothing that would hinder the success of the Commission; on the other hand the suggestion had raised several doubts in our minds.

I told Mr. Broadmead, therefore, that I would speak to you⁷⁴ on the matter and hoped to be in a position to tell him whether or not we would send a definite answer or allow the question to go by default.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

Later, in accordance with the Secretary's instructions, I telephoned Mr. Broadmead, at four o'clock, that "the situation was so kaleidoscopic we were not in a position to make a decision as soon as the British had a right to expect. We did not therefore feel that they should wait for our decision before going ahead with such countries as had already accepted."⁷⁵

P. M.

852.01/374 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

WASHINGTON, June 16, 1938—7 p. m.

30. Your telegram no. 27, May 21, 5 p. m. and despatch no. 250 of May 22.⁷⁶ Following statement is in reply to points raised in memorandum presented to you at Burgos:

Points 1 and 2, general. It would not be legally possible for this Government to accord to representatives of an unrecognized regime those consular rights and privileges which are now exercised, under existing treaty provisions, by the consular representatives in the United States of the Spanish Government with which this Government maintains diplomatic relations. As was stated in the Department's telegram no. 18, May 9, 6 p. m., this Government has taken no step which might be construed as recognition of the regime of General Franco.

Point 2 (a). While agents of General Franco cannot be permitted to perform consular functions in the United States or to issue consular documents as such, there is no restriction under our practice to the issuance or visaing by them of documents which are to be used in territory under the control of General Franco. (b) While this Government cannot recognize passports issued by agents of General Franco, in reality this presents no practical problem. Persons bearing such documents are being granted visas without being required to present any other passport. In the cases of non-immigrants evi-

⁷⁴ Notation on this memorandum indicates it was sent to the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary of State.

⁷⁵ On July 13, 1938, the Department was informed that the British Government must, in view of difficulties encountered in the formation of an international commission, now arrange for the constitution of a British commission for the object in view.

⁷⁶ Despatch not printed.

dence of permission to enter a foreign country upon completion of their temporary stay in the United States would, of course, be required. There are no restrictions on issuance of travel documents for use in other countries by Franco agents acting in this country in an unofficial capacity. (c) Notarial services cannot be recognized in this country but there is no objection to services of this nature for use in Franco territory. (d) There is no objection to the recording of vital statistics for transmission to Franco authorities, but this Government can assume no responsibility in this connection. (e), (g), and Point 3. Since this Government does not recognize the regime of General Franco, it could not recognize the flag or official seal or paper of that regime. This Government could not, therefore, agree to permit the display of that flag or seal by a Franco agent on his residence, or enter into any undertaking with respect to the flying of that flag on vessels visiting American ports. There are no restrictions on the issuance of necessary documentation by Franco agents here to enable vessels in general to proceed to ports in Spain under his control. (f) Agents could not collect fees for consular services which they cannot be permitted to perform. No objection is perceived to collection of customary fees by them for services of the kind mentioned above not performed in a consular capacity. (h) This Government could undertake no obligation with respect to affording Franco agents access to official centers, nor could they be given any official status for this purpose. It is not believed, however, that they would have any difficulty in approaching the appropriate local officials in this country in a personal capacity. (i) There is no censorship of postal, cable or telegraphic communications in this country.

In conclusion it may be observed that while there is no provision in our laws, regulations or practice for the recognition of agents of a regime not officially recognized by this Government, the unofficial representative of the Franco regime in this country can perform documentary services of the nature indicated above and has freedom of communication with the Franco authorities.

No practical reason is perceived, therefore, why our consular officers in territory under the control of General Franco should not be permitted to continue to function. The maintenance of our consular officers in Franco territory would seem to be in the mutual interest of all concerned.

You are authorized to proceed to Burgos and to convey the above statement orally to the appropriate authorities. Transportation expenses and six dollars per diem authorized, subject travel regulations, chargeable "Transportation Foreign Service Officers, 1938".

HULL

852.00/8121 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, June 20, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received June 20—3:35 p. m.]

153. My No. 144, June 13, 7 p. m.⁷⁷ Lord Perth informed me yesterday that he had received instructions again to take up with Count Ciano questions arising out of the Spanish situation. Without giving me any details he did not give me the impression that he was particularly optimistic with regard to the outcome. He added, however, that he would on his own initiative, which I presume was also under instructions, make every effort to induce the Italian Government to recommend a truce between the warring factions. He seemed to feel that this was not an impossible accomplishment in view of the growing dislike throughout Italy of the continued Italian participation and also to the increasing strain on Italy's financial and economic positions. Perth has seen Ciano today but inasmuch as the Duce is out of town he does not expect to receive a reply for several days.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8193

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

No. 595

LONDON, June 22, 1938.

[Received July 5.]

SIR: With reference to the Embassy's despatch No. 460 of June 3, 1938, and previous despatches concerning nonintervention, I have the honor to report that, according to a communiqué issued after a meeting of the Chairman's Sub-Committee yesterday, the British formula for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers was unanimously accepted. The Sub-Committee also gave unanimous approval to the strengthening of sea and land control and the establishment of observers in certain Spanish ports. This result was made possible by the attitude of the Russian representative who told the Committee that his Government was not altogether satisfied with the plan for coastal control but was willing to approve it in a spirit of compromise.

This means that all the Powers on the Sub-Committee have agreed that commissions should be sent to Spain to count the foreign combatants on each side and that when 10,000 auxiliaries have been withdrawn from the side found to have the fewer, and a proportionately

⁷⁷ Not printed.

higher number from the other side, belligerent rights should be granted. While the count is taking place, land frontiers should again be controlled.

The Sub-Committee also examined the financial scheme for the British plan and the Soviet representative reiterated that his Government would not pay anything toward the cost of repatriating Italian combatants, but offered to share in the cost of administration and certain other activities. The Sub-Committee is scheduled to meet again the end of this week. Apart from the final settlement of the financial question, other technical matters will have to be dealt with before the two commissions can be despatched to Spain.

When these matters are settled, the formula must be submitted to the whole Non-Intervention Committee and it is hoped that by that time replies will have been received from the two Spanish parties. According to one estimate, this should be about July 15 to July 20, and if Barcelona and Burgos consent, as is expected, the commissions should be able to start in Spain toward the end of July or the first days of August "provided no further difficulties arise."

Respectfully yours,

HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON

852.00/8156 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 26, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received June 27—7:34 a. m.]

1006. We were informed today by the Foreign Office that the French Government believed that the Spanish Government would not carry out its threat to bombard Italian cities in retaliation for bombardment of Spanish cities by Italian planes. The British and French Governments have expressed the opinion to the Spanish Government that in case the threat should be carried out the Italian Government would attack the Spanish Government at once with overwhelming forces and had indicated that neither the French nor the British Government would intervene to save the Spanish Government from destruction.

BULLITT

852.01/380 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, June 27, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received June 27—7:24 a. m.]

38. At noon on June 22 I delivered the substance of the Department's telegram No. 30, June 16, 7 p. m., to Senor Vidal which he re-

ceived without visible reaction. He said he would speak to the Foreign Minister about it. He observed, however, that the Department had not conceded their chief desire of obtaining some kind of recognition for General Franco's agent in the United States and also that their ships flying the national flag may not visit our ports. He asked for my memorandum which had been prepared for myself and which I gave him.

Following our conversation he presented me, upon my request, to the Under Secretary with whom I took up the subject of American prisoners and my proposed visit to the concentration camp. This is the subject of a following telegram.⁷⁸

Copy to Ambassador.

BAY

852.00/8164 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, June 28, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received 6 p. m.]

989. I requested Del Vayo this morning (an appointment yesterday had been canceled) to inform me with respect to the reports currently circulating that the Government may undertake retaliatory air raids over foreign territory. For reply he cited paragraph 3 of his response (apparently dated June 27 and published in today's papers) to the note of June 24 from the British Embassy announcing the formation of the British-Swedish-Norwegian commission to examine the scenes of air raids. The paragraph in question may be translated as follows:

["The Spanish Government has considered, and continues to do so, that there is no place in its conception of the real character of the struggle in progress in Spain or in the sentiments which inspire the entire Spanish people for the policy of replying to the mass murder of women, children and noncombatants in general by balancing the great losses in Republican Spain with other Spanish lives torn from the civil population of the rebel zone. Any reply which may become necessary as a result of persistence in aerial aggressions of the kind mentioned will be based on the foregoing considerations."]

Senor del Vayo added that the Spanish Government has felt it to be good policy not to increase inter-Spanish bitterness by air raids in rebel territory apparently as a measure in conjunction with its endeavor to emphasize in both the Rebel and Loyalist zones that the conflict now has become a war of independence and liberation from

⁷⁸ Telegram No. 39, June 27, noon, from the Consul at Seville, p. 302.

foreign moves in which all Spaniards can find a common cause. In answer to my specific inquiry he stated that Spanish air operations "abroad" would depend upon the continuance of or discontinuance of the air attacks on the cities.

He appeared to be hopeful that the newly created commission may serve to curtail such attacks and expressed satisfaction over its establishment. He did not mention our abstention. An editorial in *La Vanguardia*, however, attributes our action in this respect to the belief that the commission probably will merely pronounce "platonic condemnation", and points out that such abstention is in contradiction to the Secretary's recent statement on air bombardments.

THURSTON

852.00/8196

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the
Secretary of State*

No. 639

LONDON, June 28, 1938.

[Received July 5.]

SIR: With reference to previous correspondence on the bombing of British ships in Spanish ports, I have the honor to outline below, as of possible interest, certain points in this relation which do not appear to have been examined either in the press or in debates in Parliament.

As the Department is aware, since the outbreak of the civil war in Spain the British Government has refused to grant belligerent rights to the two parties, maintaining that these rights are only withheld because of non-intervention. Since the British Government does not grant these rights, the Spanish Nationalists have, particularly insofar as British shipping is concerned, been unable successfully to impose an effective naval blockade of any Spanish Government port. It will be recalled that last summer British warships escorted British merchant vessel through the Bilbao, Santander, and Gijon blockades to Spanish territorial waters, and that this policy was arrived at after debates in which the Government was severely criticized by the Opposition for not protecting these vessels. Similarly, the successful working of the Nyon Agreement put an end to the menace to British shipping in the Mediterranean from submarines and surface vessels.

Thus the policy of the British Government has, in a sense, indirectly contributed towards the adoption by the Nationalists of the only other means of interfering with shipments to their enemies, namely, by bombing ships from the air. This new method of interfering with the enemy's supplies within Spanish territorial waters, has been so successful that even if the Nationalists should now be

granted belligerent rights, and presumably the right of blockade, it is perhaps doubtful whether, if given the choice, they would not prefer to continue to bomb ships in Spanish ports rather than to attempt an effective naval blockade, particularly in view of the reduced strength of General Franco's navy. In other words, by denying to Nationalists belligerent rights at sea in order to further the cause of non-intervention, Great Britain has inadvertently encouraged the development of a new method of blockading enemy ports which is far more ruthless and destructive than that which it has replaced. Certainly there can be little or no question of peaceful capture, visit and search, etc., from the air which is usual in the case of a legal and effective blockade.

The position in which the British now find themselves seems the more paradoxical when it is considered that Great Britain, the dominant naval power in Europe, but one of the most vulnerable to air attack, and certainly the most dependent on seaborne supplies, has denied to a belligerent the right of naval blockade which, in turn, has led to an intensive bombing by airplanes of ships carrying supplies and British ships at that.

Respectfully yours,

HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON

852.00/8171 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, June 29, 1938—noon.

[Received June 29—8:50 a. m.]

160. My telegram 134, June 6, 1 p. m. Perth called on Ciano yesterday and unofficially sought to impress upon him the extremely unfavorable effect continued bombing of British vessels was having on public opinion in Great Britain. He did not mention the Anglo-Italian Agreement⁷⁹ but from what he has told me of his conversation it is evident that Ciano could only have inferred that until the bombings ceased no consideration could be given to his request that that agreement be put into effect without further delay.

According to Perth, Ciano seemed somewhat shocked by this intimation and repeated that the Italian Government had no control over the activities of Franco's air force. He did say, however, that Mussolini had sent one message on the subject to Franco and that now it might be presumed he would send another.

PHILLIPS

⁷⁹ Signed at Rome, April 16, 1938, League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. cxcv, p. 77.

852.00/8185 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, July 5, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received July 5—9:14 a. m.]

165. Embassy's 160, June 29, noon. The British Ambassador told me last night that his conversation with Count Ciano on Saturday had been rather discouraging. Mussolini had rejected flatly any suggestion for a truce as well as the proposal for a unilateral withdrawal of a certain number of volunteers as a preliminary to putting the Anglo-Italian agreements into effect. The Duce had also instructed Ciano to inform Lord Perth that there was no possibility of renewing the negotiations with France until after the Anglo-Italian agreements were in operation.

Perth said that Ciano was still insistent that Italians had fulfilled their obligations with respect to Spain when they agreed to make the London Non-Intervention Committee plan effective and could go no further. Ciano seemed to feel that the British had not done their share and that the value of the agreements was being lost by the delay.

Perth admitted that he was somewhat disheartened at this turn of events as he saw no immediate solution and remarked that considerable bitterness had been displayed by Ciano with reference to the French. He agreed that the Italian attitude had probably been affected by the stiffening of the Loyalist resistance in Spain.

I expect to see Ciano shortly.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8201 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, July 6, 1938—10 a. m.
[Received July 6—7:20 a. m.]

597. The British plan for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers from Spain was unanimously adopted at a plenary meeting attended by representatives of 26 noninterventionist states last night. Copies of the complete document comprising some 60 pages are being despatched today to Barcelona and Burgos and will be published as a White Paper⁸⁰ at the end of the week.

⁸⁰ British Cmd. 5793, Spain No. 1 (1938): *The Text of a Proposed Resolution Reaffirming and Extending the Non-Intervention Agreement, and Providing for the Withdrawal of Foreign Volunteers from Spain . . . Adopted by the International Committee for the Application of the Agreement Regarding Non-Intervention in Spain . . ., July 5, 1938.*

The two Spanish parties will be asked to provide facilities for the commissions to carry out their work of counting foreign auxiliaries and to arrange for setting up base camps through which they can be evacuated. They will also be requested to agree to a new arrangement by which international observers will be established on land in Spanish ports.

Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy each paid their share of an initial fund of £50,000. As previously reported the cost of the entire program was estimated at £2,750,000.

No significant editorial comment has appeared in the London press, but special reports of diplomatic correspondents are optimistic.

KENNEDY

852.00/8251

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Chief of the Division of American Republics (Briggs)

[WASHINGTON,] July 7, 1938.

Ambassador Wright informed me this morning that he had just received from the Cuban Secretary of State a memorandum (apparently based on information received from the Cuban Minister to Switzerland) which indicated that Cuba hoped to enlist the support of the United States in action designed to terminate hostilities in Spain. Mr. Wright read various excerpts: apparently the Cuban Minister to Switzerland considers the present moment "propitious" for such a move, to be promoted by the United States but made by this Government in association with various other American states. Mr. Wright observed that it appeared to be along the lines of the former Cuban proposal, and he said that he had refrained from expressing any comment as to what the attitude of this Government might be. He said he had limited himself to assuring Secretary Remos that the memorandum would be transmitted to Washington without delay, and that he hoped to get it in tonight's airmail.

I told Ambassador Wright that I assumed that the position of this Government towards such a proposal would be as indicated in connection with the former Cuban suggestion,—that is, that for reasons with which he was familiar we would not be in a position to take any action.

ELLIS O. BRIGGS

852.00/8214 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, July 7, 1938—10 a. m.
[Received 11:24 a. m.]

1075. I discussed last night with Bonnet⁸¹ the situation in Spain. As you know Del Vayo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Barcelona Government, has been in Paris for the past week. Bonnet said that the Barcelona Government was not only ready to accept mediation and make peace but also was intensely eager to have some sort of action taken which might bring an early armistice. Bonnet said that he was under the impression the Barcelona Government now felt that it should have made an effort to obtain peace some time ago.

The British, he added, were continuing to attempt to interest Franco in the idea of peace but had not had any success.

Bonnet then recurred to a variation of the suggestion which Delbos made to me many months ago. He said that he felt that if England, France, the Pope and the President of the United States should propose an armistice and offer mediation in Spain the weight of moral influence would be so great that Franco would be compelled to accept an armistice. He added that he knew that not only the French and British Governments but also the Pope would be ready to take such action at once if the United States could see its way clear to participate.

I should be obliged for any instructions the Department may care to give me with regard to this matter.

BULLITT

852.00/8215 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, July 7, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received July 7—4 p. m.]

169. My telegram 160, June 29, noon. The British Ambassador informs me he has received a telegram from his Government stating that since his representations to Ciano on June 28 there have been no attacks whatsoever on British ships by Franco's forces.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8216 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, July 7, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received July 7—5:30 p. m.]

170. My telegram No. 165, July 5, 11 a. m. I saw Ciano last evening but did not find him very communicative.

⁸¹ Georges Bonnet, French Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Daladier Cabinet.

With respect to the London Non-Intervention Committee agreement he thought that Franco would accept the Committee's proposals although possibly with certain observations.

Concerning the British-Italian agreements, Ciano said he was doing everything in his power to hasten their being put into effect. As regards French-Italian relations, Ciano said the French were continuing to make as much difficulty as possible in all directions prompted presumably by their desire to prevent the British-Italian agreements from coming into force.

Perth now tells me that the Italian Government's observations referred to in my 165, July 5, 11 a. m. were in form of a memorandum prepared by the Duce himself. He has no doubt that these observations were discussed at yesterday's meeting of the British cabinet but has not yet received any word. Perth is disturbed by Mussolini's refusal to proceed with conversations with the French until the British-Italian agreements are in effect. The French Chargé d'Affaires he says is inclined to think the Germans are intriguing to prevent or delay Italo-French conversations but Perth does not share this view. In his opinion this is the moment for the French and Italians to settle their problems because Daladier and Bonnet are sincerely desirous of doing so and are free to act at least until the French Chamber meets in October.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8214 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, July 8, 1938—5 p. m.

450. Your 1075, July 7, 10 a. m. If you are requested to transmit a suggestion or invitation for this country to participate in a proposed mediation of the Spanish struggle, I wish you would explain that our policy of strict noninterference in the Spanish situation would preclude our participating in any such offer.

HULL

852.00/8238 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Cuba (Wright)

WASHINGTON, July 9, 1938—2 p. m.

54. Your letter July 7 to Briggs regarding mediation in Spain.⁸² You may informally advise the Secretary of State that our policy of noninterference in the Spanish situation would preclude our participation in any such action as that proposed.

HULL

⁸² Not printed; but see memorandum dated July 7, p. 225.

852.00/8253 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, July 13, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received July 13—3:13 p. m.]

174. Embassy's 165, July 5, 11 a. m. In a conversation which I had with Perth this morning I found him somewhat discouraged in regard to his recent talks with Ciano. He explained that the Italians had been insisting that the agreement to put the British plan into effect constituted a "settlement" of the Spanish problem but that the British Government could not accept this interpretation since it was Chamberlain's view that the accomplishment of a substantial withdrawal of volunteers would be necessary. The Italians had, however, not even yet been informed of this view but merely that acceptance of the British plan could not be considered a "settlement" sufficient to bring the Anglo-Italian agreements into operation. In his last communication to Ciano, Perth had stated that his Government was nevertheless very anxious to put them into effect at the earliest possible moment and hoped that the Italian Government on its part would propose some other way of getting around the difficulty.

Although when the agreements were concluded both the British and Italians were convinced that within 3 months the Franco armies would have achieved victory, Perth did not now foresee any rapid solution to the military problem. He admitted that certain younger elements in the Fascist Party were becoming impatient and he believed had counselled Mussolini to discard the agreements. Perth felt, however, that there was no immediate danger that Mussolini would act on this advice.

PHILLIPS

852.2221/1031 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, July 14, 1938—9 a. m.
[Received 6:25 p. m.]

1003. Embassy's 1002, July 13, 4 p. m.⁸⁸ The morning papers publish the text of a note from Del Vayo to the British Chargé d'Affaires acknowledging the receipt of the plan for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers. The note cites the several occasions, beginning in February 1937, on which the Spanish Government has expressed its advocacy of the withdrawal of all foreigners participating in the Spanish

⁸⁸ Not printed.

conflict, and states that it is in this spirit that it is now studying the plan.

Senor Del Vayo stated to me yesterday that in addition to the note above described he has also addressed a note to the British and French Governments requesting assurances that if upon the expiration of the "period of grace" mentioned in the plan (I have not seen its text) definite progress toward execution of the plan has not been made the present restrictions of the nonintervention policy be lifted as regards the Spanish Government. He states that approval of the plan of withdrawal is not, however, contingent upon acquiescence in this suggestion.

THURSTON

852.00/8260 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, July 15, 1938—5 a. m.

[Received July 14—7:15 p. m.]

1004. 1. Military. Since the fall of Castellon a month ago the rebel offensive on the Teruel-Sagunto front has advanced slowly. Its principal progress has been inland from Castellon in the general direction of Segorbe. Alvarez del Vayo informed me yesterday, however, that it is obvious that the rebels are preparing to initiate a drive of major proportions along this line—and this morning's papers indicate that it may already have begun with the capture of Sarrion. Such a drive in all probability would give the rebels possession of the Teruel-Sagunto railway and highway and possibly carry them on to Valencia.

Operations on other fronts have been desultory. Air raids continue.

2. Political. Although underlying conditions remain unchanged speculation about the political situation appears to have lessened and the Government seemingly is firmly in control.

3. International. While the Non-Intervention Committee and all its works are viewed with hostility and suspicion, its plan for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers is in principle accepted with favor. The Anarcho-Syndicalists press states that withdrawal can only be beneficial to the Loyalist cause and approval also is expressed by the communist press—which suggests that aviators, artillerymen and technicians be withdrawn first.

Senor Del Vayo expressed concern during our conversation yesterday over the attitude of the French Government which he attributed to British influence. A more severe control is understood to be in effect on the frontier although no formal announcement on the

point has been made here. I saw yesterday, however, several truck loads of what undoubtedly were packed airplanes (the cases were marked Le Havre) going towards Barcelona.

THURSTON

852.00/8305 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, July 28, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 2:50 p. m.]

1015. Embassy's 1003, July 14, 9 a. m. The reply of the Spanish Government to the British note conveying the plan of the Non-Intervention Committee for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers from Spain is published in today's newspapers. The following are its salient points:

1. The Spanish Government considers that it may construe the plan to be designed primarily to assure the withdrawal of foreigners directly or indirectly participating in the Spanish conflict. The provisions applying to this point are contained in part 4 of the annex to the proposed resolution of the Non-Intervention Committee, and the Government declares that it accepts these provisions at once and when the occasion arises will collaborate faithfully in their execution. Nevertheless it feels obliged to make the following observations:

2. Concerns system of estimating number of foreign volunteers, which Government believes should be effected by direct investigation.

3. Concerns zones of evacuation.

4. Concerns "time table" for withdrawal which it analyzes in detail and finds in some respects entirely impracticable and prejudicial to the Government.

5. Concerns definitions of "foreign volunteers" and suggests withdrawal in first place of technicians, aviators, artillerymen, general staff, et cetera (see section 3, Embassy's telegram 1004, July 14 [15], 10 [5] a. m.).

6. Concerns "nationality" and reaffirms Government's contention that [apparent omission] are to be considered foreigners and therefore should be withdrawn.

7. Concerns exemption of foreigners who enlisted in the Spanish Foreign Legion prior to July 18th, 1936, whose withdrawal also is urged.

8. Concerns failure to provide for withdrawal of foreign material and prevention of its continued arrival.

9. Concerns maritime control which since rebels receive supplies by sea it considers should be made as effective as land control. Criticizes selection of controlled parts which omits Ceuta, Coruna, the islands, et al. Calls for fuller information in general.

10. Concerns air control, omission of which is criticised, and expresses astonishment that after a full year this nonintervention has not been studied.

11. Concerns belligerent rights. Repeats opposition to granting such rights to rebels.

THURSTON

852.00/8338

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1560

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, August 1, 1938.
[Received August 9.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that Sir Robert Hodgson⁸⁴ recalled from Burgos with General Franco's reply to the British protests against the deliberate bombing of British ships is returning to Burgos with instructions to settle the final details of the Commission to be set up to examine the individual cases. The Prime Minister has announced in the Commons that while Burgos has insisted that the bombing of the British ships was not deliberate, the British Government cannot reconcile this denial with positive knowledge that the planes have descended to a short distance above the ships, made many attempts, and then machine-gunned the decks. In truth the day after Mr. Chamberlain announced that Sir Robert Hodgson would return, Franco planes, unquestionably Italian, sank the British steamer *Dellwyn* after repeated attempts, killing the Danish observation officer on board, and this was done in the presence of a British war ship which for the first time in British history under such circumstances failed to act. The fact that the evidence is to be in secret, kept from the public, is resented by the British ship owners.

Mr. Thompson, an associate of Mr. Eden, who has had charge of the British Embassy here for months, and whose despatches have not been in harmony with the pro-Franco policy of Mr. Chamberlain, has been recalled and given another assignment which is a promotion. However, Mr. O'Malley, who was in Mexico, has been sent as his successor. I have had Mr. O'Malley to lunch at the house and I find that while he knows absolutely nothing about the Spanish quarrel his prejudices against the Government to which he is accredited are most violent.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

⁸⁴ British diplomat, appointed agent to the Spanish Nationalist Government, November 1937.

852.00/8376

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

No. 2776

PARIS, August 9, 1938.

[Received August 19.]

SIR: It is generally understood here that the effective closing of France's Spanish frontier to the delivery of war materials to the Barcelona Government and of the despatch of volunteers to Spain dates from June 13. The Department will, of course, recall from my telegrams that I was informed early in June that the frontier had been virtually closed since about the end of May.

Recently, the Italian press has renewed the attack on French policy with respect to the Spanish situation by alleging that France is again permitting the delivery of war materials to the Barcelona Government. These allegations, and the deduction drawn from them that French policy with respect to Spain renders impossible the conclusion at this time of a serious and useful accord between Paris and Rome, have appeared so persistently in the Italian press, and particularly in connection with the return to Paris early this month of the French Chargé d'Affaires at Rome for the purpose, presumably, of conferring with M. Bonnet concerning Franco-Italian relations and the possible resumption of negotiations looking to a Franco-Italian accord, that the Quai d'Orsay has issued two official denials, one of a somewhat mild and general nature on August 5th, and another, yesterday, of precise and emphatic refutation, which has been given prominence in all of the Paris newspapers this morning. The texts of these denials are transmitted herewith.⁸⁵

Where the truth lies in this matter, it is difficult to say. The Department will recall that, in his telegram No. 1004 of July 14 [15], 10 [5] a. m., our Chargé d'Affaires at Barcelona reported having seen, on the previous day, several truck-loads of what appeared to be packed aeroplanes on their way to Barcelona from Le Havre. However, the campaign which the Left press in Paris has been carrying on recently against the Government's policy with respect to Spain indicates that the border is effectively closed, or nearly so, to shipments of war materials to the loyalist Government. At any rate, these journals, and particularly *Humanité*, urge, in view of Franco's long delay in replying to the non-Intervention Committee's plan, that the French border be reopened and that the 40-million dollars of gold deposited with the Bank of France by the Bank of Spain in 1931 be turned over to the Barcelona Government. On July 6 the Appellate Court upheld the right of the Bank of France to withhold delivery of this gold to

⁸⁵ Not printed.

the Bank of Spain of Barcelona on the grounds that, although the Barcelona bank is closely associated with the State, it could not be identified with the State and, therefore, delivery could not be effected without the danger that the Bank of France might be called upon to pay twice.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
EDWIN C. WILSON
Counselor of Embassy

852.00/8353 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, August 14, 1938—10 p. m.
[Received August 15—1:15 p. m.]

1022. 1. **Military maneuvers.** Major military developments since the last report of this series has been the successful Government offensive across the Ebro and the resultant paralyzation of the rebel drive on Sagunto. Rebel attempts to force the Loyalists to recross the river which are expected to be intensified have thus far failed and Government officials believe that they will not succeed. In the meantime every effort is being made to strengthen defenses in the Sagunto area.

A less spectacular but potentially important military activity is the current rebel offensive in Extremadura. The Government is despatching reinforcements and capable leaders to this front in an effort to save the Almaden Mercury Mines and to prevent a general disruption of its lines there. Government offensives near Teruel and across Segre are apparently of no significance.

2. **Political.** The "crisis" mentioned in my 1019, August 10, 9 a. m.⁸⁶ appears to have been provoked by the Socialist Party (possibly at the instigation of Prieto) and to have been based on the fear that Negrín has been too complacent with respect to the absorptive tendency of the Communist and is prolonging an unsuccessful war which should be brought to an end. Negrín subsequently appeared before the National Committee of the Socialist Party and evidently convinced it of the wisdom in the practicability of his course in general and received assurances of its support. The Communist factor appears to have been disposed of by the publication of some of the minutes of the committee expressing disapproval of the "tendency toward exclusivism" of the Communist Party. I am assured by Zugazagoitia and Del Vayo that the incident has been settled.

⁸⁶ Not printed.

A second "crisis" however has arisen as a result of the recent militarization of all war industries. This deprives the Generalidad of control over important Catalan industries (which the Government claims were failing to meet war requirements) and has succeeded in impaired relations between the government and the Generalidad. An immediate consequence has been the resignation of Senor Aguade (Catalan left republican) as Minister of Labor and the resignation of Senor Irujo (Basque nationalist) as Minister without Portfolio as an act of solidarity on an issue involving regional autonomy. Action on these resignations had not been taken when I spoke with Government officials last evening.⁸⁷

3. International. The official viewpoint would [apparent omission] the attitude of cooperation in the interests of international peace maintained throughout the present conflict by the Spanish Government now entitles it in view of Franco's attitude regarding the nonintervention plan to demand reconsideration by foreign powers of the Spanish problem. Senor Del Vayo has already spoken in this sense to the British and French Embassies here and he informed me yesterday that if the situation does not change he may address formal petitions to the British and French Governments—which I inferred would demand that the nonintervention plan be modified and that the French frontier be opened.

4. Prospects. Negrín's exposition before the National Committee of the Socialist Party as described to me by Zugazagoitia was designed to show that the Government can hold its present positions, has funds sufficient to conduct the war for two more years if necessary and that disruptive tendencies in the rebel camp together with the trend of events abroad counsel the continuance of the war. It also appears that he feels that the Loyalist rear guard is sound and that the food problem can be solved. Armament is being manufactured (30 to 40 planes per month) and acquired abroad (Zugazagoitia said yesterday that 70 planes have just been received) and the restored Republican army is expected to be prepared for major offensive operations by next spring.

The soundness of these calculations is open to doubt although the recovery since last March is proof of the strength and spirit that can be mustered and the attitude and possible influence of Azana and Prieto must also be taken into account.

THURSTON

⁸⁷ An official communiqué announcing the resignations was issued August 17, 1938.

852.00/8358 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, August 15, 1938—noon.
[Received August 16—9:30 a. m.]

1025. My 979, June 16, noon.⁸⁸ The British Minister informed me this evening that he was requested by President Azana to meet him a few days ago in the distant town of Vich. At the resulting interview Azana stated that while he accepted the possibility of Franco's ultimate defeat the attainment of that end would entail a prolonged conflict which would leave Spain prostrate and that he desires to bring the war to an early end to avoid further destruction.

He believes that this can be effected through the application of the Non-Intervention Committee's plan for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers—in connection with which a cessation of fighting might be brought about during which a plan of amnesty could be agreed upon which would facilitate and lead to an armistice and final peace. If the prospects for the success of such a program should so warrant Azana is prepared to reorganize the government to include men who would carry it out.

Mr. Leche did not say whether he was requested to make concrete proposals to his Government (presumably necessary for an approach to Franco through Italy) but I assume that he was.

THURSTON

852.00/8877 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, August 21, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received August 21—9:42 a. m.]

210. With reference to British concern over Italian "volunteer" reinforcements to Franco Spain, Charles, British Chargé d'Affaires here, has confidentially informed the Embassy as follows:

Last night at Ciano's request he called at the Foreign Office. He had called previously on August 18th to remind Ciano of the latter's promise to investigate charges of reinforcements of Italian "volunteers" to Franco Spain as well as alleged French laxity on the Spanish frontier, which last the British deny. Ciano who according to Charles had been evasive on the 18th was forthright yesterday evening. He said that Italy was sending armaments to Franco in proportion to those which "Italy knew" were being sent from France to Barcelona.

⁸⁸ Not printed.

Appertaining to troop movements he admitted "replacements" but flatly denied an increase in existing forces. Charles felt that Ciano was sincere in this last statement.

Charles then called Ciano's attention to the recrudescence of subtle anti-British propaganda in the Italian press with particular reference to Palestine. He pointed out that while there was no comment, ambiguous headlines and unfortunate photographs played a fairly important role. Ciano expressed complete surprise and ignorance of this which Charles considers somewhat naive.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8387 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, August 23, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received August 23—5 p. m.]

1034. Paragraph 3 of my 1022, August 14. Señor Del Vayo informed me this morning that in view of the negative nature of Franco's reply to the non-intervention plan⁸⁹ he summoned the French Ambassador and the British Chargé d'Affaires to the Ministry of State last evening and, after reminding them that the Spanish Government had approved the plan largely as a result of the repeated assurances and insistence of their Governments, informed them that his Government now looks to theirs to remedy the inequitable situation which prevails. I inferred that he cited Count Ciano's recent remarkable statement to Lord Perth about "replacements" as evidence of continuing Italian intervention.

In addition to the foregoing action Del Vayo has also addressed a note to the French Government formally requesting that the frontier be opened.

THURSTON

852.00/8407 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, August 29, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received August 29—9 : 54 a. m.]

519. I have just learned from most reliable quarters, identified in despatch going out today,⁹⁰ that the rigid closing of frontier due to serious dissensions across the border, involving among other things

⁸⁹ Printed in the *London Times*, August 22, 1938.

⁹⁰ Not printed.

a conflict between Franco and General Anido, Minister of Interior and hailed as "the strong man". Franco plans to dismiss Anido and serious trouble feared. Defeatist note common in San Sebastian, not unheard even at Burgos, but suppressed at Saragossa and near the front. Even Marquis de Rialp⁹¹ unable to cross border Saturday to keep engagement with me. Most serious conflict apparently between Franco's group and Falangists.

BOWERS

852.00/8426 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, September 6, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 6:25 p. m.]

1038. 1. Military. Military activities during the past 3 weeks have largely been confined to the Extremadura and Ebro fronts. On the former the Government first arrested the Rebel drive toward the Almaden mines and then initiated a counter offensive which made some progress but now apparently has in turn been checked. On the latter the Rebels have continued and greatly intensified their effort to drive the Loyalist forces from across the river. While the Government lines still hold and some hope is entertained that they will not break, it is generally expected that the Rebel effort will eventually meet with success.

2. Political. Although rumors of political crises are recurrent there is no evidence to support them. Basic divergencies, which I have frequently reported, continue to exist and it is probable that under certain conditions a "peace party" might emerge—but at the moment the Negrín-army-coalition is paramount.

As evidence of the healing of the breach between the Government and the Generalidad two Catalans (Nicolau d'Olmer of the Bank of Spain and Quero Molares who recently resigned as sub-Secretary of State) will be included in the Spanish delegation to the forthcoming meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

3. International. Alvarez del Vayo will leave tomorrow for France en route to Geneva, where he will later be joined for the Assembly by Negrín and among others the Spanish Ambassadors at London and Paris. No reply has been made to the representations reported in my 1034, August 23, 5 p. m. Del Vayo has informed me, however, that restrictions at the French frontier have been somewhat relaxed—pre-

⁹¹ Representing Franco in arrangements with Ambassador Bowers for the exchange of prisoners. See pp. 285-345 *passim*.

sumably in view of the persistent reports of the arrival in Spain of a constant supply of new Italian equipment.

Señor Del Vayo appeared to be impressed this noon by the gravity of reports just received from the Spanish Chargé d'Affaires at Praha. These appear to imply that unless Benes' latest concessions are accepted hostilities are inevitable.⁹²

The British exchange commission has just visited Barcelona and is now en route to Burgos.

THURSTON

852.00/8435 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, September 9, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 9—10 a. m.]

522. I saw the Spanish Ambassador in Paris Wednesday and he showed me what purports to be documentary proof that during the last 7 weeks 30,000 more Italian troops have reached Spain along with many shiploads of arms and ammunition from Italy and Germany unloaded mostly at Algeciras. He says that during the fighting, from the now abandoned Sagunto offensive through the Ebro campaign, Franco has suffered from 40 to 50,000 casualties. His losses certainly have been heavier than at any time since the war began. Under the circumstances even the Non-Intervention Committee cannot possibly believe that Franco has the slightest intention of agreeing to the withdrawal of his foreign troops and material. The Ambassador says that of the 13 divisions now engaged on the Ebro front 8 are Italian. These include recent reinforcements from Italy.

BOWERS

852.00/8358

The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston)

No. 538

WASHINGTON, September 9, 1938.

SIR: The Department has noted with interest the information contained in your strictly confidential telegram no. 1025 of August 15, noon, and in other reports which you have submitted, indicating the possibility that the Spanish Government may be disposed to take steps to terminate the present conflict by negotiation. For your confidential information in this connection, you are advised that the

⁹² See pp. 433 ff.

American Consul General at Zurich has informed the Department that according to an unofficial but very reliable source, Premier Negrín and the Duke of Alba, special agent of General Franco at London, were observed to have met in the Sihl forest near Zurich during the former's visit to that city. What occurred at this meeting is not known.

The Department will, of course, be interested in receiving any information which may come to your attention regarding any steps that may be taken by the Spanish Government with a view to a peaceful settlement of the present conflict.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
A. A. BERLE, JR.

852.00/8440 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, September 12, 1938—10 a. m.
[Received 2: 16 p. m.]

1042. My 992, June 28, 8 p. m.⁹³ The President of the Basque State, Señor Aguirre, has informed me that he recently conferred in Paris with Monsieur Bonnet at the latter's request and that Basque and Catalan representatives in London at the same time conferred with Lord Halifax regarding a settlement of the Spanish conflict. The trend of these conversations appears to have been as follows:

The British and French Governments are now of the opinion that neither party to the Spanish conflict can subjugate the other, that the conflict should be brought to an early end and the danger of foreign domination in Spain removed, and that peace can only be established by positive action from abroad. They are in agreement on a possible course of action looking to a cessation of hostilities, and armistice and finally a plebiscite. It apparently is contemplated that once the Czechoslovakian crisis is passed an attempt to realize this plan will be made, and Bonnet suggested another meeting with Aguirre for October.

Aguirre is confident that a plebiscite would be favorable to the Republic and I infer from hostile criticism of the Negrín Government that Basque and Catalan pressure would be applied in support of such a plan.

This telegram is being repeated to Paris and London and I should be glad to receive from the Department any reports which may be submitted by our Embassies there on this or the Spanish situation in general.

THURSTON

⁹³ Not printed.

852.00/8450 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State*ST. JEAN DE LUZ, September 14, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received 3:10 p. m.]

525. For the Secretary and Under Secretary. Viscount Momblas representing Franco's Foreign Office here, going back and forth constantly to Burgos, told me "very confidentially" last night that the Germans are very unhappy in Franco Spain and not popular. He says their arrogance has been resented and he would not be surprised to see them leave at any time. He tells me that when the press reported a decree had been prepared recalling the Jesuits and restoring their property in rebel territory the German Ambassador called on Franco. He said that the report had caused much distress and uneasiness in Germany where such a step was considered reactionary and contrary to the policy on which Hitler and Franco were supposed to agree. Franco heard him in silence and then pressing a button summoned a clerk and instructed that the decree be brought in. The clerk on returning with the decree explained that it had been printed and would be published in the official gazette the next morning. "See that nothing interferes with its publication in the morning," said Franco.

Such an unprecedented confidence from such a source convinces me that Franco is fearful of the effect of a European war with him aligned with Germany. This would drive the democracies to align themselves effectively with the Spanish democracy and mean his destruction in the end. Should the Germans act against France from their airdromes and artillery bases on the frontier regardless of Franco's wishes it would mean French military intervention at once. I suspect Momblas intended me to report his confidence as evidence of Franco's hostility to Hitler's new adventure. Should war come, however, Franco will be tied to Hitler's destiny unless the Germans with their planes, tanks, artillery, are sent out of Spain at once.

BOWERS

852.00/8503 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State*ST. JEAN DE LUZ, September 28, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received September 28—2:48 p. m.]

535. Conversations with outstanding Francoists including Perez de Ubla, former Spanish Ambassador in London, disclose a general

agreement that Franco cannot maintain his alliance with Hitler and Mussolini in a European war since France would speedily wipe him out. Admitted by all that, should Italy join Hitler, Franco should send all his German and Italian allies home forthwith and that France would have to act at once or very soon to clean out the Italian bombing nest in the Balearics. The bitter and contemptuous attacks on France by Francoists for 2 years and never so bitter as during the last 6 weeks have given way to expressions of friendliness and my informants say Franco is withdrawing his Germans and Italians 130 kilometers back from the French frontier and they evidently think this may be sufficient. They all admit a fear that hot heads on Franco's side may force a clash with France and that Franco may not be able to control his Fascist and Nazi allies enrolled with him. My colleagues here take it for granted that the Spanish Government, naturally on the side of the democracies, will give France and England naval bases at Cartagena and probably elsewhere and that this will further make the line-up in Spain. However, Franco is said to be desperately anxious to stay out.

BOWERS

852.00/8507 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 30, 1938—10 p. m.
[Received September 30—7:02 p. m.]

258. My telegram 253, September 29, 7 p. m.⁹⁴ The Council today appointed a committee consisting of the delegates of France, Great Britain and Iran to carry out the appointment and despatch of a small commission to observe and report on the withdrawal of non-Spanish combatants from Government Spain and authorized an expenditure of 250,000 Swiss francs for the purpose. A report on this subject adopted by the Council was designed to safeguard the position of the London Non-Intervention Committee. Bolivia and Peru abstained. Upon the suggestion of the British delegate the Council agreed that if a similar demand was received from the other side in Spain it would welcome it in the same spirit.

BUCKNELL

⁹⁴ Not printed.

852.00/8508 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, October 1, 1938—4 p. m.
 [Received October 1—11:35 a. m.]

261. My number 258, September 30, 10 p. m. League is now considering formation of the commission to investigate withdrawal of foreign volunteers from Government Spain. Since it may be desired to consider the appointment of an American Army officer among other possibilities for the Commission I am informally requested by a responsible member of the League Secretariat informally to inquire whether: (a) United States would object to the appointment by the League Committee of Three of an American Army officer possibly on the retired list to serve on League Commission which will observe withdrawal; and (b) if there is no objection would the United States care informally to suggest the name of such an officer who might be immediately available in Europe. It would be appreciated if a reply could be received by Monday morning since it is hoped to appoint the Commission on that date.

The reason for considering the action in appointing an American may be that we are neither members of League nor of Non-Intervention Committee.

I am informed in confidence that plan is that Commission will consist of 15 officers as follows: one general and two colonels who would be paid 2000 Swiss francs per month and 60 Swiss francs per diem; two majors (staff officers); eight captains or lieutenants in the Army; and two lieutenants or lieutenant commanders in the Navy. This group of officers would receive 15 Swiss francs per month and a per diem of 40 Swiss francs.

BUCKNELL

852.00/8508 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Geneva (Bucknell)

WASHINGTON, October 2, 1938—2 p. m.

112. Your 261, October 1, 4 p. m. It will be understood, I feel sure, that following our policy of noninterference and nonintervention we would prefer not to have American officers engaged in the work of this commission.

Please therefore discourage the idea of appointing an American officer on the League Commission for the Evacuation of Foreign Volunteers.

HULL

740.00/485 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, October 5, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received October 5—9:05 a. m.]

283. This morning's announcement from Paris of the decision of the French Government to recognize the Italian Empire and to appoint an Ambassador to Rome has been given great prominence in this morning's press. During my call upon Count Ciano this morning he expressed much satisfaction and said that the new French Ambassador would be François-Poncet.

Negotiations are now in progress between the British Embassy here and the Italian Foreign Office with a view to regularizing British-Italian relations. Count Ciano told me that as a unilateral act and not as a part of these negotiations the Italian Government would begin to withdraw from Spain on October 15 or 16 a large number of "Italian volunteers"—a force which would amount to more than one half of the total Italian forces in Spain. He added that General Franco had the situation so well in hand that Italian troops were no longer so necessary.

It would appear probable that Great Britain is preparing promptly to bring into effect the British-Italian agreements of April 16 last.

Ciano appeared optimistic over the decided turn for the better of European affairs in general. He also expressed satisfaction at the announcement this morning from Praha of the appointment of Chvalkovsky as Foreign Minister in the new Czechoslovak Cabinet. Chvalkovsky has represented his country in Rome for 6 years and previously as Minister in Berlin.

PHILLIPS

852.2221/1208 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 8, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received October 8—2 p. m.]

1146. Hemming, secretary of the Spanish Non-Intervention Committee, left London today for Burgos to explain to Franco and his staff the British plan for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers from the military forces fighting in Spain. According to Foreign Office sources, a principal objective of Mr. Hemming will be to find out from Franco what his real intentions are with respect to execution of the British plan. Franco's reply to proposed British plan was so ambiguous and disappointing that further elucidation of the meaning

is being sought (see my despatch No. 1040 of August 24th, 1938⁹⁵). If Hemming can return to London with a satisfactory understanding effect with Franco, a meeting of the Non-Intervention Committee will be called immediately with a view to putting the machinery of the British plan into operation.

It is reported in today's press from Spanish sources, that Franco has already expressed his agreement to the imminent withdrawal of about 10,000 men. This is confirmed from official sources who state also that it has the concurrence of Italy. While this may be a step toward the putting into effect of the Anglo-Italian agreement, the declaration of the Barcelona Government at Geneva of its decision for the immediate and complete withdrawal of all non-Spanish combatants on its side, does not make the problem of the British Government any easier. The Prime Minister is committed to Parliament not to put the Anglo-Italian agreement into effect until there has been a substantial withdrawal of foreign volunteers from both sides. Some way will have to be found to make Franco's concessions appear "substantial" in the face of the unequivocal action of the Barcelona Government. Informed official sources express confidence that a suitable formula to make effective the Anglo-Italian agreement will soon be found.

KENNEDY

852.2221/1209 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, October 8, 1938—9 p. m.
[Received October 8—6:05 p. m.]

266. My telegram 258, September 30, 10 p. m. I am informed in confidence that the Council Committee of Three constituted the Commission to supervise the withdrawal of non-Spanish combatants from Government Spain as follows:

President, General Jalander, Finland; commissioner in charge of observers at the front, Lieutenant Colonel Homo, France; commissioner in charge of observers at ports, Colonel Molesworth, United Kingdom.

The two sections of observers are composed of four military officers of various nationalities. The secretary of the Commission is Colonel Bach, French member of Disarmament Section. The assistant secretary is Noel Field.⁹⁶ Staff supplied by Secretariat.

⁹⁵ Not printed.

⁹⁶ American.

It is understood that the Spanish Government was today requested to advise when the Commission can be received and it is expected that all members of the Commission will meet in Perpignan some time next week.

BUCKNELL

852.00/8526 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, October 10, 1938—10 a. m.
[Received October 11—8:45 a. m.]

1056. The British Chargé d'Affaires has informed me that he advised the Foreign Office today that in his opinion it would now be appropriate, in so far as Government Spain is concerned, to present a proposal for the settlement of the Spanish conflict. I inferred that Azana has intimated that any reasonable proposal for discussion made by Franco would be accepted. Mr. Leche assured me however that his Government has as yet made no suggestion to the Spanish Government regarding peace arrangements.

The conviction is growing in Barcelona that peace is near, and there are many rumors regarding the reorganization of the Government preliminary to negotiations. There is however no evidence to support such conjectures—although it appears to be true that Negrín and Del Vayo are out of the country at the moment and this of course inspires the presumption that they are engaged in peace explorations.

THURSTON

852.2221/1220 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, October 12, 1938—10 a. m.
[Received October 12—8:28 a. m.]

1058. The Minister of State informed me last evening that the international Commission designated at Geneva to observe the withdrawal of foreign volunteers from Loyalist Spain will arrive at Perpignan today and will later come to Barcelona. Señor Del Vayo stated that all foreign volunteers have now been withdrawn from the fighting lines and that most of them are concentrated at various points in Catalonia, although a few are in the severed southern zone. He expects evacuation from Spain to begin within a very short time.

THURSTON

852.00/8532 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, October 12, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received October 12—7:52 a. m.]

1059. My 1056, October 10, 10 p. m. [a. m.]. The Minister of State informed me last evening that there is no basis for the speculation now current regarding a negotiated settlement of the Spanish conflict. He added that while no direct proposals have been presented the Spanish Government has been indirectly approached and has made unmistakably clear its rejection of any attempt to impose peace.

Señor Del Vayo stated that the plan of his Government is to bring to an issue the question of foreign participation in the war by removing all foreigners from the Loyalist forces (see No. 1058⁹⁷) in the expectation that a similar course must thereafter be followed by the rebels. Once all foreigners are out of Spain the Government will press for the abandonment of the Non-Intervention Pact and the substitution for it of a policy of bona fide neutrality. Thereafter the two Spanish parties to the conflict would fight it out.

The Minister stated that the Government has full confidence in its ability to continue the war (see last two paragraphs of telegram 1022, August 14, 8 [10] p. m.). He admitted the gravity of the food situation however and said that Negrín and several members of the Government have removed to a village in the Pyrenees in order to devote exclusive attention to that problem.

THURSTON

852.00/8531 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 13, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received October 13—10:27 a. m.]

546. During the last 3 days all Franco papers are running almost hysterical articles in large black type and in "boxes" and editorials with interviews denouncing the idea of mediation. Have seen no such campaign on any subject before. These clearly ordered by Burgos. Interviews with Jordana, Minister of State, generals and two Fascist members of Ministry, say suggestion of mediation is treason. All based apparently on mere rumors of the possibility.

Am personally told by visitors from across border that the people are war weary and discouraged over the 3 months' failure on the

⁹⁷ *Supra.*

Ebro and the decisive defeat near Almaden. Soldiers on leave no longer enthusiastic and very tired. Am convinced the remarkable press propaganda and threats thought necessary to intimidate growing desire for mediation among the people.

BOWERS

852.2221/1222 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, October 13, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received October 13—12:50 p. m.]

297. After the announcement of the withdrawal of approximately 10,000 volunteers from Spain, see my 291, October 8, 6 p. m.,⁹⁸ it now appears that the Anglo-Italian negotiations to bring the April agreement into effect have been suspended pending discussion in the British Parliament. The Embassy has learned that the Italian Government was informed that Chamberlain was desirous of bringing the pact into operation as early as possible but was bound by his pledge to Parliament to give it a prior opportunity for a full discussion of the situation. The British Embassy is of the opinion that the withdrawal already announced is "substantial" and will permit the pact to go into operation although Great Britain would have preferred to have seen more troops and material removed. According to the British Ambassador, Ciano has confidentially informed the British Ambassador that after the announced withdrawal 9 Italian infantry battalions of approximately 700 men each will remain in Spain. This, of course, does not include the services or supply troops required to keep this body of men in the line. It is difficult to obtain an accurate estimate of the latter as without doubt some of the services are being performed by Spanish troops.

From Italian official sources it has been confidentially learned that, in addition to the 10,000 troops who will be withdrawn according to the Salamanca announcement of October 9th, 2,500 have already been repatriated on account of illness or wounds and it is expected that an additional 600 men including wounded and dissatisfied men will also be brought back, giving the total estimate of withdrawals over 18,000. This approximates a withdrawal of about half of the Italian forces in Spain which was mentioned by Ciano in his conversation with me on October 5, see my 283, October 5, 1 p. m.

Although an official communiqué published this morning announces that Italian casualties in Spain from the beginning of operations to October 10 total 12,000 killed and wounded it is not believed that this

⁹⁸ Not printed.

number represents the entire casualty list. In fact it has been confidentially asserted that Mussolini admitted to Chamberlain at Munich that his total losses amounted to 50,000 and that he had evidenced a desire to get out of Spain completely. For the present, however, it is believed that Italian aviation, artillery, land and other specialists will remain.

Although it is claimed that the aspirations of the Duce to eliminate Bolshevism from Spain are on their way to fulfillment it must be remembered that Italian intervention has not succeeded in bringing about a victory for Franco and from that point of view has been a failure. It would therefore appear that a desire to cover up this failure has been the controlling factor in the Italian drive to put the Anglo-Italian Pact into immediate effect in order that the simultaneous withdrawal could seem part of the same operation. The fact that this has not been possible in view of the aforesaid British attitude is doubtless responsible for the stiff tone recently adopted by the Italian press in criticism of elements in England and France and the demands of certain editorial writers that the Italian-German terms of peace be accepted. Up to the present there has been no specification of the nature of these terms.

PHILLIPS

852.2221/1229 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, October 16, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received October 16—9:35 a. m.]

303. My 297, October 13, 3 p. m. Although it still remains understood that no further steps will be taken toward putting the Anglo-Italian agreement into operation until after Parliament meets early in November, Perth tells me that he has again been discussing the subject with Ciano in the hope that Italy can be persuaded to add something more in the matter of withdrawal of Italian troops and give some assurances with respect to the cessation of aerial bombardments. So far he has been unable to do so and Ciano has told him definitely that the contemplated withdrawal is as far as Italy can go at present.

The British Prime Minister has agreed to submit the situation to the Cabinet sometime this week. Perth himself is of the opinion that the proposed steps represent a "considerable withdrawal" and that the British Government is therefore committed to give recognition to the Empire. Perth gives me the impression that the Cabinet will accept this interpretation and he is hoping that the Prime Minister

will authorize him to inform Ciano of the Cabinet's decision even though there can be no publicity until the discussion in Parliament.

It is announced today that the 10,000 legionaries have embarked at Cadiz to return to Italy.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8605

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1605

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 28, 1938.

[Received November 12.]

SIR: In further reference to the Hemming Commission's activities in Burgos, I have the honor to report that its mission and activities are most carefully concealed from the British correspondents here, and that there is no reason to believe that the reason given by the British Government, that is the wish to "explain" the Non-Intervention Committee's withdrawal plan and to persuade General Franco to accept it, is the true reason. In my dispatch at the time this Commission appeared here⁹⁹ I expressed the conviction that the sole purpose is to exaggerate out of all proportions the withdrawal of the 10,000 Italians and to declare this a complete compliance with Mr. Chamberlain's demand that there shall be a "settlement" of the Spanish question before the Anglo-Italian agreement can be put into effect. There can scarcely be any doubt of it now.

The fact that Hemming went to Cadiz to witness the departure of these Italians, though he had stoutly declared such was not his purpose, and that a British official was sent to Naples to witness the landing there, leaves no room to doubt that this withdrawal of a small part of the Italian army is to be used by Mr. Chamberlain as a satisfactory settlement.

There is significance also in the fact that the British Broadcast reported fully on every phase of this withdrawal, but has scarcely mentioned the presence in Barcelona of the representatives of several neutral nations, sent by the Council of the League of Nations to supervise the withdrawal of all the foreigners from the other side.

The original position of Chamberlain was that when a "proportionate" number of foreigners on both sides has been withdrawn "in substantial number" he would consider the Spanish question "settled" enough to allow him to put the Italian agreement into operation. With all foreigners leaving loyalist territory, there is manifestly no proportionate withdrawal at all if only 10,000 Italian soldiers leave Franco's side.

⁹⁹ Despatch No. 1596, October 17, not printed.

In this connection it must be noted that no Italian aviators, or technicians are leaving, though these are by long odds Mussolini's most effective contribution to Franco's cause. On the contrary other Italian aviators have arrived.

In view of the common opinion of everyone from across the border, partisans of Franco, business men having no special partiality, and war correspondents, I feel safe in saying that there is no thought of withdrawing any more Italians.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.00/8663

The Spanish Embassy to the Department of State

MEMORANDUM

No. 141/15

The Government of the Spanish Republic decided the total withdrawal of foreign volunteers and accordingly the Prime Minister, Dr. Juan Negrín, announced this resolution in his speech before the League of Nations:

He asked that a Commission be appointed by the League of Nations to go to Spain to control and ascertain the actual withdrawal of foreign volunteers. The Commission is at present in Spain and has attended the farewell of the volunteers who fought in favor of the Spanish Republic.

The Spanish Government had adopted this resolution unilaterally, without taking into consideration the intentions of Germany and Italy—who have openly helped the rebels—with regard to the withdrawal of their regular forces from rebel territory.

The intention of the Spanish Government was to do everything necessary in order that the Spanish conflict remained exclusively a conflict between Spaniards, making by this an important step towards its solution.

Mr. Mussolini announced then the retirement of 10,000 Italian soldiers, confessing once again the official intervention of Italy in the Spanish civil war. The withdrawal of these 10,000 Italian soldiers was offered having in view the possibility of putting in force the Anglo-Italian pact.

But the Spanish Government has information of absolute truthfulness that the 10,000 Italian soldiers retired from rebel territory are ill and invalid men of no use for military service and, therefore, the withdrawal of Italian volunteers has been only one more farce to be added to the many already realized by the great farce of non-intervention. The rebel General Staff is these days working intensely

in the reorganization of two new Italian shock divisions and trying to camouflage the rest of the Italian troops as volunteers with the Foreign Legion. This authentic information coincides with the news of a new violent offensive by the rebels, made with Italian and German men and materials, which could give them in a short time an appearance of a small military advantage as justification of the beginning of coming into force of the Anglo-Italian pact.

The Government of the Spanish Republic most emphatically demands the complete and total withdrawal of the foreign troops fighting with the rebels. This withdrawal to be controlled as has been done with the foreign volunteers who have been fighting for the Spanish Republic.

WASHINGTON, November 1, 1938.

851.00/1899 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, November 2, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received November 2—3 : 28 p. m.]

1854. I had a talk yesterday with Delbos. . . .

As for Spain, Delbos fears that the French Government will agree to grant Franco belligerent rights after the Anglo-Italian agreement enters into force and on the basis of the withdrawal of only the 10,000 Italian troops who have already left Spain. This will mean complete victory for Franco leaving a large number of Italians still in Spain particularly Italian aviators at Majorca. France will be hurried into negotiations with Italy for the settlement of all questions in dispute between them while Mussolini continues to hold the trumps in the form of positions in Spain threatening French communications with North Africa.

WILSON

852.00/8609

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1611

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 3, 1938.

[Received November 12.]

SIR: Apropos of Mr. Chamberlain's announcement that there has been a "settlement" in Spain because 10,000 Italians have been withdrawn and that the Anglo-Italian agreement should immediately go

into effect, I have the honor to report that the Spanish Government has just made public through its Embassy in London its own figures on Italian participation in the war of fascist invasion against Spain. It says:

"It is estimated that there are about 90,000 Italians in the service of the insurgents, 60,000 of whom are infantry, artillery and tank corps.

"Pilots number from 900 to 1,000 and aviation mechanics 2,000.

"There are between 3,000 and 4,000 radio telegraphists, assistants and aviation operators, 10,000 automobilists, 5,000 engineers, 5,000 workers on war services, and 2,000 police and agents.

"There are still eight Italian Generals in Spain.

"Recent Italian arrivals in Spain were 325 aviators, 3,374 soldiers and 600 technicians.

"The total of Italian planes noted in flight on the Ebro front during the first fortnight of September was 1,301."

It is my firm conviction, based on conversations with war correspondents, that there must be as many as 60,000 of the Italians in the infantry, artillery and tank corps. It is notoriously true that the major part of the aviation is Italian, and some German.

All the planes, tanks, etc., German and Italian.

There appears to be no doubt that more Italian soldiers have entered Spain during the last two months. The English prisoners recently exchanged were confined in a concentration camp entirely in charge of Italians and these are reported to me to have told the prisoners that they had come not over a month before.

These figures and facts are well known to Mr. Chamberlain, which may explain the complaint of a Tory member of the House of Commons in this week's debate that "the House of Commons has been continuously and grossly misled by Ministers over a period of several years." That I personally and positively know to be absolutely true—particularly in the case of Spain.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.00/8596: Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, November 4, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received 5:50 p. m.]

1072. 1. Military. Another rebel counter offensive (said to be the 7th) was launched October 30 against the Loyalist positions beyond the Ebro. That action apparently is of major proportions (the sound and concussion of the battles distinctly perceptible here for

several days) and it is evident from Government communiqués that it has resulted in rebel gains.

Alvarez del Vayo has just returned from a tour of the southern area and has informed me that he is well satisfied with the military situation there. He admitted that the food problem is somewhat serious but expects new plans to improve conditions. His conversation and attitude confirm my 1059, October 12, 5 p. m. He spoke casually of the winter campaign and projects for operations next spring.

2. Political. There have been no developments of significance and the basic situation remains as often described. Public statements by members of the government imply confidence in its strength and continuance.

3. International. I am reliably informed that the League of Nations Commission now here is satisfied as to the good faith of the Government with respect to the withdrawal of foreign volunteers. Evacuation has commenced, but the French authorities have thus far refused entry into France to all but French volunteers and further delays will result from the determination of the above to safeguard volunteers who came from Germany, Italy and other countries to which they must not be forced to return.

Much effort is being devoted to foreign propaganda designed to stimulate the supply of food to Loyalist Spain for the coming winter.

THURSTON

751.65/429 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, November 10, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received November 10—4 p. m.]

330. François-Poncet, the newly appointed French Ambassador, informed me today that he had made his first call upon Ciano yesterday afternoon and had expressed the desire of his Government for better relations and for some sort of accord. Ciano had replied with definiteness that negotiations looking to an accord would be impossible unless the French Government would withdraw its support from the Barcelona Government. The Ambassador admitted to me that this attitude on the part of Ciano was a serious obstacle to an early *rapprochement* between the two countries because of the fact that there were still powerful groups in the French Government which held to the policy of supporting what they regarded as a liberal Spanish Government. He thought, however, that possibly the French Government would have to yield with regard to its position in Spain to pressure from the British. The Italians wished, of course, for recognition of Franco's belligerency but the British up until now had

not reached any decision in this respect. In view, however, of continued Italian disquietude in this direction and the British Government's policy to pursue friendly relations with Italy, the Ambassador thought that eventually recognition of belligerency would be granted.

PHILLIPS

852.00/8603 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 12, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received November 12—10:25 a. m.]

556. Hemming went to London but returns to Burgos. I learn he does not pretend to represent the Non-Intervention Committee but does represent the four Munich powers with Portugal thrown in for good measure. He says he will remain in Burgos until Franco signs some carefully guarded plan submitted to him but no indications of nature of plan. Generally assumed here it must be in "the spirit of Munich". Hemming says doubtfully he hopes also to go to Barcelona but as representative of the Munich spirit he will not be welcome there.

BOWERS

852.00/8636 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, November 17, 1938—noon.

[Received 11:52 p. m.]

1091. 1. Political. While the rumors provoked by Señor Besteiro's¹ visit to Barcelona continue to circulate Government officials assure me that they are without foundation and that no change in the Government or its war policy is contemplated. These assertions were made yesterday morning and it is possible that a reaction may follow the recrossing of the Ebro which may affect the political situation.

2. International. The Minister of State informed me yesterday that the Spanish Government has notified the British and French Governments that if the Spanish question is to be dealt with in the Anglo-French conversations next week it enters full reservations and will expect to be given the opportunity to present the view of the Spanish Government.

Señor del Vayo also stated that he understands that Hemming has been informed that [omission ?] rebels will not relinquish their foreign

¹ Juan Besteiro, a leader of the Socialist Party of Spain.

technicians, aviators and artillerymen although they may send out additional contingents of foreign troops. [Omission?] the British have declined to assist the Spanish Government in hastening the evacuation of its foreign volunteers by providing transportation or at least naval escort to Barcelona for the volunteers still in Valencia area. In this connection he intimated that he feels that the British may not be unwilling for further delay in the evacuation of foreign volunteers from the government side to occur as such delay would place the government somewhat on a parity with the rebels in so far as the superficial appearance of the continued presence of foreign forces in their respective zones is concerned and thus obviated the embarrassment that would be caused by unilateral withdrawal.

THURSTON

852.00/8654½

*Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State (Berle) to
President Roosevelt*

WASHINGTON, November 19, 1938.

On November 7th you spoke to me about the possibility of a Spanish armistice, outlining the possible method. I went to work on this.

I believe the Secretary of State has already told you that he was working on the matter. The present idea of the people here is that in view of our changed relations with Germany it will be necessary to associate some South American countries with us; and if possible, make it a unanimous act of the Lima conference. A formula has been prepared which Sumner will probably take up with you. It seems to me that some move is essential. I think that Loyalist Spain would accept; there is a possibility that Franco might, but that if he did not, the knowledge that he had declined would liberate political forces which might force peace within a few months. Further, if he did refuse it would clear the way for changing our position in the matter of the Spanish embargo.

What must be done here is to make sure, if possible, that the Vatican goes along. This would have to be handled while we are en route to Lima.

I feel no possible harm would come from making a strong move; great good might result; and the move works along with your policies whether successful or unsuccessful in immediate effect. The career people feel there is at least an even chance of its being successful.

A. A. BERLE, JR.

852.00/8646 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 19, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received November 19—10:45 a. m.]

558. 1. Hemming just returned from London to Burgos has returned to London by plane to submit some proposition to Lord Plymouth for the Ambassadors of Germany, Italy, Portugal, England, and France he admits he represents. Note that he reports to Chairman of Non-Intervention Committee. Indications that this Committee has been irregularly reorganized to eliminate all friends of the legal Spanish Government and that the proposition to be submitted will be quite in "the spirit of Munich". Personally convinced it is impossible for Franco to agree to withdrawal of his German and Italian allies.

2. A pro-Franco member Diplomatic Corps just returned, unofficial observer rebel territory, assures me that conditions behind the lines are quite serious because of bitterness of factional dissensions and that physical combats between factions in Burgos last week. From another completely dependable source told that one more reverse for Franco would be fatal. Am positive behind the line hostilities far more serious in rebel than in Government Spain. Caldwell, manager Telephone in Spain, just out, thinks Negrín firmly in the saddle.

BOWERS

852.00/8667

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1621

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 24, 1938.
[Received December 2.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that the Hemming Commission has left Spain and that it is the understanding here, unverified however by any competent authority, since the Hemming Commission was most reticent, that Franco refused to consider sending, not all, but any, more Italians or Germans out of Spain until belligerent rights had been previously granted.

Since the Non-Intervention Committee has taken the position positively that belligerent rights will not be granted until all foreigners are removed from the fighting forces, and since Mr. Chamberlain has so assured the Commons time and again, this would seem to mean that the granting of such rights is very remote.

Even so it is commonly believed in circles usually dependable that Mr. Chamberlain, in his eagerness to give further assistance to Franco, and thus to appease Hitler and Mussolini, is anxious to grant such rights regardless of the pledge. When interrogated in the Commons this week Mr. Butler, Sub-Minister of Foreign Affairs, was far from downright in his answers.

It has been thought probable that one of the purposes of the visit of Chamberlain and Halifax to Paris today and tomorrow is to persuade or bully the French into agreeing to this course. However Bonnet has assured Mr. Blum² that there is no possibility of France agreeing to this course, and Mr. Blum has given this to the press; and the Committee on Foreign Relations in the French Parliament has unanimously taken a stand against it.

In view of these discussions, whatever may happen in Paris this week, I am inclosing as part of this despatch an editorial from the *Vanguardia* of November 22, "Chamberlain a Paris", and another from *El Diluvio* of the same date on the same subject: "La Solucion no esta en Paris; esta en Espana."³ Since these papers reach me just as the pouch is going out I regret I do not have the facilities to send translations.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

741.51/311: Telegram

The Chargé in Italy (Reed) to the Secretary of State

ROME, November 25, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received November 25—2:29 p. m.]

348. Embassy's telegram No. 330, November 10, 6 p. m. The results of the Anglo-French talks in Paris are described in the Italian press as very limited and from the European point of view distinctly negative.

Gayda asserted this evening that the British and French policy respecting armaments and military cooperation was incompatible with the spirit of the Munich accords and in reality constituted a reaction against them. With reference to recognition of Franco's belligerent status he stated that it was untenable to argue that recognition should be subordinated to complete withdrawal of foreign volunteers since it was well known that French ports continue to be open to Red Spain. He denied emphatically that any further Italian volunteers have been or will be sent to Spain and declared that any

² Léon Blum, President of the French Council of Ministers, June 1936—June 1937; March—April 1938.

³ Editorials not reproduced.

Italo-French agreement similar to the Franco-German declaration was not to be expected inasmuch as there were questions between Italy and France still awaiting clarification the first of which related to the "problem of Spain".

The French Ambassador again said today that the official Italian position was that no discussions for the improvement of Franco-Italian relations could usefully begin until France had accorded the Nationalist Government in Spain full recognition of belligerent status. François-Poncet said that his Government in view of the opposition among the Left elements in France could not take this step and saw no immediate solution for this deadlock.

REED

852.00/8669a : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State, On Board the S. S. "Santa Clara," at Sea*⁴

WASHINGTON, December 1, 1938—5 p. m.

10. In my conversation today with the British Ambassador, following the thought expressed in your last conversation with me, I asked him what his personal and unofficial opinion was, in the event that the Conference might think the time propitious for making an offer of mediation to the two factions in Spain, as to whether such a move would in any way be regarded unfavorably by the British Government. The Ambassador replied immediately that he thought his Government would view such a step with favor. He added, however, that about six weeks ago the British Government had reached the positive conclusion that no mediation in which the British Government itself took part would meet with success until conditions in Spain materially changed.

WELLES

852.01/411 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, December 2, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received December 3—8:55 a. m.]

1117. An official statement by the Ministry of State published in today's newspaper announces the recall of the Spanish Ambassador and staff from Brussels in view of the assignment of a Belgian com-

⁴ The Secretary of State, as Chairman of the American delegation to the Eighth International Conference of American States, was en route to Lima, Peru. See vol. v, pp. 1 ff.

mercant agent to "rebel territory". The statement points out that the decision of the "Belgian Prime Minister" was taken just as the Spanish Government was repatriating foreign volunteers and at the time "savage attacks on open cities were arousing horror and universal condemnation."

The Belgian Chargé d'Affaires in Spain has been recalled and will leave for France tomorrow.

THURSTON

733.52/21

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

No. 560

SAN ANDRÉS DE LLAVANERAS, December 2, 1938.

[Received December 22.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's strictly confidential instruction number 545, of October 31, 1938,⁵ (File No. 733.52/-20) with which was transmitted a copy of a despatch submitted by the American Legation at Montevideo on the subject above cited, and to report that there has been no change in the attitude of the Spanish Government with respect to the resumption of diplomatic relations with Uruguay since the preparation of this Embassy's confidential despatch number 446, of July 15, 1938.⁵

I mentioned this subject to Señor Alvarez del Vayo, the Minister of State, during a conversation yesterday, and he stated that while the Spanish Government desires to restore such relations, and has made tentative advances, it does not appear probable that they will be restored in the immediate future.

Respectfully yours,

WALTER THURSTON

852.00/8697

The Chargé in Sweden (Cabot) to the Secretary of State

No. 82

STOCKHOLM, December 2, 1938.

[Received December 16.]

SIR: With reference to the Legation's despatch No. 81 of December 2, 1938,⁵ item 1, page 1, I have the honor to report that the Secretary General of the Foreign Office yesterday confirmed to me the withdrawal of Sweden from the Sub-Committee of the Spanish Non-Intervention Committee and said that the reasons given in the local press for this move were substantially correct.

⁵ Not printed.

The Secretary General stated that Sweden had been included originally on the Sub-Committee as one of the principal arms exporting nations. For a long time, however, it had become increasingly evident that Sweden and the other small nations represented on the Sub-Committee were merely being used by the Great Powers in their political manoeuvres, and were expected to ratify decisions taken by the Great Powers without having any real influence on these decisions. This position of responsibility without power was not only prejudicial to Sweden's prestige but also at times politically disagreeable and even dangerous. Sweden had therefore gradually come to the conclusion that it must withdraw from the Sub-Committee.

In answer to a question the Secretary General said that Sweden and Belgium had not agreed beforehand on their simultaneous withdrawal from the Sub-Committee. There had, however, been discussions regarding this point between the two countries before their respective withdrawals, and in view of the similar positions which they occupy from the viewpoint both of internal and international politics it was not strange that they had reached a similar decision at almost the same moment.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN M. CABOT

852.00/8677a : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, December 10, 1938—1 p. m.

39. We received last night this report through the head of the Havas Bureau here:

"Havas, London, reports that the British Government has been advised by the American Government in Washington that the American Delegation in Lima is going to propose to the Conference that the Conference offer mediation in the Spanish conflict."

As you may remember, I asked the British Ambassador just before he left for his own personal reaction to such a possibility and he replied that he personally believed his Government would be enthusiastically favorable to such a step. No further conversation on the subject has taken place here or in London.

I have informed the correspondents who have inquired with regard to this report that I knew nothing whatever about it and that inquiries should be addressed to the American Delegation in Lima which was the only competent authority to give any information with regard to this rumor.

WELLES

852.00/8688 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, December 15, 1938—11 a. m.

49. The French Ambassador by instruction of his Government came to see me yesterday afternoon and left with me an *aide-mémoire* of which the following is a translation :

“At the same time that bad weather conditions are suspending military operations in Spain, an increasing feeling of weariness on both sides is seizing the masses of the people who are seeing less and less clearly their ideological antagonisms and are realizing with constantly increasing distress the destructions which have been accomplished.

In this state of mind, if an appeal for the cessation of hostilities was made publicly and solemnly at Lima by the Pan American Conference, which has just consecrated for the new world an international peace order, it can be hoped that such a declaration would have a profound and perhaps decisive reaction in Red Spain as well as in White Spain. In fact, the Conference certainly represents for all of Spain a high moral force which no party would dare to dispute.

If the South American republics assembled at Lima took such an initiative, the French Government would be disposed to support it with all of the discretion and all of the decisiveness which might be desired, in accordance, it is needless to say, with the Government of the United States and the Government of Great Britain.”

In reply to this communication I said to the Ambassador that I was not as yet advised whether in fact any such step was being contemplated by the Conference. I said, expressing my own opinion, that such a step could only usefully be taken if it was taken unanimously by all of the twenty-one republics and that I did not yet know whether there was any unanimity of sentiment in this regard. I further expressed the opinion that if the French Government let it be known publicly that it was supporting such a move or that it was communicating with other governments in support of such a move, the publicity resulting would in all probability make it completely impossible for the Conference to take any step, even if the twenty-one republics so desired, because of the opportunity which would be afforded to the Franco regime to announce publicly in advance that such an attempt at mediation would not be acceptable to it.

If there are any representations you would like me to make to the French Government beyond those I have indicated, please let me know.⁷

WELLES

⁷ The Secretary of State apparently made no reply to this telegram.

II. PROTECTION OF LIVES AND PROPERTY OF AMERICANS AND
OTHER NATIONALS*

352.115/326

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary
of State*

No. 291

BARCELONA, January 6, 1938.

[Received January 27.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's instruction number 489, dated November 22, 1937,⁹ (File No. 352.115/313[317]) and in compliance therewith to report as follows:

There has been no change in the status of the Commission to examine and report on foreign claims since my despatch number X-280 of December 12, 1937.¹⁰ The Secretary General of the Ministry of State informed me a few days ago that Señor Alvarez del Vayo (nominally the Chairman of the Commission) has not assumed his duties, and that no further meetings have been held. Señor Ureña expressed the hope, however, that he himself would be able to take charge of the Commission (he is Vice Chairman) and cause weekly meetings to be held.

The Commission will sit in Barcelona where, pending the allocation of other quarters, it will occupy rooms in the Ministry of State.

There is enclosed herewith a copy of a Note (No. 6) that has been addressed to the Ministry of State¹¹ with respect to the several points mentioned in the instruction under acknowledgment about which the Department desires further information. It will be observed that it has been drafted to take cognizance of the Executive Orders transmitted with despatch X-280, of December 12th.

Respectfully yours,

WALTER C. THURSTON

352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/147

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

No. 502

WASHINGTON, January 19, 1938.

SIR: Reference is had to the Department's telegram B-385 of November 24, 7 p. m.,¹² and to subsequent communications regarding

⁸ Continued from *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 469-564.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 557.

¹⁰ Not printed; it transmitted texts of two Executive Orders relating to the Claims Commission, dated October 18, 1937, and published in the *Gaceta de la Republica* of November 11, 1937. (352.115/323)

¹¹ Not printed.

¹² *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 559.

the case of Antonio Fernandez Villa and his wife, Salvadora, American citizens imprisoned at Palma de Mallorca. There is now enclosed for your information a copy of a strictly confidential despatch, no. 48 of November 23, 1937 from the American consular officer at Palma,¹³ reporting upon the trial of Fernandez and his wife, which took place on November 16, 1937.

For your further information it may be stated that Professor Pedro Villa Fernandez of New York University, who is a brother of Antonio Fernandez, has advised the Department that according to information that he has received from a personal source, the authorities at Palma de Mallorca would not object to the release of Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Fernandez, if they could be sure that after leaving Spain they would not talk about their personal experiences, which might be used for propaganda purposes against the regime of General Franco. Professor Villa Fernandez has assured the Department that if Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Fernandez Villa are permitted to leave Spain, he will undertake to see that his brother will neither talk nor write about his experiences in Mallorca nor allow himself to be used for propaganda purposes as long as the present conflict in Spain continues. It may be remarked, incidentally, that Professor Villa Fernandez has been in close touch with the Department on this case, and some time ago deposited \$425.00 with the American Consul at Marseille to cover the expenses of his brother and his wife in returning to the United States. Professor Villa Fernandez has been informed that his assurances in this connection have been brought to your attention.

The Department is of the opinion that the evidence upon which Mr. and Mrs. Fernandez Villa were convicted by the military tribunal at Palma, as reported in the enclosed despatch from Vice Consul Fisher, in no way justifies the extremely severe sentences imposed by that tribunal. It may also be observed that this case has aroused considerable interest in this country, and may result in increasingly unfavorable publicity for the regime of General Franco. It is hoped, therefore, that favorable action in this case may soon be taken by General Franco.

If a favorable opportunity should present itself, you are authorized to bring the above considerations to the attention of Señor Sangroniz¹⁴ or of his representative at St. Jean de Luz, and to emphasize again the desirability from the point of view of all concerned of bringing

¹³ Not printed; T. Monroe Fisher, Vice Consul at Leghorn, Italy, was on detail at Palma de Mallorca.

¹⁴ J. A. de Sangroniz, Chief of Diplomatic Cabinet of the Nationalist Government of Spain.

this unfortunate incident to a close on the basis suggested in your letter of November 27, 1937 to General Franco.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
G. S. MESSERSMITH

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./11: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, January 22, 1938—3 p. m.

B-400. Your 426, January 20, 1 p. m.¹⁵ Consul, Marseille, reports *Nantucket Chief* seized by Franco naval vessels.

Vessel is of American registry and owned by American corporation, the Nantucket Chief Steamship Company, and at time of seizure was flying American flag and manned by American crew.

Please take up matter informally with Franco regime and endeavor have vessel released; also endeavor ascertain status and welfare of captain and crew.

Confidential: At the time of seizure vessel was under charter to the Spanish Petroleum Monopoly.

HULL

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./13: Telegram

The Consul at Gibraltar (Williams) to the Secretary of State

GIBRALTAR, January 24, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received January 24—2:30 p. m.]

Following telegram has been received from Fisher, Palma de Mallorca, via British naval radio.

"24th. According to captain and ship's papers *Nantucket Chief* loaded cargo gasoline at Atrico, Texas, and cleared for Marseille but was ordered to change at sea and cargo delivered Campsa at Tarragona Spain end of December. Present cargo gasoline and kerosene loaded at Tuapse, Russia, and destined for Campsa, Barcelona. Ship seized latitude 40 degrees 45 north longitude 3 degrees 45 east night of January 17th by three Nationalist warships and brought here. Owners cargo unknown. Understood that case has been referred to Salamanca. Captain states that he has no funds here and food sufficient for about 8 days. He has had some trouble with the crew but situation now in hand."

WILLIAMS

¹⁵ Not printed.

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./16 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the
Secretary of State*

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, January 25, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received January 25—11 a. m.]

428. Your telegram No. B-401, January 24, 7 p. m.¹⁶ Have consulted with Yrujo¹⁷ and in view of the lack of authority in Nacho Enea¹⁸ have taken measures to secure release of the *Nantucket Chief* through Sangroniz. Am convinced that the insurgents will hold the ship and crew for an indefinite time as in the case of the British and Norwegian vessels taken under similar circumstances. However, the informal protest and request for release has been presented.

2. Nacho Enea does not know about present situation of crew but assumes they are held on the ship with insurgent guards on board. Am confident request for information will be complied with.

3. My request that Fisher's report be forwarded here, based on Thurston's telegram to me, No. 13, January 22, 11 a. m., saying "the Embassy at Paris informed me yesterday that it was expecting his report through our Consulate General at Marseille". It seemed essential to me that I should have all possible information in approaching insurgent authorities.

BOWERS

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./29 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, January 28, 1938—7 p. m.

B-404. Your 428, January 25, 1 p. m. Telegram from Fisher¹⁶ reports captain of *Nantucket Chief* taken ashore under arrest for trial on unspecified charges. Please communicate with Franco authorities and request prompt action for release of captain.

For your information owners of vessel have suggested to Department that release of vessel might be expedited if assistant naval attaché at Paris were authorized to go to Salamanca to take up matter with Franco authorities. It appears that vice president of com-

¹⁶ Not printed.

¹⁷ Luis M. de Yrujo, formerly Counselor of the Spanish Embassy at Washington, attached to the headquarters of the Nationalist Government at St. Jean de Luz.

¹⁸ Residence of Franco agents at St. Jean de Luz.

pany is personally acquainted with assistant naval attaché at Paris. We have made it clear to the owners that we do not favor such a visit.

We shall appreciate an indication of when a reply may be expected from Franco authorities regarding release of ship. In taking up with them matter of captain's arrest you should emphasize our interest in obtaining the release of this American vessel. The Department will appreciate any suggestions that you may wish to make as to other means of expediting release.

HULL

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./31: Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, January 29, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received January 29—11:04 a. m.]

433. Your number B-404, January 28, 7 p. m. Have just talked plainly to Yrujo and prepared a vigorous protest against detention and arrest of captain and requested his prompt release in letter to Sangroniz. Since the *Nantucket* incident is purely military and Sangroniz's recommendation if favorable may be ignored, suggest that Bay²⁰ be instructed to tell Queipo de Llano²¹ that we would take a serious view of the captain's imprisonment and trial. Have Yrujo's promise to impress on Sangroniz the necessity of early action.

The latter will take up the matter with Franco's brother, the military representative connected with the diplomatic cabinet as liaison officer.

Should the captain be detained for trial it will mean that only a show of force will be effective and in that event I suggest that the *Raleigh* be sent to Palma de Mallorca to investigate.

BOWERS

352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/150: Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, January 31, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received January 31—10 a. m.]

435. Despatch [*Instruction*] No. 502, January 19. In all dealings with rebel authorities have used effect on public opinion as our most effective weapon. Am informing Sangroniz today by courier of pledge of non-participation in propaganda if the Fernandezes are pardoned.

BOWERS

²⁰ Charles A. Bay, Consul at Seville.

²¹ Nationalist General.

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./38: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, January 31, 1938—6 p. m.

B-407. Your 433, January 29, 2 p. m. Careful consideration was given by the Department when this case first arose as to the best manner of communicating with General Franco. You were requested to take the matter up with Franco's representative because this appeared to be the most satisfactory means of communication. This conclusion was in line, moreover, with your own recommendation that communications to General Franco should be addressed through you and not through Bay and General Queipo de Llano. Unless circumstances have changed since your recommendation was made, we fail to see what useful purpose would be served by making representations to Queipo de Llano. Our desire is to communicate in the quickest and most direct manner possible with General Franco, who alone appears to have the authority to order the release of the *Nantucket Chief*.

Message from Fisher via Gibraltar, dated January 29,²² reports trial of captain "was held 9 o'clock morning of 27th and naval prosecutor asked 12 to 20 years for captain and confiscation ship's cargo. Verdict not yet announced. Captain in prison, all other members of crew on board."

In telegram on January 29,²² to which no reply as yet received, Department instructed Fisher to report circumstances of captain's arrest and exact charges against him.

You are requested again to communicate with General Franco's representative with a view to immediate action by General Franco for release of captain and vessel. It may be added that owners have assured Department that when released vessel will not be used in further trade with Spanish ports. We are not interested in cargo.

HULL

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./42: Telegram

The Vice Consul at Gibraltar (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

GIBRALTAR, February 1, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 4:52 p. m.]

Following telegram has been received from Fisher. (The letter from Spanish commander referred to below was translated in this Consulate.)

²² Not printed.

"31st. This morning I have received a letter from judge handling *Nantucket Chief* case stating that verdict of 17 years 4 months for Captain Lewis and confiscation ship and cargo was approved. Shortly afterwards naval military commander apparently now handling case verbally informed me *Nantucket Chief* had sailed for a port of Nationalist Spain to discharge cargo with all crew on board except Captain Lewis; that when cargo discharged ship and crew now on board would be liberated and permitted to sail for the United States and that in a week or so Captain Lewis would be pardoned. Commander said that information was official but he requested me to make official request for information which was done immediately.

This afternoon commander sent to me following letter which reads in part as follows:

'In reply to your esteemed communication of today I have the honor to inform you that the American ship *Nantucket Chief* is on its way to a Nationalist port where it will unload and it will be probable that the crew and the ship will remain at liberty. I should inform you also that His Excellency, the Admiral, has requested of our Government in Salamanca the pardon of the captain of said ship.'

Personally I believe verbal information given to me correct but premature for official written communication."

Telegram has been repeated to Bowers.

JOHNSON

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./46: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, February 1, 1938—9 p. m.

B-408. Reference Fisher's report of 31st through Consulate at Gibraltar. We are assuming that the indication of intention to release ship and crew is true and will be carried out immediately. Please keep in touch with Franco representative and advise us of all developments in this connection. You should also make further urgent representations with a view to effecting immediate release of captain.

HULL

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./59

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Office of Arms and Munitions Control (Green)

[WASHINGTON,] February 1, 1938.

Judge Moore,²³ after consulting with Mr. Dunn,²⁴ Mr. Moffat²⁵ and Mr. Green as to the measures to be taken with a view to the immediate release of the *Nantucket Chief* and its captain now held by the Franco Government at Palma de Mallorca, requested Mr. William S. Culbertson, former Ambassador to Chile, to call at his office this morning. Mr. Culbertson, now a Washington attorney, is acting as counsel for Señor Juan Cardenas, former Spanish Ambassador in Washington and now unrecognized agent in this country of the Franco Government. Mr. Culbertson called in compliance with Judge Moore's request. Mr. Dunn, Mr. Moffat and Mr. Green were present during the conversation.

Judge Moore explained briefly to Mr. Culbertson the circumstances surrounding the capture of the *Nantucket Chief*, and outlined the contents of the reports received by the Department in regard to the action of the authorities in Palma in this case and the nature of the efforts, thus far unsuccessful, which the Department has made to bring about the release of the ship and its captain. He emphasized the seriousness with which the Department regarded the case, referred briefly to the inevitable effect upon public opinion in this country of the holding of an American ship and the imprisonment of an American citizen in such circumstances, and discussed in some detail the action which this Government might feel called upon to take should the Franco authorities carry out their apparent intention to hold the ship and imprison the captain.

At Judge Moore's request, Mr. Dunn and Mr. Moffat added some details in regard to the seizure of the ship and the action already taken by the Department to effect its release, and Mr. Green explained the attitude adopted hitherto by the Department toward transactions involving exports to Spain.

Mr. Culbertson said that he fully shared the Department's serious view of the situation which had developed as a result of the seizure of the *Nantucket Chief* and of the situation which would result if

²³ R. Walton Moore, Counselor of the Department of State.

²⁴ James Clement Dunn, Adviser on Political Relations.

²⁵ J. Pierrepont Moffat, Chief of the Division of European Affairs.

that seizure became the subject of widespread comment in the press and in Congress. He said that the Department had been more than fair in its treatment of Señor Cardenas and that he would immediately communicate with his principal and urge upon him the necessity of persuading his Government to free the ship and the captain immediately.

Early this afternoon Mr. Culbertson telephoned Mr. Green and said that he had just had a telephone conversation with Señor Cardenas. He said that Señor Cardenas had told him that he had already telegraphed to his Government urging the release of the ship and the captain, and that he would immediately do so again in stronger terms and would request a reply. Mr. Culbertson said that as soon as a reply had been received he would communicate its substance to the Department. He added that he was preparing a letter to Señor Cardenas on the basis of this morning's conversation in which he was emphasizing the seriousness of the situation and the necessity in its own interests for immediate action on the part of the Franco Government.

FEBRUARY 2, 1938.

Mr. Culbertson telephoned Mr. Green's office this morning and read a telegram which he had just received from Señor Cardenas as follows: "Matter submitted to me this morning satisfactorily settled."

Mr. Culbertson said that he assumed that this telegram must mean that Señor Cardenas had received information from Spain that the *Nantucket Chief* and its captain had been released. He said that he would endeavor to obtain further details from Señor Cardenas and that he would telephone me later.

JOSEPH C. GREEN

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./47: Telegram

The Consul at Malaga (Callanan) to the Secretary of State

MALAGA, February 2, 1938—noon.

[Received February 2—9:55 a. m.]

1. Your February 1, 9 p. m.²⁶ Port Captain states informally and confidentially that he is expecting the *Nantucket Chief* in port this afternoon to discharge a portion of its cargo, that the balance will probably be discharged at Ceuta, at Cadiz or at Seville and he will inform us to which of these ports the vessel will proceed as soon as he receives his instructions. He understands that upon the completion

²⁶ Not printed; it instructed the Consul to endeavor to facilitate early release if *Nantucket Chief* arrived at Malaga, and to advise Department of all developments (352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Company/45).

of discharge the vessel and crew will be placed at liberty to proceed to the United States. The captain, but no member of the crew, will be permitted to come to the Consulate. Ambassador not informed.

CALLANAN

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./66 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, February 6, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received February 6—10: 54 a. m.]

443. My telegram No. 441, February 2, 1 p. m.²⁷ There can be no doubt that Sangroniz acted at once on my first letter for in acknowledging my second just received he says:

"I have received your letter of the 29th instant relative to the capture of the Steamer *Nantucket Chief*.

As it is always pleasing for me to attend to the matters which you submit to my consideration, I hasten to inform you that previous to your letter and note with reference to the above mentioned steamer the necessary orders had been given in order that the *Nantucket Chief*, its captain and crew should be placed at liberty.

I know that you will appreciate and communicate to your Government the deep feeling of generosity which is contained in the gesture of His Excellency the Chief of State the incarnation of National Spain."

BOWERS

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./72 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, February 8, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 7: 11 p. m.]

445. I have just received two letters from General Jordana, Minister of State at Burgos, relating to the case of the *Nantucket* and the Fernandez pardon.

1. The *Nantucket*. "His Excellency, the Generalissimo, has followed with the greatest interest the development of this incident which he hopes may be settled justly and show the cordial relations which unite North America and Spain.

"A good proof of that intention and of the magnanimity of His Excellency, the Chief of State, is shown by the fact that orders have already been given to the competent authorities to place at liberty the above-mentioned ship, the captain of the same and its crew.

²⁷ Not printed.

"The indispensable steps which must be followed that the generous desires of the Caudillo may be fulfilled will be expedited as much as possible with orders which are being repeated to authorities who are handling the matter."

2. The Fernandez pardon. "I am today turning over your request to His Excellency, the Minister of Justice, in order to know exactly the causes which have motivated the imprisonment of the above-mentioned couple; and as soon as they are known to me should they offer because of their political nature a favorable opportunity, I shall be glad to comply with your request."

BOWERS

352.115 Eastern States Petroleum Co./79 : Telegram

The Consul at Malaga (Callanan) to the Secretary of State

MALAGA, February 10, 1938—noon.

[Received 2:28 p. m.]

11. Your No. 3, February 8, 7 p. m.²⁸ Captain Lewis arrived here this morning and has resumed charge of the *Nantucket Chief*. Port captain in reply to my inquiry stated at 11:30 that his instructions were to hand over the ship to Captain Lewis through the intermediary of the Consulate which he will not be able to do until 4:30 p. m. today, although I requested that the matter be [expedited?].²⁹ Ambassador not informed.

CALLANAN

352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/160 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Vice Consul at Gibraltar (Johnson)

WASHINGTON, March 2, 1938—noon.

Following message for Fisher. Report when delivery made.³⁰

"Your despatch No. 70 of January 14, 1938,²⁸ and previous communications regarding Fernandez case. Since nothing can apparently be accomplished locally toward release of Mr. and Mrs. Fernandez, you are instructed to return to your post as soon as possible. For your information we have taken up this case directly with Salamanca and will continue to press it.

Before departure you should address a letter to commanding general at Palma expressing your appreciation of the courtesies and facilities

²⁸ Not printed.

²⁹ By telegram of February 10, 6 p. m., the Consul at Gibraltar informed the Department that the *Nantucket Chief* had sailed for Gibraltar at 6 p. m. (352.115-Eastern States Petroleum Co./80).

³⁰ On March 6 the Consul at Gibraltar informed the Department that Fisher had acknowledged the receipt of the message.

extended to you during your stay there, and stating that you are returning for the time being to your post at Leghorn but that you contemplate returning to Palma in connection with the Fernandez case at any time.

Transportation expenses and per diem yourself only authorized subject Travel Regulations chargeable 'Transportation Foreign Service Officers, 1938'. This order not at your request nor for your convenience.

Before leaving Palma endeavor to see Fernandez and make all arrangements possible to assure his physical well being. American Red Cross is communicating with International Red Cross with a view to transmission to him of foodstuffs and other necessary articles through its representative in Mallorca."

HULL

852.00/7569 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, March 22, 1938—noon.

[Received March 22—10:15 a. m.]

15. In a conversation with General Queipo de Llano yesterday he said that a general offensive would be launched within a fortnight. He avoided answering whether this offensive would be directed against Barcelona or constitute a drive to the Mediterranean in lower Aragon or both. He stated emphatically that this offensive would begin the final phase of the civil war in Spain. He added however that no attempt would be made to take Madrid as its fall would entail feeding one million persons which is not desired at this time.

He also stated that a considerable number of Americans had been captured recently near Teruel apparently members of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion. These he said would be required to build up Spain after the war.

By mail to the Ambassador.

BAY

352.1115/4799 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, March 22, 1938—7 p.m.

[Received 9:45 p. m.]

913. My 911³¹ and 912.³² Once the Embassy and Consulate General have been removed from Barcelona it might be difficult and unduly

³¹ *Ante*, p. 166.

³² March 22, 11 a. m., not printed.

hazardous to return for emergency protection and evacuation work. In view of this the Department may wish to give consideration to the advisability of a further attempt to evacuate a portion at least of the American nationals residing here before the transfer takes place. I am informed by Admiral Lackey's³⁴ flag secretary, Lieutenant Commander Roberts, that a vessel for such service probably can be made available.

It is estimated that approximately 175 Americans are still in Barcelona of whom perhaps three-fourths are of dual nationality Filipinos or Puerto Ricans. It is likely that only a few would avail themselves of an opportunity to leave at this time—but by affording that opportunity our responsibility at a later and possibly perilous time would have been discharged. A circular can be sent to all Americans informing them of the impending closing of the Embassy and Consulate and warning them that in an emergency they might not be able to receive diplomatic or consular protection or be evacuated by an American ship.

THURSTON

352.1115/4799 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain
(Thurston)*

WASHINGTON, March 24, 1938—7 p. m.

433. Your 913, March 22, 7 p. m. Please inform Department of new location, which it is assumed will not be far from Barcelona.³⁵ American citizens in Barcelona should then be notified that Embassy and Consulate General offices are established there.

With reference to suggested evacuation of American nationals by naval vessel, it is not believed that this would be desirable at the present time in view of your statement that only a few would be likely to avail themselves of such an opportunity to leave. If at any time, however, you feel that an emergency situation is developing you should so report and arrangements will be made immediately with Navy Department to send naval vessel or vessels to Barcelona or whatever other point you may suggest. Department is informed vessels at Villefranche can reach Barcelona in an emergency in about 12 hours.

HULL

³⁴ Commander of Naval Squadron 40-J, in European waters.

³⁵ See telegram No. 926, March 31, 10 p. m., from the Counselor of Embassy in Spain, and footnote 35, p. 170.

852.2221/755 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

WASHINGTON, March 26, 1938—4 p. m.

11. Your telegram No. 15 of March 22, noon. In view of statement by General Queipo de Llano that a considerable number of Americans were captured recently by forces of General Franco, you are requested to make inquiry through him regarding whereabouts and welfare of following American citizens reported captured by Franco forces while serving with armed forces of Spanish Government: Ezak Babsky, Morris Ecker, Ralph Lawrence Neafus, Leon Norvell Ticer and Paul MacEachron, Jr.

Department's position regarding protection of American citizens serving with armed forces in Spain was set forth in its telegram of November 6, noon.³⁶ However, in view of reports circulated in this country that Americans captured in Spain are in danger of execution, it would be helpful if Franco authorities would confirm our assumption that rules of war respecting treatment of prisoners are being respected.

HULL

852.2221/767 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, March 29, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 5:06 p. m.]

923. I have been advised by the Embassy at Paris and by the *New York Times* correspondent here that Ernest Hemingway³⁷ is undertaking to arrange for evacuation from Spanish ports of several hundred wounded American members of the international brigades. He will, I understand, request that the *Raleigh* be utilized for the purpose.

Should the Department feel that such action would be inadvisable it might wish to suggest to the persons who consult it that the *Oregon* (see Valencia's March 24, 3 p. m.³⁸) be employed. While not a passenger vessel it probably would be satisfactory for the short trip to

³⁶ *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 554.

³⁷ American novelist and newspaper correspondent.

³⁸ Not printed; it reported the arrival of the *Oregon* laden with 8,800 tons of Australian wheat (195.91/3519).

Marseille. Arrangements for its use presumably could be made through Sherover³⁹ in New York.

In this connection it is not improbable that we will soon be confronted by the problem of more or less numerous requests for protection by active members of the American section of the international brigades. A telegram on this subject is being drafted by the Consulate General and I recommend that constructive instructions be furnished as quickly as possible.

THURSTON

852.2221/768 : Telegram

The Vice Consul at Barcelona (Flood) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, March 29, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received March 30—9:20 a. m.]

Recent developments in military situation make it advisable to give further consideration to policy regarding American volunteers in Government forces and to anticipate what action can be taken in case large numbers of such Americans, whose lives would be endangered for political reasons, should present themselves at this office. Three former deserters have already arrived and have been refused assistance.

In spite of the fact most of these men came to Spain with non-valid passports, I believe it would be inexpedient to refuse whatever aid this office might be able to give them in such an emergency.

In view of the Government's apparent desire to avoid unnecessary trouble in case of defeat, and the possibility of the international brigades ceasing to exist as an organization, it is possible the Government will change its policy regarding foreign deserters; it would obviously not be prudent to press this issue in advance.

The only suggestion I can offer at this time is that when the situation arises this Consulate General be authorized to use its discretion in issuing emergency documents for travel to France where the question of verification of citizenship can be given further consideration. According to the French Consulate, arrangements are being made to receive refugees across the frontier where they will be temporarily taken into custody.

The Department's instructions are respectfully requested.

FLOOD

³⁹ Miles M. Sherover, president of Hanover Sales Corp., 30 Broad St., New York, N. Y.

852.2221/769 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, March 30, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received March 30—10 a. m.]

469. Ernest Hemingway came to see me regarding evacuation of such American nurses and surgeons as can be spared and may leave, and of the American wounded in hospitals. He reports 30 wounded in Barcelona that can be evacuated on 2 days notice; 382 in hospitals, Beni Casim on Valencia coast and Villa Paz at Saelices on main Madrid-Valencian highway near Tarancon; and 125 in Murcia. These he said can be evacuated through Alicante on 6 days notice.

The French offer to evacuate any American wounded and hospital personnel and non-combatants before American ships can be sent. All evacuations if made to Marseille after which ours is the problem of repatriation. Hemingway suggests that money necessary may be had from the Medical Bureau for Aid of Spanish Democracy, from Friends of the Lincoln Brigade, et cetera. Believe all this important in event collapse, since danger otherwise of massacre of wounded and of incidents involving personnel of hospitals, doctors and nurses, here properly with our consent. Would appreciate Department's attitude toward this evacuation phase.

2. Rebels' overwhelming advantage in German and Italian artillery and planes makes defence almost impossible. Exaggeration of propaganda about Russia's participation evident, in fact no Russian guns or planes have been sent to offset those from Germany and Italy. Reliably informed this due to Government's unfriendly attitude toward Russian suggestions and Prieto's hostility. French guns very recently sent in but without trained men familiar with their operation. About 30 French planes, not of the best, sent in very recently. Not enough to affect the 700 most modern German and Italian planes in charge of German and Italian officers.

BOWERS

852.2221/769 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston)*⁴⁰

WASHINGTON, April 1, 1938—6 p. m.

436. Your 923, March 29, 5 p. m. We are naturally giving the most careful consideration to policy regarding Americans in Spain in

⁴⁰ Copies sent on the same date to Ambassador Bowers at St. Jean de Luz (in Department's No. B-423), and to the Embassy in France (in Department's No. 194).

the event that the situation should call for emergency measures. This Department has in the past taken steps with a view to saving lives and will be guided in general by the same consideration in the future. We are, however, anxious to avoid any possible complication with either side or with both as a result of any move on our part to assist the evacuation of persons serving with and actually a part of the armed forces in Spain. The Americans in question would seem to fall into three categories: (a) nurses, doctors, and relief workers who have entered Spain with valid passports; (b) wounded American volunteers who are, however, still under the orders of the Spanish military authorities; (c) American volunteers who are still on active service.

Please send us an approximate estimate of the numbers in Loyalist Spain of these three categories.

The Department has not been approached by either the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade or the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy. If you are consulted by interested parties it would be advisable for you to suggest that they consider making their own arrangements to use the *Oregon* for evacuation purposes of individuals whom the Spanish Government might permit to leave. You should also make it clear that there are no official funds available for repatriation of American volunteers who may be evacuated from Spain, and the consequent desirability that interested organizations should provide funds and themselves make arrangements for repatriation from France since most of these men will probably leave Spain in destitute condition.

In the event that the Spanish Government should release wounded American volunteers and permit them to leave the country please telegraph us for our information. In any event, if an emergency should arise such as a possible collapse of the Spanish Government, American naval vessels will be sent to Spanish ports in view of possible chaotic conditions to evacuate all Americans in general who may wish to leave.

We have sent copies to Ambassador Bowers at St. Jean de Luz and to AmEmbassy, Paris, for their guidance.

HULL

852.2221/768 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Vice Consul at Barcelona (Flood)

WASHINGTON, April 1, 1938—7 p. m.

Your telegram March 29, 7 p. m. You should continue to refuse assistance to American deserters unless they are able to obtain dis-

charge from military service of Spanish Government and permission of Spanish authorities to leave Spain. You may use your discretion in issuing emergency documents for travel to France to American volunteers who may obtain permission from Spanish authorities to leave country, or in general without such permission if authority of Spanish Government should collapse.

Please repeat to Worley ⁴¹ for his information.

HULL

852.2221/777 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, April 2, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received April 2—10:15 a. m.]

472. Your telegram to Thurston ⁴² in reply to my telegram No. 469, March 30, 1 p. m. Hemingway, John Whitaker and Mowrer, the correspondents planning these evacuations, acting through me. They have raised the money for a hospital in France for such of the wounded as cannot at once be repatriated. They are positive can raise money for repatriation purposes.

Second, as to our involvement: There is no question of removing even the wounded unless there is a collapse of the Government so we would not be involved with the Government. I warned in my telegram that all this should be very confidential in the meantime lest premature publicity give Government legitimate cause for complaint.

Nor will we be involved with rebels unless they object to saving Americans wishing to leave from the fate of the wounded at Toledo.

Whitaker talking for Hemingway from Paris this morning stresses secrecy at this juncture since conditions have "incredibly improved". Delighted with suggestion about the *Oregon* and plan to have boats at Spanish ports in case of collapse. These correspondents and Hemingway will take on themselves the task of assembling these people at the ports. Would appreciate being kept informed since these plans being perfected over here and I am in communication with them by phone.

BOWERS

⁴¹ Lee Worley, Vice Consul at Valencia.

⁴² Telegram No. 436, April 1, 6 p. m., p. 277.

852.2221/785 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 6, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received April 6—3 p. m.]

549. Reference your 194, April 1, 6 p. m.⁴³ In the event of a collapse of the Spanish Government we shall be faced in France with a serious problem as regards the reception, care and repatriation of wounded and able-bodied American volunteers who have been serving in Spain.

A small group composed of Edgar Mowrer of the *Chicago Daily News*, Ernest Hemingway, Charles Sweeney and others are taking particular interest in this matter. Mowrer who has talked with me at various times now states that he is hopeful of obtaining sufficient funds from the organizations which sent these volunteers to Spain to cover the cost of their care and repatriation. Mowrer has been trying to set up a committee to deal with this problem and has approached among others Dean Jay, president of the American Hospital. Jay has come to me to say that in case the funds which Mowrer hopes to receive should not materialize he feels that a relief problem will arise which will be beyond the possibilities of the American community here to handle. While no exact estimates are available it is possible that there might be several hundred wounded and as many more able-bodied Americans in destitute condition landed in France. Jay expresses the opinion that the problem is of sufficient magnitude to warrant its being dealt with officially by the Government of the United States and has suggested the despatch of a naval hospital vessel. I have informed him that there are no official funds available for repatriation of Americans who may be evacuated from Spain and that I am informed by the Naval Attaché that the only hospital ship now in commission is with the fleet at Honolulu.

It is my thought that providing Mowrer obtains his funds the problem will be largely one of organization of activities for relief and repatriation and that in this the Embassy can be helpful in a number of ways, for instance by detailing one or more of our personnel to go to the port where Americans are landed and to assist in organizing activities there. If it turns out that Mowrer is unable to obtain funds then we shall indeed be faced with a serious problem and one in which it will be essential to obtain funds from America. The Department may care to discuss this angle of the matter with the American Red Cross.

The Foreign Office has also spoken with me concerning this problem. They say that in case of an emergency they will do what they can

⁴³ See footnote 40, p. 277.

before the arrival of American naval vessels in Spanish ports to evacuate Americans from Spain. They point out however that the French authorities are going to be swamped with the arrival in France of great numbers of Spanish refugees and they urge that Americans evacuated from Spain be repatriated to America directly if possible. If they are to remain in France for a short time then the French Government hopes that all expenses will be paid from American sources. They also state that ports near border such as Port Vendres will be overrun with Spanish refugees and they urge that American naval vessels evacuating Americans from Spain land them at Marseille or Nice. I have told Mowrer of the views of the French Government and have also urged him to consider making arrangements to use the steamer *Oregon* at Valencia for the evacuation of American volunteers.

The Naval Attaché informs me that the *Raleigh* will leave Villefranche on April 11 for Marseille, departing from Marseille on April 12 for Algiers and leaving Algiers on April 19 for Gibraltar. The *Claxton* is now at Gibraltar leaving there on April 22 for Villefranche. The *Manley* is at Villefranche. If there is danger of a sudden collapse of the Spanish Government the Department may wish to consider maintaining these three vessels relatively near at hand, say at Marseille or Villefranche.

I would appreciate an expression of your views regarding the foregoing matters and any instructions you may desire to send me.

Mowrer and his group are especially apprehensive that if there is a collapse in Spain the wounded Americans in hospital there may be massacred by Franco's Moorish troops. It is of course obvious that Mowrer and his friends whose sympathies have been openly with the Government have no possibility of approaching, themselves, Franco in this matter.

WILSON

852.2221/785 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in France (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, April 9, 1938—1 p. m.

209. Your 549, April 6, 8 p. m.

(1) There are no appropriated funds available for repatriation of American volunteers from Spain. Red Cross funds previously made available to Department for repatriation destitute Americans nearly exhausted and moreover these funds were contributed on understanding they would not be used for repatriation persons who had proceeded to Spain after outbreak present conflict for service in armed forces of that country.

(2) Department has not been approached by organizations in this country interested in American volunteers in Spain. Although you do not specifically say so, it is assumed that Mowrer and others are in touch with these organizations. As stated in our No. 436 of April 1, 6 p. m. it would seem desirable that funds be provided and arrangements made without delay by these interested organizations and individuals for repatriation of American volunteers who may reach France in destitute condition.

(3) For your own information it is not the Department's practice to intervene to protect or assist Americans serving with Spanish military forces contrary to our policy of strict non-interference in internal affairs of another country. We have, however, accepted funds from persons or organizations in this country for transmission through consulates outside Spain to such Americans who may have been able to leave that country. Upon receipt of necessary information Department is prepared to communicate with relatives, friends or organizations in this country on behalf of such persons and transmit funds for their repatriation through appropriate consular office abroad. Marseille has been so advised.

(4) In event of collapse of Spanish Government, Americans evacuated from Spanish ports on naval vessels would be landed at nearest available port outside of Spain, probably Marseille. Navy Department has instructed Admiral Lackey that *Raleigh* should remain at Villefranche or immediate vicinity in view of uncertain conditions.

(5) Please repeat together with your 549 of April 6, 8 p. m. to Bowers and Barcelona.

HULL

852.2221/806 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, April 16, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received April 17—10:45 a. m.]

942. Your 436, April 1, 6 p. m. Dr. Barsky, leader of the American medical units operating in Spain under the auspices of the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, today informed me that there are in his organization approximately 100 doctors, nurses, and relief workers all of whom I presume entered Spain with valid passports. Of these at least seven are now in southern Spain. In addition there are perhaps ten other relief workers such as the Quakers some of whom also are in southern Spain.

The Military Attaché has estimated that as of November 1 there were about 2000 American volunteers serving with the Spanish Gov-

ernment forces of whom 900 were in active combat service, 300 were in hospitals or rest areas, 300 in training centers, and 500 in noncombatant activities with motor and hospital units. Military operations since then probably have reduced the number with combat troops to about 450 and increased the number of those in hospitals. It would seem safe to estimate the present total at 16 or 1700.

It is reported but not confirmed that all international brigade forces were established within the Catalonia area before communication with the south was cut. If this is true most able bodied American volunteers probably could proceed to France overland when necessary. The *Oregon* is again in Barcelona but I have not been consulted by Hemingway or others interested in the matter with respect to the evacuation of wounded Americans.

THURSTON

852.2221/823 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

WASHINGTON, May 9, 1938—7 p. m.

19. Your despatches Nos. 220 and 223 of April 2 and April 16, 1938,⁴⁴ regarding American citizens captured by Franco forces while serving with Spanish Government forces. Our position in this regard was set forth in Department's telegram of November 6, noon.⁴⁵ In view of the various rumors and reports regarding treatment of prisoners it would be helpful if you could obtain definite statement in this regard from appropriate authorities of General Franco during your trip to Burgos, authorized in Department's telegram No. 18 of this date,⁴⁶ supplementing assurances already given by General Queipo de Llano.

Referring to Department's telegram No. 11 of March 26, 4 p. m. and subsequent inquiries regarding American citizens reported captured by forces of General Franco, it is observed that no information has as yet been furnished by General Queipo in reply to your inquiries and that information contained in your despatch No. 223 was obtained from the British Agent in Burgos. It is suggested, therefore, that inquiry be made of the appropriate authorities at Burgos with a view to obtaining any available information regarding these men. Press item of April 22 from Burgos reported announcement of capture of twelve Americans.

Report result of your action by telegraph and submit full report on this subject by mail.

HULL

⁴⁴ Neither printed.

⁴⁵ *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 554.

⁴⁶ *Ante*, p. 188.

852.2221/840 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 13, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received May 13—3:55 p. m.]

761. Consul at Havre reports that 16 Americans, former members of military forces of Spanish Government, have arrived at Havre seeking repatriation. Affidavits with photographs being sent and it is requested that Department verify issuance of passports and notify Consul at Havre by telegraph. Cost of reply will be paid by Sarah Katz, representative in France of Friends of Abraham Lincoln Battalion. When citizenship is verified Consul at Havre will endeavor to repatriate as many as possible as work-aways on American vessels pending endeavor to secure funds from Friends of Abraham Lincoln Battalion for their repatriation. A number of these men have expulsion orders from French police and may be returned to Spain if they do not leave France.

BULLITT

138 Spain/932 : Telegram

The Vice Consul at Barcelona (Flood) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, May 16, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received May 16—9 a. m.]

My May 2, 11 a. m.⁴⁷ Robert Minor⁴⁸ assures me that after prolonged conversations of a strictly informal nature with officials of the International Brigades he has brought the matter of the return of passports of American volunteers to a point where a request to the Ministry of State would bring satisfactory results. He states that he has already mentioned the matter conversationally to Alvarez del Vayo.⁴⁹

Does the Department wish to authorize the Embassy to take up the question with the Ministry of State?

FLOOD

138 Spain/932 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston)

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1938—7 p. m.

442. Consulate's 16th re passports. You are authorized in your discretion take up matter with Ministry of State and to take any other action which might result in recovery of any of passports.

HULL

⁴⁷ Not printed.⁴⁸ Representing the American Communist Party at Barcelona.⁴⁹ Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

752.00114/14 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, May 19, 1938—7 p. m.
 [Received May 19—3:45 p. m.]

487. Marquis de Rialp, representing the Generalissimo, called today to request us to convey to Government at Barcelona a proposal for an exchange of aviator prisoners conditioned on their non-participation in the war hereafter. The Franco flyers whose names I have and will transmit by the pouch consist of 23 Italians, 1 Portuguese, and 5 Spaniards. The Franco prisoners they propose to trade consist of 3 Russians, 12 Spaniards—all the aviator prisoners held by Franco. To make up the difference he proposes to include 14 Americans of the International Brigade. These figures are most significant.

I can see no objection to our submitting this proposition by request to Barcelona. It does not affect our neutrality and is in line with what the British have been doing. Please wire your general reaction without a committal until you receive my despatch in next pouch.⁵⁰

The Marquis also expressed a willingness to join in an agreement for exchange of children away from parents. This may conceivably have complications not discernible in the exchange of actual prisoners. We are acting here merely as a postal service between the two sides.

BOWERS

752.00114/14 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France

WASHINGTON, May 20, 1938—6 p. m.

B-433. Your 487, May 19, 7 p. m. I can see nothing inconsistent with our neutrality in permitting you to act as intermediary between the Government and the Franco authorities on an exchange of prisoners, conditioned on their non-participation in the war hereafter. If there is any information in your despatch which would have a bearing on our decision please telegraph a summary thereof. You should, of course, make it clear that you would act as intermediary only and not assume any responsibility for (a) the selection of prisoners to be exchanged (b) for the technical process of effecting the exchange, or (c) for the fulfillment of any commitments made in connection therewith.

⁵⁰ No. 1510, May 20; not printed.

As to the question of working out an exchange of children away from parents it is difficult to see how this could be carried out except through the intermediary of some established agency such as the International Red Cross or other relief body enjoying the confidence of both sides. If this point is raised again you should take that position.

HULL

752.00114/16 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, May 26, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received 4:10 p. m.]

963. The British Minister informed me this noon that he is hopeful that negotiations he has been conducting for some time with a view to a mass exchange of political prisoners including all remaining refugees in foreign diplomatic missions are about to be brought to a successful conclusion. He stated that the Council of Ministers last night approved a proposal that a commission should be appointed for the exchange of such prisoners to be composed of one British, one American, and one French or Scandinavian member. The members of the commission are to be nominated by King George. Should he decline the task President Roosevelt will be requested to nominate them. The commission itself will be empowered to select its chairman and will have full powers to inaugurate, negotiate, and effect the exchange. One half the cost of the exchange will be borne by the Spanish Government and the other by Franco whose regime apparently accepted the proposal in principle some time ago—although at that time only one commissioner was contemplated and the full new proposal will now require his approval.

I received the impression from Mr. Leche that it is contemplated by the British Government that if the exchange plan meets with success advantage may be taken of the opportunity to try to bring about an armistice and possible peace negotiations.

THURSTON

852.2221/875 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 26, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received 12:18 p. m.]

833. Some days ago a committee representing Abraham Lincoln Brigade called on me to ask what the American Government or this

mission could do to assist in the evacuation of Americans wounded in Spain and their repatriation. I replied that I had been informed that these American boys had had their way paid to Spain by Mr. Louis Fischer (correspondent of the *Nation*) with funds derived in part from the Spanish Government through Negrín⁵¹ and in part from other sources. I had also been informed that Mr. Fischer still had \$150,000 in a bank in Paris unexpended of this fund which had been employed to get American citizens into the Spanish army.

I suggested that the committee address itself, in first instance, to Mr. Fischer to attempt to obtain these funds for the repatriation of these wounded soldiers for whose presence he was responsible. I have had no further visit from this committee; but yesterday Mr. John Whitaker of the *Chicago Daily News* (replacing Edgar Mowrer who is now in China) called on me and, when I brought up the question of these funds of Louis Fischer, informed me that Fischer had gone to Moscow. Whitaker added that when he had spoken to Fischer about his responsibility for the presence of these wounded men and had suggested that the funds at his disposal should be used for their repatriation Fischer had replied that so long as the fighting was still in progress in Spain his funds were to be used to get men into Spain and not to repatriate them. In other words the American wounded are to be left without assistance by those responsible for their going to Spain.

Inasmuch as there are between two and three thousand American citizens still in the Spanish army and inasmuch as they are coming across the French frontier in considerable numbers, it is clear that their care and repatriation cannot be handled as a local problem. The American Aid Society of Paris has already cared for and repatriated a considerable number of these men; but I am informed by the President of the Society that its funds will not permit any further expenditures of this nature.

[Here follows an article from the Paris *New York Herald* of May 26, 1938, on this subject.]

It is entirely clear that we should not allow these American citizens to die untended in France where the French Government is unable to make provision for their care. I recall conversations that I had on this subject when I was in the Department on my recent visit and remember that the Department did not look favorably on action by our Government or expenditures by our Government to care for and repatriate these men. I feel certain, however, that in the end our Government will wish to take action to save their lives and it seems to me that such action should be taken before there is an international outcry on this subject.

⁵¹ Juan Negrín, Spanish Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense.

I venture to suggest that, if you do not wish to ask Congress for funds for the care and repatriation of these men, an appeal should be made to the Red Cross. Indeed I feel that the problem may soon become so serious that it should be handled by the efficient organization which the Red Cross possesses to deal with difficulties of this nature. It might be possible for me, by a personal appeal, to raise further small sums from the American community in Paris; but it will certainly be impossible for me to raise sufficient funds to handle the problem and I have not the staff in Paris to control the expenditure of the moneys involved or the care of the wounded.

I have instructed Consul General Hurley, and Moreland at Bordeaux, to attempt to establish the facts as to the number of wounded now in France and as to the shipments that may be expected.

I should be obliged for instructions at the earliest possible moment.

BULLITT

852.2221/875 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, May 27, 1938—8 p. m.

321. Your 833, May 26, 7 p. m. In view of the pressing circumstances which you describe and the desirability that these destitute Americans should be assisted to return to this country as soon as possible, I have written to David McKelvey White,⁵² National Chairman of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in New York City and have suggested that his organization take action and furnish funds to this end. I have also suggested that his organization should be in a position to obtain funds from all of those persons and organizations in this country who have assisted these men to go to Spain and who therefore have a clear responsibility to assist in their repatriation.

For your confidential information, I have acquainted Senator Pittman and Representative McReynolds with the plight of these Americans as reported by you and I have also conveyed to them a copy of my letter to White.

Copies of these letters are being sent to you by mail.⁵³

With reference to your suggestion that an appeal might be made to the Red Cross I may say that while funds have heretofore been made available to the Department by that organization for the repatriation of destitute Americans from Spain, these funds were contributed on the understanding that they were not to be used to assist Americans who may have gone to Spain since the outbreak of the present

⁵² Letter not printed.

⁵³ Not printed.

conflict to serve in the armed forces of that country. The funds made available to the Department by the Red Cross have now been practically exhausted and when an additional contribution was obtained some time ago it was indicated that no further funds would be available for repatriation of Americans from Spain.

HULL

852.2221/875 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, June 1, 1938—3 p. m.

330. Your 833, May 26, 7 p. m. and Department's reply of May 27, 8 p. m. Mr. David McKelvey White, National Chairman of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, in response to my letter to him, called upon me at the Department yesterday. He stated that it is the intention of his organization to undertake a special drive for a large sum to be applied specifically to the care and repatriation of wounded Americans. In response to our request, he is endeavoring to arrange for allocation of funds for repatriation of the twenty-eight men mentioned in your telegram. He also stated that he was working with the Bromfield⁵⁴ Committee in Paris. I am now communicating also with the Medical Bureau, North American Committee in Aid of Spanish Democracy. I cannot be at all sure that any of these efforts here will be effective and suggest therefore you keep this information confidential for the present.

Press despatches from Paris this morning report failure of Paris Committee to raise funds.

HULL

852.2221/907 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 4, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received June 4—9:20 a. m.]

880. Department's 330, June 1, 3 p. m.

1. Careful investigation by Consulates, Marseille and Bordeaux the results of which have been checked with the Bromfield Committee's information indicates that problem of wounded American volunteers is not for the moment an extensive one. Investigation has turned up 24 incapacitated volunteers claiming American citizenship with the possibility that there may be four or five more in France whose identity and whereabouts remain very vague. Spanish authori-

⁵⁴ Louis Bromfield, Chairman, Emergency Committee for American Wounded from Spain.

ties informed Thurston on May 29 that of the foreign volunteers thus far sent to France less than 25 were American. The Embassy is making arrangements with the French authorities to be advised by them of any new arrivals. Thurston will also endeavor to keep the Embassy informed of departures.

2. It appears that of the 24 listed cases most are being cared for by the French authorities. Seven of the men are in the American Hospital, Paris. It is anticipated that the volunteers now being looked after by the French will ultimately have to be cared for and repatriated through the combined efforts of the American Aid Society, the American Hospital and the Bromfield Committee. The latter has raised about 25,000 francs to date. It hopes to increase this amount considerably through a canvass which it is now making of some 1900 Americans in France.

3. The foregoing should not be permitted to obscure the fact that a large number of incapacitated American volunteers may reach France in the very near future and that the problem of meeting this contingency has by no means been solved. Vice Consuls Wallner and Moore of Barcelona who were in Perpignan a few days ago then estimated American wounded in Barcelona at about 200.

4. Frederick Thompson of the Bromfield Committee, who claims 5815 Third Street, San Francisco, as his home address and who some days ago talked as if he were a representative of the "Friends of Spanish Democracy," and Sylvia Katz (see your 319, May 27, 6 p. m.⁵⁵) now deny any representative connection with the two organizations in America, to the attention of which you have brought the plight of the wounded volunteers.

5. I urge that the Department countermand its telegraphic instruction 126, March 2, 5 p. m.,⁵⁶ and that the Embassy be authorized to deal by telegraph with the passport angle of these cases and such other as may arise.

BULLITT

852.2221/875 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, June 4, 1938—3 p. m.

340. Reference Department's 330 of June 1, 3 p. m. White informs us that his organization is today announcing a general drive for funds

⁵⁵ Not printed.

⁵⁶ Not printed; it stated that in future the Department would not authorize new issue of passports telegraphically but would await receipt of applications and affidavits; this procedure was established to facilitate delivery to Consul General at Barcelona of passports taken from American volunteers. (130 Sovetski, Bunni)

to take care of American wounded in France. Organization press release states "we proudly accept our responsibility to these men". With respect to 28 immediate cases White states appropriate instructions have been sent to organization's representative in Paris. We assume steps have been taken to apply for necessary travel documents for these men. Consul Marseille has reported names and data on eight wounded men in his district.

Murphy⁵⁷ sailed yesterday and has full information on this whole matter.

WELLES

852.00/8131

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the
Secretary of State*

No. 417

BARCELONA, June 4, 1938.

[Received June 21.]

SIR: The Minister of State informed me today of the negotiations now in progress with the British Government for a mass exchange of political prisoners, and furnished me a copy of a Note addressed to the British Minister on May 25, 1938, setting forth the procedure by which the Spanish Government believes the exchange can be effected. A copy and a translation of this Note are enclosed.⁵⁸

As will be observed, the terms of the Note to Mr. Leche differ in two important respects from those which he described to me and which were reported in the Embassy's confidential telegram number 963 of May 26th. The Note makes no reference to President Roosevelt as a possible nominator of the members of the proposed exchange Commission, nor does it definitively designate an American as one of the members. An American is merely suggested as an alternative to a Scandinavian, whereas according to Mr. Leche's statement, a Scandinavian would be an alternative to a French member. As of interest in this connection, there also is enclosed a copy of a pencilled memorandum handed to me by Mr. Leche,⁵⁸ and upon which the telegram already cited was based.

The British Minister informed me that it had been his hope to have but a single Commissioner, who of course would have been a British subject, but that the French had learned of his negotiations and insisted on participating in the proposed exchange—thus compelling the Spanish Government to devise the three-member form of Committee. A notation on Mr. Leche's memorandum refers to this intervention of

⁵⁷ Robert Murphy, Consul and First Secretary of Embassy in France.

⁵⁸ Not printed.

the French Ambassador. Señor Alvarez del Vayo's version of the negotiations with respect to the composition of the Commission, however, is that while the British Government did in fact propose but one Commissioner (Sir Philip Chetwode) the Council of Ministers is so antagonistic toward and mistrustful of Mr. Chamberlain's Government that it would not accept the proposal, and insisted on a three-member commission to offset the British plan to control the exchange negotiations.

Señor del Vayo expressed the hope that the Commission might be established and achieve its purpose, since all other efforts—by the International Red Cross and the British Government—to effect a genuine and large scale exchange had failed. He did not refer to the possibility, mentioned by Mr. Leche, that the activities of the Commission might afford the basis for an armistice and peace negotiations.

Respectfully yours,

WALTER C. THURSTON

852.2221/920 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 8, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received June 8—1 p. m.]

895. My 880, June 4, 11 a. m., paragraph numbered 3, and your 340, June 4, 3 p. m. Thurston has just telegraphed from Barcelona that his office has been informed by an American nurse that on June 9 a group of over 300 wounded will be sent to France. Of these 53 are Americans. Nurse stated that "upon leaving Spain they will be furnished a complete outfit and upon reaching Paris will be given a sum of money".

Has the Department considered the possibility of raising with the Spanish Government the question of the care and repatriation direct from Spain of wounded American volunteers?

An arrangement of this nature concluded either through negotiations with the Spanish Government by the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade or directly by the Department might lessen the suffering of the boys concerned and at the same time solve what will otherwise become an overwhelming problem for the American Hospital and American charitable institutions in Paris.

See paragraph 4 of my 880, June 4, 11 a. m. Who is the representative referred to in White's statement contained in your 340?

BULLITT

852.2221/920 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, June 9, 1938—6 p. m.

360. Your 895, June 8, 4 p. m. Department is informed by Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade that \$5,000 have now been sent to organization's representative in Paris for care and repatriation wounded Americans. Organization insists Sylvia Katz is acting as its representative pending arrival of David Amariglio who sailed yesterday on *Queen Mary* with letter of introduction to Murphy. Organization states cable received from Paris June 7 reporting all Americans in France will be moved to Paris where hospital facilities have been arranged for them and that it expects that those who experience no passport difficulties will reach New York in near future.

In response to Department's letter acquainting him with plight of American wounded, Herman F. Reissig, Executive Secretary of the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy has informed Department that that organization has now sent \$5,000 to its representative in Paris for medical care and repatriation of wounded Americans. Representative is stated to be Peter Rhodes, in care of l'Office Internationale pour l'Enfance, 38 rue Chateaudun. Reissig states further that "we expect to provide medical and nursing personnel for these wounded men while they are en route to the United States" and adds in explanation that Dr. Edward Barsky, head of medical personnel of organization in Spain, has been instructed to proceed to Paris, and together with two nurses arrange to accompany men.

The \$10,000 already contributed by these two organizations would seem more than sufficient to cover cost of repatriation of wounded Americans now in France and the 53 additional reported in your telegram under reference as being sent out of Spain today. While realizing that the problem has probably not reached its full magnitude, the Department is relieved that the two organizations have assumed responsibility for all wounded Americans who may leave Spain, and are making arrangements for their care and repatriation to the United States.

Copies of correspondence with Reissig, memorandum of conversation between White and officers of the Department on May 31, and memorandum by Mrs. Shipley,⁶⁰ covering passport procedure with regard to returning American volunteers, are being mailed to you today.⁶¹

HULL

⁶⁰ Chief of the Passport Division.

⁶¹ Instruction No. 891, June 9, and its enclosures not printed.

852.2221/928 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 10, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 1:35 p. m.]

907. Your 360, June 9, 6 p. m. Louis Fischer, who has just returned from Moscow, called on me yesterday. In spite of Mr. Fischer's objections I insisted on having Mr. Barnes⁶² present during the conversation.

Mr. Fischer in the presence of us both denied that he had had any connection whatsoever with recruiting in the United States or anything to do with paying passages for Americans to Spain. He denied that he had ever said to Mr. Edgar Mowrer and Mr. John Whitaker or anyone else (see my 833 May 26, 1 [7] p. m.) that he had \$150,000 to use in shipping Americans to Spain but would not use any of it for the return of American wounded to the United States. He alleged that what he had said was that he could get all the money necessary from Negrín to pay passages of American wounded from Paris to the United States. He stated that he could still get from Negrín all the money necessary to pay for the shipment of American wounded from Paris to the United States. He was not so categorical in his statement with regard to the payment of railroad fare from Perpignan to Paris and said that he thought the care of the wounded while in France and in transit could and should be handled by contributions from the American colony in Paris and other sources. Mr. Fischer then promised to get in touch at once with the officials in Paris of the Central Sanitaire, 38 Rue Chateau Dun, and to report to Mr. Barnes yesterday afternoon the result of his conversation. We have not yet heard anything from Mr. Fischer and have been unable to reach any responsible official at the Central Sanitaire.

. . . I feel therefore that there should be no relaxation in the efforts of the Department to obtain money from the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and from the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy. In any event considerable sums will be needed for the care of wounded while in France.

I shall keep the Department informed with regard to any further conversations that Fischer may have with members of the Embassy.

I am getting in touch with Katz and Rhodes with a view to holding them to the Department's understanding of the action that has already been taken by the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy.

BULLITT

⁶² Maynard B. Barnes, First Secretary of Embassy in France.

188 Spain/977a : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain
(Thurston)*

WASHINGTON, June 13, 1938—7 p. m.

447. Department's 442⁶³ re passports of volunteers. What action have you taken? What is attitude of authorities?

Do you think interested organizations in United States if approached by Department could bring any influence on Spanish authorities?

HULL

852.2221/938 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, June 14, 1938—noon.

[Received June 14—7:50 a. m.]

34. With reference to the Department's telegram 19, May 9, 7 p. m., and to my despatch 253, May 23, 1938,⁶⁴ concerning the desire of the Department to obtain a statement from General Franco about treatment of American prisoners, following is translation of a communication dated June 12 from Civil Governor, Seville:

"The Chief of the Political and Treaty Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs desires me to communicate to you, with reference to your oral declarations about reports circulating in the United States regarding the welfare of Americans captured by the Nationalists while fighting in the ranks of the Red forces, that on repeated occasions it has been stated by the Chief of State, as well as by competent organisms, that national Spain not only applies the conventions and principles regulating the practice of war, and especially those relating to the treatment accorded to enemy combatants, also in a magnanimous spirit has liberated on many occasions foreign combatants who have taken part in a war which they should have and could have avoided, did not deserve such measures of clemency. As for the treatment accorded to prisoners and the conditions in which they live, you may take note yourself by visiting the concentration camps in San Pedro de Cardenas.

It would be helpful, therefore, if you would communicate to the press of your country the true criteria by which the National Government has been acting in this matter since the beginning of the war and about which the Chief of State has already made declarations."

BAY

⁶³ *Ante*, p. 284.⁶⁴ Despatch not printed.

138 Spain/978: Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, June 15, 1938—10 p. m.

[Received June 16—11:51 a. m.]

978. Department's 447, June 13, 7 p. m. I have discussed the return of passports of American members of International Brigades personally on several occasions with Alvarez del Vayo and Zugazagoitia⁶⁵ and have supplemented these conversations with personal letters. Both persons named are favorably inclined toward the return of the passports, and I am hopeful, following further conversations today, that they will cause that action to be taken.

I have been promised a statement within a short time and believe that pending its receipt no action of the kind to which you refer is necessary. I will report when there are developments.

THURSTON

352.115 Anderson, Clayton and Co./64

The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston)

No. 523

WASHINGTON, June 16, 1938.

SIR: The Department refers to its instruction no. 489 of November 22, 1937⁶⁶ and your reply no. 291 of January 6, 1938,⁶⁷ concerning the Commission appointed pursuant to the decrees of August 6 and August 31, 1937, charged with the examination and the preparation of a report upon petitions and claims addressed to the Government of the Spanish Republic by foreign entities or persons arising with respect to the activities of the Civil Administration effected since July 18, 1936.

It does not appear that you have as yet had a reply from the Ministry of State to your note no. 6 of January 6, 1938, a copy of which was transmitted with your despatch of that date. You may again take up the matter with the appropriate authorities with a view to obtaining a reply at the earliest possible date.

The Department desires you also to endeavor to ascertain through independent sources and report promptly with the greatest possible detail concerning the scope and activities of this Commission, the precise nature of the claims to be considered by it, what rules and

⁶⁵ Julio Zugazagoitia, Secretary General of the Spanish Ministry of National Defense.

⁶⁶ *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 557.

⁶⁷ *Ante*, p. 262.

regulations it has formulated with regard to the presentation of claims and the evidence to be submitted, et cetera, et cetera.

So far as can be gathered from the meager information to date furnished the Department, the presentation of claims to the Commission is merely permissive and not in any sense mandatory. It is understood that a failure to present them would in no way prejudice claims.

The Department will appreciate your keeping in touch with the matter and promptly informing it of any developments. The Department also desires to be informed of what, if any, claims have been reported by the Embassy.

There is enclosed a copy in triplicate of a letter from Fulbright, Crooker and Freeman,⁶⁸ attorneys in this city, representing Anderson, Clayton and Company, of Houston, Texas, transmitting a letter addressed to the Government of the Spanish Republic regarding the requisitioning by that Government of 213 bales of Argentine cotton belonging to Anderson, Clayton and Company. There are also enclosed the original letter and duplicate copies of the Anderson, Clayton letter in question.⁶⁸ The Department, with the meager information in its possession cannot instruct you whether or not to transmit Anderson, Clayton and Company's letter to the authorities of the Spanish Government. You may, however, do so if you consider this to be an appropriate action. You will observe that no supporting documentary evidence accompanies the letter. Please advise what you do with respect to this case.

There is also enclosed a copy of the Department's letter to Fulbright, Crooker and Freeman.⁶⁸

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State :
R. WALTON MOORE

852. 2221/938 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

WASHINGTON, June 16, 1938—8 p. m.

31. Your 34, June 14, noon. Department is gratified to note assurances contained in statement of Franco authorities regarding treatment of prisoners of war. You are authorized to take advantage of your visit to Burgos in connection with subject of Department's telegram No. 30, June 16, 7 p. m.,⁶⁹ to visit prison camps at San Pedro de Cardenas and any other camps possible. At the same time you are requested to renew inquiry through Vidal, the Inspector of

⁶⁸ Not printed.

⁶⁹ *Ante*, p. 217.

prison Concentration Camps, or other appropriate officials at Burgos with a view to ascertaining the present whereabouts of persons mentioned in Department's telegram No. 26 of June 4, 6 p. m.⁷⁰ and other Americans reported captured concerning whom no definite information has as yet been obtained. Report result of your visit by telegraph.

HULL

138 Spain/981a : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain
(Thurston)*

WASHINGTON, June 17, 1938—6 p. m.

449. Your 978.⁷¹ In discussing matter with Spanish authorities point out that return of passports would facilitate return to United States of wounded and disabled American volunteers and would obviate extra expenses incurred by relief organizations while American citizenship of volunteers is being verified.

Press matter as vigorously as you think possible without arousing resentment.

HULL

852.00/8119 : Telegram

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary
of State*

BARCELONA, June 20, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received June 20—9:10 a. m.]

982. The rebel advance south of Castellon has now reached a point approximately 35 miles to Valencia and it is probable that while it may be delayed and occasionally checked it will eventually threaten Valencia. When such a threat may develop cannot of course be foreseen, although the defensive possibilities of Sagunto might make it a question of several weeks.

The British Embassy informs me that it has not as yet given serious consideration to the removal of the British Consul at Valencia—who may in his discretion call for a naval vessel and leave. It is at present contemplated that he would embark at Gandia.

In view of the possibility of sudden developments of a political or military nature, I believe it is not premature to suggest that the Department may wish to instruct Mr. Wallner⁷² as to the course he

⁷⁰ Not printed.

⁷¹ *Ante*, p. 296.

⁷² Woodruff Wallner, Vice Consul at Valencia.

should take under foreseeable circumstances and to arrange with the Navy Department for its cooperation.

Mr. Wallner has informed me that he has learned that there are more than 150 American members of the International Brigades in his district and it has previously been reported that there are also several American relief workers there. The Department may wish to instruct him with respect to the latter in the event of his departure—although if such a course is feasible I would suggest that he should not definitely leave but merely go aboard a naval vessel for the period of the transfer of control in order that our [omission] at Valencia may if possible be retained.

THURSTON

852.00/8119 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain
(Thurston)*

WASHINGTON, June 20, 1938—6 p. m.

450. Your 982, June 20, 10 a. m. Following telegram was sent to Wallner June 18:

“In view of possible military developments affecting Valencia in the near future you are reminded that the Department does not desire that its officers remain at their posts in the event that a situation develops endangering their personal safety. You should bear this consideration in mind and be prepared to depart from Valencia without delay if the situation should so require. Please telegraph just as soon as you feel that we should ask the Navy Department to send a destroyer to evacuate you and such Americans as may desire and are able to leave. We assume that you would be able to concentrate such a group at Gandia in advance of an agreed time as we would not desire destroyer to remain in Spanish waters one moment longer than absolutely essential. The Department counts upon you to keep it currently informed of military developments and local conditions in general.”

No reply has as yet been received.

WELLES

138 Spain/991 : Telegram

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the
Secretary of State*

BARCELONA, June 21, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 12:50 p. m.]

984. Department's 449, June 17, 6 p. m. I again discussed the return of these passports with Del Vayo in the Embassy in Llavaneras

Sunday afternoon. He informed me by telephone last night that upon Premier Negrín's return from Madrid yesterday morning he had consulted him about the matter and that Negrín stated that he would take steps at once to expedite return. I shall try to obtain final action this week, but if there is opposition from the international brigades or associated organizations there may arise further delay—in which event the course suggested in Department's 447, June 13, 7 p. m., would appear to be indicated.

THURSTON

852.2221/961 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 22, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received June 22—1:45 p. m.]

984. Your 321, May 27, 8 p. m. Amariglio has today turned over to the Embassy 12 of the missing passports of American volunteers to Spain and hopes to recover additional documents. He is paying for the transportation of 17 volunteers whose papers are now in order, who are returning tomorrow on the steamship *President Harding*. He states he has made arrangements with Barcelona under which further men will not be released until the cases of those remaining here have been settled. He seems to be equipped with ample funds for the repatriation of wounded, sick and able-bodied volunteers who are regularly discharged by the Spanish Loyalist military authorities but states that his organization will do nothing for deserters.

Foreign Office advises that volunteers will not be allowed across Franco-Spanish frontier unless they are in possession of valid travel documents. In such cases they will be granted transit visas good for 15 days only.

BULLITT

852.2221/967 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, June 23, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received June 24—9:35 a. m.]

987. Embassy's 942, April 16, 6 p. m. Revised estimates made by Military Attaché place number of Americans now serving with Government forces at 1250, of whom 300 are in hospitals and 150 in Valencia. The total thus far killed and missing in action is put at 500. A few continue to arrive.

THURSTON

752.00114/29

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1535

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, June 23, 1938.

[Received July 6.]

SIR: I have the honor to report as follows on my intermediation, agreed to in your telegram No. B-433, May 20th, 6 p. m., for an exchange of certain prisoners between the Spanish Government and the Franco Organization.

You will have observed in the list submitted to me by Marquis de Rialp, head of General Franco's commission for the exchange of prisoners, that there were 29 rebel aviators, and only 15 Government aviators and that it was proposed to make up the difference of fourteen by adding that number from among the Americans in the International Brigade.

I suspect that the Francoists realized the unfairness of the proposal to exchange aviators for private soldiers and that the Americans were added, instead of private soldiers of other nationalities, on the theory that I would press for the acceptance of the plan, and that the Government would find it embarrassing to refuse.

I have acted strictly on instructions that we have nothing whatever to do with the selection of the prisoners to be exchanged and that my sole function is that of a go-between.

The reply of Sr. Del Vayo, sent directly to me here, is to the effect that after discussing the Franco proposal with Sr. Giral, who is in charge of such matters for the Government, Barcelona agrees to an exchange—but an exchange of aviators for aviators, officers for officers of equal rank, and privates for privates; but cannot agree to exchange Franco aviators for Government privates. He adds that the Government would be pleased to effect an exchange for the Americans but that it would have to be on the basis of private for private.

This reply is so manifestly fair and natural, that I should have been astonished had any other come.

Marquis de Rialp was immediately notified, and this morning he came to see me with the proposal that this exchange be confined to aviators, and since Franco holds but 15 loyalist aviators, he has selected fifteen Franco aviators from the list of twenty-nine originally submitted.

This gives the advantage to the Government, since Rialp proposes that foreigners exchanged on either side shall return to their own homes and not resume fighting, but that Spaniards may resume fighting if they please.

The new list consists of three Russians on the Government side and twelve Spaniards as before; and on the Franco side there are nine Italians, one Portuguese, and only five Spaniards.

I have transmitted the revised list to Sr. Del Vayo for transmission to Sr. Giral, and there seems good grounds to expect a successful issue.

In his letter to me Sr. Del Vayo in expressing a willingness to make the exchange says he does so "in spite of the profound deceptions which we have suffered in such matters, as a consequence of the utter lack of sincerity or of a humanitarian sense in the rebels."

Apröpos of the inclusion of the fourteen Americans in the Franco list he says:

"In the case of the Americans who have fought on our side, with a courage to which I desire to pay homage, and because of your highly esteemed intervention, my Government would be disposed to exchange the 14 Americans in the list for the same number of rebel or foreign prisoners belonging to the military force not being of the aviation."

I call particular attention to another paragraph from Sr. Del Vayo's letter:

"I take due note of the fact that while you are authorized by the American Government to act as an intermediary in the proposed exchange, you cannot assume any responsibility for it."

I am thoroughly convinced that this new proposition relieves us of considerable embarrassment in eliminating the Americans of the International Brigade, since we have no provision in Government funds for sending the fourteen Americans back to the United States.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.2221/970: Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, June 27, 1938—noon.

[Received 1:20 p. m.]

39. Referring to Department's 31, June 16, 8 p. m., and in continuation of my 38, June 27, 11 a. m.,⁷³ the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the matter of prisoners of war was entirely in the hands of the military authorities and that he desired to speak to the Foreign Minister who was absent prior to completing arrangements for my visit to San Pedro. He promised to telephone me some time the following day. At noon June 23rd I visited Señor Vidal to inquire and he informed me that a motor car would call for me at 5 p. m. the following day June 24. He appeared friendly and

⁷³ *Ante*, p. 220.

helpful and arranged, upon my request, that I might call that day on the Inspector of concentration camps.

The Inspector stated that every effort had been made without success to obtain record of the three Americans mentioned in the Department's 26, June 4, 6 p. m.,⁷⁴ all camps and hospitals having been addressed and the American prisoners in San Pedro questioned. He had just finished a complete investigation and obtained nothing definite. He said all foreign prisoners were now concentrated in San Pedro and that in future this would be the only camp for foreigners. He said there were 77 American prisoners there now and that he would provide me with a list of their names.

Two officers accompanied me to San Pedro. About 600 foreign prisoners were basking on a grassy hillside. I interviewed with complete freedom 20 Americans. All appeared in good condition and their only criticism was about permission to write letters with a view to obtaining money for personal desires. As prison warden had stated they enjoyed freedom of communication through military censor, I cleared up this point with men and warden. Charles Barr, father James Barr, 640 Oakmont Avenue, Steubenville, Ohio, has lost left eye and claims vision is gradually failing in the other. Prison doctor states that vision will ultimately be lost and that no remedy will save it else action would be taken by them. None of the prisoners had any information of the three Americans about whom I inquired.

After inspecting prison premises I saw prisoners served dinner of lentils and meat stew with white bread.

San Pedro is ancient convent 16 kilometres from Burgos off Madrid road. Now contains some 3,000 prisoners of which 600 are foreigners separated from Spaniards. There were 190 British but 100 were recently transferred to Palencia probably preparatory to exchange. No attempt has been made to segregate foreigners by nationalities.

Prison yards small but in summer prisoners spend all day on hillside. Sleeping quarters small but sufficient, latrine and washing facilities distinctly insufficient others being provided in new construction, food plain and nutritive, recreation basking, reading matter none, hospitalization facilities adequate, two doctors on the premises and five others among prisoners.

On my return I thanked inspector and stated the whereabouts of the three Americans sought was still unsolved. He then said it was possible they might have been tried and shot though he said this was mere theory on his part. He offered to continue his investigations and promised to communicate with the commanding officer for original records, as well as military court record, if any, reporting results

⁷⁴ Not printed.

directly to me. He said the allegations concerning prisoners were being followed and that they had nothing to conceal. Foreign prisoners, he said, are not tried by military court unless charged with crime and as far as he knew no Americans had been so tried. He said I may write to him directly on all these questions instead of through General Queipo de Llano and professed high admiration for the United States based on his Cuban birth. He is a man of about 60.

Despatch with details follows.⁷⁵ Copy to Ambassador.

BAY

852.2221/1009

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

No. 2525

PARIS, June 27, 1938.

[Received July 8.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's instruction No. 891 of June 9, 1938,⁷⁶ and to the subsequent exchange of telegrams relating to the care and repatriation of American citizens returning after service with the armed forces in Spain, and to report several conversations during the past week with Mr. David Amariglio, bearer of Departmental passport No. 544.810 issued June 2, 1938, who has come to France in behalf of The Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, 125 West 43rd Street, New York.

Mr. Amariglio has evinced every desire to cooperate with the Embassy in the repatriation of American volunteers who have been regularly discharged from the military forces of the Spanish loyalist government. He explained that his organization, which—in this respect—is in the same situation as the kindred North American Friends of Spanish Democracy, is embarrassed by the complaints of many men to whom the organization is responsible for the predicament in which they find themselves after their evacuation from Spain.

It is quite obvious from our several talks that the desire on the part of these organizations to cooperate with the Government in caring for these destitute Americans and effecting their repatriation results from the fear of losing caste in the circles from which these volunteers have been drawn, coupled with the belief that the morale of the volunteers now fighting in the international brigades is adversely affected. There is also evident, of course, a sense of responsibility for having brought these men to Spain.

In addition to the American citizens involved, Amariglio estimates that there are volunteers of foreign nationality amounting to approxi-

⁷⁵ Despatch No. 280, June 28, not printed.

⁷⁶ Not printed; but see Department's telegram No. 360, June 9, 6 p. m., to the Ambassador in France, p. 293.

mately five percent of the total number of volunteers recruited by the organizations in the United States. The foreigners, recruited in the United States, were there either legally or illegally.

Amariglio voiced the opinion of the organizations that the volunteers who had been recruited in the United States should be treated with as much consideration as the Americans and entertained at first the notion that the immigration law and regulations might be treated somewhat lightly in this respect. He now understands, as a result of our conversations, that the law is mandatory and that while the Embassy will go as far as it can in treating the cases sympathetically, we have no power to waive the rules.

He has been concerned especially with the cases of twenty men, all of them apparently foreigners, or whose nationality status has not been determined, recently arrested by the Paris police, of whom fifteen are still under detention. He was informed that our immigration board here has just completed a review of most of these cases and that we believe that the technical difficulties have now been overcome in all except one case, which is still under consideration. This has relieved Mr. Amariglio's mind to a great extent, as he had decided that it would be best to avoid the evacuation of any additional American volunteers from Spain until the settlement of the cases of individuals now in Paris.

Amariglio is said to have left Paris Sunday morning for Barcelona and this office has assisted him in obtaining the necessary French visa. The Consulate General at Barcelona was informed of the object of his visit. The Barcelona office stated that the American passports, which are apparently somewhere in the custody of the Spanish government, have not as yet been turned over to that Consulate General, but it is hoped that this action may be taken soon. Amariglio believes that nothing will be done about these passports until he has had opportunity to discuss the matter after his arrival at Barcelona.

Amariglio had received a report, through his organization, that the French would not allow the departure from Spain of any further American volunteers unless each individual was in possession of a valid travel document approved by our Consulate General in Barcelona and visaed in turn by the French Embassy at that place. He understood that in such cases a visa valid only for twenty-four hours would be granted. The Foreign Office, however, advised that the regulation in respect of the travel document was correct as stated, but that in such cases the customary transit visa valid for fifteen days would be granted.

Amariglio also said that he had been informed that the French had decided to discontinue paying the rail fare of these destitute American volunteers, although they were continuing to pay the rail fare from Spain to Paris of the destitute volunteers of other nationalities. He

believed that this might be a result of the statement made by Louis Fischer, correspondent of "The Nation", to the effect that he disposed of ample funds which were available for American volunteers; that this statement might have been conveyed to the French authorities and given them the erroneous impression that they need do nothing for our nationals. Amariglio believed that if this were true, it was most unfortunate and would constitute an unnecessary burden for his organization. There seems to be no foundation to the story and, according to the Consulate General at Barcelona, no distinction—up to the present—has been made in such cases.

Amariglio said that he had talked with Louis Fischer, who is stopping at the Hotel Lutetia and who is said to be in town at the moment. He said Fischer operates quite independently of The Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, but that he seems to be in the confidence of Negrín, who is an old and intimate friend. Amariglio believes that Fischer speaks freely of funds, on the theory that he enjoys Negrín's full confidence and that he can persuade Negrín to allocate official funds of the Spanish Government. Amariglio believes, also, that Fischer is primarily interested only in the prosecution of hostilities and is not actively interesting himself in the repatriation and rehabilitation of volunteers.

He said also that he hoped the Embassy would continue to support the Emergency Committee for American Wounded from Spain and that he intended to subsidize that Committee. He said, however, there was one condition, i. e. that the Committee would refrain from extending any aid whatsoever to deserters from the Spanish forces, whether wounded or not. He said he had no authority to advance his organization's funds for that purpose and, if the Committee insisted on extending relief to deserters, he would be obliged to discontinue all contributions to the Committee. Amariglio intimated that he welcomes the opportunity to operate through the Committee, rather than receive any publicity for himself or his organization.

Amariglio voluntarily turned over to the Embassy twelve American passports obtained through his organization's channels. A list of the names of the bearers of these passports is attached.⁷⁷ He was not pressed to explain where he had found the passports, as it was not desired to deter him from obtaining more, according to his promise. He expressed himself as very appreciative of the Department's helpful attitude in connection with the repatriation of these men.

Amariglio's Paris address is the Hotel Anglo-American and the Hotel Majestic in Barcelona. He plans to remain in Barcelona for

⁷⁷ Not printed.

a week or ten days, returning to Paris. He has designated Miss Ethel Samuels to act for him in Paris during the period of his absence.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
ROBERT D. MURPHY
First Secretary of Embassy

852.2221/988 : Telegram

The Vice Consul at Barcelona (Flood) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, June 30, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received July 1—10:14 a. m.]

Evacuation of American volunteers. French Consul General informs me that financial requirements recently imposed by his Government on all foreigners passing through France from Spain can be waived if American Consulate at Marseille, acting on behalf of interested organizations, can give assurances that their travelling and maintenance will be met. In such event French Consul General will arrange with prefecture of police at Perpignan (which is in the Marseille consular district) for their transportation.

All cases could be handled directly between American Consulate at Marseille and prefecture at Perpignan. Despatch follows.⁷⁸

Repeated to Marseille and Paris.

FLOOD

852.2221/988 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, July 1, 1938—8 p. m.

433. Reference telegram of June 30, 5 p. m. from Consulate General at Barcelona regarding traveling and maintenance expenses of American volunteers passing through France from Spain. We suggest Amariglio may be able to make some arrangement in this connection. In the absence of appropriated funds for repatriation of stranded Americans abroad we do not see how our Consulate at Marseille could give suggested assurances.

Please repeat to Consulates at Barcelona and Marseille and keep Barcelona informed of any developments.

HULL

⁷⁸ Despatch No. 555, July 20, p. 313.

852.2221/997 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, July 5, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 3:56 p. m.]

1058. Your 433, July 1, 8 p. m. We have discussed informally with an official of Foreign Office the question of the return of further American volunteers from Spain. Foreign Office advised of Amariglio's presence in Barcelona. Official consulted believed it possible to authorize immediate passage through France of most urgent cases of American volunteers now awaiting repatriation on the guarantee of payment of expenses by Amariglio and his organization. It was made clear to Foreign Office that our Government officially cannot assume this responsibility. Official said that similar guarantees were being exacted from other governments relating to their nationals and if an exception were made in favor of Americans there would undoubtedly be protests from other countries. Foreign Office is studying matter carefully and will instruct French Embassy at Barcelona. Official added that France had been put to exceedingly heavy expense as an incidence of the exodus from Spain of volunteers of all nationalities and was obliged to protect itself. Even in the case of returning French volunteers he said it was required that the volunteer or the organization which sponsored him foot the bill for his return to his home.

BULLITT

125.961/32

The Vice Consul at Valencia (Wallner) to the Secretary of State

No. 287

VALENCIA, July 8, 1938.

[Received July 26.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's telegram of June 18, 11 A. M. 1938 (copy attached ⁷⁹) concerning the possible evacuation from Valencia by naval vessel of the Consular Officer and American nationals who desire and are able to leave.

While the port of Gandia is, next to Valencia, the most desirable embarkation point, disorderly local conditions attendant upon a situation calling for evacuation might render Gandia dangerous or impossible for the evacuation party to reach. The road from Perelló to

⁷⁹ See telegram No. 450, June 20, 6 p. m., to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain, p. 299.

Gandia passes through the villages of Sueca, Cullera and Tabernes, all of which, like Gandia itself, earned a sanguinary reputation in the early days of the Civil War.

In that event the indicated embarkation point might well be the beach at the village of Perelló. A small stream enters the sea at that point, and although the water is not more than three feet deep, I have witnessed successful landings by both the French and British navies, who consider the place entirely satisfactory in calm (normal summer) weather, and possible, except in a storm. Indeed it figures as an alternate concentration point in the evacuation scheme of the Consulates of both these nations. If it will be possible to leave Valencia at all, Perelló may be reached with a minimum of danger since the road from Valencia is not the main highway to the South and passes through no towns of consequence.

In the event that Vice Consul Worley is to be returned here by destroyer the Department may wish to suggest to the Navy Department that a trial landing be made at Perelló.

I have been approached by citizens of Panama for information as to whether I was authorised to embark them in case of evacuation by naval vessel, and since this office is now looking after the interests of the Brazilian Consulate, there is a possibility that citizens of that nation may likewise wish to be evacuated. Although the telegram under reference mentions only American citizens, I should appreciate specific instructions from the Department as to whether I should permit the embarkation of foreigners, and if so, of what nations.

Respectfully yours,

WOODRUFF WALLNER

852.2221/970 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

WASHINGTON, July 16, 1938—3 p. m.

41. Your 39, June 27, noon. Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade have requested that a representative of the Department informally inquire into the possibility of obtaining the repatriation or exchange of some or all of the American prisoners. Expenses to be borne by that organization. You are therefore directed to proceed to Burgos at the earliest practicable moment and endeavor informally to ascertain the reaction of the authorities there to this proposal. Report results by telegraph. Transportation and per diem authorized subject to travel regulation.

HULL

352.115 Anderson, Clayton and Co./66

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

No. 448

SAN ANDRÉS DE LLAVANERAS, July 16, 1938.

[Received August 2.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's instruction number 523 (File No. 352.115 Anderson, Clayton and Co./63[64]), dated June 16, 1938, and to report as follows—

1. I have submitted to the Spanish Ministry of State, for study by the Foreign Claims Commission, the claim of Anderson, Clayton and Co. for payment in the amount of \$15,122.11 for 213 bales of cotton belonging to it requisitioned by Government agents at Santander in 1936. A copy of the Embassy's Note presenting this claim is enclosed herewith.⁸¹

The Department is requested to notify Anderson, Clayton and Co. of the filing of this claim, and to request it to furnish "documentation or evidence, as may be, showing his (its) personality and nationality", pursuant to the regulations of the Claims Commission transmitted with the Embassy's despatch No. 421, of June 13, 1938.⁸¹ It is assumed that an affidavit, citing the American articles of incorporation of the Company, authenticated by the Department and the Spanish Embassy at Washington will suffice.

2. The Embassy has reported promptly and fully to the Department all available information concerning the formation and operation of the Foreign Claims Commission. There are no "independent sources" from which further information on the subject can be obtained—and inquiry among my colleagues makes it apparent that other diplomatic missions here are less well informed regarding the Commission than this Embassy.

During a conversation a few days ago with the Minister of State I inquired about the Commission. Señor del Vayo stated that upon resuming office as Minister of State he had relinquished office as Chairman of the Commission, and that he was unaware of its present status. This morning, I discussed the Commission with the new Secretary General of the Ministry of State, Señor Pablo de Tremoya. He stated that he had replaced Señor Rafael de Ureña (his predecessor in the Ministry) as Vice Chairman of the Commission, but that no meetings had been held since he entered the Ministry of State.

It is my opinion that undue importance should not be given the Foreign Claims Commission. At best, it is but a reviewing body, de-

⁸¹ Not printed.

signed to study and report upon claims—but without final powers. At worst, it is merely another of the initiatives upon which the Government has wasted energies which might better have been applied to its war effort. From the practical point of view, it is probable that what the Commission does or fails to do will have no bearing upon the ultimate fate of claims of American interests. The Government is in no position to pay awards now, and in all probability would not be for a considerable period should it emerge victoriously from the present war—which at this moment seems highly unlikely.

In so far as the Embassy is aware, all cases in which American interests have been injured during the present civil war have been communicated to the Spanish authorities—thus establishing the basis for formal claims negotiations at a later date. An annotated list of all such cases of which the Embassy has knowledge is being prepared for the Department's files.⁸²

Respectfully yours,

WALTER C. THURSTON

752.00114/32 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, July 18, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received July 18—11:05 a. m.]

503. Your telegram No. 445 July 16, 3 p. m.⁸³ Does the Department realize that at this moment and on its authorization I am engaged with the Marquis de Rialp, head of Franco's commission for exchange of prisoners, in arranging exchanges involving some Americans; that I see him in my office two and three times a week; that since I am rendering his people a service they solicited I am in perfect position to ask reciprocation; that my negotiations promise early success and that it will be difficult either in Barcelona or Burgos to understand why this work is shifted from the Ambassador to a Consul unless intended as a reflection on the former. I assume, of course, that is not the purpose but I know the Spaniards. The British are seeking the exchange of their prisoners through their Embassy here and not through their agent in Burgos, and if we wish to have our own prisoners released through an exchange I respectfully submit that the initiative should be taken by the Ambassador who is in position to summon De Rialp to his office. In working out the details Bay can be used. I have had

⁸² Not printed.

⁸³ Not printed; it informed the Ambassador of the instructions to the Consul at Seville to proceed to Burgos, contained in telegram No. 41, July 16, 3 p. m., p. 309 (752.00114/31).

no intimation that the Department is interested in securing the release of these prisoners, else through De Rialp and Del Vayo, with both of whom I am in friendly contact, I could have had the negotiations started long ago. It may interest the Department to know that the British who have been working in conjunction with the International Red Cross to effect an exchange of British prisoners have made little progress in almost five months.

BOWERS

752.00114/32 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, July 18, 1938—6 p. m.

B-446. Your 503, July 18, 1 p. m. Bay has, in the course of his recent visits to Burgos in several conversations with the Franco authorities, dealt with the matter of treatment of American prisoners, and it was suggested to him that questions concerning prisoners be taken up by him with the authorities concerned. Pursuant to this suggestion, we have therefore made our preliminary approach through Bay.

Until the interested American organization offered to pay expenses of repatriation or exchange, it was not possible for us to make any inquiries along those lines, as the Government has not appropriated funds at its disposal for either of those purposes.

If our preliminary approach receives favorable response, the method and details of working out the repatriation or exchange can be taken up.

HULL

138 Spain/1059 : Telegram

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary
of State*

BARCELONA, July 20, 1938—noon.

[Received July 20—3:58 p. m.]

1010. Since sending my 990 of June 28, 4 p. m.,⁸⁴ I have held several further conversations with the Minister of State and the Secretary General of the Ministry of National Defense regarding the delivery of the passports of American volunteers. As a result of my last talk

⁸⁴ Not printed; it reported that further conversations with Spanish officials encouraged belief that passports would be delivered in near future (138 Spain/1016).

(yesterday) with Del Vayo he sent the Secretary General of the Ministry of State to see Zugazagoitia in order to obtain a definitive statement on the subject. The Secretary General of the Ministry of State sent to me last night a personal note reading as follows:

"I take pleasure in advising you of the interview I had this morning with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Defense concerning the passports of American citizens serving as volunteers with our international brigades.

In the first place, I must say that as far as the Spanish authorities are concerned there is no difficulty whatsoever with respect to the delivery to your Embassy of the passports in question, the only obstacle being that the holders of those documents do not wish to deliver them for fear of possible persecution by the American authorities.

The Secretary General of Defense has stated to me that this obstacle may be overcome by making them see that your Government does not intend to take any action that might prejudice them and he hopes to convince them so that the passports may be delivered at once.

He has furthermore indicated to me that the greater part of these passports are in the possession of anti-Fascist organizations in France and that, if you perceive no objection thereto, it would be best, in order to settle the matter, that those passports in the neighboring republic together with the few now in Spain be delivered to the Embassy of your country in Paris."

In view of the foregoing, I believe that it would now be well for you to take up the matter with the organizations in the United States alluded to in your 447, June 13, 7 p. m.; their influence, however, should be exerted not upon the Spanish authorities but their confreres in France and Spain.

In the meanwhile, I shall address an informal note to Del Vayo requesting that at least the passports of deceased volunteers be delivered if they are here and stating that, of course, it will be entirely agreeable to us to have the other (or all) passports delivered to the Embassy in Paris.

With respect to the fear of prosecution or "persecution" now aduced, I have on several occasions orally stated that our efforts to recover these passports are not to be ascribed to any ulterior motive.

Repeated to Paris.

THURSTON

852.2221/1087

The Vice Consul at Barcelona (Flood) to the Secretary of State

No. 555

SAN ANDRÉS DE LLAVANERAS, July 20, 1938.

[Received August 2.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to my telegram of June 30, 5 p. m. regarding the evacuation of American volunteers and to the De-

partment's telegram of July 1, 8 p. m. to Paris, from which there appears to have been some misunderstanding in respect to the manner of guaranteeing the maintenance and traveling expenses of these men during their sojourn in France.

In discussing this matter with the French Consul General I pointed out that the great majority of these volunteers came over here with passports not valid for Spain, but bearing valid French visas; that since no apparent effort had been made by the French authorities to prevent their crossing into Spain (or even to note in their passports their departure from France) their French visas would in many cases still be valid; and that therefore all these restrictions about their returning through France were beside the point. He agreed that, in principle, this argument had some merit, but that as a practical matter, his Government had been put to such extraordinary expense in caring for the "back-wash" from both sides of the Spanish war, that it had no alternative but to impose these restrictions. However, he said there was no necessity for handling these cases individually in Barcelona, and that if the police authorities at Perpignan could be officially notified that the organizations interested in these men's welfare were financially able to pay their expenses in traveling through France, Perpignan being within the Marseille consular district, such representations could be made by our Consulate there without becoming involved in the bureaucratic meshes of the French Government, which otherwise would require dealing through the Foreign Office. Since it was already understood that there were no official funds appropriated for such purposes, it was of course never contemplated that the Marseille Consulate should give any assurances other than that these organizations themselves were financially responsible. It would seem that this fact could easily be established by exhibiting bank statements showing that funds were currently available.

In the few cases which have so far arisen of volunteers leaving the country (with permission of the Spanish authorities)—except in two instances where I was personally acquainted with the circumstances—this office has refused to give the definite written assurance, required by the French Consul General, that their expenses would be paid in France, since it was not known whether these persons were in good standing with the committee in Paris.

As an alternative solution, it might be feasible (*a*) for the Department to give this office a blanket authorization, in the case of volunteers who have permission of the Spanish Government to leave Spain, to give written assurances to the French consular authorities that the interested organizations are able and willing to pay all necessary expenses, or (*b*) for the organizations in question, or the relief com-

mittee in Paris, to furnish this office with a list of those persons whose expenses they are willing to pay, and for the Department to authorize similar action on the basis of such list.

Another possible way of handling this situation would be for the organizations' representatives in Paris to offer satisfactory evidence of their financial status to the French Government, which in turn could send the necessary instructions to its Consulate General at Barcelona.

Respectfully yours,

DOUGLAS FLOOD

138 Spain/1059 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, July 22, 1938—noon.

491. Barcelona's 20th passports volunteers. Advise Amariglio sense of message and request his cooperation in obtaining passports from Anti-Fascist organizations in France as well as from authorities in Spain. Assure Amariglio that passports are not desired or necessary for purpose criminal prosecution and that they will not be used for that purpose if obtained. Inform him that passports are mainly desired for documentation of volunteers returning to United States to obviate the difficulties and delays of identification encountered under present arrangements.

Reference eighth paragraph your despatch 2525⁸⁵ inform Amariglio that Consul Barcelona will be authorized to furnish appropriate documents for travel to France to volunteers whose passports shall have been delivered your office. Keep Barcelona fully advised.

HULL

852.2221/1064 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, July 26, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received 4:50 p. m.]

48. Referring to the Department's 41, July 16, 3 p. m., I returned to Seville today. Yesterday I conveyed to Señor Vidal in Burgos substance of telegram under reference. He said that he would take up the matter with the Foreign Minister and would communicate answer to me in a few days. Repatriation of these men he stated emphatically was impossible since they had been captured while fighting against them and as prisoners of war they could not be given their freedom.

⁸⁵ *Ante*, p. 304.

Exchange of some or all he thought quite possible and the conditions would be communicated to me shortly.

Before leaving, Señor Vidal said that matters of this kind may be taken up with him by letter if so desired.

BAY

352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/178 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, August 5, 1938—7 p. m.

B-449. Your despatch no. 1433 of February 9, 1938,⁸⁶ Antonio Fernandez and wife. Information received by Vice Consul Fisher from Palma de Mallorca and in letters from Antonio Fernandez to his brother in New York indicate that he has been hospitalized suffering from chronic nervous ailment aggravated by continued imprisonment. In view of assurances of favorable consideration of case given in General Jordana's letter of February 5, 1938 and the long time which has since elapsed, you are requested again to bring this case informally to the attention of General Jordana and to express the hope that in view of Fernandez' physical condition it may be possible to permit his release and return to the United States together with his wife.⁸⁷

HULL

852.2221/1099 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary
of State*

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, August 8, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received August 8—9 : 55 a. m.]

510. Franco accepts Giral's⁸⁸ last proposal⁸⁹ and International Red Cross notified. Am asking Murphy in Paris to contact the man with repatriation money to contact me. This exchange first of the war, the British efforts for 6 months having failed of agreement. This opens the door. List of Americans in pouch. By wire if requested.

BOWERS

⁸⁶ Not printed, but see the Ambassador's telegram No. 445, February 8, 7 p. m., p. 271.

⁸⁷ By telegram No. 509, August 6, 1 p. m., the Ambassador reported that a letter had gone that day to General Jordana (352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/177).

⁸⁸ José Giral, Minister without Portfolio in the Spanish Government.

⁸⁹ i. e., proposal for exchange of prisoners.

852.2221/1131

The Consul at Paris (Murphy) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

No. 2774

PARIS, August 8, 1938.

[Received August 19.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the question of the repatriation of American volunteers from Spain and to inform the Department that since the arrival in France of Mr. David Amariglio, the Paris representative of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, approximately 150 so-called American volunteers have entered France from Spain. Of these there are at present thirty-six men in France, of whom six are American citizens and the balance foreign nationals.

The latter present a difficult problem as almost all of them arrived without adequate identification or other documents necessary under our immigration laws and regulations. Because of the absence of papers of identity the French authorities in turn have imprisoned some twenty of these men for technical violation of French regulations concerning sojourn in France. In these cases the Embassy has been lending its informal assistance to Mr. Amariglio in his efforts to regularize the situation of the men. Some of the cases however are dubious and we have not been able, for example, to verify previous legal entry into the United States, et cetera.

Financial Support

The Department may also be interested to know that Mr. Amariglio states that he has been successful in obtaining \$21,500 to assist in defraying the expenses of subsistence, repatriation, etc., of returning volunteers, from Mr. Louis Fischer, an American citizen, bearer of passport No. 435103 issued June 7, 1937, at Washington, and a correspondent of *The Nation*. . . . I am informed that he enjoys the confidence of Señor Negrín and other members of the Spanish Government and that he acts as confidential agent of the Government on a number of matters. The Department will recall Ambassador Bullitt's telegram No. 907 of June 10, 1938, relating to Mr. Fischer.

In addition to Mr. Fischer's contribution, Mr. Amariglio has just received a total contribution of \$10,000, comprising 83 gifts of approximately \$120 per returning volunteer, from Mr. Bernard Baruch. The contribution happened to be made in my presence and Mr. Baruch said that he had intended to do this for some time as he thought something should be done "to get those boys back home".

Respectfully yours,

ROBERT D. MURPHY

752.00114/37 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, August 10, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received August 10—10:10 a. m.]

512. The International Red Cross came to congratulate me on the success of the exchange of prisoners, the first of the war, and to say it is arranging the details of the withdrawal requiring 5 or 6 days. It will give me 2 days' notice so I can get the agent with the money for the repatriation of the Americans here from Paris and notify the Embassy there so it can arrange about the passports. I am in touch with Murphy and we have an understanding. Have telegraphed Barcelona asking if passports are there and instructing that they be sent to the Embassy in Paris if so.

BOWERS

752.00114/41 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, August 15, 1938—10 p. m.

[Received August 16—7:25 a. m.]

1023. My 963, May 26, 3 p. m. The British Minister has informed me that the negotiations for a mass exchange of prisoners have been concluded. The Spanish plan transmitted with despatch No. 417 of June 4, has been modified and the mediating commission will consist only of British members. It will be headed by Sir Philip Chetwode and is expected to assemble within 10 days.

THURSTON

852.2221/1120 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, August 16, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received August 16—2:50 p. m.]

53. Referring to my 48, July 26, 4 p. m., since no reply has been received from Señor Vidal, does the Department approve telephoning to him to inquire when reply may be expected? ⁹⁰

BAY

⁹⁰ Department's telegram No. 44, August 19, 6 p. m., in reply, stated: "Inquiry by telephone approved."

852.2221/1138 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, August 26, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received August 26—8:20 a. m.]

55. Department's 44, August 19, 6 p. m.⁹¹ Señor Vidal stated over telephone last evening that if I would write him about the proposal of Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade he would make a reply. A personal note will suffice. Instruction requested.⁹²

BAY

852.2221/1131

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

No. 1045

WASHINGTON, August 26, 1938.

SIR: The Department has received and noted with interest the Embassy's strictly confidential despatch no. 2774 of August 8, 1938 on the subject of returning American volunteers from Spain.

The Department perceives no objection to the procedure suggested in the despatch under acknowledgment whereby \$2,000.00 of the sum contributed by Mr. Baruch to assist in the repatriation of destitute American volunteers in France will be turned over to the Embassy by the representative of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade for transmission to the American Aid Society of Paris. It is noted that these funds would be used, if appropriate arrangement can be made with the American Aid Society, for the repatriation of American deserters from Spain whom the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade are unwilling to assist.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
G. S. MESSERSMITH

352.1115/5098

The Secretary of State to the Danish Chargé (Eickhoff)

WASHINGTON, August 30, 1938.

SIR: I acknowledge the receipt of your note no. 128 of August 19, 1938,⁹³ requesting certain information, on behalf of your Government, regarding the measures which may have been taken by this Govern-

⁹¹ See footnote 90, p. 318.⁹² Department's telegram No. 46, August 27, 2 p. m., in reply, stated: "Personal note approved." (852.2221/1064)⁹³ Not printed.

ment for the repatriation of American citizens residing in Spain, as a consequence of the civil strife in that country. I note that your Government would also appreciate being informed of the attitude of this Government with respect to claims from repatriated citizens for losses incurred in the civil strife in Spain, in the event that a decision has been taken in this regard.

In reply to your note under acknowledgement, I am pleased to furnish the following information with regard to the points raised therein:

1. No public funds have been appropriated by the Congress of the United States or are available to the Department of State for the repatriation of American nationals abroad, with the exception of funds specifically appropriated for the repatriation of destitute American seamen under certain conditions.

2. A considerable number of American nationals residing in Spain who were either destitute or temporarily without financial means of their own, have been repatriated since the outbreak of the present conflict in that country with funds made available to the Department of State by the American Red Cross. These funds were made available by the American Red Cross as a special and extraordinary contribution to meet the emergency situation which had arisen, and upon the understanding that they were to be used to assist in the repatriation of destitute Americans residing in Spain when funds for that purpose could not otherwise be obtained from interested relatives or friends in the United States. In general, the Department of State has first endeavored to obtain funds from such relatives or friends before drawing upon the necessarily limited funds placed at its disposal by the American Red Cross. When funds have been provided by relatives or friends in this country the Department has undertaken to transmit them to the appropriate American consular officers in Spain or at some convenient port outside of Spain where arrangements for repatriation to the United States could be made.

3. American nationals repatriated from Spain with funds provided by the American Red Cross are not required to make repayment of the sums expended in this connection. A number of persons thus assisted have, however, voluntarily reimbursed the Department for the expenditures incurred after their return to the United States.

4. No special subsidies or other payments from public funds are provided for the support of American nationals repatriated from Spain after their arrival in this country. In case of need such persons are, of course, entitled to receive the same assistance from public sources as any other American nationals residing in the United States.

5. This Government has not as yet undertaken to consider the presentation of diplomatic claims on behalf of American nationals, for losses suffered by them during the present conflict in Spain of the nature indicated in the second from the last paragraph of your note under acknowledgment.

Accept [etc.]

For the Secretary of State:
R. WALTON MOORE

852.00/8421 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, September 2, 1938—10 a. m.
[Received September 2—9:25 a. m.]

1036. The Spanish Government has notified Exchange Commission now at Toulouse that it proposes, on the basis of reciprocity by the rebels, the suspension of all death sentences already pronounced or to be pronounced for offenses committed prior to September 1, 1938. This suspension, to be effective throughout September, is designed to facilitate negotiations by the Commission for a general pardon or exchange of condemned persons.

This development is regarded as a result of the reaction to wholesale executions reported in telegram 1024, August 16, 11 a. m.⁹⁴ and is believed to have been brought about by the British Minister, who is now at Toulouse. I am informed that Azana hopes that the arrangement can be made permanent. It is possible that this may be a tentative approach toward the program mentioned in the last paragraph of telegram 963, May 26, 3 p. m.⁹⁵

THURSTON

532.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/186 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, September 5, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 5—9:10 a. m.]

521. My telegram Number 509, August 6, 1 p. m.⁹⁶ Courier just brought reply from Sub-Minister of State, Burgos, a trained man, reiterating that report is asked from Ministry of Justice and also from juridicial body general headquarters, and will act when received.

Since first appeal to which Jordana replied was made while State Department in confusion and in process of organization, suspect the appeal overlooked. Hope for speedy action.

The Balearics under domination of Italians and suspect their consent necessary. Also afraid because of Italian domination Franco not eager to permit foreigners unfriendly to his regime to leave islands lest they report on conditions there.

BOWERS

⁹⁴ Not printed.⁹⁵ *Ante*, p. 286.⁹⁶ See footnote 87, p. 316.

352.115/5068

The Secretary of State to the Vice Consul at Valencia (Wallner)

WASHINGTON, September 7, 1938.

SIR: Reference is had to your despatch no. 287 of July 8, 1938 on the subject of the possible evacuation from Valencia by an American naval vessel of the consular officer and American nationals. In this connection you request instructions regarding the possibility of embarkation at the same time of nationals of other countries.

In the event that it should become necessary to evacuate American nationals from Valencia by an American naval vessel, nationals of other countries, except, of course, Spanish citizens, may be evacuated at the same time provided that space is available after provision has been made for all American nationals able and willing to leave, that the foreign nationals desiring to be evacuated are in possession of proper travel documents, and that they are permitted by the Spanish authorities to leave Spain.

Your suggestion regarding the possible use of the beach at Perelló as an alternative point of embarkation in the event that local conditions should make it difficult or dangerous to use the port of Gandia, has been transmitted to the Navy Department for its information and that of the Admiral in command of the American naval squadron in the Mediterranean.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
G. S. MESSERSMITH

852.2221/1195

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1585

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, September 23, 1938.
[Received October 4.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that I have succeeded in the exchange of prisoners in which I acted as intermediary at the request of General Franco, and that the fourteen Americans involved will cross the border into Hendaye next week where I shall meet them with David Amariglio, representative of the Friends of the Lincoln Brigade, who has the money to send them home, and who is now waiting here.

After an agreement had been practically made for the exchange of the fourteen aviators and the fourteen privates, the latter Italians for Americans, a difficulty rose because of the mistake in Barcelona of including on the aviation list the name of a Spanish aviator who is

a hostage for Colonel Angulo, held by Franco, and under death sentence.

The Government offered a number of propositions in an effort to meet this difficulty :

1. To exchange the Spaniard on the list for Angulo.
2. To let the original list go through provided an exchange be arranged of Angulo for one of Franco's officers held by the Government also.
3. To strike out the exchange of the Spaniard in controversy and the Franco prisoner coupled with him, and let the list go through.

To this I added, as a last resort, the suggestion that General Franco enter into an agreement not to carry out the death sentence against Angulo until an exchange of him for another could be effected.

To all these suggestions Burgos gave a negative reply.

I had brought personal and friendly pressure to bear on Barcelona through the Spanish Ambassador in Paris because of the Americans involved, and Giral replied by proposing that the exchange of the privates, Americans for Italians, proceed at once, and that the difficulty over the aviators be fought out later. I passed this on to Burgos and the Marquis de Rialp came to see me yesterday with an acceptance of this plan.

This is gratifying not only to me because of the Americans involved, but to the International Red Cross, in that it is the first time since the war began that it has been possible to arrange an exchange of military prisoners. This opens the door for the future. The British, acting in cooperation with the International Red Cross, have made futile efforts to arrange such an exchange for eight months, and both the British and the Red Cross assured me I would fail.

The Americans who will cross at Irun follow :

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.2221/1185a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, September 28, 1938—5 p. m.

714. Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade inform us that French refuse to permit entry into France of members of the International Brigade now being discharged in conformity with Negrín's announcement to the League and that Amariglio will communicate with the Embassy in this regard.

Please report by telegraph regarding this situation.

HULL

852.2221/1194 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, October 3, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 6:11 p. m.]

1681. Your 714, September 28, 5 p. m. During the past week French authorities have refused to permit entry into France of members except French nationals of the International Brigade discharged by the Spanish Government. We are informed that this is a temporary measure incident to the recent crisis and designed to prevent any large numbers of doubtful foreigners entering France during such a critical time. It is understood that this temporary restriction may be removed shortly.

We are now informed that the French authorities are disposed to permit returning American volunteers to cross France on the assurance of the International Aid Committee and Amariglio that immediate steps for their repatriation to the United States are undertaken. Volunteers of other nationalities will not be allowed temporarily to enter France.

Amariglio has also raised a question concerning the eventual repatriation of the balance of the American volunteers now in Spain. According to his information all of the American volunteers with the International Brigade have been demobilized and will be released as soon as arrangements can be made for their repatriation. He has addressed a letter to the Embassy urging that the United States Government take the initiative of requesting the Spanish Government to evacuate American volunteers from Spain and that the American Government provide for their repatriation. It is understood that he has requested his organization in New York to discuss such a proposal with the Department. He has been advised that we doubt very much that our Government could make the suggested arrangement. Written report follows.⁹⁷

BULLITT

752.00114/52

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1590

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 3, 1938.

[Received October 11.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that Field Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode, Bart., head of the British Commission for the exchange of prisoners in Spain, having failed completely in Burgos, has returned

⁹⁷ Despatch No. 3039, October 4, not printed.

to England. The reason given for his return to England was that he is an officer and was recalled because of the threat of war, but when he emerged here he appears to have left no doubt in the minds of those in the British Embassy here of his disgust over his experiences in Burgos. He seems to have been treated with scant courtesy, and his first proposition—an agreement on both sides to suspend death sentences—was instantly rejected. I am told by the British Embassy that it has little hope of anything being accomplished by this Commission.

On the other side the Commission was accorded an entirely different reception. In response to the proposal for suspension of death sentences, Sr. Del Vayo replied with the following proposals:

"1. That all death sentences now in force which have been passed or will be passed for offenses committed before September 1, 1938 (including cases where the discovery but not the execution of the offenses is posterior to this date) shall be suspended.

"2. The rebel authorities must offer the strictest reciprocity which shall be guaranteed by the British Commission.

"3. The suspension of the execution of sentences shall remain in force throughout the month of September and shall serve as the basis of negotiations, through the mediation of the British Commission, for a generous measure of clemency or of exchange of condemned prisoners or of accused in Loyalist and Rebel territory.

"4. The offenses which are committed after September 1, 1938 shall not come within the scope of this proposition."

This reply of Del Vayo was received promptly; and the whole of September was wasted with the Burgos authorities.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.2221/1197 : Telegram

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

SEVILLE, October 5, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received October 5—9:25 a. m.]

58. Referring to my telegram No. 55, August 26, 11 a. m. and Department's 46, August 27, 2 p. m.⁹⁸ Having received no reply to my personal note of August 29, I telephoned Señor Vidal today. He stated it was wholly impossible to consider the release of American prisoners but he would be glad to receive any concrete proposal for their exchange. My impression is that Burgos authorities do not want to act in this matter.

BAY

⁹⁸ See footnote 92, p. 319.

852.2221/1200 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, October 6, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received October 6—9:25 a. m.]

1701. Your 714, September 25 [28], 5 p. m. Earl Browder, who has arrived in Paris, informs us that he has come here expressly for the purpose of effecting arrangements for the withdrawal of all American volunteers from Loyalist Spain. He believes there are at present approximately 1,000 American volunteers in Spain; that about 800 have already been repatriated and that casualties amount to about 2,000. He is operating through the French and Spanish Communist Parties and states that he will endeavor to accomplish the purpose indicated without a visit to Barcelona as he prefers not to go there. He inquired whether it were true as reported by individuals in Barcelona that any number of American passports of volunteers had been surrendered to this Embassy and he was informed that except about 30 which Amariglio delivered last June none has been received. He said that he was in accord with the proposition that the outstanding balance should be surrendered and would work to that end.

He also seems to entertain the hope that our Government will take some initiative toward the evacuation of American volunteers from Spain emphasizing that the organizations in the United States which are concerned are financially unable to bear the burden. He said that of course he was proposing to the Spanish Government that it pay the expenses but he did not hope for substantial aid because of the limited financial resources of the Spanish Government. He expressed a gloomy view of the present situation of the Barcelona Government and the conviction that the "capitalist" countries especially Great Britain were determined to end the Spanish affair quickly and in favor of Franco.

If, as I suppose, our Government will not repatriate the volunteers in question it seems to me that the responsibility lies between the Spanish Government and the American organizations which arranged their enlistment. Under such circumstances I believe the French authorities would admit for transit through France only individuals for whom a guaranty of expenses of repatriation to the United States is forthcoming.

WILSON

852.2221/1206: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France,
to the Secretary of State*

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 8, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received October 8—11 a. m.]

541. The 14 American prisoners names and addresses given in my despatch 1585, September 25 [23], crossed the International Bridge at Hendaye at 11 o'clock this morning. I received them from the International Red Cross and turned them over to the representative of the Friends of the Lincoln Brigade who takes them on to Paris this afternoon. All are in good condition. This is the first exchange of military prisoners since the war began.

BOWERS

352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/190

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, October 8, 1938.

SIR: Reference is had to your despatch no. 1575 of September 5, 1938,⁹⁹ enclosing a copy of the letter which you have received under date of August 27, 1938, from the Sub-Minister of Foreign Affairs at Burgos, in reply to your letter of August 6 inquiring as to the possibility of granting a pardon to Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Fernandez Villa, American nationals, imprisoned at Palma de Mallorca. In the event that no further word is received from the authorities at Burgos within a reasonable time no objection is perceived to your addressing a further informal communication to the appropriate authorities of General Franco with a view to expediting action in this case.

For your confidential information you are advised that the Department has been informed by Professor Villa Fernandez, the brother of Antonio Fernandez, that he has been notified through the Spanish Embassy at Washington that the names of his brother and sister-in-law have been included by the Barcelona authorities in a list of prisoners to be submitted to General Franco for exchange. Professor Villa Fernandez states that the Spanish authorities are aware of the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Fernandez are citizens of the United

⁹⁹ Not printed; but see the Ambassador's telegram No. 521 of the same date, p. 321.

States, and adds that it is merely due to his friendship with the Spanish Ambassador that he has been able to obtain this special favor. He also states that he has received assurances that efforts are being made by the International Red Cross to bring about the release of his brother and sister-in-law.

Professor Villa Fernandez has been kept informed in confidence of the steps which you have been taking in the effort to obtain the release of Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Fernandez Villa by the Franco authorities.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:

G. S. MESSERSMITH

852.2221/1228 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, October 22, 1938—2 p. m.

B-462. With reference to our B-445, July 16, 3 p. m.,¹ after some exchanges between Bay and Burgos authorities, Bay reported on October 5 that authorities took position it was wholly impossible to consider the release of American prisoners. Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade now desire, however, to have new approach made to Franco authorities in the light of Spanish Government's declared withdrawal of foreign combatants from its forces. It appears to us that new circumstances in situation coupled with the fact that Burgos authorities recently released 14 Americans would fully warrant our taking up a new question of release of all American prisoners. Although you will recall that it was suggested to Bay in the course of one of his visits to Burgos that questions concerning prisoners be taken up by him with the authorities concerned, in view of your 503, July 18, 1 p. m., I would like your opinion as to the channel of approach which should be used in taking up this question anew with the Franco authorities. If you consider that it would be preferable for you to take this matter up, it would be understood, of course, that any conversations you carried on for this purpose would not necessitate your going into Franco territory or sending any representative for that purpose, as it is impossible for us to have any situation arise which might be construed as granting recognition or even partial recognition.

HULL

¹ Not printed.

852.2221/1240 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 25, 1938—1 p. m.
 [Received October 25—10:45 a. m.]

547. Your B-462, September [October] 22, 2 p. m. Since I am acting as intermediary in exchange of prisoners on the request of Burgos and specifically with some Americans and since I see Franco's commissioner on exchange once and twice a week in my own office it would seem logical that I should take up the matter of the other Americans with him.

Since Burgos protests deep appreciation of my efforts made at its request we ought to test it.

The first approach under these circumstances unquestionably should be made by me.

BOWERS

352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/193 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 27, 1938—1 p. m.
 [Received October 27—11:15 a. m.]

548. Have just received a reply from Burgos in the case of Antonio Villa and wife submitting alliance [*sic*] report to the "Chief of the Juridical Legal Body of the Headquarters of His Excellency the Generalissimo" from the military commander general of the Balearics. It goes into a detailed account of the processes of the trial to show defendants were accorded every legal right of defense. It shows that for 10 years before the war defendants conducted themselves as Spanish citizens, following the requirements of the recruiting law and resorting to the amnesty decreed on March 24, 1926, and paying the fine prescribed. On February 17, 1932, a new pardon [*amnesty?*] given him. Both defendants voted in the election of 1936 and thus exercised all rights of a Spanish citizen including the purchase of property without asking consent of War Department as prescribed for people of other than Spanish nationality.

The Minister concludes at the end of this report that defendants "have practiced the rights which Spanish nationality conveys until

the year 1936 inclusive and if they have shown American nationality there is no doubt that they used a double nationality choosing one or the other according as the circumstances dictated".

We had not questioned the trial at all and had based the request solely on their American citizenship and the mildness of their offense. Would be glad to receive instructions.² Full report leaves in pouch on Saturday.³

BOWERS

852.2221/1240 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, October 29, 1938—3 p. m.

B-463. Your 547, October 25, 1 p. m. You are authorized to take up informally with Franco authorities question of release of all remaining American prisoners for return to the United States. If released, arrangements for repatriation would be taken care of by Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade, as in case of 14 men recently released, in accordance with assurances contained in their letter of July 13, copy of which was sent as enclosure to Department's instruction of July 19, 1938.⁴ Pending outcome of your conversations please keep this matter confidential in order to avoid possible premature publicity in the press which might handicap result.

Instruction has been sent Consul at Seville enclosing copy of your 542 of October 10, 1 p. m.⁴ and he is being authorized to proceed to Burgos to investigate and report upon conditions at San Pedro de Cardenas and ascertain whereabouts and status of Blair and others mentioned in your telegram. At the same time he will endeavor to obtain final, complete list of all American prisoners, including any held in prisons or hospitals elsewhere than at San Pedro. He is being informed that question of release of American prisoners is being taken up by you with Franco authorities, and is instructed to forward to you copy of his report and list of prisoners when obtained.

We are not clear as to the meaning of statement in your telegram under reference that you are now acting as intermediary in exchange of prisoners on the request of Burgos. Have there been any fur-

² The Department's telegram No. B-470, November 19, 2 p. m., in reply, authorized the Ambassador to press for a pardon along the lines of this paragraph and on grounds of clemency. However, it was not until October 25, 1940, that the Chargé in Spain reported that Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Fernandez Villa had been liberated and had departed for Barcelona. (352.1121 Fernandez, Antonio/196, 245)

³ Not printed.

⁴ Neither printed.

ther developments in the exchange question since release of the 14 Americans? We shall appreciate being kept closely informed of progress of any conversations you may have on this subject.

HULL

852.2221/1246 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 31, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received October 31—11 a. m.]

550. Your telegram No. B-463, October 29. Am preparing to approach Rialp on exchange of all remaining Americans for equal number Italians and will await Bay's new list before submitting names. Del Vayo has already agreed to this.

2. In clarification of my 547. I submitted Franco's request that I act as intermediary in my 487, May 19,⁵ and you telegraphed authorization in your B-433, May 20,⁵ provided that notice was served both sides that I assumed "no responsibility". Am acting on these instructions and entirely within them and am reporting actual developments. Aviator list pending because of disagreement on one man. Am acting largely as a postoffice.

3. Nothing given correspondents on negotiations remaining Americans but impossible to prevent their speculating on the possibility.

BOWERS

852.2221/1246 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France

WASHINGTON, November 1, 1938—noon.

B-464. Your 550, October 31, 1 p. m. I do not want you to approach the Burgos authorities with any proposal for exchange of Americans for equal number of Italians, as any proposal for exchange of prisoners must come from one side or the other and cannot be initiated by us.

What I had in mind in B-463, October 29, 3 p. m., was merely for you to take up informally with Franco authorities the question of release of all remaining American prisoners for return to the United States on the basis of the changed situation resulting from the Spanish Government's declared withdrawal of all foreigners from its forces.

HULL

⁵ *Ante*, p. 285.

852.2221/1246a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in France (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, November 1, 1938—7 p. m.

826. At request of David McKelvey White of Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade, please report circumstances of and basic reason for reported action of French authorities in refusing admission to group of wounded Americans from Spain.

HULL

852.2221/1249 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 3, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received November 3—11:03 a. m.]

551. Your B-464, November 1. There has never been a release of prisoners except through an exchange since war began and am positive impossible now. Pressure by Italians on Franco for exchange of Italian prisoners makes acceptance improbable. However, I shall, if under these circumstances so directed, act on your B-464.

I respectfully suggest what I think a more promising plan. Since Del Vayo in a personal letter to me said that he would do anything to aid in getting the Americans out and home I suggest I ask him personally, not officially, to submit to me as acting intermediary selected by both sides a proposal for exchange of the Americans for an equal number of Italians. If this follows the submission of plan proposed in your B-464 after its rejection our part in the proposal for exchange coming from Government would be suspected. If I arrange for Government to submit the proposal suggest that this be tried on Rialp first.

The recent "release" of some British prisoners was arranged only through exchange for Italians.

If authorized I can thus arrange for the proposal to "come from one side or the other" and assure you this plan is infinitely more promising than the other. Will take no action until I get your reactions and instructions.

2. If Bay learns anything about Haber and Blair please inform me as I have inquiries.

BOWERS

852.2221/1250 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, November 3, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received November 3—2:14 p. m.]

1857. Your 826, November 1, 7 p. m. The group of wounded Americans from Spain to whom White refers are evidently 54 volunteers said to be American citizens who after demobilization are ready for evacuation from Spain. They apparently form part of a group of approximately 300 men comprising several nationalities including about 60 French nationals who arrived at Cerbere on the French frontier on October 31. The competent French authorities decided to admit the French nationals only, as the others apparently had not complied with present French regulations. We are informed by the Foreign Office that present regulations require each returning volunteer desiring to cross France to be in possession of either a passport or a police certificate identifying him duly visaed by the French authorities in Barcelona. The latter are instructed in such cases to grant transit visas without privilege of sojourn in France. A showing will also be required that every individual will be financially able or that provision will be made for him enabling him to depart from France. Furthermore, the returning men will be subjected to a medical examination by French doctors who will be stationed at the frontier. The French authorities require also that a list of the names with an indication of date and place of birth of each group of volunteers be supplied to the Ministry of the Interior ten days in advance of the arrival of the group at the French frontier.

It is understood that there are approximately 600 so-called American volunteers who are ready to leave the Barcelona area. On the bases of past experience probably 10 percent of these men are foreigners.

Amariglio has been urging this Embassy to prevail on the French authorities to admit the entire group offering to furnish a list of their names. We have informed him that we are disinclined to take such action in the absence of better proof of their citizenship. His organization has been able to recover passports in the majority of cases recently. We have had several assurances from Browder and Amariglio that a happy solution of the entire passport question would shortly be found but as yet there is no evidence of the early return of the apparently large number of passports issued to men who have volunteered for service in the Loyalist forces.

We have insisted that those passports issued to men who have been killed in action or who are missing must in a large number of cases be available. Unless recovery is made before evacuation of the remaining volunteers it is doubtful there will be a subsequent opportunity.

Thurston informed.

WILSON

852.2221/1250a : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, November 4, 1938—7 p. m.

B-465. We appreciate your efforts and it may be that some further opportunity will present itself through the initiation of one side or the other of a plan of exchange for you to lend your good offices to the accomplishment of such an arrangement. I feel that as far as you taking any initiative yourself in that direction is concerned, it would be highly undesirable, as this Government cannot be put in a position of proposing the exchange of Italian prisoners for Americans, particularly in the face of the possibility of any such exchanged Italians reentering the conflict on the Franco side. I feel sure you will agree with me that the only approach this Government can make to the Franco authorities in the present circumstances is on the basis of a release of the American prisoners based on the fact that because of the withdrawal of foreigners from the Spanish Government Forces, these Americans will not re-engage in the conflict, but will be returned to this country by the group here interested in their organization.

The Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade have been told that we would again propose to the Franco authorities the release of these prisoners but that any proposal for their exchange would have to come from the Spanish Government or from the Burgos authorities.

HULL

852.2221/1258 : Telegram

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary
of State*

[MATARO,] November 6, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received November 7—noon.]

1074. In view of reports that the French authorities were placing difficulties in the way of the repatriation of foreign volunteers through France, I called on Del Vayo November 2 and requested to be informed

of the situation in this respect as it affected Americans. The next day I supplemented my oral representations by an urgent telegram. In response I received today the visit of Señor Quero Molares, a former Sub-Secretary of State now detailed to the Spanish Commission in the Ministry of Defense for the evacuation of the foreign volunteers, who informed me as follows:

The French Government has in fact refused entry into France of the foreigners included in a group of wounded volunteers who arrived at the frontier a few days ago. It desires to maintain this attitude, and has suggested to the Spanish Government that all foreign volunteers be embarked at Spanish ports on vessels which will transport them direct to their countries of origin. Señor Quero, however, expressed the belief that permission for American volunteers to pass through France can be obtained by our Embassy, and the Counselor of the French Embassy, whom I consulted yesterday, expressed the same opinion. Quero also stated that the British Government will evacuate British and Canadian volunteers by sea, and intimated that the question of transporting American volunteers by the British ship to be employed for that purpose has been discussed with the British Embassy here which is favorably disposed. The British Minister has notified me that he will call tonight or tomorrow morning to confer with me regarding the repatriation of our respective volunteers. I have, of course, made no commitments of any kind and will make none.

Señor Quero states that there are fewer than one thousand American volunteers. He will furnish me as quickly as possible a list of their names. A group of 272 is now quartered at Ripoll awaiting evacuation, and he inquired whether we would be willing to examine their documents and verify their American citizenship (he asserted that all possess their original American passports). I stated that I am confident that the Consulate General will be immediately authorized to do so. He likewise inquired concerning the entry into the United States of Spanish wives acquired by American volunteers. I replied that I would request instructions. He also inquired whether the American volunteers have lost their citizenship. I replied that I assume that they have not unless they have sworn allegiance to another flag and government. He finally inquired whether alien volunteers who came to Spain from the United States can return there with their American comrades. I replied that presumably such cases would be governed by our immigration laws.

It is planned to commence full withdrawal November 9th when the first group of 1500 French volunteers will cross the frontier. On November 10th contingents of Belgian, Dutch and Scandinavians

and the remaining French will be sent out. And on November 11th it is desired to send out the British, Canadians, Latin Americans and Americans. Your early instructions will therefore be appreciated, although it is improbable that such a hasty schedule can be carried out.

THURSTON

852.2221/1260 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, November 7, 1938—9 a. m.

[Received 8:15 p. m.]

1075. My 1074, November 6, 5 p. m. The British Minister informed me last night that no decision has yet been reached regarding the transport by sea of British volunteers although he is recommending that course to the Foreign Office. With respect to the American volunteers, he apparently felt that we might wish to join in a general plan whereunder we presumably would repatriate at that time the Americans, Canadians and Latin Americans to be taken out November 11 if possible. I informed him that I assume we will prefer land evacuation in order that responsible private organizations in France may effect repatriation and that I also assume we will not send a naval vessel into Spanish waters for such repatriation work.

As to French policy Mr. Stevenson stated that permission has now been given for the passage through France of the November 10 contingent consisting of 235 Scandinavian volunteers.

THURSTON

852.2221/1260 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston)

WASHINGTON, November 8, 1938—7 p. m.

469. Your 1074 and 1075 regarding repatriation of American volunteers. It is assumed you have received copy of telegram from Embassy at Paris dated November 7, 6 p. m. on same subject.^s

Two consular officers, accompanied by clerk if necessary, are authorized to proceed to Ripoll to examine passports in possession of alleged Americans quartered there. Transportation and per diem chargeable regular contingent allotment. Passports should in each case be examined in presence of the bearer. If passport appears in

^s Not printed.

order it should be stamped or marked "Valid only for direct return to the United States".

For those claiming American citizenship but having no documents, officer may take registration applications and cable pertinent data, including in each case names of two references in the United States able to substantiate citizenship and identity.

You are authorized to furnish list of persons whose American passports appear to be in order to Spanish authorities and to French Consul General at Barcelona, with a statement to that effect. List should include reference to number and date of passport and any other data of assistance to authorities in identifying persons in question. Copies of list and accompanying data should be transmitted by telegraph to Embassy at Paris and to the Department as soon as prepared.

It is suggested that you impress upon the appropriate authorities that the identification of American citizens for purposes of evacuation will be greatly facilitated if they are in possession of their original passports.

With reference to financial arrangements for repatriation of these American volunteers mentioned in telegram from Embassy at Paris, it is our understanding that Amariglio is the representative of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, a private American organization, and is authorized to make all arrangements in this connection. You should make clear to the appropriate authorities that, while this Government is making every effort to facilitate the return of these American citizens to the United States it cannot undertake any financial responsibility for the cost of their repatriation.

Once citizenship of the American volunteer is established, he may execute petition on form 633, requesting non-quota status for his Spanish wife, provided evidence of marriage is presented and he furnishes names of two American citizens in the United States who are prepared to vouch for him. Because of the urgency the names of American husband, alien wife and supporting witnesses in the United States may be cabled to the Department. The Secretary of Labor will then be requested in a personal interview to approve petitions immediately in order that the approval may be cabled to you within 48 hours. It should be emphasized that this emergency procedure will not be acceptable to Department of Labor on behalf of alleged American husbands who are not holders of valid American passports.

Your statement to Spanish representative regarding possible return of alien volunteers to the United States is correct.

Embassy at Paris is being informed of the foregoing. If you have not already done so please furnish it with copy of your telegrams under reference.

852.2221/1268 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

[MATARO,] November 10, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 8 p. m.]

1080. My 1079, November 9, 5 p. m.⁹ Vice Consul Jernegan has returned from Ripoll where the Political Commissar in charge informed him there are now 420 American volunteers of whom only about 10 percent are in possession of American passports. Conflicting statements were made by the Commissar and the representative of the Ministry of Defense who accompanied the vice consuls to Ripoll regarding the alleged presence of the missing passports in Barcelona. The report was revived that all passports surrendered to International Brigades authorities at Albacete were lost en route to Barcelona.

Vice Consul Worley and Mr. Caragol remained at Ripoll to continue work and will be rejoined tomorrow by Mr. Jernegan after an interview in Barcelona tonight with officials regarding results of their efforts to locate passports.

In view of the large number of volunteers who probably will be unable to produce suitable documentation, the presumed difficulty of obtaining passport forms in Europe and the time and clerical labor that would be involved in making them out, the Consulate General suggests that the Department may be willing to authorize the issuance of emergency identification certificates for return to the United States such as those authorized in its telegram April 1, 7 p. m. to the Consulate General.¹⁰ The Consulate General also suggests that it may prove to be impossible to obtain photographs, owing to lack of material and inquires whether these may be dispensed with pending the arrival of volunteers in France.

THURSTON

852.2221/1268 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston)

WASHINGTON, November 14, 1938—7 p. m.

470. Your 1080 November 10. Documentation of volunteers. After verification citizenship Department is willing authorize cer-

⁹ Not printed; it reported the expected departure for Ripoll next morning of Vice Consul Lee Worley and Vice Consul John Jernegan, accompanied by Clerk Caragol (852.2221/1269).

¹⁰ *Ante*, p. 278.

tificates identification without photographs with understanding that men will be questioned further and photographs added at Paris.

Continue efforts obtain lost passports not only of persons in Spain but of deceased Americans and of volunteers who left Spain without passports. Department does not give credence to report loss of passports while en route from Albacete to Barcelona.

HULL

752.00114/63

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

No. 1617

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 16, 1938.

[Received November 25.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that the Commission for the Exchange of Non-Military Prisoners headed by Field Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode of the British Army has been encountering serious difficulties for the six months of its efforts and that a crisis has developed in its work which may endanger its existence.

An agreement was reached for the exchange of 147 inmates of the Cuban Embassy in Madrid for a like number of political prisoners on Franco's side. On November 5 the 147 from the Cuban Embassy who had been sent to Valencia embarked under the eye of the International Red Cross on the British ship the *Hood* and were sent to Marseilles.

It was understood of course that 147 prisoners on Franco's side should on the same day cross the border at Hendaye.

But while the Government released its 147 prisoners on November 5th, none came out at Hendaye on that day. Press correspondents went to the border to see them emerge and on inquiry it was announced by Franco representatives that there was some reason why they could not be sent out until the next Saturday November 12th. When they failed to appear on November 12th, the correspondents were told positively they would come out on November 15th. But on that day they failed to appear.

The reason vaguely given by Francoists is that the Government substituted some "anarchists" for some of those in the Cuban Embassy and that these were to be sent over into Franco territory for espionage purposes. No correspondent and no one else believes this story. It seems too absurd. Another story is that there were some of the inmates of the Cuban Embassy who had died and that other prisoners held by the Government were substituted for these.

The effect has been to destroy confidence in the efficacy of the Chetwode Commission. It may hopelessly impair its work. I learn positively that the Field Marshal is much disliked in Franco territory

and is charged with going beyond his announced duties to report fully on conditions in the rebel zone.

That Chetwode is not favorably impressed by the rebels I know. He was treated with marked discourtesy when he first arrived and was refused permission to cross the border for several days, though all arrangements had previously been made. He has since been charged with saying that the Government infantry is superior to that of the rebels. Last week Lady Chetwode was at my house for tea and I was surprised by the opinions she expressed about the Francoists. She impressed me as quite belligerently anti-Franco, and I suspect she reflects the views of her husband.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.2221/1290 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 18, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received November 18—11:25 a. m.]

557. Your telegram No. B-462, October 22, 2 p. m. Marquis de Rialp November 14 summarized:

“Being always desirous of attending to all requests which the Embassy may make to me through you, who so worthily represents it, I have examined the affair with the greatest attention in order to find the quickest and most favorable solution. As you know, since it has just been published in the press, the Government of Burgos has agreed to fully evacuate the foreign legions which are in Madrid. For that purpose it has to find as a counterpart prisoners now in the concentration camps and since from the first of last September an English commission for the exchange of prisoners has been set up in Pau it is this commission which must consider the prisoners who may be exchanged, that is to say, if those who have foreign nationality can be used for that purpose. For this purpose I think that the best manner of successfully carrying out the proposition which you make to me is that the Embassy take steps with the English commission and if it should accept the using of North Americans as a counterpart, I think that I do not take any risk in informing you that on the part of my Government there will not be the slightest difficulty in exchanging them in the category above-mentioned as a counterpart for the refugees in the Embassies.”

Refugees in Embassies are Franco Spaniards and on evacuation enter Franco Spain while foreigners exchanged for them must return to their own countries. First, I doubt if Barcelona would agree for this reason. Second, I doubt if English commission would exchange Americans while English prisoners are held.

It is too much to expect Franco to release the Americans on any basis but an exchange somewhere and there still are Italian prisoners. Would like your reaction before renewing discussions with Rialp.

BOWERS

852.2221/1290 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, November 19, 1938—3 p. m.

B-471. Your 557, November 18, 1 p. m. The only direct proposal that we are now prepared to make, as stated in my B-465 of November 4, 7 p. m., is that American prisoners be released for return to the United States in view of withdrawal of all foreign volunteers from military forces of Spanish Government. It is not clear from your telegram that this proposal has definitely been rejected by Franco authorities.

We would have no objection, however, to any proposal which would result in release and repatriation of these Americans through exchange of prisoners. If such proposal is actually made you are authorized to use your good offices in same manner as in the case of the 14 Americans.

HULL

852.2221/1304 : Telegram

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary
of State*

MATARO, November 22, 1938—9 a. m.

[Received 8:10 p. m.]

1102. I shall today hand to the French Embassy and the Ministry of State a list of the 201 American volunteers whose passports have been found to be in good order and have been endorsed as directed in your 469, November 8. To facilitate repatriation I shall also informally hand a copy of same list to League Commission. Same procedure will be followed with respect to the seven volunteers holding seamen's certificates. League Commission believes these 208 Americans can be conducted across French frontier this week provided all other necessary arrangements are made.

Photographs have just been received from Ripoll and final applications of those approved by the Department will now be executed by Consulate General upon termination this work. Same procedure as above will again be followed and reported to the Department.

THURSTON

852.2221/1302 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

MATARO, November 22, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 4:03 p. m.]

1103. The League Commission informs me that approximately 2450 foreign volunteers have thus far been evacuated, of whom 2000 were French and the remainder Belgians and Scandinavians. Some 800 more will go out this week most of whom are Polish, Italians, Czechs, and Germans, who formerly resided in France. If the necessary arrangements are made the 201 Americans mentioned in my 1102 will accompany this group.

Figures furnished by the Government show the total of 1103 American volunteers in Spain with 487 in the southern area. I am inclined to doubt the accuracy of the latter figure but it may be correct. Approximately 100 additional American volunteers (83 of whom are apparently the ones rejected at the French border and mentioned in my 1074, November 6, 5 p. m.) have been discovered by Mr. Worley who will proceed to Sagaro and Farnes tomorrow with Mr. Caragol to examine them.

THURSTON

852.2221/1307 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, November 24, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received November 24—10:10 a. m.]

559. Your number B-471, November 19, 3 p. m. International Red Cross representative importuned by Italians for exchange of their prisoners, volunteers [suggestion?] that they approach De Rialp with suggestion of exchange for Americans. Meanwhile other nations certain to seek exchange of their nationals for Italians and unless we show equal interest we may find ourselves without any one to exchange. I would not urge this on you but for the positive conviction that it would be a serious mistake for us not to act. There is no possibility of securing any release except on basis of exchange.

BOWERS

852.2221/1314: Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, November 26, 1938—noon.

[Received 7:15 p. m.]

1108. Señor Quero Molares has informed me that he intends to conduct the American contingent into France Monday if possible. If this plan can be carried out the group should contain 309 men, as 105 certificates were delivered by the Consulate General yesterday at Ripoll.

When I inquired regarding steamship and other arrangements in France presumably being made by Amariglio and the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Señor Quero remarked that the person and organization named merely constitute a "set up" for the Government—which in reality is defraying all costs of repatriation but prefers to act through them. Amariglio, he said, is on the Government payroll and acts solely under its instructions.

THURSTON

852.2221/1312: Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, November 26, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 8:30 p. m.]

1109. My 1103, November 22, 10 a. m. Quero states that figures for southern area have been revised and that there probably are only about 150 Americans there.¹¹

He also states that the League Commission will proceed to the southern area next week to check the volunteers. Thereafter the volunteers will be brought to Barcelona on government transports and later evacuated through France. It is felt that by having volunteers checked in southern areas by the League Commission their non-combatant status will be established and the danger of attack while en route to Barcelona correspondingly lessened.

If the foregoing plan is carried out the American volunteers concerned will of course be examined and documented here. If it is

¹¹ On December 4, Quero submitted a list showing only 77 American volunteers in the southern area.

abandoned then consideration might be given to the feasibility of their evacuation on the SS *Wisconsin* or some similar vessel following examination and documentation by Wallner.

THURSTON

852.2221/1323 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, December 2, 1938—11 p. m.

[Received December 3—8:50 a. m.]

1118. My 1114, November 30, 10 p. m.¹² Worley reports that 332 American volunteers crossed the French frontier this noon under the surveillance of representatives of the League of Nations Commission. The group included 307 of the volunteers reported in telegrams 1102, November 22, 9 a. m., and 1111, November 26, 3 p. m.,¹³ plus 25 others in possession of endorsed documents.

THURSTON

852.2221/1384

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

No. 3466

PARIS, December 6, 1938.

[Received December 23.]

SIR: I have the honor to enclose a copy of a self-explanatory memorandum prepared by Vice-Consul Gannett¹² relating to the arrival in France of a group of 326 American volunteers evacuated from Loyalist Spain on December 2, 1938.

These men were originally scheduled to sail on s/s *Normandie* on December 3, 1938, from Le Havre, but due to a strike declared by the Seamen's Union the vessel was unable to depart on schedule. The group has been quartered in the Hotel d'Heve, a large and commodious barracks owned by the French government and used by the French Line. They are maintained at that place at the expense of the French Line. An effort is being made by the American representative of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade here to obtain passage for them on another vessel, possibly to charter a vessel, to accommodate this group and a further group of approximately 230 men who are expected to arrive shortly.

It is recalled that this group of Americans was admitted into France under a blanket transit visa good only for immediate travel through

¹² Not printed.

¹³ Latter telegram not printed.

France from the Franco-Spanish frontier to the port of embarkation. A special train was provided for this purpose which was routed through to the port without stop at Paris. The men were accompanied by Vice-Consuls Gannett and Worley, as well as by Mr. David Amariglio, the American representative of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. They were met on arrival at Le Havre by Consul Wiley who has kept closely in touch with the men throughout their stay at Le Havre. Every effort has been made by the French government and the French Line authorities to make their unexpected sojourn at Le Havre, due only to the sudden strike development which could not be foreseen, as pleasant and comfortable as possible.

Respectfully yours,

EDWIN C. WILSON

852.2221/1371

*Memorandum by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs
(Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] December 17, 1938.

The Spanish Chargé d'Affaires called this morning to ask two questions on behalf of his government:

(1) Would the United States Government be willing to pay the expenses of the American members of the International Brigade who have been returned to the United States, from the Spanish frontier to New York? I told him that this Government very definitely could not make this payment.

(2) The second question the Chargé asked was whether members of the International Brigade who had been residents of America but had not acquired citizenship would be permitted reentry into the United States? I told him that each case was decided by the Department of Labor on its merits and that many factors were taken into account,—notably the length of residence, the conditions under which the resident had originally been admitted into the United States, et cetera. The Chargé asked if the same applied to Puerto Rico; to this I answered "yes".

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

III. ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS AGAINST SENDING AMERICAN AIRPLANES AND OTHER WAR MATERIAL TO SPAIN¹⁴

711.00111 Lic. Bellanca Aircraft Corp./2: Telegram

68

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Greece (MacVeagh)

WASHINGTON, December 30, 1937—7 p. m.

47. The Bellanca Aircraft Corporation has applied for a license to authorize the exportation to Greece of 20 Bellanca model 28-90 low

¹⁴ Continued from *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 564-604.

wing monoplanes valued at \$1,047,200. The application states that the planes are purchased by Technical and Aeronautical Exploitations Company, 3e Philellinon Street, Athens, for the use of the Civil Reservists School in Greece.

In view of the apparent doubt of Bellanca as to the ultimate destination of the planes if they were exported and in view of recent apparent attempts to use Athens as a point of transshipment to Spain for arms of American origin, it has been suggested to Bellanca that he ask Galatti, his agent in Athens, to request the Greek Government to inform you that the planes are actually intended for use in Greece and that they will not be transhipped to some other country.

Please telegraph the substance of any communication you may receive from the Greek Government in regard to these planes. If no communication is received from the Government, please telegraph any information which you may be able discreetly to obtain in regard to the proposed transaction.

HULL

711.00111 Lic. Bellanca Aircraft Corp./3 : Telegram

68

The Minister in Greece (MacVeagh) to the Secretary of State

ATHENS, January 5, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received January 5—2:45 p. m.]

2. Department's telegram No. 47, December 30, 7 p. m. No word has been received from the Greek Government. The Technical and Aeronautical Exploitations Company was formed last month by S. and M. Maltezos, both Greeks, with a paid-in capital of only a million drachmas for the announced purpose of establishing aeronautical factories and repair shops, the founding of a school for amateur and reserve army pilots and the manufacture and sale of munitions. Nothing has been learned detrimental to the reputation of either partner, but the civil reservists school appears to be only something which the company hopes to found in the future. Zotos¹⁶ is understood to have left for London at Christmas time to negotiate for the purchase of Bellanca planes. Galatti's¹⁷ office is closed and he too may be in London. Discreet inquiries so far fail to reveal any trace of Greek Government or other organization here making the purchase in question.

MACVEAGH

¹⁶ Aeroteknih Zotos, of the Technical and Aeronautical Exploitations Co. of Athens.

¹⁷ Agent in Greece of Bellanca Aircraft Corp.

852.24/551 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 5, 1938—8 a. m.

[Received 9:15 a. m.]

91. In the *Angriff*, the press organ of Minister Goebbels, an alleged request of the Department to the "Red Spanish Embassy" to desist from armament purchases in America was criticised as being merely intended to "save face". In a short editorial yesterday which concluded "that one will nevertheless continue to make a profit—industry will simply negotiate direct—is a neat proof of the skill of the Foreign Office of the United States. The arms dealers will well know how to appreciate such skill."

WILSON

852.24/551 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, March 5, 1938—3 p. m.

21. Your No. 91, March 5, 8 a. m. The report of such an alleged request to the Spanish Embassy has no basis in fact. We have no reason to believe that any arms have been exported to Spain since the embargo became effective in January 1937 or that the Spanish Government has made any efforts to purchase arms in this country since that time.¹⁸

HULL

711.00111 Armament Control/1716 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, March 25, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received March 25—4:30 p. m.]

468. Press report on our policy reading "Loyalist Spain will continue to be denied arms from America while the rebels still receive them from Germany and Italy who are both free to buy from America" echoes complaints that have been made to me. Practically certain if Germany and Italy are buying war material in America it is for use in Spain against which both are waging war. If our records show Germany and Italy are not receiving war material from us I could use the fact discreetly and effectively with our more important critics here.

BOWERS

¹⁸ See also Department of State, *Press Releases*, March 26, 1938, p. 399.

711.00111 Armament Control/1716 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, March 29, 1938—5 p. m.

B-442. Your no. 468, March 25, 7 p. m. Since January 8, 1937, when the embargo on the exportation of arms to Spain became effective, export licenses have been issued authorizing the exportation to Germany of 74 aircraft engines and 72 airplane propellers for installation on commercial planes manufactured in Germany for exportation to known destinations other than Spain; 20 aircraft engines for installation on planes manufactured in Germany for the Netherlands navy; and 14 aircraft engines and 17 airplane propellers of which Germany was presumably the ultimate destination. No licenses have been issued authorizing the exportation to Germany of any of the other articles defined as arms in the President's Proclamations of April 10, 1936¹⁹ and May 1, 1937,²⁰ except sporting rifles, revolvers, and small arms and ammunition in negligible quantities. The total valuation of all the arms licensed to Germany since January 8, 1937 is \$1,060,881.46.

Since January 8, 1937, licenses have been issued authorizing the export to Italy of 13 aircraft engines and 17 propellers for installation on planes manufactured in Italy for exportation to known destinations other than Spain; and one commercial airplane, 9 engines, 3 propellers, and a small quantity of spare parts of which Italy was presumably the ultimate destination. No licenses have been issued during this period for the export of any other arms to Italy. The total value of the arms licensed to Italy since January 8, 1937 is \$370,225.18.

The Department has no reason to believe that any arms, ammunition, or implements of war exported from the United States since January 8, 1937 to any foreign country have reached Spain.

HULL

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/209

*Memorandum by the Chief of the Office of Arms and Munitions
Control (Green)*

[WASHINGTON,] June 10, 1938.

After consulting Mr. Murray,²¹ I requested the Turkish Ambassador to call at my office in order that I might give him some information in regard to the recent attempt to export airplane parts to Spain

¹⁹ Department of State, *Press Releases*, April 18, 1936, p. 311.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1937, p. 290.

²¹ Wallace Murray, Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs.

via Canada by means of false representations that they were destined to Turkey. The Ambassador called this morning. I informed him of the essential facts and showed him photostatic copies of the documents by which the purchaser had attempted to establish the bona fides of the transaction. I said that copies of these documents had been transmitted to his Foreign Office and that I understood that his Government now had the case under investigation.

The Ambassador expressed great interest in what I had told him. He said that he must assume that the documents were forgeries; that he considered the case of great importance to his Government; and that he intended to send a despatch to his Foreign Office urging the importance of clearing up the mystery in order that no difficulties might possibly arise in connection with the exportation of the airplanes which his Government has actually purchased in this country.

For his convenience, he asked me to let him have a memorandum summarizing the facts in regard to the case and, if possible, photostatic copies of the documents purporting to establish the fact that the planes were ordered by his Government. In compliance with his request, I sent him informally a memorandum of which a copy is hereto attached.²²

The Ambassador said that this case recalled to his mind an incident which had occurred about a year ago. An American, whom he did not name, had called at the Embassy and had asked him to assist, by furnishing the necessary documents, in the exportation of planes to Spain. He said that the proposal made to him was that the planes would be made to appear to have been purchased by his Government and that an agent in Istanbul would assist in carrying out the deception. The planes would, however, in fact be diverted to some port of Loyalist Spain as soon as they entered the Mediterranean. The Ambassador said that he had indignantly spurned the proposal.

JOSEPH C. GREEN

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/214

Memorandum by the Chief of the Office of Arms and Munitions Control (Green)

[WASHINGTON,] June 15, 1938.

The Turkish Ambassador called at my office this morning. Mr. Yost²³ participated in the conversation. The Ambassador referred to our conversation on June 10 in regard to the recent attempt to export airplane parts to Spain by means of false representations that they

²² Not printed.

²³ Charles W. Yost, Assistant Chief of the Office of Arms and Munitions Control.

were destined to Turkey. He said that he had already telegraphed his Government expressing his view that this was a very serious matter from the Turkish point of view, and urging that a thorough investigation be made. He said that he wished to do everything possible to facilitate that investigation, and he requested me to give him any information which I might have which might indicate the identity of any persons in Turkey who might have participated in the attempt to deceive this Government.

Mr. Yost told the Ambassador that, on the assumption that the names signed to the photostatic copies which I had given him were forgeries, the only person in Turkey mentioned in our records of the case who might be able to throw light on the matter was the agent in Istanbul of the American Export Lines. Mr. Yost said that he understood that this man was a Turk. He added that, as far as our information went, he may just as well have been a victim of the deception which was practiced as a participant in the attempt to deceive.

The Ambassador said that it had occurred to him after our conversation on June 10 that a Greek by the name of Namstrad might be implicated in this matter. He said that Namstrad had attempted to pass himself off on American airplane manufacturers at various times last year as an agent of the Turkish Government. He said that he would send me, in confidence, within the next few days all the information he had in regard to Namstrad.

Mr. Yost told the Ambassador that we had recently received an application for a license to export one airplane engine to Turkey and that the application named Namstrad as the consignor. He added that the license applied for had not been issued and that we were now investigating the *bona fides* of the transaction.

JOSEPH C. GREEN

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/211 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Turkey (MacMurray) to the Secretary of State

ISTANBUL, June 20, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received June 20—9:50 a. m.]

26. Department's 8, May 14, 11 a. m.; and Embassy's 35, May 18, 5 p. m.²⁴ Secretary General of Foreign Office to whom photostat copies of documents were handed today inquires whether we have any objection to their publication. He stated that they are obvious forgeries pointing out that seals are not those used by Turkish Government, signatures not those of persons they purport to be, et cetera. He said

²⁴ Neither printed.

that on three different occasions recently General Franco had inquired of Turkish Government whether planes purporting to be consigned to the Turkish Government found on ships examined by insurgents were actually destined for the Turkish Government (in one instance it was a case of 50 planes on a Norwegian vessel presumably coming from America).

Referring to news reports that planes purchased in America for Turkey had been shipped to a foreign country by way of Canada official Turkish news agency published today statement to the effect that Turkish Government had placed all orders for planes in the United States only through Turkish Embassy in Washington, that no organization or person was authorized to act for Turkey and that all statements to the contrary were false.

MACMURRAY

852.24/730 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 21, 1938—noon.

[Received June 21—8:35 a. m.]

970. Bonnet said to me this morning that he was being pressed extremely hard by the Spanish Government to reopen the French frontier to shipments of airplanes, munitions and other implements of war.

The Spanish Ambassador last evening had said to him that the Spanish Government had made arrangements for the immediate purchase of 100 planes in the United States and their immediate shipment to Spain via France. He had alleged that the Government of the United States fully approved the shipment of these planes to the Spanish Government and that it was only the decision of the French Government to keep the frontier closed that prevented the Spanish Government from receiving this important aid.

Bonnet added that he would be greatly embarrassed if the American Government should request the French Government to permit the shipment of these planes or other implements of war through France to Spain.

I replied that I had received no intimation whatsoever that our Government had altered its policy of refusing export licenses for planes and munitions to Spain and that I was compelled to believe that the statement of the Spanish Ambassador with regard to the approval of the American Government for the shipment of planes or other implements of war and munitions to Spain was founded on nothing more substantial than a wish.

Bonnet answered that it would be most valuable to him to have authoritative information on this point immediately. As we are dining together this evening I should be greatly obliged if the Department could send me a brief telegram on this subject.

BULLITT

852.24/730 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, June 21, 1938—2 p. m.

384. Your no. 970, June 21, noon. The Department has received information indicating that an attempt is being made to purchase large numbers of used planes for immediate shipment to Spain. We are expecting to receive applications for export licenses falsely indicating France as the ultimate destination. Licenses will not be issued. There is no foundation for the statement that this Government has approved the proposed transaction.

WELLES

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/216 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, June 23, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received June 24—9:42 a. m.]

986. Mr. Bolard More²⁵ and Colonel Fuqua²⁶ have recently ascertained from separate sources that a score or more American airplanes (said to be "Grumman's") are now at the Cardedeu airfield near Granollers. Colonel Fuqua has obtained confirmation of this at the Office of the Sub-Secretary for Air and when he acquires further information which he expects to do in a few days he will submit a telegraphic report direct to the Department of War.

THURSTON

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/211 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Turkey (MacMurray)

WASHINGTON, June 23, 1938—7 p. m.

63. Your No. 26, June 20, 10 a. m. There is no objection to the publication of the documents.

²⁵ Vice Consul at Barcelona.

²⁶ Stephen O. Fuqua, Military Attaché in Portugal.

Our records indicate that the planes mentioned as having been found by the insurgents on a Norwegian vessel could not have been shipped from this country.

HULL

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/220

The Chargé in Canada (Simmons) to the Secretary of State

No. 2333

OTTAWA, June 24, 1938.

[Received June 27.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's telegraphic instruction No. 50 of June 23, 1938, (7 p. m.)²⁷ and to previous correspondence in regard to the export of airplane parts to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, ostensibly for transshipment to Turkey.

The information which the Department thus supplied, consisting of a complete denial by the Turkish Foreign Office of the authenticity of orders for airplane parts alleged to have been placed by the Turkish Government with the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, was brought confidentially to the attention of Mr. John E. Read, Legal Adviser to the Canadian Department of External Affairs.

Mr. Read expressed great interest in this most recent development, and stated that it now seemed clear to him that the airplane shipments which have been the subject of previous correspondence with the Department were not bona fide and that the evidence now at hand seemed conclusive in showing that unauthorized persons had used the name and prestige of the Turkish Government in securing these shipments from Canada of airplane parts manufactured in the United States.

Mr. Read further advised me that the Canadian Government has been making its own investigations with the Turkish Government, but that thus far no definite information has been obtained from that source. He intimated that the Canadian Government would be very loath in the future to grant any permits for exports of this character, adding that they would not have done so in the past had it not seemed clear to them that the documentary proof submitted at that time indicated that the orders from the Turkish Government were authentic.

Mr. Read expressed himself as being very grateful to the Department for having supplied information in regard to these orders, which he stated would be of great benefit to the Canadian Government in its future consideration of questions of this character.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN FARR SIMMONS

²⁷ Not printed.

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/216: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain
(Thurston)*

WASHINGTON, June 25, 1938—4 p. m.

452. Your 986, June 23, 5 p. m. Licenses were issued between November 1937 and March 1938 to Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation authorizing the exportation to Canada of 51 fuselages for Model FF-1 planes valued at \$284,000. In the same period, licenses were issued to Brewster Aeronautical Corporation authorizing the exportation to Canada of 70 wing panels, 66 tail units, and a quantity of other parts for the same type of plane to the value of \$496,853.60. Most of these articles were exported under these licenses before any doubt arose as to the legality of the transaction. The applicants had stated that the parts were consigned to Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, to be assembled in Canada. Later they informed the Department that the assembled planes were for exportation to Turkey. Investigation revealed that the Turkish Government had not ordered the planes, that the alleged orders were forgeries, and that at least part of the shipments had not been assembled in Canada but had merely passed through Canada en route to France. Outstanding licenses relating to this transaction were revoked and applications for further licenses rejected. The Department and the Canadian Government are pursuing investigations with a view to possible prosecutions.

Your telegram contains the first definite information of the arrival of the planes in Spain. Please report fully by telegram any further information you may be able to obtain.

HULL

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/232

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Office of Arms and
Munitions Control (Green)*

[WASHINGTON,] June 27, 1938.

Mr. E. R. Leonard, Washington representative of the Bethlehem Steel Company and the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, Ltd., called at my office this morning. In the course of a conversation in regard to various matters, he said that the Bethlehem Steel Company, which is contemplating resuming the manufacture of artillery, had recently been approached by Mr. Stravoudis, President of Namstrad, Inc., who represented himself to be an agent of the Turkish Government. He wished to place an order for 700 mountain guns and a large quantity of ammunition therefor. Mr. Leonard said that he had

called to ascertain whether the Government had any objection to the proposed transaction.

I told Mr. Leonard that I had been definitely informed that Namstrad was not a representative of the Turkish Government and that the Turkish Government had no purchasing agent for arms in this country other than the Turkish Ambassador. I said that attempts had recently been made to export arms to Spain in violation of the law by means of false statements that Turkey was the country of destination and I suggested that great care should be exercised by exporters applying for licenses to export to Turkey to assure themselves that Turkey was the country of actual destination. I added that if the Turkish Government really desired to purchase mountain guns and ammunition, licenses authorizing their exportation would be issued without delay.

In Mr. Leonard's presence I called the Turkish Ambassador by telephone. I told him that I had just been informed that Mr. Stravoudis of Namstrad, Inc., was again representing himself as an agent of the Turkish Government and was attempting to buy arms ostensibly on behalf of that Government. The Ambassador reiterated to me his assurances that his Government had no agents in this country authorized to purchase arms.

JOSEPH C. GREEN

711.00111 Lic. Douglas Aircraft Co. Inc./4 : Telegram

52

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, June 28, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received June 29—10 a. m.]

991. My 990.²⁸ Señor Zugazagoitia²⁹ with whom I have held numerous conversations recently with respect to the return of the passports of Americans who came to Spain to serve with the Government military forces yesterday informed me that he in turn had a favor to request of me.

He stated that prior to the commencement of the present war the Spanish Government had contracted with the Douglas Aircraft Company for the delivery of five commercial transport planes to supplement and increase the L. A. P. E. (Lineas Aereas Postales Espanolas) service with France. A deposit of one half the cost of these planes was made but delivery was not effected due to the war. Zugazagoitia desires to know whether delivery of these planes may now be made

²⁸ See footnote 84, p. 312.

²⁹ Secretary General of the Ministry of National Defense.

if the Government gives its pledge that they will be used exclusively for international mail and passenger (Government officials) service.

It is obvious that no control could be exercised by us over these planes once they entered Spain and it would be expecting too much to assume that they would not be put to other uses. Under the circumstances alluded to in the first paragraph, however, I feel that I could not refuse to bring the matter to the Department's attention. I believe Ambassador de los Rios also will approach you about it.

THURSTON

711.00111 Lic. Douglas Aircraft Co. Inc./5 : Telegram

52

*The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain
(Thurston)*

WASHINGTON, June 30, 1938—noon.

454. Your no. 991, June 28, 5 p. m. The laws prohibiting the exportation of arms to Spain contain no provisions under which exceptions to the prohibition could be granted.

HULL

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/223 : Telegram

*The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary
of State*

BARCELONA, July 1, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received July 1—8:35 a. m.]

996. My 986.³⁰ Mr. Krieger³¹ has ascertained from a member of the Spanish Air Force that about 40 Grumman planes are now here. Also that an [unknown?] number of Northrop monoplanes of a new model have just arrived.

THURSTON

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/223 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Counselor of Embassy in Spain
(Thurston)*

WASHINGTON, July 2, 1938—1 p. m.

456. Your 996, July 1, 10 a. m. The Grumman planes were evidently assembled from the parts mentioned in the Department's no.

³⁰ June 23, 5 p. m., p. 352.

³¹ William Krieger, clerk in the American Embassy in Spain.

452 of June 25, 4 p. m. Can you ascertain whether they were assembled before or after they reached Spain? What type of engine is installed in them?

Our records indicate that it is extremely unlikely that any Northrop planes have been indirectly exported from the United States to Spain, except possibly two which may have formed part of the cargo on the S. S. *Ibai*. (See Department's no. 426, February 25, 2 p. m.³²) These two were used planes, one presumably a Gamma transport, and the other a 2E-5B bomber. It seems probable that any new Northrop planes arriving in Spain must have come from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Gamma bombers are manufactured in that country under license granted by Northrop. The company has no information as to possible modifications which Soviet engineers may have made in the Gamma type. There is a bare possibility that the planes may have come from Canada. Canadian Vickers has a license to manufacture Delta transports but is not known to have manufactured any recently. AmLegation, Ottawa, has been instructed to investigate.

Can you obtain further information as to the number and model of the Northrop planes? Keep Department fully informed by telegram.

HULL

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/239 : Telegram

The Counselor of Embassy in Spain (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

BARCELONA, July 18, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 11:41 a. m.]

1006. Your telegram No. 456 July 2, 1 p. m. You will appreciate that it is difficult under present circumstances to obtain information regarding military equipment and that persons supplying it might expose themselves to extreme penalties.

The informant cited in the Embassy's 996 July 1, 10 a. m. is a Spanish aviator on active service. He states there are about 30 Northrop planes now here. He says they are not of Russian make but that they [apparent omission] from the United States and were assembled here—as were the Grummans as well. He also has mentioned the presence of several Vultee planes.

THURSTON

³² Not printed.

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/258

The Chargé in Canada (Simmons) to the Secretary of State

No. 2424

OTTAWA, July 28, 1938.

[Received July 29.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's instruction No. 1311 of July 23, 1938, (file No. 711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/239)³³ and to previous correspondence concerning the shipment to Canada of United States airplanes and airplane parts, with a presumable destination of Spain, and to transmit herewith a copy of note No. 107 dated July 27, 1938, which has today been received from the Canadian Department of External Affairs³³ relative to this subject. The Department will note particularly that the Canadian Government now recognizes the fact that the documentary evidence which led the Canadian authorities to grant export permits in the case of certain shipments made by the Canadian Car and Foundry Company Limited was of a fraudulent character. The concern of the Canadian Government in regard to the question of responsibility for this fraudulent action is clearly stated, and it is set forth that the company in question, although taking the position that its officers were at all times innocent of any complicity in this fraudulent scheme, has nevertheless been penalized by the refusal of the Canadian Government to issue further export permits to this company.

I should judge from the note in question, and also from recent personal conversations which I have had with Mr. John E. Read, Legal Adviser to the Department of External Affairs, on this subject, that the Canadian Government has been subjected to considerable pressure on the part of the Canadian Car and Foundry Company Limited, to relax its present restrictions on that company. In this connection it is of interest to note that the Department of External Affairs argues that the continuance of these restrictive measures on the company in question, coupled with the maintenance of the present refusal of the United States Government to permit the shipment of airplane parts to that company from the United States, would have an effect upon the supply of aircraft for the domestic trade in Canada and for export to countries where such export is proper. It is also argued that a continuance of present restrictions would cause a shut-down of the company's plant with severe financial losses to the company and serious hardship to the workmen who normally would be employed in the plant.

It occurs to me in this connection that, for the first time in recent negotiations which have occurred with the Canadian Government on this general question, the Department of External Affairs has shown

³³ Not printed.

an active interest in settling this whole question. Although this interest may have been inspired by pressure from the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, it is nonetheless evident that the Canadian Government would now welcome some practical solution of this problem so as to ensure that there will be no further export to countries to which export is forbidden under the laws of either country, and at the same time to permit all proper transactions in connection with the aircraft trade.

This increased solicitude and interest on the part of the Canadian Government in the general problem involved would, in my opinion, furnish the United States Government with an excellent opportunity of stressing once more to the Canadian Government its desire for more direct and efficient cooperation in connection with the exchange of information concerning shipments of airplanes, airplane parts, and other similar material to foreign countries from Canada. Should the Department so desire, I shall be glad to approach the Canadian Government once more on this general question in connection with the solution which is now being sought covering the difficulties which have been encountered by the Canadian Car and Foundry Company Limited.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN FARR SIMMONS

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/258

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Canada (Simmons)

No. 1326

WASHINGTON, August 5, 1938.

SIR: The receipt is acknowledged of your despatch no. 2424, dated July 28, 1938, transmitting a copy of note no. 107, dated July 27, from the Canadian Department of External Affairs in regard to the exportation of aircraft parts to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, ostensibly for reshipment to Turkey, but apparently in fact for shipment to Spain.

The Department concurs in your belief that it would be advisable at this time to approach the appropriate authorities of the Canadian Government with a view to obtaining more direct and efficient cooperation in connection with the exchange of information and with a view to clarifying the position of this Government in respect to the question of future exports of aircraft and similar material to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited.

In regard to the first of these questions, reference is made to the Department's instruction no. 1307 dated July 20, 1938.³⁴ As stated

³⁴ Not printed.

in that instruction, this Government is desirous of receiving from the Canadian authorities certain additional information which is outlined in some detail in the instruction. This information will be useful in connection with the investigation now being conducted in this country to determine whether the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation or the Brewster Aeronautical Corporation are subject to prosecution for a violation of the neutrality laws of this country. The results of this investigation will of course be communicated to the Canadian authorities and may well be of assistance to them in determining the responsibility of the officers of the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, for the fraudulent acts which took place in Canada in connection with these shipments.

In connection with the position of this Government in respect to the question of future exports of aircraft and similar material to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, reference is made to the Department's letters dated July 1 and July 6 [8], 1938, to the Brewster Aeronautical Corporation, copies of which were transmitted to you with instruction no. 1302 dated July 20, 1938.³⁶ It will be noted from these letters that the Department has at all times been willing to issue export licenses for shipments to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, provided the Department first receives assurances from the appropriate Canadian authorities that the articles covered by these export licenses will not be transshipped to any country to which the export of arms, ammunition, or implements of war is prohibited under the laws of this country. Information to this effect has been communicated to the applicant in the case of each of several applications recently received by the Department for license to export aircraft parts and accessories to Canada for the use of the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited. Copies of these applications are enclosed.³⁷

In communicating this information to the Canadian authorities, you may inform them that, in order to avoid undue delay in shipments to Canada, the Department is prepared to grant all applications for license to export arms, ammunition, and implements of war to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, under a blanket assurance communicated to the Legation by the Canadian Department of External Affairs that transshipments of the character referred to above will not take place.

There are enclosed for the information of the Legation copies of despatch no. 732, dated July 9, 1938, from the American Embassy at Istanbul, Turkey,³⁷ and a confidential communication from the War Department dated July 28, 1938, containing a paraphrase of a cable-

³⁶ None printed.

³⁷ Not printed.

gram received by the War Department from the Military Attaché at Barcelona, Spain.³⁸ There would be no objection to the communication of the substance of these documents to the Canadian authorities.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State :

R. WALTON MOORE

852.00/8396

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Vigo (Graves)

No. 68

WASHINGTON, August 29, 1938.

The Secretary of State refers to the concluding paragraph of the Consulate's despatch No. 259 of August 6, 1938,³⁸ referring to American airplanes reported to be in the service of the Loyalist forces and to have been shot down by the Nationalists.

Since the outbreak of the civil strife in Spain, the Department has received repeated reports to the effect that Curtiss, Martin, and Boeing planes were in the service of the Loyalist air force. Most of these reports have emanated from Spanish Nationalist or from Italian sources. None of them, however, has ever been authenticated and the Department has never had any concrete evidence presented to it which would lead it to believe that any aircraft manufactured in the United States by the above-mentioned companies were being utilized by either party to the Spanish struggle. It is understood, however, that each of these companies has licensed the Soviet Government to manufacture certain of its planes and it is altogether possible that aircraft of these types manufactured in the Soviet Union are in use in Spain.

Should the Consular Officer in charge have any information brought to his attention which would lead him to believe that any airplanes of American manufacture are being employed by either of the parties to the Spanish civil strife, he is requested to transmit this information to the Department.

711.00111 Unlawful Shipments/282

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Canada (Simmons)

No. 1370

WASHINGTON, September 17, 1938.

SIR: The receipt is acknowledged of your despatch no. 2629 [2529] of September 10, 1938,³⁸ transmitting a copy of a note of September 9 from the Department of External Affairs of Canada giving a blanket assurance that arms, ammunition, and implements of war exported under license from this country to the Canadian Car and Foundry

³⁸ Not printed.

Company, Limited, will not be transshipped from Canada to any country to which the export of arms, ammunition, and implements of war is prohibited under the laws of the United States.

Relying on this assurance, the Department will henceforth grant applications for license to export arms, ammunition, and implements of war to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, which are presented by properly registered applicants without requiring specific assurances in regard to the ultimate destination of the shipments.

The Department, upon the receipt of your despatch, granted an application of the Bendix Products Division of the Bendix Aviation Corporation for a license to export undercarriage units, and an application of the Brewster Aeronautical Corporation for a license to export wings and tail units to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, these being the only pending applications in its files for license to export arms, ammunition, or implements of war to that company. As you were informed in the Department's instruction no. 1338 of August 17, 1938,⁴⁰ licenses were granted at that time to the Aviation Manufacturing Corporation, the Aerial Machine and Tool Corporation, and the United Aircraft Corporation (Hamilton Standard Propeller Division), for the export to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited, of the articles referred to in notes no. 112 of August 5, and no. 113 of August 6, addressed by the Canadian Department of External Affairs to the Legation. The Department has received no application from the Lasley Turbine Motor Company for license to export arms, ammunition, or implements of war to the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, Limited. This company is, furthermore, not registered with the Secretary of State as a manufacturer or exporter of arms, ammunition, or implements of war and, therefore, could not legally obtain a license for the export of such articles to any foreign country.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
R. WALTON MOORE

852.00/8623

The Consul at Seville (Bay) to the Secretary of State

No. 360

SEVILLE, October 18, 1938.
[Received November 14.]

SIR: I have the honor to inform the Department that recently the press published a detailed list of foreign war material which it stated had been captured up to July 31, 1938. The list gave material by countries of origin, beginning with Russia, France, English and

⁴⁰ Not printed.

Mexican, and lastly included the United States. The following is a translation of the American material so listed:—

Armored cars	17	Rifles	3,480
Field guns	38	Projectiles	11,700
Machine guns	680		

In a conversation with General Queipo de Llano⁴¹ soon after the appearance of these articles in the press, I pointed out to him that there was legislation in the United States prohibiting the exportation of all war material destined to Spain and that it would be interesting to have more details of the alleged material of American origin said to have been captured by the forces of General Franco. He said that such material as was captured of American origin doubtless came from Russia or Mexico but he offered to obtain details of that reported captured.

He accordingly has transmitted to me two memoranda, translations of which are attached,⁴² which give certain descriptions but on the whole they are of such a character that they can lead to no identification of the material. Much of the material is obviously obsolete and the total volume is without significance.

Respectfully yours,

CHARLES A. BAY

852.00/8747

The Acting Secretary of State to the Consul at Seville (Bay)

No. 45

WASHINGTON, December 23, 1938.

The Acting Secretary of State refers to the Consulate's despatch no. 360 of October 18, 1938, in regard to a quantity of war material, allegedly of American origin, stated by the Spanish Nationalist authorities to have been captured from the Spanish Government forces.

The Department of State and the War Department have made a careful study of the memoranda supplied the Consulate by General Queipo de Llano and have come to the conclusion that it is extremely unlikely that any of these arms, ammunition, and implements of war were exported from the United States after January 8, 1937. All of the arms listed are old and obsolete, with the possible exception of the 37 mm anti-tank guns. The United States Government has a large supply of these guns on hand, but it has never at any time disposed of them. It is not believed furthermore that any private American manufacturer could have exported any guns of this type to Spain since the embargo went into effect.

⁴¹ Nationalist general, in command of the Seville area.

⁴² Not printed.

IV. EFFORTS FOR THE RELIEF OF SPANISH REFUGEES

852.48/212

*The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France,
to the Secretary of State*

No. 1545

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, July 8, 1938.

[Received July 19.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that I saw Sr. Del Vayo, Minister of State, in Paris, apropos of the exchange of prisoners in which I am acting as intermediary,⁴³ and that he requested me to transmit to the President through the Department a statement regarding refugees in Spain driven from their homes, together with a suggestion as to the amelioration of their condition which involves the United States.

He says that as many as 3,000,000 people, men, women and children, have been forced from their homes by the rebels and have taken refuge in some of the larger cities, such as Barcelona, Valencia, Alicante, etc. Of this number, close to a million are children. Everything is being done by the Spanish Government within its power for the care of these refugees, and particularly the children, but the problem is becoming too large, and outside help is needed.

Other nations have proposed taking over the children during the period of the war, notably Belgium and Mexico, but the Spanish Government does not think it humane to separate the children from their mothers, and prefers that they remain in Spain.

The subject recently was the subject for consideration for the Council of Ministers, and it appears that the Ministers unanimously decided to ask outside assistance on humanitarian grounds, and to place absolute control over the direction of relief work for the refugee children and mothers preferably in an American Commission.

Sr. Del Vayo in his conversation made the reason for this preference clear enough by referring to the Hoover relief commission in Belgium, and in Russia, to the relief work in Germany, and to the relief work for the Armenian refugees.

Should an international commission to deal with the problem of the refugees, particularly children, be created, it was the unanimous desire of the Ministers that the chairman and personnel should be named by President Roosevelt, and that the commission should have complete authority, and should deal with the problem wherever found, regardless of the geographical division of the two sides in Spain.

⁴³ See telegram No. 487, May 19, 7 p. m., from the Ambassador in Spain, p. 285.

Comment.

The fact that the Minister did not submit the proposal in a formal note but by word of mouth, gave me the impression that it was being thrown out as a feeler. There is no doubt as to the reality of the grave human problem that is involved in the driving of a great population from their homes; and that the Spanish Government is concerned over its capacity to deal adequately with such a problem in the midst of the war; and it is but natural, in view of the work we have done in the past, that the Spanish Government should instantly think of the United States in this connection.

Sr. Del Vayo also explained it on the ground that we, more than any other nation, have been honestly neutral, and can be counted upon to act solely from humanitarian motives and without political considerations.

Asked directly by the Minister of State to convey this message to the President through the Department, I could not do otherwise than promise to do so.

Naturally I expressed no opinion, but called attention to the fact that the President was leaving for a month's trip across the continent, and that if the plan involved any congressional cooperation Congress has just adjourned and will not reassemble until in January.

Since the proposal was not submitted in writing but by word of mouth, any reply can be made without formality and I can manage that easily enough.

Respectfully yours,

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

852.48/216

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] July 22, 1938.

The Spanish Ambassador called to see me at his request. The Ambassador began the conversation by requesting that the subject matter which he desired to discuss with me be regarded as strictly confidential. The Ambassador then went on to say that he had received a couple of days ago a confidential message from his Government saying that the situation of the refugees within Loyalist territory was becoming desperate. At the present time in a portion of Spain which normally is occupied by some eight millions of people there are residing over eleven and one-half millions, an excess population of three and one-half millions; within this territory many villages have been destroyed, whole districts in cities and towns are in ruins, and there is consequently not nearly enough accommodation within which these persons can be housed. Furthermore, most of them have

no means of livelihood nor have they the wherewithal with which to purchase more than a minimum amount of food. In addition to this, the natural food supply is running short and the increasing destruction of merchant vessels bringing supplies to Loyalist ports is reducing materially the foodstuffs which can be obtained outside of Spanish territory. The Ambassador went on to say that hundreds of thousands of people are now gravely undernourished and ill clad and that conditions will reach a desperate stage during the winter if, as the Ambassador believes, the civil war will last for an indefinite period.

The Spanish Government desired to remind this Government of the humanitarian efforts which this country had so often made, as in the cases of Belgium and of Germany, Russia and many Central European countries after the World War. It wished to know whether there is not a possibility that some charitable agency in the United States would undertake the work of attempting to relieve this distressing situation among the civilian refugees in Loyalist Spain, particularly the women and children.

I told the Ambassador that necessarily I was very much moved by the statements he had made to me and that we here in the Department of State could not but give sympathetic attention to the suggestion made. I said that I thought I had a right to feel proud of the record of the American people who had never let political considerations enter into their minds when it was a question of relieving human distress in other parts of the world. I added that of course I could give him no positive or definite statement as to what could or could not be done but that he might rest assured that we would immediately commence a consideration of this matter. I asked the Ambassador if he could tell me with any definiteness the exact number of individuals among the civilian refugees who now required assistance and in particular additional food supplies. I also asked if the Ambassador could tell me how many charitable organizations, dependent on foreign funds, were engaged in relieving distress in Loyalist Spain. The Ambassador told me that he could not answer either of these questions with any precision but that he would cable to his Government and let me have the necessary information early next week.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

852.48/243

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[Extract]

[WASHINGTON,] August 17, 1938.

The Spanish Ambassador called this morning and spent an hour with me. . . .

(3) The Ambassador then turned to the question of relief, and asked me whether any results had been obtained following his approaches to Mr. Welles. I gave him the main outline of the story to date and pointed out that we seemed to have struck a snag, at least in so far as dealing with the Red Cross was concerned. I said that this snag was due, in large part, to the expenses of transportation of supplies, and asked whether his Government could perhaps assume this expense. He said that he thought this was possible, though it would be preferable to have the shipping under a foreign flag even if chartered by the Spanish authorities. The Spanish Flag could not go through the Straits of Gibraltar. He also said that the greatest need was not in the Madrid area, but in the Catalonian area, where there were a million and a half refugees. He wondered whether or not the Red Cross would be willing, in case the various organizations collecting funds and supplies for Loyalist Spain were to pool their resources under the Red Cross, to administer this relief. He felt that in order to avoid criticism, administration of relief by a great national group was essential. The only difficulty that he foresaw was that if such an arrangement were made that proportion should be expended in Loyalist Spain as would be contributed by the organizations created for that purpose.

I told the Ambassador that this was a new thought which I would talk over with Mr. Swift ⁴⁴ when he returned next Monday. He ought to bear in mind, however, (1) that the Red Cross was not under the orders of the Government, and that the most we could do was to urge a certain course of action; (2) the other was that the Red Cross had certain very definite policies with regard to its relations with other organizations.

The Ambassador asked whether the President was interested in this subject. I told him that as far as I knew the President had been given by Mr. Welles a memorandum pointing out (a) the Ambassa-

⁴⁴ Vice Chairman in charge of foreign operations of the American Red Cross.

dor's request, (b) our feeling that, if possible, it should be complied with, and (c) the difficulties (apparently insuperable) thus far faced by the Red Cross. The Ambassador said that as soon as the President returned he was going to ask for an interview as time was pressing.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

852.48/222

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] September 6, 1938.

The Spanish Ambassador called this afternoon to inquire as to the progress of the American relief effort in Spain. I told him that since our last talk considerable thought had been given to the problem, but that although we were not able to give as much as he had hoped, nonetheless it would probably be possible to give a little bit more than we had thought that day. As a matter of fact, the Central Committee of the Red Cross was meeting tomorrow, and the idea was to make an announcement shortly thereafter and to start the flour moving just as soon as possible.

He asked what figures I estimated, and in accordance with what Mr. Davis⁴⁵ had said, I indicated that it would probably be about 250,000 bushels of wheat, which is the equivalent of 60,000 barrels of flour, enough to take care of 500,000 women and children for some time. The Ambassador expressed gratitude for this assistance, and I think appreciated that it had meant considerable work on the part of a good many individuals and agencies.

However, he said that from his point of view the problem had not yet been fully met inasmuch as there were at least 3,000,000 refugees (exclusive of men of military age) who would be starving. In fact, his Government had telegraphed him that if aid were not forthcoming maybe one-half a million people would die of hunger and cold this coming winter.

He was groping for ways and means to obtain additional funds. He thought that a corporation might be set up in this country which could obtain bank credit wherewith to purchase, at subsidized figures, additional supplies to be distributed in Spain. He was exceedingly hazy as to the details, and had obviously not thought the matter through. He was trying to evolve some agency to which credit could be extended that would not run into the provisions of the Neutrality Act against the extension of credit. He thought the Red Cross might

⁴⁵ Norman H. Davis, Chairman of the American Red Cross.

even be tied up with such a corporation, but I told him that in my opinion the Red Cross could at best appear only as sole beneficiary.

On this point the conversation was without conclusion other than my agreeing to mention the idea to Norman Davis and see if his ingenuity could evolve some other scheme for solving the problem.

The Spanish Government undertook to allocate at least ten trucks, and maybe more, to the relief organizations.

In regard to political matters the Ambassador said that, according to his information, vast quantities of war supplies and materials had again been sent to General Franco by the Germans and Italians. He attributed the recent Ebro offensive to a desire on their part to have this coincide with the Nuremberg Conference and the pressure on the Czechs.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

852.48/225

The Secretary of State to the Spanish Ambassador (De los Rios)

WASHINGTON, September 9, 1938.

EXCELLENCY: The information which the Department of State has furnished the American Red Cross during the past few weeks indicating a growing problem of human misery in many parts of Spain because of insufficient food for the civilian population, particularly women and children, was presented to the Executive Committee of the American Red Cross yesterday. I now have the honor to inform Your Excellency that to help meet this situation, the Committee authorized an appropriation to finance the shipment to Spain of flour to be milled from Government wheat up to a total of 250,000 bushels under a plan which provides for the cooperation of the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, the United States Maritime Commission, the American Friends Service Committee, and the American Red Cross.

It is the desire of the American Red Cross to extend the benefits of this plan to distressed civilians, particularly women and children, in proportion to their need wherever they may be in Spain. On behalf of the American Red Cross I am writing to inquire whether this offer is acceptable to Your Excellency's Government and whether it would be willing to cooperate with the American Friends Service Committee in the transshipment of the flour from France and its distribution in Spain.

I shall be most happy to transmit your reply to the American Red Cross, and suggest that thereafter questions of detail be worked out directly between Your Excellency and the Chairman of the American Red Cross.

Accept [etc.]

CORDELL HULL

852.24/225 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Spain (Bowers),
Then in France*

WASHINGTON, September 9, 1938—2 p. m.

B-455. The Executive Committee of the American Red Cross, moved by the indications of suffering on the part of the civilian population, especially women and children, in Spain has authorized an appropriation to finance the shipment to Spain of flour to be milled from Government wheat, up to a maximum of 250,000 bushels, under a plan which provides for the cooperation of the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, United States Maritime Commission, American Friends Service Committee, and the American Red Cross. It is the desire of the American Red Cross to extend the benefits of this plan to distressed civilians, especially women and children, in proportion to their need wherever they may be in Spain, without regard to factions in the current hostilities. Please ascertain from General Franco's authorities whether this offer would be acceptable and whether they would be willing to cooperate with the American Friends Service Committee in the transshipment of the flour from France and in its distribution.

For your guidance, all reports reaching us from official sources as well as from the Friends Committee indicate that the food shortage and destitution among civilians, notably women and children, is very much greater in Loyalist than in Franco Spain. No fixed proportion as to percentage of relief to be distributed on the two sides is being worked out in advance; this will be determined by the Red Cross solely in relation to the extent of the needs as they become apparent and without regard to political considerations.

Please telegraph reply.

For your information we are making a similar inquiry with regard to Loyalist Spain through Ambassador de los Rios, with whom we have been discussing the problem informally for some time.

HULL

852.48/227

The Spanish Ambassador (De los Rios) to the Secretary of State

[Translation]

No. 140/16

WASHINGTON, September 10, 1938.

EXCELLENCY: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of Your Excellency's note of the 9th instant, in which you are good enough to advise me that, after information had been given by the Department of State to the American Red Cross regarding the situation of a large part of the population of various regions of Spain—concern-

ing which this Embassy had given details of all kinds to Your Department—the Executive Committee of that institution has authorized the purchase of 250,000 bushels of wheat to aid the civilian population, especially women and children, in proportion to the necessities felt in the various regions.

In accepting this donation of the American Red Cross, obtained with the cooperation of the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, I offer you my most sincere thanks in the name of my Government, for the generous attitude adopted by Your Excellency and Your Government with respect to this Spanish problem of a humanitarian character; and I request that Your Excellency will transmit to the American Red Cross the expression of my most heartfelt gratitude and inform it that my Government will cooperate not only with the American Friends Service Committee in the transportation of the flour from France and its distribution in Spain, but also in whatever may be required for the fulfillment of this mission, which is a continuation of the admirable tradition of your country, initiated with the people of Belgium.

I avail myself [etc.]

FERNANDO DE LOS RIOS

852.00/232a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery)

WASHINGTON, September 21, 1938—6 p. m.

111. You will have noted in the daily press bulletin of September 16, 1938, a release regarding the distribution of flour to refugee women and children in Spain which is being undertaken by the American Red Cross.⁴⁷ The wheat, from which this flour is being milled, has been made available by the Surplus Commodities Corporation. Further reports received from Spain indicate that there is an almost complete shortage of coffee.

Please bring discreetly and tactfully to the attention of the appropriate Brazilian authorities that, actuated entirely by humanitarian motives, this Government is desirous of offering the suggestion that the Brazilian Government might wish to consider the donation to Spanish refugees (who would certainly not be in a position to buy any) of a certain quantity of surplus coffee from the amount which is periodically destroyed.

It is recognized that the problem of roasting, transportation and distribution still remains, but if the idea commends itself to the Brazilian Government in principle, and the Brazilian Government desires further advice as to the most favorable means of assuring its reaching the refugees, the Department would be only too happy to put

⁴⁷ Department of State, *Press Releases*, September 17, 1938, p. 190.

the Brazilian Embassy here in touch with the American National Red Cross.

HULL

852.48/233 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery) to the Secretary of State

RIO DE JANEIRO, September 22, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 22—12:25 p. m.]

221. Department's telegram No. 111, September 21, 6 p. m. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will recommend to President Vargas that coffee be donated to the Spanish refugees on condition that the difficulties which have recently arisen again in intensified form in conjunction with the refugees in the Brazilian Embassy at Madrid (my despatches 861, September 5 and 887, September 13⁴⁸) be adjusted. The Brazilian Government desires to remove those refugees from territory dominated by the Barcelona Government.

Aranha added that the Franco government is "buying" coffee for the regions occupied by him.

CAFFERY

852.48/253

The Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery) to the Secretary of State

RIO DE JANEIRO, September 28, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received September 28—10:55 a. m.]

228. Notwithstanding the situation described in my 221, September 22, 1 p. m. the Brazilian authorities have decided, solely because we are suggesting it, to donate coffee for Spanish refugees. They want to know how much coffee is desired and they hope that measures can be taken to insure that the coffee is actually used for purposes indicated and none of it sold by the Spanish authorities.

CAFFERY

852.48/256 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, September 30, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 30—9:35 a. m.]

536. My telegram number 534, September 28, 1 p. m.⁴⁹ Viscount Mamblas⁵⁰ telephoned me last night that Burgos will cooperate with

⁴⁸ Neither printed.

⁴⁹ Not printed.

⁵⁰ Representing Franco's Foreign Office at St. Jean de Luz.

Friends Committee on the Red Cross flour and is very appreciative of the offer. Letter probably will reach me in a day or so from Burgos but with Mamblas' assurance the Red Cross may proceed as planned.

BOWERS

852.48/260

The Spanish Ambassador (De los Rios) to the Secretary of State

[Translation]

No. 141/04

WASHINGTON, October 1, 1938.

MR. SECRETARY: I have the honor to acknowledge to Your Excellency the receipt of Your Excellency's note no. 852.48/250 of September 29, last,⁵¹ in which you were so good as to communicate to me that the American Red Cross has informed you that the first shipment of flour consisting of twenty thousand barrels will leave New York for Le Havre on October 8, and that it will be delivered at that port to the American Friends Service Committee, which is acting as agent of the American Red Cross, for reembarkation and distribution in Spain.

It has been agreed with the American Friends Service Committee that my government will undertake all the expenses from the arrival of the flour at Le Havre.

I avail myself [etc.]

FERNANDO DE LOS RIOS

852.48/259: Telegram

The Ambassador in Spain (Bowers), Then in France, to the Secretary of State

ST. JEAN DE LUZ, October 3, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received October 3—10:44 a. m.]

538. My telegram No. 536, September 30, 1 p. m. Supplementing this Mamblas informed me today that the representative of the Friends organization should get in touch with General Espinosa de los Monteros, the Under-Secretary of State. Would suggest that the representative of the Red Cross [apparent omission] tactful and yet firm since I suspect a disposition to claim flour entirely out of proportion to the need merely to deprive the other side where the need is real.

BOWERS

⁵¹ Not printed.

852.48/253 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery)

WASHINGTON, October 5, 1938—6 p. m.

115. Your 228, September 28, 11 a. m. Please convey to the Brazilian authorities an expression of our appreciation of their humanitarian decision to donate coffee for the use of women and children refugees in Spain.

The Counselor of the Brazilian Embassy informed the Department yesterday that he had received instructions from his Government to get in touch with the American Red Cross with a view to arranging the details of shipment and distribution of this coffee through the Red Cross. An appointment was accordingly arranged with Mr. Ernest J. Swift, Vice Chairman in charge of foreign operations of the American Red Cross. The Department is now informed that the Red Cross will undertake to transport the coffee from Brazilian ports and supervise its distribution to refugees in Spain in same manner as is being done with flour shipments from this country. Arrangements have been made by Red Cross to assure distribution of these commodities directly to refugees in all parts of Spain in proportion to the need. The quantity of coffee that will be shipped under this arrangement will have to be determined later depending upon the amount that can usefully be distributed in Spain and upon the funds available to the Red Cross to cover incidental costs.

WELLES

852.48/269

Memorandum by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)

[WASHINGTON, October 8 (?), 1938.]

Mr. Moffat asked Mr. Meana⁵² to call to speak to him with regard to an informal inquiry made by the Spanish Ambassador, both of Mr. Welles and of himself. As we understand it the question raised by the Ambassador was the following:

"The Spanish Government proposes to have Spaniards resident in this country set up a corporation; the Spanish Government would turn over to that corporation Latin American or other securities owned by the Government; the corporation would put up these securities as collateral for loans from American banks; the money borrowed would be expended for humanitarian relief work in Spain.

"Is there any method by which this program could be accomplished without violation of Section 3 of the Neutrality Act?"⁵³

⁵² Juan Antonio Meana, of the Spanish Embassy in Washington.

⁵³ Joint Resolution 173, August 31, 1935, 49 Stat. 1081; amended May 1, 1937, 50 Stat. 121.

Mr. Moffat said that there had been considerable discussion of this proposal among the interested Divisions of the Department and that the conclusion was reached that to carry out the program as stated above would be a violation of Section 3 of the Neutrality Act. On the other hand, the authorities felt that the desired end could be legally accomplished: (1) if the Spanish Gov't were to sell the securities in question instead of using them as collateral for a loan, or (2) if the proposed corporation should obtain the proposed loan from Canadian or other foreign banks outside the United States instead of from American banks.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

852.48/262 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, October 10, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received October 10—11:35 a. m.]

267. My telegram 257, September 30, 9 p. m.⁵⁴ Loveday⁵⁵ informs me he is today cabling Norman Davis as follows:

"Spanish Government has asked for League technical cooperation for study economic and financial questions involved in feeding refugees and we are sending two experts study situation. Understand American Red Cross has received million bushels wheat for these refugees from Government and might receive more. Could you inform me whether statement about million bushels correct and what further amount if any you expect to receive. We most anxious avoid any action which might embarrass your organization. Have you a representative in Spain with whom our experts could discuss. Loveday, Nations, Geneva."

Loveday stated he was anxious that the League inquiry should in no way embarrass or delay the action being undertaken by the Red Cross as he considers the need for relief for Spanish refugees to be very urgent. An expert commission consisting of Sir Denys Bray and Lawrence Webster, both British, has already left for Spain. They consulted in Geneva with a representative of the International Commission for the Assistance of Child Refugees in Spain and will discuss the problem with representatives of that organization in Spain. The Secretariat is concerned over the difficulty of confining assistance solely to refugees and would be interested to learn whether this problem arises so far as the Red Cross is concerned.

⁵⁴ Not printed; it reported that the Council of the League of Nations had authorized the Secretary General to institute a preliminary inquiry on the spot regarding aid to refugees in Spain (852.48/257).

⁵⁵ Alexander Loveday, British, Director of Financial Section and Economic Intelligence Service, League of Nations.

Loveday mentioned incidentally that the Council action was taken before it was known here that such a substantial amount of wheat had been made available to the Red Cross.

BUCKNELL

852.48/276 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, November 4, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received November 4—5:42 p. m.]

273. My telegram 272, November 4, 5 p. m.⁶⁶ Report answers three following questions in the affirmative:

1. Is refugee population in Republican Spain in need of food relief?
2. Are the refugees differentiated from native civil population?
3. Can a scheme be devised whereby food supplies provided would be distributed to the refugees and the refugees only?

The report agrees that the winter peak of refugees set by the Government at about three million seems a probable approximation.

It advises against setting up an independent organization for relief distribution if only because of time factor and recommends:

(a) Utilization and reenforcement of existing Government medium of communication enlisting collaboration and assisting expansion of all voluntary relief organizations such as International Commissary for the Assistance of Child Refugees in Spain, the Society of Friends and the Swiss Relief.

(b) The appointment of a relief commissioner working in close collaboration with the Spanish Government to supervise and energize the refugee relief organization. Such commissioner would probably need a deputy at Barcelona, Madrid and Valencia, a small central office and a staff of about eight Spanish speaking inspectors equipped with light vans. Some augmentation of existing motor transport facilities would be essential to ensure efficiency of distribution.

(c) The ration proposed by the Spanish Government appears to represent a bare but fair minimum.

(d) Report stresses urgency and magnitude of problem and states that even under the most favorable conditions it would take considerable time to get any relief scheme into full swing and that present private organizations cannot do more than touch the fringe of the problem. While asking that such organizations receive increasing support report urges that no time be lost in obtaining help from governments and especially from nations with surplus stock of wheat, dried fish, skimmed milk, cocoa and other essential supplies.

⁶⁶ Not printed; it reported that the Bray Committee had completed its report on the question of refugees in Spain (852.48/274).

(e) Attaches Spanish Government's financial proposals in a separate memorandum in which Government asks for relief amounting to 476,000 pounds per month; hopes that the League of Nations will lend this assistance offering to give in return most formal assurances that the saving on its own expenditure which may be brought about by such assistance will be wholly employed in improving the diet of that part of the civil population which is suffering most severely through reduction of its standard of living; suggests that the humanitarian purposes to be met should be supported by gifts but that the Government would be prepared, insofar as the 476,000 pounds could not be provided by gifts, to arrange a credit operation on the security of promissory notes principal and interest of which might be paid off within period of 10 to 15 years from the close of the war.

I learn in confidence that Pickett of the Friends Service Committee has cabled the Secretariat to the effect that he has been informed, presumably by Secretary Hull and Norman Davis, that while the American authorities agree that a relief commissioner should be appointed they fear that his appointment by the League might give an impression of partiality toward the Government side and that they have suggested that since the Friends Service Committee is an impartial organization it should be asked by the League to make the appointment. Pickett added that if this were done he was assured of ample continued supplies. From what I have been able to learn the Secretariat agrees that the appointment should not be made by the League and I understand that Avenol⁵⁷ feels that the League's connection with the project should terminate with the publication of the Bray-Webster report. The Secretariat feels, however, that it would be difficult for the League to make such a request of a private organization particularly as there are other private organizations active in Spain. If it is desired that the appointment be made by the Friends Service Committee, however, they believe that the request could better be made by the Spanish Government. The Secretariat feels strongly that the Commissioner should be an American.

BUCKNELL

852.48/276 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Geneva (Bucknell)

WASHINGTON, November 10, 1938—7 p. m.

119. Your 273, November 4, 7 p. m. Norman Davis was informed of contents of your telegram and has now written following letter to the Department explaining position of American Red Cross, which is transmitted to you for your guidance:

“While the report of the League of Nations Committee confirms our previous information as to the magnitude of the problem, this is the

⁵⁷ Joseph Avenol, Secretary General of the League of Nations.

first report of an authoritative committee which has expressed itself so definitely on how the situation could best be met. Since the need is greater than can possibly or probably be met from private sources, I hope that the League will act upon the recommendations of their Committee. I do not see how the League can well drop the matter and not attempt to do something further, either such as that suggested by the Spanish Government or through an appeal among the members of the League for funds.

"I do not know just what Mr. Pickett of the American Friends Service Committee cabled to the Secretariat of the League but if it is what our Consul was given to understand, it did not convey my views or that of the American Red Cross. Mr. Pickett did telephone me that the League Committee was of the opinion that a Food Dictator should be appointed and that he should be an American, and that the Spanish Government was willing to do so with the assurance that the relief would be forthcoming.

"He also wished to know what would be the attitude of the Red Cross. I told him that we were doing all we could and could not undertake to do anything more that would involve any further outlay of money.

"As to the appointment of a Food Dictator I told him I did not see how that would work, because a dictator appointed by one side could not act on the other side. Pickett told me subsequently that in thinking this over he agreed. I also told him that the Red Cross would not be opposed to any plan that might be helpful in Spain even to the appointment of a Relief Commissioner by the League, provided, of course, such action would contribute to the solution of the problem. In such an appointment the Red Cross would have no responsibility and therefore would hardly be in a position to advise any one as to its propriety. As far as its own work is concerned, the American Red Cross prefers to carry on its activities in line with the traditional neutrality of the Red Cross which would mean the impartial distribution in Spain of relief according to need and not according to political consideration."

You may make discreet informal use of the foregoing information in the event that any misconception should persist at Geneva as to the position of the American Red Cross with respect to relief work in Spain.

HULL

852.48/294 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, November 22, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received November 22—3: 11 p. m.]

278. Your telegram 119, November 10, 7 p. m. I learn in a private conversation that so far as the Secretariat is aware neither the British nor French Governments have yet determined their policy respecting

the Spanish refugee problem. Lord Halifax⁵⁸ told Denys Bray that in his opinion the crux of the problem was the difficulty of getting supplies into Spain although the Spanish Government claims its losses do not exceed 5 percent. I understand that Chamberlain⁵⁹ thought it might be necessary to obtain some assurances from Franco and referred to the possibility of designating a special port for refugee supplies and providing for the convoying of shipments. It is thought here that this matter may be discussed during the French and British conversations this week. In this connection I learn that the French authorities informally told a Secretariat official that before determining their own policy they wished to know what the British intended to do.

So far as the Secretariat is concerned the position is that it has promptly complied with the Council's request and its present mandate is terminated. The next move is up to the Spanish Government, to individual members of the League or to the Council. Although the Spanish Government may appeal to the League for further assistance it is believed here that in any case that Government may appoint a food dictator as recommended in the Bray report, possibly either Bray or Webster. It is pointed out by Secretariat officials that the setting up of a food dictator by Government Spain would in no way prevent a non-partisan distribution of supplies to both sides.

Although I have no definite information it is thought here that the British and particularly the French are anxious to set up at least a skeleton relief organization on the Franco side before proceeding much further with assistance to the Government side.

BUCKNELL

852.48/310

The British Embassy to the Department of State

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

A commission consisting of Sir Denys Bray and Mr. Lawrence Webster which was appointed by the League of Nations at the request of the Spanish Government to study measures for providing food for refugees in Spanish Government territory has now submitted its report which has been communicated to the members of the Council. The principal conclusions of the report are as follows:—

1. The number of refugees, most of whom will be in urgent need of relief this winter, is estimated at between 2,400,000 and 3,000,000.
2. The Commission is satisfied that the existing machinery set up

⁵⁸ British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

⁵⁹ British Prime Minister.

by the Spanish Government for providing public assistance clearly differentiates between refugees and other sections of the population.

3. The problem is urgent and far beyond the capacity of existing foreign organisations. A comprehensive international scheme is therefore required without delay and appropriate help should be obtained from governments, and especially from nations with surplus stocks of wheat, dried fish, skimmed milk, cocoa and other essential supplies.

4. A relief commissioner should be appointed for the purpose of guaranteeing that food is distributed only to refugees. Attached to the report are certain financial proposals of the Spanish Government. It is estimated that contributions will be required at the rate of £476,000 per month. It is anticipated that many of these contributions will consist of gifts in kind but the suggestion is also made that the Spanish Government should obtain credits with which to buy food repayable in annual instalments spread over a period of from ten to fifteen years.

His Majesty's Government have not yet formed any definite views on this report but Lord Halifax feels that in view of the existence of the International Committee for the Assistance of Child Refugees in Spain to which His Majesty's Government and many other governments have already contributed, and of the size of the problem as disclosed by the report, there would be no object in setting up a fresh organisation unless it were launched upon a really large scale. Such an enterprise if it is to be successful will need the active support of governments and in particular of the United States Government. Relief in kind appears to be mainly a question of surplus foodstuffs which the United Kingdom cannot supply in large quantities. Although France and other countries may be able to contribute, the success of any scheme would seem to depend largely on the attitude of the United States of America.

So far as His Majesty's Government are concerned the only condition which they would wish to attach would be that the scheme should cover the whole of Spain and should be administered strictly impartially on the basis of the provision of relief wherever it is needed. This is the principle which they have adopted from the start and was the condition upon which they agreed to contribute to the funds of the International Red Cross Committee and of the International Commission. The Spanish Government in approaching the League stated that they had no objection to the expansion of League action to the whole of Spain. As however His Majesty's Government are informed that there is no similar refugee problem on General Franco's side, assistance would have to take some other form.

In view of the possibility that the Council will wish to discuss this report at its meeting in January Lord Halifax would be grateful to receive the views of the United States Government as soon as possible.

WASHINGTON, December 3, 1938.

852.48/310

The Department of State to the British Embassy

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

For some time past the Government of the United States has been gravely disturbed over the reports reaching it of widespread suffering and human misery in Spain. Ever since last August it has been working in close touch with the American Red Cross, which undertook (using the Friends Service Committee as its field agents) to distribute impartially in Spain according to need 60,000 barrels of flour from wheat which was obtained from the American Surplus Commodities Corporation, and transported free of charge in unused cargo space of vessels belonging to the Maritime Commission. The charges of handling this flour amounted to over a dollar a barrel which was met by a direct cash contribution by the Red Cross from its general funds.

Even before the report was made by Sir Denys Bray and Mr. Lawrence Webster to the Secretary General of the League of Nations, it had become apparent that far greater efforts were needed to prevent widespread starvation and disease. The Surplus Commodities Corporation is ready today to make available to the Red Cross, at a purely nominal figure, up to 500,000 bushels of wheat per month for the next six months, to be distributed as before by the Red Cross in Spain impartially according to need. This offer, together with certain services in kind which might be given to the Red Cross, constitutes the contribution that the Government of the United States through its different branches is able to make. It is not in a position to make a gift in cash nor is the Red Cross able to continue supplying its own funds to meet the necessary handling charges. The present problem before the Red Cross is accordingly to find the funds to enable it to meet the handling charges and thus to avail itself of the offer referred to.

The Red Cross is hoping to obtain these funds from two sources: the first is through a drive which will shortly be undertaken by the Friends Service Committee which it is hoped may produce a substantial sum; the second is through a possible contribution from the International Commission for the Assistance of Child Refugees in

Spain, which is already in touch with the Red Cross through the Friends Service Committee. Inasmuch as with the gifts and services in kind offered by the different branches of the Government of the United States one dollar's donation made available to the Red Cross will provide foodstuffs to the value of some four dollars, it is hoped though it cannot yet be promised that the funds obtained from these two sources will enable the Red Cross to distribute the full amount of wheat (either as cracked wheat or milled into flour) mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

The Government of the United States is inclined to feel that with so many organizations already in existence in Spain the chances are that the setting up of a fresh organization would complicate rather than ease the situation. The American Red Cross has worked very closely with the International Red Cross Committee, to which it has contributed more than \$55,000 in cash. It has also maintained the best of relations with the International Commission for the Assistance of Child Refugees in Spain, and both the International Commission and the Red Cross have made use of the Friends Service Committee as their field agents. The American Red Cross believes that it would prefer to continue working in cooperation with these organizations and to see their scope and capacity extended rather than to risk any delay in its operations while working out ways and means of cooperating with a new organization.

WASHINGTON, December 9, 1938.

852.48/316

*The French Embassy to the Department of State*⁶⁰

[Translation⁶¹]

During the sessions of the last Assembly of the League of Nations, M. Negrín presented a request of the Spanish Government for technical assistance to study the question of providing food for the civilian refugees in Spanish Government territory.

The attention of the French Government has been drawn by the British Government to the report which Sir Denys Bray and M. Lawrence Webster, who have been in charge of this investigation, have submitted following their mission to Spain last October. According

⁶⁰ This *aide-mémoire* was handed to the Under Secretary of State by the French Ambassador on December 15, 1938. In reply, an *aide-mémoire*, dated December 15, 1938, was sent to the French Ambassador similar to the *aide-mémoire* of December 9, 1938, to the British Embassy, *supra*.

⁶¹ Translation supplied by the editors.

to this report, there are actually in Spanish Government territory about three million refugees for whom the situation with respect to food is extremely serious. It is therefore urgent to take collective action in their behalf.

The French Government, like the British Government, desires to have the support of the Government of the United States in this humanitarian undertaking. It is disposed to study, in agreement with the Governments at London and Washington, the means of providing relief for the Spanish populations so investigated. Moreover, in the event that a project of assistance shall be established, the French Government would gladly welcome the nomination of a Commissioner of Relief of American nationality who would be charged with control of the distribution of provisions to the Spanish refugees in the Government zone.

WASHINGTON, December 13, 1938.

ANNEXATION OF AUSTRIA BY GERMANY¹

863.01/566 : Telegram (part air)

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, January 18, 1938—noon.

[Received January 19—8:20 a. m.]

17. 1. Rumors are again current that "some development" in the "Austrian question" is relatively imminent. As has repeatedly been the case in the past, the Embassy can find no substantiation of these rumors.

In relation to this, the general aspect of the situation here is substantially as follows. Germans undoubtedly envisage the ultimate incorporation of Austria into the Reich. Their desires in this regard are derived from a fundamental attitude respecting the political union of German peoples enhanced by the individual sentiment of Hitler. This circumstance forms a permanent basis for the outcropping from time to time of rumors of German action. While German leaders might take advantage of some unexpected development in the international situation favorable to their taking steps to bring about a union and while it is difficult to judge what combination of conditions they might construe as opportune, the present circumstances suggest that Germany feels that in the international scene time is working in her favor and with special preoccupations regarding Great Britain and France, Germany is disinclined to dispute what she perceives as a favorable current by launching on an adventure the results of which might be unpredictable. Diplomatic opinion here is however sharply divided on the Italian elements in the equation. The majority favor the classical view that Italy entertains unalterable apprehensions of a Germany at the Brenner. There remains a strong minority opinion that Italy in return for German support of which she is evidently in need has bargained away her objections to a German Austria, certain diplomats asserting that such an arrangement was consummated at least in principle during Mussolini's visit to Berlin last September. I find, however, that these divergent views are apparently based on the individual's concept of the "logic" of the situation and have not been able to discover any substantiating facts.

¹ See also section entitled "Problems Arising from the Annexation of Austria by Germany", vol. II, pp. 483 ff.

In respect of current German-Italian relations it is noteworthy that while the proposed visit of Hitler to Italy is given enormous publicity in the Italian press, the German press has maintained utter silence having confined itself merely to a *pro forma* carrying of the Italian statement (Embassy's 7, January 8, noon²). On this score Foreign Office officials in conversation with me have not disguised a resentment over Ciano's³ recent visit to Vienna and Budapest and the inference is conveyed that the marked lack of a display of enthusiasm in Germany over Hitler's proposed trip is in retaliation for some Italian attitudes, unwelcome here, possibly including Ciano's visit and some feature of an alleged receptivity to direct conversations with Great Britain.

2. Without suggesting anything but a most remote analogy between the "Austrian" and "Czechoslovak" questions,⁴ the general considerations believed to govern Germany's continental policy described above may, I think, be applied to current German-Czechoslovak relations.

GILBERT

863.00/1368 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, January 27, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received January 27—2:20 p. m.]

4. Vienna Nazi leader Tavs arrested and National leader Leopold interrogated. Incriminating documents seized including plan drawn up by Tavs for Nazi uprising this year involving German participation. Foreign Office is inclined to regard plan as personal rather than officially approved project. Tavs' private archives are now being deciphered for further enlightenment. Foreign Office is informed that Neurath⁵ recently made alarming statements to François-Poncet⁶ and Flandin⁷ on the subject of German attitude toward Austrian independence. This is perhaps basic [*basis of*] rumors reported by Berlin in telegram 17 of January 18, noon.

WILEY

² Not printed.

³ Galeazzo Ciano, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

⁴ See pp. 483 ff.

⁵ Baron Konstantin von Neurath, Reich Foreign Minister.

⁶ André François-Poncet, French Ambassador in Germany.

⁷ Pierre Etienne Flandin, leader of the opposition in the French Independent Radical Party.

863.00/1370: Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, January 29, 1938—2 p. m.
 [Received January 29—1:05 p. m.]

6. My telegram No. 4, January 27, 6 p. m. Tavs 1908 [1938] plans of action based on present incapacity England and France to intervene and Italian dependence on Germany as follows:

(1) *Politiche Korrespondens* should denounce Austria for breach of July 11th agreement.⁸

(2) Papen⁹ should preemptorily demand legitimation National Socialist Party in Austria and resignation of Schuschnigg.¹⁰

(3) Detachments German Air Force and families should be moved to Austrian frontier.

(4) Leopold should be recognized as führer in Austria.

Police obtained reliable evidence that Tavs also had project for uprising in the spring; Tavs apparently did not propose *Anschluss* but rather the Danzigification of Austria and in order to cushion the blow to outside opinion he planned that a provisional government be formed of pro-German rather than Nazi elements to pave the way gradually for plebiscite. No evidence that his plan had been approved in responsible quarters in Germany but Papen has been given dossier containing evidence that local Nazi organization was in close contact with subordinate Nazi authorities in Germany. Papen has proceeded to Germany for the purpose of presenting this evidence personally to Hitler.

Police have had information that Nazis also intended to engineer insult to German flag and assassination of Papen as provocation for German intervention. Police for some time have been exercising great vigilance.

Am reliably informed that Schuschnigg intends to follow resolute but non-provocative policy. He is assured of Hungarian support and counts on sympathetic attitude of Italy. He has had Austrian case prepared in such a way that if Germany denounces July 11th agreement he can immediately make effective appeal to world opinion.

Police have operated with great skill and the situation, though delicate, may fortify Austrian position and retard purport of German projects. Federal press service is carefully playing down sensational aspects.

WILEY

⁸ Austro-German Agreement of July 11, 1936; Department of State, *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, series D, vol. 1, p. 278.

⁹ Franz von Papen, German Ambassador in Austria.

¹⁰ Kurt von Schuschnigg, Austrian Chancellor.

762.63/433

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

No. 112

VIENNA, February 4, 1938.

[Received February 16.]

SIR: In confirmation of my telegram No. 7 of February 3rd, 5 p. m.,¹¹ I have the honor to report that Dr. Hornbostel, Director of Political Affairs in the Foreign Office, informed me yesterday that he was very much concerned over developments in Germany, where, he felt, the situation contained all the elements of a serious Party crisis.¹² While the eventual solution of the crisis might be favorable in that more moderate elements might triumph, he could not for the moment find grounds for reassurance. There was, he felt, real danger that the situation in Germany might have grave repercussions on Austria.

He referred to the Tavs affair, reported in my despatch No. 106 of January 31, 1938,¹¹ and stated that, though Dr. Tavs insisted that he was solely responsible for the "1938 Plan of Action" and though the Austrian Government had no evidence to controvert this thesis, it nevertheless knew perfectly well that the plan either had been drafted in Germany or only after consultation with authoritative National Socialist quarters. Dr. Tavs was an old Patent Office functionary and was not competent to formulate plans involving coördinated political, diplomatic, and military activities. Dr. Hornbostel believed that only a resolute statement by both France and England to the effect that they would not tolerate a breach of Central European peace could safeguard the situation.

Dr. Hornbostel seemed particularly apprehensive that General von Reichenau might succeed Field Marshal von Blomberg as Minister of War. He described General von Reichenau as a wild Nazi who would be very dangerous in respect of German policy towards Austria.

Dr. Hornbostel further stated that the National Socialists have recently been very active. The Austrian police have seized large quantities of propaganda material at the border. As a matter of fact, only twenty minutes before he had been notified that an "enormous" truckload of such material had just been discovered at the border.

Until a short time ago German pressure was applied chiefly on Czechoslovakia. Its full force was now being directed against Austria. The Germans have been complaining that Austria was guilty of violating the terms of the agreement of July 11, 1936. According to Dr.

¹¹ Not printed.

¹² During the first week of February, Hitler had forced some changes in his Army Staff and in the Reich Ministry.

Hornbostel, before Herr von Papen's recent departure for Germany, Dr. Guido Schmidt, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, formulated point by point German violations of this agreement. Papen was told to bring this to the attention of his government, with the explanation that Germany was responsible for the present situation. If she would observe her commitments not to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria and not to support the Austrian National Socialists, Austria would be only too willing to shape and pursue a German policy. Particular resentment was felt by the Austrian Government that the third section of the German organization for Austrian National Socialist students had been called the Planetta Section. (Planetta was executed as the assassin of Dollfuss.¹⁴) The German Government had denied that this was the case, but the Austrian Government had now been able to submit photographic evidence to Papen that at the University of Munich this section was described in this objectionable way on the official bulletin board.

Dr. Hornbostel also remarked that the attitude of the German National Socialist leaders had been very cynical. General Goering¹⁵ frankly told Dr. Schmidt in Berlin that Captain Leopold, the National Socialist leader in Austria, was always "pumping" money out of him. Dr. Himmler¹⁶ at a recent police conference in Rome had openly boasted to the Austrian police delegate that he had organized S. S. troops in Austria and the fact that they were not making trouble for Austria was merely because they had not had orders from him to do so.

I asked Dr. Hornbostel regarding the truth of rumors that substantial sums of money had been found when the police closed the premises of the Committee of Seven in the Teinfaltstrasse. Dr. Hornbostel replied that these stories were much exaggerated; that whatever money was found was unimportant and not of interest to the authorities. It could be said that the National Socialists in Austria really needed very little money. Everything was put at their disposal. Propaganda material was provided for them and there was nothing much for which they needed to disburse funds. Through National Socialist control of German imports from Austria they were able to take care generously of the National Socialist leaders and subordinates throughout all of Austria. This had to do particularly with manipulations of timber, dairy and agricultural exports.

¹⁴ Engelbert Dollfuss, Chancellor of Austria assassinated in 1934; see *Foreign Relations*, 1934, vol. II, pp. 1 ff.

¹⁵ Hermann Goering, Reich Minister of Aviation and Commissioner for the Four Year Plan.

¹⁶ Heinrich Himmler, Chief of Schutzstaffel (S. S.) and the Gestapo in Germany.

Count de Montbas, the Counselor of the French Legation, who is on the eve of his departure for Berlin whither he has been transferred as Counselor, informed me today that the question of a joint statement on the part of both France and England on behalf of the independence of Austria had been uppermost in the mind of Chancellor Schuschnigg for the last ten months. Following his return from his somewhat unhappy interview with Mussolini in Venice, Schuschnigg approached the French Legation and made urgent representations in the hope of eliciting a definite pronouncement at that time. The French Government discussed the matter with the British Government, but it was not found feasible to work out a suitable formula. The British Government felt then that public opinion in England was too strongly inclined to believe that the German minority in Czechoslovakia was being oppressed for it to be able to intervene in respect of Central European affairs in a manner hostile to Germany. (If I remember correctly, there was at that time considerable sentiment in England for an understanding with Germany.)

Moreover, the French Government found it somewhat embarrassing to take too strong an attitude in respect of a country like Austria which the French Left parties regarded as Fascist. There were, however, according to Count de Montbas, a series of independent statements on the part of both France and England showing sympathetic interest. The question, Count de Montbas added, was again being studied and it was not impossible that a formula for a joint pronouncement might now be found. He considered it urgently desirable. The Government of Czechoslovakia has recently gone fairly far in meeting the legitimate demands of the Sudeten Germans. The ex-Social Democrats in Austria have made repeated and rather effective efforts to appease the misgivings of the Popular Front.

Count de Montbas confirmed my impression that there was an unusual degree of anxiety in high Government circles in Austria, and he believed the present situation in Germany to be serious. Should it develop unfavorably, he thought it would have immediate repercussions on Austria. In preparing himself for his work in Berlin he has recently studied with great care all despatches and telegrams submitted by M. François-Poncet, the French Ambassador in Berlin, to his Government. Count de Montbas told me that M. François-Poncet is convinced that 1938 will be the decisive year in respect of Austria.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN C. WILEY

762.63/422 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, February 12, 1938—5 p. m.
 [Received February 12—1:35 p. m.]

15. My 14, February 12, 4 p. m.¹⁷ I am reliably informed that invitation to Berchtesgaden extended at the instance of Papen and that Schuschnigg and Schmidt left without program. Schmidt drafted communiqué for press but Papen had no authority to approve it so no communiqué was issued.

Though Schuschnigg intends to maintain a firm attitude and will not withdraw from League or join Anti-Comintern Pact he is prepared to take Seyss-Inquart¹⁸ into Cabinet if Hitler will agree to reenforce agreement of July 11, 1936 and accredit "friendly" successor to Papen. It is also not improbable that Schmidt will become either Foreign Minister or Minister to Germany.

Rumors from Nazi sources allege that Italy brought strong pressure on Schuschnigg to accept invitation. French Minister disbelieves. He is however most concerned and feels inclusion of Seyss-Inquart would discourage Austrian resistance. If Schmidt is not made Foreign Minister it would be a German victory.

After Schuschnigg's return tomorrow I hope to be able to telegraph further.

WILEY

762.63/423 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, February 13, 1938—1 p. m.
 [Received 3:20 p. m.]

16. My 15, February 12, 5 p. m. Brief official communiqué states only that Schuschnigg and Schmidt accompanied by Papen paid visit to Obersalzberg on invitation Hitler. Ribbentrop¹⁹ present. "This unofficial meeting responded to reciprocal desire to discuss all questions having to do with Austro-Hungarian [*Austro-German?*] relations."

Am informed by Federal Press Service that time for preparation and discussion was inadequate to permit agreement on specific points. "Therefore in the near future expression in concrete form will be given to the proposed clarification." Press service states that though psychological influences and material facts made difficult reciprocal

¹⁷ Not printed.

¹⁸ Arthur Seyss-Inquart, Austrian Nazi.

¹⁹ Joachim von Ribbentrop, appointed Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs February 4, 1938.

satisfactory carrying out of July 11th agreement position of the Austrian Government is fixed on bases of this agreement and that the interests and intentions of the Reich Government point in the same direction.

My impression is that Schuschnigg has so far maintained his position and that further negotiations are impending. I am reliably informed that Schmidt expresses himself as pleased with results of yesterday's conversations. Shall report further after seeing Schmidt.

WILEY

762.63/427 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, February 14, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received 11:45 p. m.]

18. My telegram No. 16, February 13th. Have just seen Schmidt and he told me that the Berchtesgaden conversations had been extremely "hard" and that he had to admit that Schuschnigg had been under heavy pressure. I inquired whether Schuschnigg had been confronted as rumored with the text of an agreement already signed by Hitler. He denied this and stated that during the protracted conversations every possible combination had been debated. He admitted, however, that three ranking German generals had been present in order to increase the pressure and did not deny a rumor that Hitler had threatened trouble in the event that Schuschnigg refused to accept Hitler's proposals. It had all, however, come to a happy end and he felt that a great service had been rendered to world peace. He would not promise that the solution would be a permanent one. Probably Austro-German relations would again come to a crisis and require revision.

I asked Schmidt whether an agreement had actually been definitely concluded. He replied that the agreement had not as yet been formally reached but that he thought it would be and that a joint communiqué would be issued. I inquired with regard to details. He told me that the agreement would comprise all of the basic elements of the July 11th accord and admitted that Hitler had requested the inclusion of Seyss-Inquart in the Government as Minister of Public Security. Police President Skubl however would remain. Schmidt assured me that the Chancellor had complete confidence in Seyss-Inquart and that he, Schmidt, did not regard him as an obstacle to appeasement. He said that "if he is loyal we prefer to have Nazis arrested by a Nazi. If he is not loyal it will mean that appeasement between the two countries is not possible and something else will have to be done". I suggested that as late as 2 years ago Seyss-Inquart had been working

actively on behalf of the Nazis. He replied that Seyss-Inquart was a devout Catholic and since that time the "Kultur Kampf" had broken out. Moreover Seyss-Inquart was in deadly opposition to Captain Leopold, the illegal Austrian Nazi leader. I suggested that if Seyss-Inquart was loyal to Schuschnigg I did not understand why Hitler placed such emphasis on his inclusion in the Government or if he was not loyal how the Austrian Government could risk turning over the police control of the country to him. Schmidt replied that he had raised the same question with Hitler. However there was always a "middle way" and he hoped that it would be found in the present instance. (I could not obtain clarification of this.)

I [asked?] Schmidt if it was true that Schuschnigg had shown Hitler documents seized in Tavs affair incriminating Nazi leaders in Germany. He replied in the negative stating that this had previously been done through Papen. (Papen definitely leaves end of this week.)

Schmidt added that while it had been agreeable to work with Ribbentrop he had the definite feeling that Ribbentrop had inwardly been much opposed to the results achieved.

I queried Schmidt with regard to the Italian attitude. He was non-committal save for the admission the Italian Government was informed of the negotiations well in advance.

I told Schmidt that my Government maintained a deep and sincere interest in the welfare of Austria and I was sure it hoped earnestly that the Austrian Government would firmly resist threats against the independence of Austria.

I have learned indirectly but reliably from the Federal Press Service that in return for the appointment of Seyss-Inquart Hitler promised the maintenance of the principles the July 11th agreement with recognition of Austria's independence, may²⁰ the patriotic front as the unique political structure of Austria together with a pledge of non-interference in domestic affairs; economic matters were not mentioned.

Schuschnigg avoided committing himself stating that he was not authorized to sign any agreement without previous consultation with President Miklas. According to the Press Service the attitude of the Chancellor was that the portfolio of Public Security which he now retains could only be confided to some one having his entire confidence. President Miklas was opposed to the proposed concession.

From another source reliably informed Hitler promised to dissolve Austrian legion in Germany. About a thousand workmen at Austro Fiat and Clayton Shuttleworth factories made a short protest strike this morning against concession to National Socialists.

²⁰ Sentence apparently garbled at this point.

My feeling is that inclusion of Seyss-Inquart in the Government would be stopgap solution reflecting force of German pressure and would profoundly discourage spirit of resistance in Austria.

WILEY

762.63/428 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, February 15, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received February 15—12: 32 p. m.]

20. My telegram February 14, 9 p. m. Dined last night at a large dinner given by Schmidt with Chancellor Schuschnigg, Seyss-Inquart, members of the Government and Diplomatic Corps. Atmosphere most oppressive. To French Minister, Schuschnigg described visit to Berchtesgaden as the most horrible day of his life. He says that Hitler undoubtedly a madman with a mission and in complete control of Germany. Hitler openly told him of his desire to annex Austria and declared that he could march into Austria with much greater ease and infinitely less danger than he incurred in remilitarization of the Rhineland. Schuschnigg admits that appointment of Seyss-Inquart is highly dangerous but states that he will make it in order to avert the "worst". In respect of Italy, Schuschnigg declared that he can count only on moral not material support.

Schmidt is attempting to make best of bad situation and was in a long and friendly conversation with Seyss-Inquart. Hornbostel is in utter despair and states openly that there is nothing left for him to do but to leave Foreign Office.

Italian Minister ²¹ claims that he was informed of Berchtesgaden meeting only on the 11th and denied that Italy took any initiative in the matter. He telegraphed full information to Mussolini. Latter, however, is engaged in winter sports and up to last night Ghigli had no information that his messages had reached the Duce. Italian Minister gives anxious impression.

Papal Nuncio admits that Seyss-Inquart may be good Catholic but fears nevertheless that it is the beginning of the end.

The French Minister who has been here 5 years states that this is the most critical moment since July 1934. "It is not the end. It is the moment before the end." In his opinion Austria can only be saved by immediate reconciliation of France and England with Italy and energetic joint action. Enderss, author of May constitution, made identical remark this morning.

²¹ Pellegrino Ghigli.

In my opinion Austria's situation is most unfortunate and menacing. If Seyss-Inquart is loyal his appointment would not be a solution. If he is disloyal it is a catastrophe. Germany probably plans gradual Danzigification and any unsupported efforts Schuschnigg may make to outmaneuver Seyss-Inquart can at best only retard process.

Repeated by telegraph to Paris, London, Berlin and Rome.

WILEY

762.63/429 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, February 15, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received 5:57 p. m.]

240. I have just discussed with Léger²² the situation created by Schuschnigg's visit to Berchtesgaden.

Léger said that Schuschnigg had informed the French Minister in Vienna very privately and confidentially that he had been received with the utmost brutality. Hitler had had three generals including Reichenau standing behind him throughout the conversation and had made the following four demands:

- (1) That the Austrian Government should declare an amnesty for all Nazis and permit those now in Germany to return to Austria;
- (2) That those Nazis who had been deprived of their pensions and positions because of their political affiliations should be restored to their pensions and positions;
- (3) That Seyss-Inquart should be appointed Minister of the Interior and given control of the entire Austrian police force;
- (4) That Austria should agree to take no action with regard to foreign affairs without previous consultation with the German Government.

Léger went on to say that Schuschnigg had returned to Vienna intensely depressed and that Guido Schmidt was doing his best to persuade Schuschnigg to accept these demands of Germany.

Léger made the obvious comment that the acceptance of these demands would mean the end of Austrian independence.

I asked if the French Government had taken any action in Vienna or given Schuschnigg definite advice. Léger replied that there had been no formal contact whatsoever between Schuschnigg and the French Minister since the former's visit to Berchtesgaden. The information which Schuschnigg had given the French Minister had been given most privately and Schuschnigg had not asked for advice nor had any been given him.

²² Alexis Léger, of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Léger went on to say that he did not know whether or not the French Government would decide to urge Schuschnigg to reject these demands. The question would have to be decided by Chautemps²³ and Delbos²⁴ after consultation with Chamberlain²⁵ and Eden.²⁶ The decision would in his opinion rest on the interpretation of recent events in Germany.

A message had been received from François-Poncet giving what he, Léger, believed to be an accurate account of the genesis of the Berchtesgaden visit. Hitler's old Nazi friends had been urging him to give up the idea that he could acquire Austria by peaceful evolutions and to turn to the method of force. Hitler was most loath to use force because the generals of the Reichswehr had convinced him that the army would not be in condition to fight a major war against France and England for approximately another year. Hitler therefore had wished to make a last attempt to gain his objective by overwhelming Schuschnigg's will to resist. He had had the three generals present in order to make it clear to Schuschnigg that if necessary there would be force behind his words.

An additional reason for Hitler's reluctance to use force or threat of force was the fact that during the present period of preparation of the German Army he wished to avoid any act which might produce a strong government of national defense in France and an intensification of British war preparations and incidentally an increase in American hostility to Germany.

Léger went on to say that both he and François-Poncet were entirely convinced that if Schuschnigg should accept the first two demands of Hitler but reject the final two demands Hitler would not dare to use force. He would employ every means short of mobilization to make life uncomfortable and impossible for the Austrian Government, but would not mobilize. Léger said that he was not sure that Chautemps and Delbos would agree with him in this diagnosis. It was possible to believe that Hitler would mobilize three or four divisions on the Austrian frontier and that Schuschnigg would be forced to give way at a moment of great European crisis.

If one adopted the latter interpretation, it would obviously be less dangerous to have Schuschnigg submit now rather than later. Léger said that there were indications that the latter interpretation might be the interpretation of the British Government. In that case France would do nothing.

²³ Camille Chautemps, French Prime Minister.

²⁴ Yvon Delbos, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

²⁵ Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister.

²⁶ Anthony Eden, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Schuschnigg would have to be assured of at least moral support from France and England and perhaps also Italy in order to be in a position to resist.

Léger said that the French and British Governments would discuss the problem this morning. He added that Hitler had not delivered an ultimatum with a time limit to Schuschnigg and he believed that Schuschnigg would attempt to gain time by standing on his dignity for a brief space.

BULLITT

762.63/427 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Austria (Wiley)

WASHINGTON, February 15, 1938—4 p. m.

6. Your No. 18, February 14, 9 p. m. The Department has found your recent telegraphic reports, and in particular your telegram under reference, most enlightening and extremely helpful.

I am somewhat concerned, however, by the statements which you say you made to Schmidt, as reported by you in the sixth paragraph of your telegram. You should very carefully avoid, in the future, making any statements which can possibly be construed as implying that your Government is involving itself, in any sense, in European questions of a purely political character or is taking any part, even indirectly, in the determination of such questions.

HULL

762.63/436 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PRAHA, February 16, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received February 16—2: 55 p. m.]

14. . . .

The fact that Berchtesgaden conversations had occurred became known here Sunday but information regarding their nature was impossible to obtain. Foreign Office officials claimed to have no information. Late yesterday Schuschnigg had had long conversation with Prime Minister Hodza. In the last 24 hours there has been extreme nervousness on the part of Austrians and the Czechs including the military. In diplomatic circles here opinion seems to be that the first step toward extinction of Austria's independence has been taken and that this country is exceedingly apprehensive that it may be the next object of German pressure although on the basis of available facts and Hitler's reported assurances regarding Austrian independence I

find it difficult to see the reason for this opinion and the existing nervousness. The press reports that to the contrary German generals participated in the Berchtesgaden conversations and that there was concentration of troops in southeast Bavaria; also that military maneuvers in the region are scheduled for the 16, 17, 23 and 24 of February. No confirmatory information so far here.

CARR

762.68/487: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, February 16, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received February 16—4:47 p. m.]

249. The Austrian Minister has just read to me a telegram which he received this morning from Schuschnigg. It indicated that Schuschnigg has by no means given up hope of maintaining Austrian independence.

Schuschnigg had confidence that Seyss-Inquart, although a pan-German, would not work in an underhand manner for the introduction of Nazis into the regime.²⁷

Amnesty would be extended at once not only to Nazis but also to Social Democrats. This amnesty would, however, not include those who had emigrated from Austria thus excluding from the country all those Austrian Nazis who are now in Germany.

The right to conduct political propaganda would be extended not only to the Nazis but also to the Monarchists and Social Democrats. Those Nazis who had been excluded from office and pensions because of their political opinions would have their pensions restored but would not be given their former offices.

The position of Schuschnigg was, I gathered, the following: that he would continue to struggle for Austrian independence; that he believed this independence could be maintained in the long run only if there should be reconciliation between England, France, and Italy; that he considered recognition of Ethiopia essential for any such reconciliation since the Italians were genuinely convinced that the British at some future date would attempt to drive the Italians out of Ethiopia which would mean the collapse of the Fascist regime in Italy.

Schuschnigg felt that the actions which he was about to take would produce a temporary breathing period but in the end would prove to be just as unsatisfactory to Hitler as his actions which followed the accord of July 1936. He expected therefore that at some future date Germany would attempt again to repeat the Berchtesgaden coup and

²⁷ Seyss-Inquart was inducted into office as Minister of the Interior on February 16 and departed for Berlin.

would mobilize if necessary on the Austrian frontier. He would make no further concessions. He could not attempt to fight Germany alone and if faced by German mobilization would have to resign.

The question of Austrian existence as an independent state therefore depended on the possibility that before Hitler again should become sufficiently irritated to mobilize on the Austrian frontier there might be reconciliation between England, France and Italy and an agreement between those states to support Austrian independence.

The Austrian Minister added that he believed the extension of amnesty to the Social Democrats would add greatly to the strength of Schuschnigg's regime as the Social Democrats would be the strongest opponents of a gradual nazification of Austria.

In contradiction of the opinions expressed above with regard to Seyss-Inquart I was told this morning by a gentleman who says he knows Seyss-Inquart intimately that the latter is a hundred percent Nazi by conviction although a devout Catholic and that he will insert Nazis gradually into all vital posts and strike for a decision in a few months.

BULLITT

762.63/450a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Italy (Phillips)

WASHINGTON, February 16, 1938—7 p. m.

14. In view of the importance to Italy of possible changes in the internal political status of Austria we would appreciate receiving from you by cable any indications of the Italian reaction to the reported developments.

HULL

762.63/441 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, February 17, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received February 17—2:25 p. m.]

60. This evening's press announces that the new Austrian Minister of the Interior Seyss-Inquart arrived in Berlin this morning "for a short visit" and was received by Hitler. It is learned that he also saw Ribbentrop and it is reported that the necessity was impressed upon him in both of these conversations of cleaning up in Austria what was described as "communist elements". It may be further noteworthy that he spent some time at the offices of the secret police.

The circumstance of a newly appointed member of the Austrian Cabinet who is known to be pro-German being thus in effect "summoned" to Berlin is construed here as sharply indicative of the nature of the new relationship between Germany and Austria.

GILBERT

762.63/442 : Telegram

The Minister in Yugoslavia (Lane) to the Secretary of State

BELGRADE, February 17, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 6:54 p. m.]

20. My 17, February 15, 6 p. m.²⁸ German Minister informs me that Schuschnigg was forced to accept German demands due to his inability to find support abroad, France and Great Britain being too weak and Italy being now on Germany's side. He said that it is only a matter of time before the *Anschluss* takes place and that the Italian Government, recalling the steps taken to secure the unification of Italy, fully recognizes Germany's desire to unite the German race. He added that Yugoslavia will have to accept the *Anschluss* whether she likes it or not. Despatch follows.

Copies to Vienna, Berlin, Rome and Paris.

LANE

762.63/446 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, February 17, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received February 17—5:05 p. m.]

140. I gather from a conversation with an official of the Foreign Office directly concerned with Central Europe that the Foreign Office has not yet received sufficiently full or accurate information from either Berlin or Vienna to form a clear judgment regarding recent events in Austria. The British Minister at Vienna was informed on February 11, at the same time as the French and Italian Ministers, that Schuschnigg would meet Hitler. The Foreign Office, it was stated, has no information to indicate whether Mussolini did or did not have prior knowledge of Hitler's intentions. The official frankly admitted that if Hitler had deceived Mussolini serious obstacles would have been removed to an Anglo-Italian *rapprochement*. If, however,

²⁸ Not printed.

Mussolini was privy to the action, he said that in the present views of the Foreign Office it was difficult to see what *quid pro quo* Hitler might have given him of sufficient importance to offset the appalling danger from Italy's point of view of having Germany for an immediate neighbor. He suggested that Hitler's surprise action may have been taken to offset diminished prestige as a result of the recent German Army purge. This loss of prestige he believed to be real.

I also gathered that the Foreign Office profoundly distrusts Schmidt whom they believe to be playing a double game and reporting everything to Hitler and the German Nazis. The situation is regarded here as most serious of course but no indication was given that the British are contemplating any form of intervention. My informant expressed as his personal opinion that this coup of Hitler's was preliminary to some spectacular action in Central Europe in the economic sphere.

JOHNSON

762.63/444 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, February 17, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received February 17—6:05 p. m.]

34. An *informazione diplomatica* communiqué this afternoon set forth the official views of the Italian Government regarding the meeting between Hitler and Schuschnigg and derides the international press comment with respect to the Italian attitude and considers that the Berchtesgaden meeting and the changes made in the Austrian Cabinet are the natural developments of relations between Germany and Austria on the basis of the agreement of July 11, 1936 which established the essential character of Austro-German relations through the explicit declaration of Austria that it was a German state and which was intended to prepare the way for an understanding between Austria and Germany founded upon realities.

The communiqué continues that "the Fascist Government has always considered and continues to consider that cordial relations and close collaboration between the two German states not only respond to the unalterable conditions of fact but to the essential interests of peace and tranquillity in Central Europe".

This expression of the official Italian view was confirmed to me by Count Ciano today. While the Minister admitted that the inclusion of Seyss-Inquart, a strong pro-Nazi leader, in the Austrian Cabinet meant a pronounced increase of German influence in Austria he nevertheless felt that it was far better to have cooperation between the two Governments since any increase of Austrian opposition or

hostility to Germany might of itself be an invitation to Hitler to take some drastic step. Ciano also told me that there would be very much closer cooperation between the German and Austrian Armies and that during the next year there would be an exchange of high ranking officers between the two armies.

The Austrian Minister here Berger-Waldenegg who, as the Department will recall, was formerly Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs takes a somewhat optimistic attitude presumably representing the official Austrian interpretation. During a conversation with him today he expressed the view that the Berchtesgaden conversations had been beneficial and represented a fairly satisfactory compromise between the demands of Hitler and the views of Schuschnigg. Berger-Waldenegg regarded Seyss-Inquart as thoroughly loyal to Austria and not an out and out Nazi. He considered Hitler's public reaffirmation of the agreement of July 11, 1936 a most useful accomplishment since Austrian Nazis had in the past refused to regard it seriously because it had been negotiated and signed by Neurath. They had used as their excuse for continuing to make trouble that Hitler had not been in sympathy with the agreement. Berger-Waldenegg added that the meeting had been carefully prepared in advance and that negotiations along this line had been going on for about 5 weeks during which the Italian Government had been kept fully informed.

I gain the impression that the Italian Government is not dissatisfied with the present arrangement since it recognizes the importance of the 1936 agreement in the maintenance of Austrian independence and therefore welcomes any development which might tend to strengthen the agreement and prevent the increase of Austrian hostility toward Germany. On the other hand the elements in this country which have been previously described as either hostile or indifferent to the Rome-Berlin Axis are concerned lest recent developments mean such a weakening of Austria as might encourage Hitler to take further steps.

Repeated to Vienna.

PHILLIPS

762.63/443 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, February 17, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received February 17—3:35 p. m.]

261. The Foreign Office states that François-Poncet is seeing Ribbentrop at 5 o'clock this afternoon. The appointment was asked for the day before yesterday but Ribbentrop was unable to set an hour

before this afternoon. François will request information concerning the exact significance of the meeting at Berchtesgaden on February 12 and will state that the French Government has a deep interest in whatever takes place in Central Europe.

The British Ambassador in Berlin saw Ribbentrop on the 15th and made a *démarche* along the lines of the foregoing. He was told that the discussion at Berchtesgaden with Schuschnigg had been concerned only with removing the causes of difficulties which had arisen from the working of the Austro-German agreement of July 1936 and that a communiqué would be issued shortly giving all pertinent information (this was before the final decision of the Austrian Government had become known).

The French do not expect to receive any more satisfactory or enlightening response from Ribbentrop than was given to the British. They state however that the fact that this step has been taken in Berlin by both the French and British Governments has some importance as manifesting the interest of both Governments in what transpires in Central Europe.

It seems clear, however, that the French and British action in Berlin has been taken mainly for the sake of the record out of a feeling that they could hardly afford to pass by recent events in complete silence.

Copies to Berlin, Vienna.

BULLET

762.63/453 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, February 18, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received February 18—3:21 p. m.]

62. The Military Attaché reports that as a result of numerous conversations and discussions with army sources he is convinced that the agreement reached with Austria as a result of the Hitler-Schuschnigg conversations contains military clauses providing for the gradual "assimilation" of the Austrian Army into the German.

Presumably this military agreement covers:

- (1) Unification of tactical doctrine through adoption of similar text books,
- (2) Austrian adoption of German military organization,
- (3) Gradual introduction of uniform weapons,
- (4) Coordination of war plans.

The Military Attaché believes that within the relatively near future there will be evidence of a military alliance through the appointment of standing military missions by each country to the other country.

As a corollary of the foregoing it is believed here that further

changes in the Austrian Government will be announced shortly which will include the appointment of a "pro-German" Chief of Staff of the Austrian Army.

GILBERT

762.63/454 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, February 18, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received February 18—4:25 p. m.]

63. The British Counselor discussed with me this morning the British Embassy's views on the Austrian development and brought me up to date on the matter of current Anglo-German relationships. The following is thus largely in continuation of my 56, February 14, 7 p. m.²⁹

He said that the British Ambassador³⁰ on his recent visit to London was himself "commissioned" to "continue the Hitler-Halifax conversations"³¹ and had brought back with him detailed instructions to this effect. The Counselor said that he regretted that he could not tell me the nature of these instructions inasmuch as they were being kept absolutely secret, the Ambassador in fact being empowered to reveal them only to the Chancellor. He characterized them nevertheless as being specific rather than general and designed to be "a step forward".

It had been the intention of the Ambassador to see the Chancellor prior to the latter's Reichstag speech in order to work out if possible some "adjustment" in the terms of the speech.

It appears to be uncertain whether the Chancellor was personally aware of this British intention. In any event the unexpected intervention of the Austrian development produced at least a changed and presumably a less auspicious situation for the contemplated conversations with the Chancellor.

On the occasion of the Chancellor's dinner to the Diplomatic Corps on February 15 the second German communiqué having just been issued (my 59, February 16, 3 p. m.²⁹), Henderson informally expressed to the Chancellor Great Britain's "interest in Austria". The Chancellor responded in no uncertain terms to the effect that "Austria was solely a German concern".

In respect of the foregoing I commented that this German position is based on the principle of "Germans being solely a German concern".

²⁹ Not printed.

³⁰ Neville Henderson.

³¹ See telegram No. 751, December 3, 1937, 8 p. m., from the Chargé in the United Kingdom, *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 183.

It thus under certain conditions might be applied to the Czechoslovak, the Danzig and the Corridor questions. The British Counselor agreed with me in this but did not believe that Germany would adopt a similar position respecting other Eastern European matters.

Henderson is now under instruction from London formally to express Great Britain's interest in Austria. He feels however these instructions are awkward to fulfill inasmuch as he had already received a "rebuff" on the same point. He must however carry out these instructions in view of certain pertinent announcements having been made in London.

The Counselor said that the French Ambassador had received similar instructions and that he understood that Poncet had seen Ribbentrop last evening on that score. The British Embassy was not as yet informed as to what took place. The Counselor stated that while he understood the British and French action in this respect was parallel it was definitely not joint action.

The Counselor expressed his belief that what had taken place was undoubtedly a first step to complete *Anschluss*. Commenting on the Italian angle he said that he understood from Rome that the Italians were given advance notification of the German action respecting Austria but that he was inclined to feel that the Italians are now somewhat disconcerted by the lengths to which Germany has gone. He felt that the Rome-Berlin Axis was as strong as ever if not stronger but agreed with me that the long range effect of Germany at the Brenner might be a different matter.

The Counselor stated that from the British point of view there were three courses which could be followed at this juncture, vis-à-vis, Germany, (a) Germany could be told that Great Britain would defend Austrian independence by arms if necessary; (b) Germany could be told that Great Britain did not approve of Germany's action and would reserve its position—in other words London could take the position that Austria was an issue between the two Governments; (c) the British could express their "interest" in Austria. He said that the latter course had evidently been chosen as presumably the only feasible one but that it was in effect meaningless.

The British Embassy is completely at a loss as to what line Hitler may take in his February 20 speech.

The Counselor and I speculated respecting the effects of the developments on Austria's international position and were inclined to believe that Austria would in due course be compelled to become a party to the Anti-Comintern Pact. Whether Austria could be a party to that pact and retain membership in the League or whether in any event Austria would be permitted to remain in the League was felt to be problematical.

762.00/165 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, February 21, 1938—6 p. m.
 [Received February 21—3:38 p. m.]

34. Foreign Minister declares himself satisfied with references to Austria in Hitler's speech yesterday which he states reaffirms agreement of July 11th, 1936 (independence of Austria). I am reliably informed the Chancellor is disappointed that Hitler failed to include specific reference to Austrian independence and nonintervention in internal affairs and that his speech on February 24th in consequence will be less friendly in tone and will attempt to clarify the agreement reached in this sense at Berchtesgaden.

Polish Minister, who is close to German Legation, fears Schuschnigg's resistance to German pressure hopeless and that new crisis will come within 1 to 2 months at the latest.

From private sources usually reliable I am informed that Seyss-Inquart was told in Berlin that Gestapo agents should have freedom of action for under-cover work in Austria; that Aryanization would be inaugurated but would proceed slowly in order to prevent flight of capital; that Nazi demonstrations would continue on increasing scale and that police should handle them with greatest care. Same source reports further that Schuschnigg has informed his most intimate associates that he is planning a counter move in about a fortnight. They should keep their nerve which they would need at that time. There was no clarification on what Schuschnigg is alleged to have in mind. Perhaps he will risk sudden plebiscite on independence issue.

Italian Minister had very protracted conference with both Chancellor and Foreign Minister today.

WILEY

762.63/464 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, February 23, 1938—7 p. m.
 [Received 7:20 p. m.]

38. Saw Foreign Minister Schmidt this morning. He regrets Eden's departure³⁸ because of latter's sympathy and understanding for Austria. He let it be clearly implied, however, that Chamberlain's attitude was more practical and that there was now hope that through Anglo-Italian understanding Central European equilibrium might be restored. Italy had been disturbed owing to his [*sic*] German policy

³⁸ Anthony Eden resigned as British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on February 20, 1938.

towards Austria but had not been in a position to take effective action without incurring the risk of complete isolation.

He said that Schuschnigg's speech tomorrow would contain no surprises but would be strong. Austrian Government would not admit additional Nationalists and was not going one millimeter beyond the line agreed on in Berchtesgaden.

Though he still considered situation most difficult for Austria he called attention to the relatively small number of Nazi demonstrators as evidence of fundamental weakness of the movement in Austria. The Nazis, he said, showed strength only in Graz.

On the subject of Hitler's speech he admitted that Schuschnigg was disappointed that Hitler had not specifically mentioned Austrian independence and non-intervention in domestic affairs. On the other hand Schuschnigg had been greatly relieved that Hitler had not spoken of situation as "family affair." He denied that Goering was coming to Austria.

Also saw Hornbostel, Political Director of the Foreign Office. He said that Eden had been disposed to make clear in Berlin that England and France would not remain passive in cases of German violation of Austria. Hornbostel fears that Chamberlain would not take similar action for the present which he deeply regrets. However, he believes that Anglo-Italian understanding is proceeding rapidly and satisfactorily. If Italy could count on England's support, former would be able to exercise effective influence to redress Austrian position.

Hornbostel told me that irrespective of what information I may have had from other sources it was a fact that Ciano knew of proposed meeting at Berchtesgaden as far back as Budapest Conference and that Mussolini highly approved of it. (Am informed in strictest confidence that Italian Minister made urgent representations February 21 that Austrian Government should not permit impression that Italy "let down" Austria. He explained that the Duce had been greatly disturbed by foreign press comment.)

When asked when next serious crisis with Germany might be expected Hornbostel replied that if things went well there might be none, if badly, not before the beginning of summer.

Saw President Miklas last night at the French Legation. He appeared depressed and stated that Austria accepted great sacrifice because Europe was not prepared. Europe should prepare herself for the immediate future. At the same time General Zehner, Under Secretary of National Defense, while admitting situation difficult maintained battle far from lost and asserted that Schuschnigg's speech would be followed by a sharp crystallization of Austrian national sentiment. Also saw Zernato deputy leader of Patriotic Front.

He said 21st had been critical day. He was then afraid he would lose half of his force through desertion and half through defeatism. However, morale had been restored and he was now entirely reassured. I infer that big Patriotic Front demonstration planned for Thursday after Schuschnigg's speech.

It appears that Austrian Government intends to continue struggle courageously and that confidence is increasing.

WILEY

762.63/466 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, February 24, 1938—12 p. m.
[Received February 24—9:05 p. m.]

41. Schuschnigg spoke 2 hours.³⁴ Speech made resolute and vigorous impression. No capitulation or indication of further concessions. He appealed against defeatism and for confidence. Though tribute paid to community German race, keynote was independence Austria and maintenance latter constitution. Seriousness crisis and "hard" nature Berchtesgaden interview not minimized. In enumerating international friendships warm reference Italy; Czechoslovakia pointedly not mentioned.

Nothing special in the way of demonstration from either side in Vienna but big Nazi demonstration reported in Graz.

United Press telegraphing very fully.

WILEY

762.63/473 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, February 26, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received February 26—11 a. m.]

83. 1. Nothing definite yet emerges here respecting German official reaction to the Schuschnigg speech. That the tone of the speech is still regarded with surprise by the rank and file of party members is evident. In diplomatic and German circles comment centers on the apparent divergencies between the temper of the speech, and in particular Schuschnigg's insistence on Austrian sovereignty and freedom from external interference, and what had been understood to be the spirit and terms of the Berchtesgaden arrangements. Speculation

³⁴ Schuschnigg's speech of February 24 was at an extraordinary session of the Federal Diet called in order that he might present the new Cabinet and give his official account of the recent conversations at Berchtesgaden.

turns on causes as deriving from the internal situation in Austria or possibly in response to some developments in great power politics.

2. From military and other contacts here the Military Attaché derives the belief that Hitler is aiming ultimately at a complete amalgamation of Germany and Austria. His sources are not agreed, however, as to the tempo with which he will proceed to complete this amalgamation.

His information is that in recent weeks Hitler has effected a rather thoroughgoing reorganization of the National Socialist Party in Austria, ousting certain local leaders such as Leopold and concentrating all party authority in the hands of Seyss-Inquart. It would seem that Hitler's purpose in these changes is to create a clear-cut channel of authority in Austrian matters from himself direct to Seyss-Inquart and to rule out all possibilities of lesser German party leaders, especially those of Prussian origin, meddling in Austrian affairs, thereby injuring Hitler's chances of bringing about the *Anschluss*.

While the exact arrangements between Mussolini and Hitler with regard to Austria are unknown, it is felt by Austrian Nazis in Berlin that Hitler intends to lose no time in securing such a strong position in Austria that even if a sudden diplomatic shifting of fronts should occur Italy could not retrace her steps. His sources feel that further important steps towards *Anschluss* will be taken not later than May, among these steps being the ousting of Dr. Kienbold [*Kienboeck?*] from the presidency of the Austrian National Bank as being too close to France.

The background opinion of these sources is that whereas up to now time has been working for Hitler in Austria the opposite became true as soon as Hitler showed his hand in the Berchtesgaden meeting. Unless Hitler's assurances from Mussolini are very strong he must now definitely fear that a British-Italian accord might either slow down or completely check his attempt to amalgamate Germany and Austria. It appears logical, therefore, from Hitler's standpoint that he should press on without delay to his goal and complete his ascendancy in Austria before the Spanish Civil War has ended and before Great Britain and Italy can have had time to reach an understanding. The National Socialist Party in Berlin apparently feels that they have already a safe majority for *Anschluss* were a plebiscite to be taken in Austria in the next few months but that this present majority is not impressive nor indeed as large as the party could make it could they obtain several months' delay for organization and propaganda.

There are some indications here that religious matters were discussed in Berchtesgaden. There is a belief in Berlin that the recall of Papen, the most prominent Catholic layman in Germany, from Vienna is connected with a desire by Hitler to use him in negotiations

with the Vatican. The question as to whether Hitler actually has made a complaint to Schuschnigg in Catholic religious matters can still not be answered but if this is assumed it could partly explain Schuschnigg's change of front at Berchtesgaden. Many indications suggest that Hitler is now seeking possibly at Mussolini's request a general all round settlement of the German religious disputes. Such a settlement in Germany would fall in with Hitler's Austrian plans and if effected would almost overnight greatly strengthen the German position in Austria.

2. By reason of his familiarity with German affairs and his numerous contacts here the foregoing information from the Military Attaché and the opinions regarding German plans in the Austrian and church questions are believed to merit consideration.

It may be added that in respect of the main thesis outlined above it is the general consensus of opinion in all Berlin circles that Hitler's ultimate aim is the absorption of Austria.

It might be emphasized, however, that the actual plans of the Chancellor in these matters are known only to himself and an extremely small circle of his intimates in governmental affairs to whom no outsider known to the Embassy has as yet established a relation of confidential access.

GILBERT

863.00/1388 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 1, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received March 1—11:40 a. m.]

47. I have just seen Hornbostel, Director of Political Affairs, at his request. He regards Styrian situation in particular and Nazi problem in general as very serious and fears that Nazi activities may soon near the end to where the Government will be obliged to take strong measures. He is apprehensive that Seyss-Inquart may not acquiesce. He believes however that Hitler prefers to avoid another crisis in respect of Austria for the present because of foreign political considerations, chiefly Italy.

Mussolini, he said, followed Schuschnigg's speech with greatest interest and sent congratulations to the Chancellor reiterating assurance that his attitude had not changed. Hornbostel does not believe however that Mussolini will be in a position to take effective stand until Anglo-Italian *détente* is achieved.

He has definite information that London conversations did not go through Ciano or Perth.³⁵

³⁵ Earl of Perth, British Ambassador in Italy.

Hornbostel claims Mussolini and Ciano are not in accord in respect of foreign policy. Ciano would willingly make any sacrifice in order to strengthen Axis. Mussolini however has no intention voluntarily of sacrificing either Austria or Czechoslovakia.

Was informed in strict confidence last night by a member of the British Legation that Halifax recently remarked to a mutual friend "I do not give Austria 6 months."

Mail copies to Missions.

WILEY

762.63/541

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

No. 93

PRAGUE, March 2, 1938.

[Received March 19.]

SIR: In my telegram No. 18 of February 26, 12 noon, 1938,³⁶ I reported the substance of an interview which Mr. Chapin³⁷ and I had with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Krofta, in relation to the Central European situation and particularly the effect of the German-Austrian relations, the Cabinet crisis in England and the speech of Hitler upon governmental and public opinion in Prague. Night before last, February 28th, I was received by the President and talked with him for fifty minutes upon the same subject.

In discussing the effect of the Anglo-Italian negotiations upon Central Europe, and especially the attitude of Germany toward Central European States, the President said that it was the Great Powers and not the small countries of Central Europe which are important at the present time. Germany's conquest of Czechoslovakia and Austria, for example, would not bring peace to Europe. It would only be a first step in Germany's program and she would carry on her activities against the other countries in this area. Their conquest in turn would not determine the peace of Europe; she would go further toward the East and South and would also involve England and France, or, if she could succeed in isolating Russia, she would undoubtedly succeed, in due time, in effecting an agreement with that country by which Germany would be given control of the whole of Central Europe or, at least, that part which was not relinquished to Russia, and Russia, on the other hand, would relinquish to Japan the control of the Far East. Then the whole of Europe would be at the mercy of Germany and Russia and would involve enormous sacrifices if not great danger to Great Britain and France. From his point of view, the only sound

³⁶ Not printed.

³⁷ Vinton Chapin, Second Secretary of Legation.

position to take is to stand, as Czechoslovakia has stood, upon principle and show courage and resist. The wisdom of this has been shown just recently in the case of Austria. Hitler made a vehement speech which caused great nervousness throughout the world and expectation of some aggressive act. Schuschnigg, on the other hand, had the courage to stand for definite principles and to declare for the independence of Austria, and no further move on Germany's part has been made. He said that Czechoslovakia would continue to maintain her position not only because it was the only loyal and honorable course to take with respect to her treaty obligations with her friends but the only sound course to take for her own self-preservation. He would gladly negotiate with Germany and would make reasonable concessions, provided they do not involve the intervention of Germany in the internal affairs of this country. Any attempt on the part of Germany to intervene in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia would be resisted to the point of fighting if necessary, and, while Czechoslovakia may, of course, be defeated, she will not compromise.

The President several times expressed his pleasure and even delight at the declarations of Chautemps and Delbos in the French Chamber of Deputies on Saturday²⁸ to the effect that France would be faithful to Czechoslovakia and to her treaty obligations and regarded Austrian independence as an indispensable element of European balance; and he commented at some length upon the vote in the Chamber in support of those declarations with only two negative votes. He said this action was not only gratifying to Czechoslovakia but that it definitely made it more difficult for Germany to make an aggressive move.

The President said he had no fear of military aggression from Germany at the present time. In his opinion, Germany will want to negotiate, and the French attitude will assist in the negotiations. In this relation he said that while in his speech Hitler raised the mailed fist menacingly toward the neighboring States of Central Europe, at the same time, as is always the case with Germany, he, on the other hand, gave encouragement to the idea of negotiation. The President said, however, that he would negotiate with Germany only on the basis of complete loyalty to Great Britain and France and full knowledge on their part of every move that should take place.

In regard to the question of a European war, the President said that Germany and Italy would not start a war at present. Italy could perhaps put several more divisions in the field, and Germany could possibly add as many as twenty more divisions to her army, but neither Germany nor Italy has the money, the raw materials or is economically in a position to carry on a war the extent of which cannot be foreseen. If they should be able to gain control of Central Europe

²⁸ February 26.

to such an extent as to strengthen themselves economically and from the standpoint of raw materials, they might then be in a position to wage war. He said he had urged this point of view strongly at Paris and had explained that unless the Great Powers, such as France and England, saw this danger and realized that their own protection lay in their support of the integrity of the Central European States, they would, in due time, be menaced and have to fight for their existence.

The President thinks that Chamberlain may succeed in his negotiations with Italy, and, if so, the situation in Central Europe would be strengthened. On the other hand, if he should fail, he believes there would be new elections and a new Government in England, possibly headed by Eden, and that the new Government would be far firmer in its attitude to the Totalitarian Powers than the Chamberlain Government has been. Meanwhile, he lays stress upon the fact that British rearmament is proceeding rapidly and the position of Great Britain is becoming stronger.

I inquired about the Soviet Pact and the extent to which it was still regarded as important. The reply was that France was bound to Russia as one of the Great Powers and that Czechoslovakia was bound to France as well as to Russia.³⁹ Germany has been trying, and is trying, to isolate Russia from Western Europe. If it should succeed in doing so, it would promptly turn round and endeavor to enter into an agreement with Russia. If this should be attended with success, all Central Europe would be at the mercy of these two Powers and the independence of the several States would cease to exist. In self-defense France must prevent such a thing from occurring and to that end Czechoslovakia must support France, because, in turn, she is relying upon France for protection. If Czechoslovakia should desert France, it would become at once a vassal of Germany. Czechoslovakia has stood fast and resisted the encroachment of Germany, and the President believes that this attitude has made possible the declarations which Chautemps and Delbos made on Saturday. He thinks that if Czechoslovakia had weakened and attempted to compromise, as some of the other Central European nations have done, it would have been disastrous not only to herself but to the other nations of Central Europe and to France as well. When asked whether there had been any perceptible increase in cohesion between the Central European States since the Hitler speech, he said that perhaps there had been a little. He did not appear to be as optimistic in this regard as Foreign Minister Krofta, whose view I reported in my telegram No. 18 of February 26th. The President went on to say that none of these

³⁹ Treaty of Mutual Assistance between France and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, signed May 2, 1935; League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CLXVII, p. 395; and Treaty of Mutual Assistance between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, signed May 16, 1935, *ibid.*, vol. CLIX, p. 347.

States had left the League and none had dropped their old allies, such as France and Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, they had pretended to take a neutral position and had undertaken to make other friends. Now they find themselves in the position of not being able to be real friends with their old associates or with their new ones; hence their position is weak. Czechoslovakia, however, is strong because she has never compromised her position but has stood definitely upon certain sound principles. He spoke with some feeling about the course of Yugoslavia and Rumania and their flirting with Germany and Italy while holding on to their relation with France and Czechoslovakia. But, on the other hand, he said that as soon as a firmer attitude was taken by France and Great Britain, there would be no question about the return of these smaller nations to their first allegiance. It was not for him, he said, to reproach other nations for the course that they had taken, but, speaking quite personally and in confidence, he said he felt strongly that these smaller nations could have prevented matters in Europe from drifting as far as they had, if they and Poland had stood loyally by the Western Powers and the League to which they owed their very existence, instead of yielding to the persuasion of so-called friends as soon as trouble appeared upon the horizon.

I asked him what the effect would be of the provision in the new Rumanian Constitution forbidding the movement of foreign troops across Rumanian territory unless especially permitted by Rumanian legislation. He said he had not been aware that such a provision existed, but, if it existed, he regarded it as unimportant inasmuch as Rumania is a member of the League of Nations and is bound by the article in the Covenant which covers that exact question; consequently, any question that might arise about the transfer of troops over Rumanian territory would be settled under that article. He added that he had never negotiated with Rumania in regard to the movement of foreign troops across that territory and never had asked her anything about it.

Returning to the question of war, he said that he was convinced that there would be no war in Europe this year, but, on the other hand, he was convinced that the events of this year would definitely determine the question as to whether there would be a European war. If the Anglo-Italian negotiations should result favorably, they would almost certainly be followed by an agreement with Germany and possibly one with Russia and peace might be assured. If, however, those negotiations should fail, then a European conflict is quite possible. Speaking again of Czechoslovakia, the President said that Germany cares nothing about Czechoslovakia in itself but is only interested in it as a pretext for her larger aims which include, of course, the control of the whole of Central Europe as a means of going further to the East.

I desire to add, in order that the Department may clearly understand my aim in the despatches and telegrams which I have sent, that I have thought it best to report to the Department, as fast as I could get information, the views expressed to me from various quarters rather than to attempt to appraise the several views and to draw from them conclusions as to what in my opinion the facts actually are. It seems to me that the Department is in a better position with the information received by it from other capitals interested in this region to make an accurate appraisal of the correctness of the information which I am reporting from time to time.

Respectfully yours,

WILBUR J. CARR

762.63/489 : Telegram

The Minister in Yugoslavia (Lane) to the Secretary of State

BELGRADE, March 4, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received 8 p. m.]

24. I have within the last week noted an increasing apprehension in Government circles as a result of Austro-German developments. From the views expressed to me by Government officials as to the danger of Yugoslavia having a common frontier with Germany I gather that the policy of Stoyadinovitch⁴⁰ in being swayed by German blandishments is not only unpopular with his colleagues but regarded as a failure in the light of recent developments. *Slovenka* the organ of Minister of the Interior Koroshets, published at Ljubljana, recently contained editorial bitterly condemning German aggression in Austria and pointing out danger therein to Yugoslavia. French Minister informs me that change of attitude of Yugoslav Government towards him since Berchtesgaden conversation is very marked.

Although I have not as yet seen the Premier since his return from Ankara I understand that attitude of Balkan Entente towards Austrian situation was to have been discussed there. Rumanian Minister and Yugoslav officials have expressed opinion to me that Balkan Entente can, through solidarity, accomplish much at the present time in making Germany understand that her aggressive attitude is resented in Southeastern Europe. I infer from conversation with Rumanian Minister that both Rumania and Yugoslavia are endeavoring to persuade Bulgaria to adopt an attitude in accordance with that of Balkan Entente. Recent meeting of Bulgarian and Yugoslav Premiers may therefore be of significance.

Copies to Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Bucharest, Sofia, Athens, and Istanbul.

LANE

⁴⁰ Milan Stoyadinovitch, Yugoslav Premier and Foreign Minister.

863.00/1396 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 9, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received March 9—9:50 a. m.]

54. Am informed by Hornbostel that Schuschnigg during the next 2 or 3 weeks will endeavor to "take reins back into his own hands" establishing definite line between legal and illegal activities and acting with energy. Hornbostel states he is much less discouraged than a week ago. Hornbostel complains, however, crisis is costing Austria heavily in outflow of foreign exchange, export of art treasures, and business paralysis.

British Minister pessimistic but feels that National Socialists should not yet become too confident. He believes Schuschnigg will react energetically and still hopes Italy may endeavor to save the situation. He asserts categorically that Mussolini was not forewarned and is both annoyed and nervous.

French Minister states that though Austria is not yet lost things are going very badly. At Linz Saturday⁴¹ Seyss-Inquart spoke as though he were the Chancellor. Austrian Government had appealed for French and British financial support. Puaux⁴² frankly told Schmidt Monday that before he could recommend favorable action he would have to know whether money was going to Schuschnigg or Seyss-Inquart.

Schmidt admitted that Seyss-Inquart went further than "promised" at Berchtesgaden but insisted French Minister would soon see countermove by Schuschnigg to redress the situation.

Puaux complains that he is in impossible situation. He has urged Schuschnigg on to resistance but is able to support him only with sympathy. So far he has been entirely unsuccessful in endeavoring to persuade his Government to adopt forceful attitude.

He believes situation will develop rapidly. Austria could win out in a tactical war of wits but not against intimidation.

Government and Catholic press today openly critical of Nazi tactics. Burghermaster of Vienna has publicly protested against Nazi "mutiny". Chancellor now in Innsbruck where he will deliver speech today.

Situation shows signs of becoming more acute with increasing friction over Nazi demands for inclusion in provincial and municipal councils.

WILEY

⁴¹ March 5.⁴² Gabriel Puaux, French Minister in Austria.

863.00/1398 : Telegram

*The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State*VIENNA, March 9, 1938—11 p. m.
[Received March 9—9:50 p. m.]

56. Penultimate sentence of my 34, February 21, 6 p. m. In an impassioned address to the Fatherland Front at Innsbruck, Schuschnigg announced a plebiscite for Sunday, March 13, when every Austrian citizen would be expected to vote yes to his program for a "free, German, independent, social, Christian Austria dedicated to peace and bread. The world shall see our will to life." Chancellor spoke in some detail of program to create work. Problem of workers holidays to be solved. Emphasized social and equalitarian aspects of program and invited especially participation of former Socialists as well as members of all former parties. Complained of failure in certain quarters of Nationalist campaign to keep "German peace" and declared that veiled threats from the same quarters would not be tolerated. Exhorted Front members to the utmost discipline and warned against any infraction of "German peace."

All Austrian citizens, male and female, born not later than 1914 eligible to vote "yes or no." Secrecy of ballot optional, full details and instructions (perhaps modifications) in the morning papers.

Schuschnigg's decision for plebiscite is encouraging. It shows that the Government has not (as was feared) yielded to defeatism and that Schuschnigg is endeavoring to reassert his authority. French Minister believes plebiscite if successful will not only have a wholesome effect internally but will greatly improve Austrian position vis-à-vis England and France.

According to reliable information Schuschnigg has had promises of support from labor leaders both legal and illegal. Though position of Government less favorable than a fortnight ago chances of securing majority still seem good if plebiscite not bungled. Age qualification for voting will eliminate large percentage pro-Nazis.

Seyss-Inquart was notified yesterday to demur decision sudden plebiscite. He is said to be flabbergasted. External position seems improved. Schmidt alleges that Austria has received encouraging assurances from Italy. He refuses to reveal how or when; perhaps via London.

The Government has requested the French Minister to use influence on French press in order that plebiscite should not be presented as anti-German move.

WILEY

762.63/508 : Telegram

The Minister in Yugoslavia (Lane) to the Secretary of State

BELGRADE, March 10, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 6 p. m.]

28. Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to me this morning that German-Austrian situation was not officially discussed by Balkan Entente at Ankara it being felt that in absence of action, even of a platonic nature, on the part of Italy, France or Great Britain any statement from the Entente would be useless. The Yugoslav attitude he said still is that it would deplore further German aggression in Austria. He expressed the opinion that there is no probability of Schuschnigg's encouraging Hapsburg restoration (this point of view is confirmed by the Austrian Minister).

The key to the peace of Europe according to Andric lies in the Ciano-Perth and Ribbentrop-Chamberlain conversations. In the event that these conversations accomplish nothing the general tension will be correspondingly increased.

Copies to Rome, Paris, Berlin, London, Vienna.

LANE

762.63/509 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 10, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received March 10—3:30 p. m.]

55. My telegram No. 40, February 25, 6 p. m.⁴³ I am informed by a reliable source that Colonel Beck, Polish Foreign Minister whose visit to Rome terminated today, had a 2-hour conversation last night with the Austrian Minister here. During that conversation Beck said that he and Ciano had come to an understanding whereby Poland at the earliest opportunity would intimate to Germany that Poland considered itself intimately associated with developments in Central Europe, particularly Austria and Czechoslovakia, and would express the hope that no brusque German action would be taken vis-à-vis either of those two powers, particularly Austria. Beck said that Ciano on his part affirmed that Italy at a slightly later date would make similar intimations.

Concerning the Austrian plebiscite announcement, the Austrian Minister here has stated to a source close to the Embassy that although he knew the move was "in the air" he did not learn of the definite decision until yesterday evening and was able to communicate it to the

⁴³ Not printed.

Italian Government only just before it was made public. He said that the Italian Government had expressed pleasure at Schuschnigg's move.

Further report on both these subjects by mail.

PHILLIPS

863.00/1399 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 10, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received March 10—4:44 p. m.]

368. I had a talk today with a member of the Austrian Legation. He told me that plans for Sunday's plebiscite had been matured with the utmost secrecy and without consultation with any foreign government. He said that it was a bold and risky stroke but such were the only tactics which could save Austria. He said that the report which I had heard to the effect that Mussolini had been consulted before the decision was taken to hold the plebiscite is untrue. If Austria had consulted Mussolini he would probably have consulted Hitler and that would have been the end of the story. My informant said that the Austrian Nazis were disconcerted and furious. They had hoped to have a plebiscite on their own terms in April and by that time intimidation and boring from within would have gone so far that the result would have been in their favor. It is not yet clear what tactics the Nazis will follow. If they were wise they would vote in favor of the question under plebiscite saying that the formula was sufficiently broad so that they could support it. If, however, as is hoped will be the case, they abstain from voting or vote against the question then the results of the vote will establish clearly that only a small minority is opposed to Austrian independence. This would be an important moral factor in other countries in case Hitler should subsequently attempt to ride roughshod over Austria.

He said that the present political crisis in France was deplorable from the point of view of Austria. It was a further indication of the weakness of the countries opposing Hitler's expansion in Central Europe and might encourage him to adopt brutal tactics again at an early date.

My informant said that Austria knew perfectly well that she could not count on any effective assistance from Italy. It is true that before Schuschnigg made his speech on February 23 [24] Mussolini had encouraged him to make a vigorous speech. However, Mussolini was using Austria merely as a pawn in blackmailing England, stating to Chamberlain that there must be an Anglo-Italian settlement so that Italy can be strong to resist Germany in Central Europe. Once he gets what he wants from Chamberlain he will again abandon Austria to Hitler whenever he can get a good price for it.

I have also seen today the Berlin correspondent of *Havas* who returned to Paris this morning but is being sent back to Berlin immediately to cover the German reaction to the announcement of the Austrian plebiscite. He said that anyone who believed that the events of February 4⁴⁴ had weakened the regime in Germany was greatly mistaken. In his judgment the country is solidly behind Hitler. He states that there are indications that the tactics of intimidation being used against Czechoslovakia are from the German point of view bearing fruit.

Copy to Berlin, Vienna, Praha.

WILSON

863.00/1402 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 11, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received March 11—11:15 a. m.]

59. My 57, March 11, 11 a. m.⁴⁵ Glaise-Horstenau,⁴⁶ not Seyss-Inquart, went to Berlin. Former saw Hitler who went into furious rage stating plebiscite would be defeat for him and that he would not tolerate it. Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau presented ultimatum to Schuschnigg demanding, under threat of open rupture, assurances by 1 o'clock today that plebiscite would be canceled.

Schuschnigg refused to act on basis of ultimatum and is replying that he will not postpone plebiscite and that to show that he is not clinging to office he will have plebiscite on "program yes—Schuschnigg no" and will agree to have another plebiscite later with list of voters et cetera.

Austrian Consul, Munich, proceeded to Kufstein whence he telephoned confirming report of military operations alleging semi-mobilization Bavaria and great movement troop trains.

British, Italian and French Ministers requested to inform their Governments. The latter replied he had no Government. British Minister apprehensive that Hitler will take advantage of Cabinet crisis in France to force the issue.

Schmidt very agitated. Press uninformed.

WILEY

⁴⁴ On February 4 the resignation of Field Marshal von Blomberg and General von Fritsch from their military posts was made public and Hitler declared himself Commander in Chief of the German Army. On the same day Neurath resigned as Reich Foreign Minister and was succeeded by Ribbentrop.

⁴⁵ Not printed.

⁴⁶ E. Glaise-Horstenau, Austrian Vice Chancellor.

863.00/1414 : Telegram

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State*PRAHA, March 11, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received March 11—3 : 30 p. m.]

24. The Minister for Foreign Affairs sent a representative to me this morning with the information that mobilization of the class of fifteen has been ordered in Austria; that Germany has closed the German-Austrian frontier; that it is believed Germany is prepared directly to intervene in Austria; that the fact that Reichenau has been sent into the region adjoining Austria is regarded as particularly significant and that the movement could only be stopped by support of Austria by the Great Powers. Authorities here think France and England understand this and may have already made their position known in Berlin. They say Schuschnigg declaration for a plebiscite came as a complete surprise to this Government. The Berchtesgaden Agreement has not been effective. The Nazi pressure continued and even after Schuschnigg's declaration of February 20 that Austria would not go further than the Berchtesgaden Agreement the Nazi pressure continued. Seyss-Inquart acted too independently and not in harmony with Schuschnigg who was at last forced to seek cooperation of the Austrian Social Democrats (trade unions) whose help he can now count on. He then ordered the plebiscite with a view to clarifying the situation. The speed with which the move was made, the unpreparedness of the Nazis and the exclusion of youngsters from voting give conditions favorable for success. Reported the Nazis will not participate. If Schuschnigg wins, however, the Nazi pressure from Germany will continue and there will be no absolute victory. If Schuschnigg should not win Foreign Office believes he will resign and chaos is expected in Austria. Authorities believe that *Anschluss* may yet be avoided if a real interest in Austrian independence is manifested by the Western Powers and particularly by Italy which they understand approve Schuschnigg's move. Confidentially they regard the plebiscite as a violation of article 88 of the Saint-Germain Treaty.⁴⁷

There seems to be no fear of a German attack on Czechoslovakia but the developments in Austria have revived the uneasiness here which had largely subsided and there is now an undercurrent of much anxiety. The Foreign Office is convinced that the Czechoslovak basis of settlement was discussed between von Ribbentrop and Halifax yesterday. However, it claims to be fully satisfied with Chamberlain's recent statement identifying himself with Eden's previous statement regarding Great Britain's interest in Central Europe. It is claimed

⁴⁷ Signed September 10, 1919, *Treaties, Conventions, etc., Between the United States of America and Other Powers, 1910-1923* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1923), vol. III, pp. 3149, 3181.

that French declaration of loyalty to Czechoslovakia automatically assures Anglo-French cooperation. While there is a hopeful attitude toward Anglo-Italian negotiations Foreign Office officials are skeptical in regard to Anglo-German negotiations because they are convinced Great Britain cannot afford to give Germany a free hand in Eastern and Central Europe.

Late advices received here of Austrian mobilization indicate that primary purpose is to preserve order during Sunday plebiscite.

I have found no evidence that Monarchist restoration in Austria is regarded seriously here.

Copies to Paris, London, Berlin, Vienna by mail.

CARR

863.00/1406 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 11, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received March 11—1:05 p. m.]

61. My telegram No. 59, March 11, 1 p. m. Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau refused to accept Schuschnigg's proposal and under threat of civil war, and presumably intervention too, Schuschnigg yielded and offered to call off plebiscite Sunday provided he was assured there would be no Nazi disturbances in Austria. Hitler has sent back word that Schuschnigg must resign and Seyss-Inquart succeed him. Hitler demands answer by 5:30 today. French and British Ministers have telephoned their Governments and Austrian Government is awaiting a reply before formulating answer to Germany.

Hitler expected to broadcast at 7 p. m.

WILEY

762.63/520 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 11, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received March 11—3:15 p. m.]

62. British Minister instructed by his Government that it informed Ribbentrop today of serious impression which would be created in England by such direct interference in internal affairs of Austria as foreseen by German ultimatum. Ribbentrop's attitude not encouraging but he consented to telephone Berlin. The British Minister was cautioned by his Government against accepting any responsibility for Schuschnigg's decision.

French Minister has so far received no reply from his Government but according to Hornbostel Austrian Minister in Paris saw Léger who advised Austrian Government to play for as much time as possible.

Action might be concerted with England and Italy. If not "France would march alone." Italian attitude evasive if not negative. Gratz reliably reported to be "occupied" by Austrian Army.

WILEY

863.00/1413 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 11, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received March 11—4: 41 p. m.]

63. My No. 62, March 11, 6 p. m. Austrian Government has received official ultimatum expiring at 7:30 (now) demanding resignation of Schuschnigg, appointment of Seyss-Inquart as Chancellor with Cabinet composed of two-thirds Nazis, repatriation of Austrian Legion which is to be entrusted with public order Vienna and total "readmission" National Socialist Party.

French and British Ministers have had nothing further from their Governments and expect nothing.

WILEY

863.00/1408 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA [undated.]
[Received March 11, 1938—5: 47 p. m.]

64. Schuschnigg made radio announcement at 7:45 in substance as follows:

I have to give my Austrian fellow countrymen the details of an eventful day and a grave situation. I declare before the whole world that the German Government today handed to President Miklas an ultimatum with a time limit attached ordering him to nominate as Chancellor a person designated by the German Government who would appoint a government satisfactory to them, otherwise German troops would invade Austria. I have to declare before the world that news launched in Germany concerning disorders created by the workers, the shedding of blood, of a situation which had got out of the control of the Government are lies from A to Z. The President asks me to tell the people of Austria that we have yielded to force since we were not prepared even in this terrible situation to shed blood. We decided to order the troops to offer no serious (the Chancellor corrected himself and said to offer no resistance). The Inspector General of the Army, General Shilharsky [*Schilhawsky*], has been placed in command of the troops. He will issue further orders to them. So I take leave of the Austrian people with a German word of farewell uttered from the depth of my heart. God protect Austria.

WILEY

863.00/1416 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA [undated.]

[Received March 11, 1938—10:30 p. m.]

67. According to radio announcement President Miklas has appointed new Cabinet as follows:

Seyss-Inquart, Chancellor and Minister War; Glaise-Horstenau, Vice Chancellor; Wilhelm Wolf, Foreign Affairs; Franz Hueber (Goering's in-law), Justice; Menghin, Education; Victor Jury, Social Administration; Anton Reinthaler, Agriculture and Forestry; Hans Fishböck, Commerce and Communications; Kaltenbruner, Undersecretary for Security Questions in Federal Chancellery; Hubert Klausner, Undersecretary for Education and Political Will. Finance Minister Neumayer and Undersecretary for Security, Skubl, carry over. Reports confirm account German troops crossing the border. Rumors circulating that Goering and Hess⁴⁸ arriving tomorrow.

WILEY

863.00/1415 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 11, 1938—midnight.

[Received March 11—9:30 p. m.]

112. Berlin is full of rumors respecting German troop concentrations on the Austrian frontier which however cannot be confirmed here. Nevertheless we have definite information that the headquarters of the Third Armored Division has left Berlin for field service. The Berlin radio station has just announced that Seyss-Inquart has formed a provisional government and has requested the German Government to send troops to maintain order. Local American press agencies are informed that German police and S. S. have crossed the Austrian frontier but it is believed that no army troops are involved. There was no evidence of any general mobilization of the army this afternoon.

WILSON

863.00/1417 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 11, 1938—midnight.

[Received March 11—11:55 p. m.]

380. I dined with the Austrian Minister tonight and have just left him. At 3 o'clock this afternoon he saw Delbos and advised him

⁴⁸Rudolf Hess, Reich Minister without Portfolio.

of the first German ultimatum demanding postponement of the plebiscite and resignation of Schuschnigg. The Foreign Office advised him later that they had inquired of the British and Italian Governments if they would join with the French in a *démarche* at Berlin and had received a negative reply in both cases. Later in the afternoon the Minister advised Delbos of the second ultimatum delivered officially by the German Chargé d'Affaires in Vienna and threatening action by German airplanes if Schuschnigg did not resign by 7:30 p. m. Vienna time.

The news in Paris at 8 o'clock tonight received over the radio from Vienna was that Schuschnigg had in fact resigned. At 9:30 Adam, Chief of the Federal Press Bureau, telephoned the Minister to say that Miklas had refused the ultimatum and Schuschnigg was still Chancellor. At 10 o'clock Rochat⁴⁰ telephoned from the Foreign Office to inform the Minister that the British and French Governments had agreed that their Ambassadors in Berlin should advise the German Government as follows: Their respective Governments protest most energetically against this act of coercion against an independent state based on military measures with the intention of creating a situation incompatible with Austrian independence; this is bound to cause the most serious reaction, the ultimate consequences of which cannot be foreseen.

Rochat at this time said that Puaux had just telephoned from Vienna that Schuschnigg was still Chancellor. About 10:30 the Minister spoke on the telephone with Hornbostel in Vienna, who also reported that Schuschnigg was still in office. Shortly thereafter however Adam again called from Vienna to say that Seyss-Inquart was now Chancellor. Rochat then telephoned to say that the French Government had received similar information. Rochat added that the Franco-British *démarche* mentioned above was in fact made in Berlin tonight though at what hour he did not know.

WILSON

762.63/523 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, March 12, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received March 12—8:45 a. m.]

26. Entry German troops into Austria last night preceded by Schuschnigg resignation and Seyss-Inquart's radio broadcast urging non-resistance produced profound impression here. Cabinet convened at 9 and continued into the night. German allegation regard-

⁴⁰ French Director of the Cabinet of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

ing movement of Czech troops to Austrian border and smuggling of arms from Czechoslovakia officially denied here. City appears externally normal but people very tense and anxious.

CARR

863.00/1425 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 12, 1938—noon.
[Received March 12—11:15 a. m.]

114. Just saw Nevile Henderson. He read to me a telegram which he had just started drafting for his Government approximately as follows:

"Yesterday I did everything humanly possible to save Schuschnigg from the results of his incredible folly."⁵⁰

Henderson received instructions in the morning to protest and do what he could to avert the menace to Austria. He could not get in touch with anybody in authority until 5 o'clock, when Neurath⁵¹ received him. He put the matter vigorously to Neurath and followed this with a strongly worded note. Goering gave a party last night at which I saw him take off Henderson for an extended conversation. Henderson said that he had told Goering vigorously that this step disrupted the immediate hope of England and Germany finding a common ground; that knowing the Chancellor's attitude towards the press he recommended that the press officers keep from him 99 per cent of the world's press in the next few days. Goering told Henderson that the Germans intended to withdraw their forces at the earliest possible moment order was established; that the Chancellor of Austria would then state that an election would be held under "fair and free conditions" as to the fate of Austria and that Germany would welcome in Austria the presence of the journalists of the world to see that this election was freely carried out.

Henderson said that this was another of the house of cards which had collapsed. The British had attempted over and over again to establish more cordial relations with Germany. He himself had last year arranged for the Neurath visit which was upset by the *Leipzig* episode;⁵² the Halifax visit was followed by a change in the British

⁵⁰ This apparently refers to document printed as No. 49 in *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, 3d ser., vol. 1, p. 25. The first two sentences read: "I greatly regret failure of my efforts to prevent series of events as regards Austria. It can however be stated that everything that could be done short of direct threat of force, was done here to save Austria from consequences of Dr. Schuschnigg's ill-conceived and ill-prepared folly."

⁵¹ Baron Konstantin von Neurath, President of Hitler's Privy Council; replaced as Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs by Joachim von Ribbentrop in February 1938.

⁵² Alleged attacks by Spanish submarines on German cruiser *Leipzig* in June 1937.

Government favoring more intimate contact with Germany and now he feared that this policy was again shattered.

He saw nothing whatever to do except to make the best of this situation and try to prevent Beneš⁵³ from encountering a similar fate. They must not repeat the folly of urging Beneš not to make concessions and to stand pat. It was incredible to count on help from England or even France and Beneš would be wisely advised—and he hoped he would be so advised—to make his own peace with Germany. No more disservice could be done than giving any encouragement to Beneš such as was probably given to Schuschnigg to stand pat and resist.

Henderson said that he alone had borne the brunt of this battle. François-Poncet had merely called on him in the evening and written approximately the same note in French that Henderson sent in in English. The lack of a French Government has paralyzed him. Henderson felt that the final loser among the big powers of Europe in this matter was Mussolini; that Italy “thrust thereto by the British Government” had turned towards Germany and was now about to pay the penalty by having this mighty neighbor on its flank. If the Axis remained Italy would be the tail of the dog. If it was dissolved Italy would be the first to be menaced by the present condition.

WILSON

863.00/1421 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 12, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received March 12—10:20 a. m.]

115. At 11 o'clock this morning Goebbels⁵⁴ read to the foreign press and representatives of the foreign missions the Fuehrer's proclamation which was later broadcast over the radio and which it is understood American news agencies will carry in full.

The first part of the proclamation contained a lengthy justification of Germany's intervention in Austria.

The last portion sets forth the following essential announcements:

1. Tanks, infantry divisions, S. S. detachments and the air force will be employed at the call of the new National Socialist Government in Vienna.

2. They will guarantee that a real plebiscite will shortly be held by the Austrian people.

3. Behind these armed forces stands the will and determination of the entire German nation.

⁵³ Edouard Beneš, President of Czechoslovakia.

⁵⁴ Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister for National Enlightenment and Propaganda.

4. That as leader of the German people he, Hitler, will be happy now as a German and free citizen to be able to return to that country which is his home.

Goebbels announced that the "troops" first entered Austria at 5:30 this morning.

Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro reports that during Hitler's necessary absence from Berlin, Goering will be his representative for the conduct of the Government.

Local news sources state that Hitler is now in Munich. The despatch of S. S. guards to Austria is taken to signify that he will shortly cross the frontier and may even visit Vienna.

WILSON

863.00/1437 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, March 12, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received March 12—12:10 p. m.]

27. Foreign Office reports Czechs have closed Austrian frontier against refugees. Yesterday German Minister and Berlin were greatly disturbed by reported Czech mobilization until assured report was false. Foreign Office official has assured me there has been no troop movements, adding that in view of non-energetic attitude in London and Paris military activity here would be most unwise. Policy at present is calm self-control.

CARR

863.00/1426 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 12, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received March 12—11:30 a. m.]

72. British and French Ministers believe since Miklas still nominally President they should recognize new government. French Minister states that Schuschnigg, Hornbostel and others are under guard and that he has found it impossible to communicate with them.

Ward Price⁵⁵ interviewed Seyss-Inquart who told him that Austrian "independence" would be maintained and that he formed his government freely of "reasonable and moderate men."

WILEY

⁵⁵ Correspondent of *London Daily Mail*.

863.00/1440: Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 12, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received March 12—2:20 p. m.]

117. After seeing Henderson (my 114, March 12, noon) I called on François-Poncet. The contrast between the two men was striking. Poncet was in a state of extreme nerves and exasperation. His thesis is simple: the states of the world have made irretrievable mistakes in giving in step by step to Germany. They have merely whetted Germany's appetite and who could tell who will be the next victim. The only thing that might still save the world would be all states getting together to serve formal notice on Germany that it had to behave or take the consequences.

He felt that Mussolini was now condemned to subservience to Germany. Mussolini's intelligence, according to François, had been overrated. In the long view he had been wrong in every great international decision and the crowning piece of his ineptitude was that he had placed his country in a position where it now lay at the mercy and under the direction of a group of leaders in Germany without scruple and of insatiable appetite.

WILSON

863.00/1494

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] March 12, 1938.

The German Ambassador called upon his own request. He immediately proceeded to say that he came on his own initiative and without instructions from his Government; that he came in order to inform me of the reasons which prompted the action of the German Government towards Austria on yesterday. He then proceeded to refer to the conference held two weeks ago between Chancellor Hitler and Schuschnigg of Austria, upon the invitation of Mr. Hitler, at Berchtesgaden; and said that at that conference a full agreement was made which would stabilize the Austrian situation and bring about more satisfactory relations between Germany and Austria in the future and that this was all that was contemplated; that to the great surprise of Mr. Hitler, Schuschnigg on March 9th suddenly departed from these agreements by giving notice that a plebiscite would be held three days later to determine Austria's course and which course it was expected would be different from that agreed upon with Chancellor Hitler some weeks before; that as a result of this attempted departure and violation of the understanding, uprisings and violent clashes of

arms were taking place in Austria to the detriment, especially of Germans residing there, and that it was in these circumstances that the action of yesterday came about.

I then propounded two questions. The first was—what was the opinion of the Ambassador as to the prospects of peace hereafter, and he promptly replied with an air of confidence and finality that there was no occasion now for military hostilities, since the Austrian matter has been settled, and that there would be none. I then said that I noticed from the despatches that German troops had gone to the Brenner Pass and stationed themselves there and that I wondered whether there would be any possibility of Italy's striking a match, so to speak, at that point and in those circumstances. (I was leading up by indirection to the purpose of securing an expression from the Ambassador of the present and prospective relations between Germany and Italy.) The Ambassador promptly replied that in the first place he doubted if any German troops had gone as far as the Brenner Pass; that if they have gone to the Pass and stationed themselves there it is merely to assist Austrian troops in preserving order and guarding against outbreaks; that there would be no occasion whatever for any flare-up by Italy in view of the absolutely cordial relations between Germany and Italy which have existed heretofore and which continue to exist to the same full and wholeheartedly cordial and agreeable extent. The Ambassador, in other words, sought unhesitatingly to convince me that the relations between Italy and Germany are as close as they were before the Austrian flare-up and during past months and that by every inference they would so continue so far as the present outlook is concerned.

Upon leaving, I thanked the Ambassador heartily for giving me the above information.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

863.00/1432 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 12, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received March 12—5 p. m.]

389. A member of the British Embassy tells me that the Anglo-French representations last night in Berlin were made on the insistence of the French, the British having very reluctantly consented. He said that it was a mistake to have made representations because Hitler knew perfectly well that neither Government intended to do anything effective for Austria.

He remarked that the best hope of salvation for the Czechs would be concessions to the Germans.

He believes that the German aggression against Austria will have no effect on the Anglo-Italian negotiations except perhaps to accelerate them.

WILSON

863.00/1434 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 12, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received 8:03 p. m.]

61. My No. 60, March 12, 1 p. m.⁵⁶ The consensus of Italian opinion as manifested by certain of the newspapers today would seem to lay the blame for the present situation in Austria upon two so-called "blunders" committed by the Versailles Powers: (1) The idea that Austria in its precarious condition both economically and politically should or could remain independent; and (2) the idea that Italy would at all times bear the burden of the situation. Austrian independence could have existed in the eyes of these writers if Germany had supported this independence but that the other powers by setting Austria perpetually against Germany have rendered it impossible.

It is also alleged that Italy's attitude in refraining from either direct or indirect intervention of any kind "in the internal situation of Austria" is irreproachably "correct". The Italian press also repeats in its editorials the German complaints regarding Schuschnigg's attitude on the plebiscite and implies that Austria is now to be regarded inevitably as part of Germany.

Gayda⁵⁷ this afternoon makes it very clear that there will be no reaction on Italy's part to what is described as the "development of a natural step in German history". He also recalls his editorial of April last year (see Embassy's telegram 176 of April 23, 6 p. m. 1937⁵⁶) to the effect that with Italy's collaboration the agreement between Austria and Germany contemplated progressive direct participation of the Nazis in the Austrian Government.

Communiqué issued this afternoon states that a special envoy from Berlin brought a personal letter from Hitler to the Duce concerning Austrian events.

While the above represents the official version of the Italian attitude there is evident among many Italians a feeling of real concern and depression.

PHILLIPS

⁵⁶ Not printed.

⁵⁷ Virginio Gayda, editor of *Giornale d'Italia*.

863.00/1448 : Telegram

The Minister in Yugoslavia (Lane) to the Secretary of State

BELGRADE, March 12, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received 9:20 p. m.]

29. Stoyadinovitch expressed himself substantially as follows to me in interview this morning on developments in Austria.

As the situation is due to a National—or National Socialist—revolution and is hence internal Yugoslavia does not intend to meddle in the matter. Schuschnigg had only one-third of the people on his side and was fearful of the result of the proposed plebiscite as is shown by his having limited the suffrage to men of 24 years and older, the younger men being pro-Nazi. If Austria wishes to join with Germany in accordance with the principle of nationalities as outlined by President Wilson in his fourteen points⁵⁸ it is not up to Yugoslavia to object. Schuschnigg's recent steps, of making an inflammatory speech immediately after the Berchtesgaden conversations and then calling a plebiscite, were very impolitic. Yesterday's action does not constitute an invasion of Austria; the German troops were sent because Austria (he did not say Austrian Government) desired and requested them. Hitler will shortly visit Vienna leaving Goering in Germany as both cannot be absent from the country simultaneously.

The question is whether European equilibrium can be maintained. This is up to the Great Powers, not up to Yugoslavia. Italy does not like the situation but Italy has in Germany her strongest advocate in the matter of the recognition of the conquest Abyssinia. For Italy the matter of Ethiopia is all important. It is not worthwhile for Italy to make trouble with Germany for the sake of Austria. Austria being German in race would never fight against Germany at this or at any other time. Between Abyssinia and Austria, Italy naturally chose the first, "a big mouthful which must be digested". Although Italy knew as did Yugoslavia that the *Anschluss* was imminent it was kept ignorant of the exact plans for consummation, the step having been precipitated by Schuschnigg's policy. (Presumably German Minister advised Stoyadinovitch as he advised me (see my telegram of February 17, No. 20 and my despatch No. 144, February 21⁵⁹.) Neither Great Britain nor France will go to war over Austria. France especially is at present in such an uncertain political state that no concerted action is possible. As to the future there is little danger of Hitler's proceeding further, at least at present. If steps similar to those adopted in Austria are taken with respect to Czechoslovakia Germany would have to risk war with France. It is doubt-

⁵⁸ *Foreign Relations*, 1918, Supplement I, vol. I, p. 15.

⁵⁹ Despatch not printed.

ful that Germany would take such a step. Furthermore the recent construction of Czechoslovakian fortifications against Germany was not an academic gesture. Czechoslovakia would undoubtedly strongly resist a German attack. The logical next step of Germany would be towards the south and first with respect to German minorities in Italy. Such a move would automatically reunite Italy, France and Great Britain. A move against the Polish corridor would likewise upset the balance of power a condition which Germany cannot afford. At present with the aid of Italy she is the most powerful country in Europe. But if Italy, Great Britain and France should present a united front Germany could do nothing. In the event of a German attack on Italy, Yugoslavia would be an ally of Italy and would resist "jusqu'au bout". For Yugoslavia the key to the situation is Italy's attitude. France and Great Britain are responsible for present situation particularly Great Britain. If Eden had as a practical necessity recognized the conquest of Abyssinia Italian-British relations would not have become strained to the point that Germany's move against Austria could have been made without resistance on the part of Italy and Great Britain. The British attitude of talking like professors to other countries has irritated everybody. (He clearly indicated that he personally resents the British attitude towards Yugoslavia.) The Prime Minister recently endeavored to blame him for the German strong attitude and threatened him that [apparent omission] counteract the German-Yugoslav friendship a triangle would be formed composed of Praha, Budapest and Vienna. Yesterday's steps show how effective such a threat would be.

Germany will probably now make an insistent demand for the return of her colonies and will, because of present situation, probably be able to bluff the other powers.

There will be no troop movements in Yugoslavia; Yugoslavia remains with her arms folded.

As will be noted Stoyadinovic's statements regarding German policy towards Austria were guardedly worded. The Prime Minister probably realizes that he is blamed by many here for having been taken in by Hitler and hence as having contributed, however unconsciously, to the recent move against Austria. The general attitude in Belgrade although [that of?] calm awakening [is] bitterly critical of the German step. Even subordinates of Stoyadinovic cautiously indicate their disapproval of his policy which if not openly pro-German certainly leans in friendship towards Berlin and Rome. Copy to Berlin, Rome, Paris, London, Vienna, Budapest, Praha, Warsaw.

LANE

863.00/1427 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 13, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received March 13—8:55 a. m.]

73. We deeply appreciate your March 12, 2 p. m.⁶¹ Hitler reported en route to Salzburg from Linz, expects to leave Vienna this week.

Situation completely liquidated. Austria under German military occupation under guise of "friendly visit". Detachments of S. S. and S. A.⁶² have been armed. Only question in doubt is whether Austria is to maintain fiction of independence or whether outright union is intended.

New Government has not yet announced itself to Diplomatic Corps.

Consensus is that political opponents and Jews will be dealt with in German Nazi manner rather than in milder Austrian fashion. Many already arrested.

No difficulties reported by American citizens. Schuschnigg left Austria last night presumably for Hungary.

French Legation smuggled widow of Dollfuss⁶³ to Czechoslovakia by car with false passport.

WILEY

863.00/1429 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 13, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received March 13—11:15 a. m.]

75. Seyss-Inquart welcoming Hitler last night at Linz declared article 88, St.-Germain Treaty inoperative. Hitler highly emotional, expressed joy at having fulfilled his mission to "give back his dear homeland to the German Reich". He did not know on what date Austrians would be called but he hopes it was not a distant one. This event would prove to the world that any further attempt to dismember this people would be futile.

Associated Press and United Press telegraphed full text of Hitler's speech, summary Seyss-Inquart's.

WILEY

⁶¹ Not printed; it expressed the Secretary's appreciation of efforts to keep the Department fully informed of developments in Austria (863.00/1426a).

⁶² Schutzstaffel and Sturmabteilung.

⁶³ Austrian Chancellor assassinated in 1934.

863.00/1451 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 13, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received 5 : 50 p. m.]

120. In separate conversations between the Counselor of this Embassy with the Chief of the Political Section of the Foreign Office, the Italian Counselor and the Austrian First Secretary the following was brought out concerning the Austrian development:

1. Chief of the Political Section: The notes of the British and French Governments to the German Government while neither joint nor identic were similar. The same is true of the German replies thereto which were made yesterday afternoon.

Weizsäcker⁶⁴ characterized the British and French notes as "strongly worded protests"; they did not "ask anything" but protested against German action as violating the independence of a third state including the employment of military compulsion.

The German position [was] that this was not a matter for third parties but solely the concern of the German peoples. While the German Government thus regarded the protests as "inadmissible" it was nevertheless not unwilling to answer the point concerning the employment of military force. The notes thereupon express the German position in substance as follows:

A few weeks ago the Chancellor, apprehensive that the internal Austrian situation was becoming dangerous, invited the Austrian Chancellor to discuss the situation with a view to its being met by measures which through friendly developments would guarantee the interests of both states. The Berchtesgaden Agreement if loyally executed by Austria would have had this effect. Inconsistent with this agreement the Austrian Chancellor on March 9, without consultation with Germany and definitely outside of the terms of the Berchtesgaden understanding, undertook to project a plebiscite which in view of the shortness of the time allowed for its preparation and in view of other attendant circumstances was obviously not destined to obtain an expression of the majority desires of the Austrian people. This action not only produced a state of violent and dangerous excitement throughout Austria but having been taken without consultation with members of the Austrian Cabinet created a serious Cabinet crisis. The result was a change in the Austrian Government. It is not true that Germany employed forceful compulsion to bring about this change and it is further untrue as the former Austrian Chancellor is understood to have stated that the German Government served an ultimatum

⁶⁴ Baron von Weizsäcker, Chief of the Political Section of the German Foreign Office; became State Secretary on April 1, 1938.

on the Austrian President that a new Austrian Cabinet should be formed in line with German stipulations. The truth is rather that the question of the despatch of German forces into Austria did not arise until the new Austrian Government had urgently requested the sending of German troops to restore order and prevent bloodshed. It was solely in response to a belief that bloody internal strife in Austria was an imminent possibility that the German Government decided to accede to the request of the Austrian Government. The only danger to peace which could now arise would be the intervention of third powers or the opposition of third powers to an expression of the principle of self-determination on the part of the German peoples.

Weizsäcker stated that no government other than the British and French had taken any action in this matter and added that the German Government had been specifically informed that the Italian, Polish, and Czechoslovak Governments would take no action.

In respect of future developments Weizsäcker expressed himself somewhat cryptically to the effect that the plebiscite in Austria mentioned in the German announcements would take the form of an "election" but he declined to expand on this.

2. Italian Counselor: Magistrati was surprisingly frank in expressing the Italian views on the Austrian developments. He recapitulated antecedent happenings by saying that Rome had not been consulted by Germany in respect of the Berchtesgaden conversations nor had Austria consulted Rome in respect of the project for a plebiscite. Had Vienna consulted Rome concerning the latter Italy would have strongly advised against any such action. He stated that in his view Schuschnigg had been lamentably unwise in the courses he had followed. He said that it should be recalled that the Berchtesgaden conversations took place only a few days after the events of February 4 which had shaken the German Government and that Hitler's statements to Schuschnigg in Berchtesgaden contained "elements of a bluff". Had Schuschnigg contemplated resistance to the German demands he should have done so at that moment; but to accept these demands and then to go back to Vienna and to recant and to endeavor to overthrow his understandings with Germany was suicidal. Above all the announcements of measures for a plebiscite to be held in so short a time was not only impractical but gave an excuse for precipitate German action. Had Schuschnigg been wise he would have adopted a policy of moving slowly and cautiously on the theory that time might run in Austria's favor and that any creation of an immediate issue could not but have unfortunate results.

The Counselor stated that Paris had asked Rome to join in the protest to Berlin. Rome had, however, perceived that events were moving too rapidly to effect any change in their course and that any

such protest would be too late to be of value. He said that from a practical point of view the British and French notes were valueless but that he quite understood this action as animated by a desire "to keep the record straight" especially in view of legislative interpellations.

The Counselor then recounted the German project for Hitler's candidature for President of Austria as reported in Embassy's 119, March 12, 8 p. m.⁶⁵ He said that President Miklas would remain in office and conduct the election. This was in line with Hitler's policy when he had come into power in Germany to the effect that everything should be conducted along ostensibly legal lines. He stated that there was no doubt whatsoever but that Hitler would be elected President of Austria inasmuch as aside from the question as to whether the election would be "fair" the Austrian people would undoubtedly vote overwhelmingly on the side of a display of power. He did not know just what aspects the two Governments would present after Hitler's election as President of Austria. He personally was inclined to believe, however, that Hitler would occupy solely the offices of Chief of State of Germany and President of Austria, that Goering might be appointed Chancellor of Germany and some Austrian as Chancellor of Austria and that Hitler would "rule" both states from Berchtesgaden. He further believed that Hitler would resist a "Prussianization" of Austria, would establish Austrian National Socialism as an Austrian affair and would restrain German National Socialists from intervening in Austria.

The Counselor stated in strict confidence that his Embassy had received word direct from Mussolini that Italy was standing entirely to one side in this entire matter. He understood that Poland was taking a similar position. He said that Goering had informed the Czechoslovak Minister here that "nothing respecting Czechoslovakia was contemplated" but the Counselor speculated as to how long this might last.

The interesting feature of the Counselor's conversation was that while naturally he said nothing directly against the German Government or against German policy his entire attitude was far from being warm toward Germany and appeared to indicate not only a definite resentment and disapproval of Germany's action but a degree of consternation in respect of the Austrian development. At a reference to a press report that German soldiers had shaken hands with the Italian brothers at the Brenner the Counselor winced.

3. Austrian First Secretary: Schwartzberg states in confidence that his Legation had not only received no advices from Vienna concerning Schuschnigg's measures for a plebiscite but had not been

⁶⁵ Not printed.

consulted in any way respecting Austrian policy vis-à-vis a possible German attitude. He was unable to account for Schuschnigg's action but believes that he must have been badly misled by the acclaim which his speech had occasioned and ill advised by his circle of associates. He does not know whether or not Vienna received encouragement from other states. Schwartzberg although an ardent advocate of Austrian independence feels that Schuschnigg's policy was nothing short of madness. The Austrian Legation, aware of the temper of the German Government, had hoped that Vienna would follow the policy of playing for time. He perceives the present situation as a *fait accompli* and definitely believes that nothing whatsoever can be done to alter it.

WILSON

863.00/1446 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 13, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received March 13—5:15 p. m.]

65. I called this morning on my British colleague and was shown an open telegram which he had just received from the Foreign Office containing the substance of a conversation between Lord Halifax and Ribbentrop in which Halifax had strongly condemned the methods used by the German Government to attain its ends in Austria. He had pointed out that these methods would have as a result the slowing up of British efforts to bring about better relations between the two Governments.

I was also shown a telegraphic report from Henderson, the British Ambassador in Berlin, containing assurances which he had received that the Austrian people would be permitted a free plebiscite to decide their future course and that the German troops now in Austria would be withdrawn as soon as tranquility had been restored.

Lord Perth had received instructions to call upon the Duce to ascertain his attitude concerning Austrian developments. Ciano, however, felt that such a call might be misunderstood and Lord Perth had withdrawn the request. Ciano had informed him that the Italian Government could do nothing in the circumstances; that Schuschnigg had proceeded against their advice with regard to the referendum; that 30 percent of the population of Austria were young Nazis thoroughly organized; that the remaining 70 percent were broken up into obstinate parties with no combined organization; and that therefore the 30 percent of young Nazis completely dominated the country and were in a position to carry out their own plans.

I also called this afternoon upon my Austrian colleague to express my sympathy. He feels apparently that the statement of Schuschnigg

had been "crazy" in trying to launch a plebiscite on such short notice and without preparation. He himself had been forbidden by his Government to consult Ciano or Mussolini to ascertain their views with regard to the plebiscite and this he felt had been another serious blunder on the part of Schuschnigg. He thought that the new elections might take place in 3 or 4 weeks and that when they did occur 90 percent of the people would be found in favor of Germany and from that moment Austria as a state, he said, would cease to exist. In reply to my inquiry as to what in his opinion would be the effect on the Catholic Church in Austria and upon the Austrian Jews, Berger Waldenegg replied that they would both have the same treatment as that now accorded to the Church and Jews within Germany.

He made it quite clear that in his opinion "the game was up" and that Austria would soon become a part of the German Reich.

PHILLIPS

863.00/1447 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 13, 1938—11 p. m.

[Received 11:35 p. m.]

77. At 7:30 new press chief informed foreign correspondents that following Miklas' resignation (presumably forced) Chancellor Seyss-Inquart had assumed charge of affairs in accordance with constitution (article 77 (1)).

Quarter hour later announcement of the "constitutional law for the reunion of Austria with the German Reich." Article 1 of law reads "Austria is a province (land) of the German Reich". Remaining articles provide that a free and secret referendum will be issued April 10th to approve this union. "All German" men and women of Austria over 20 years may vote. A simple majority of votes will be decisive, decrees regulating plebiscite will be issued by the Austrian Government, this law effective from today without submission to any legislative authority. Restriction of vote to "German" men and women presumably excludes Jews.

Reliable sources report that Schuschnigg's departure from Austria miscarried. On inquiry press chief has informed American correspondent Schuschnigg still under arrest, house arrest.

Telegram follows.

WILEY

124.68/97 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 14, 1938—2 a. m.
[Received March 13—11:54 p. m.]

78. The French Minister has requested the members of his Legation to repatriate their children. He has not yet received orders to leave. The British Minister has received orders to "report" and leaves tomorrow morning.

The Government formed after the resignation of Schuschnigg has never announced itself officially or otherwise to the Diplomatic Corps. Knowledge of its existence derives only from radio broadcast and the press.

I venture to invite your attention to the status of this Mission. It seems about to lose its diplomatic status. Under such circumstances consular section may thereafter not have consular status since none of us has an exequatur.

I am not in relations with the Government of Austria if any. I would therefore be glad if the Department would endeavor to seek clarification elsewhere.

When other diplomatic representatives leave, perhaps soon, the question may arise whether I should remain. A diplomatic representative accredited to the Schuschnigg government might not make a useful consular representative.

I wish to add that upon clarification of the situation I am of course prepared to remain indefinitely or to leave immediately as the Department may instruct.

Radio announces that German and Austrian Armies have been consolidated under command of General von Bock of the Eighth Army.

Bürckel who represented NSDAP⁶⁶ in Saar now appointed party chief for Austria. Will presumably supervise plebiscite.

Representatives of every conceivably German service except Fire Department already in Vienna.

WILEY

863.00/1464 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 14, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received March 14—12:40 p. m.]

123. The following are some of the miscellaneous measures announced here in connection with the incorporating of Austria within the Reich.

⁶⁶ National-Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei.

1. Gauleiter Bürckel who directed the administrative incorporation of the Saar within Germany is to reorganize the National Socialist Party in Austria and as acting leader of the party will be in charge of the preparations for the plebiscite.

2. In a decree dated March 13 Hitler declared the Austrian Army as of that date a component part of the German Army and ordered all members of the "former Austrian Army" immediately to swear allegiance to him as Commander-in-Chief.

As "General of the German Eighth Army", General von Bock was named commander of the "present German army within the Austrian boundaries".

3. German Minister of Economics Funk sent a telegram to the corresponding Austrian Minister stating that German economy greets the economy of a free German Austria which under Nazi leadership, henceforth will participate in the "powerful German economic upswing under the Four Year Plan".⁶⁷ Simultaneously it has been announced that at the request of the Austrian Government the 40% reduction of Austrian exports to Germany which has been in effect since November 1, 1937, is repealed as of today. (No information respecting this trade reduction had been previously announced here.)

4. Darre becomes farm leader for Austria.

5. Austrian leaders of the German Labor Front and the S. A. in Austria are named. The erstwhile Austrian labor organization is to be liquidated.

6. The property of the Fatherland Front is sequestered for the benefit of the community and the National Socialist Party is to occupy its office buildings.

7. Reich youth leader Schirach takes over the Austrian youth and Austrian customs stations are to be made youth hostels.

8. The Vienna radio becomes part of the German system and the *Vienna Telegraph* becomes a party paper under the title of *NS Telegraph*.

9. Representatives of the Austrian Evangelical Church have pronounced the union of that church with the German Evangelical Church.

10. Schuschnigg has been arrested at Vienna and at present remains in the custody of General Kraus "whom he had insulted".

11. The Austrian Ministers in London, Paris, and Praha have been retired.

12. Party golden honoresco conferred upon former Ambassador von Papen in appreciation of his cooperation.

13. In order to stop "Jewish capital flight" Austrian postal authorities have power to prevent despatch outside the country of money and securities.

14. Hitler yesterday addressed the following telegram to the Italian Premier: "Mussolini I will never forget this!"

WILSON

⁶⁷ For correspondence regarding the Four Year Plan, see *Foreign Relations*, 1938, vol. II, pp. 140 ff.

863.00/1454 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 14, 1938—2 p. m.
 [Received March 14—10:20 a. m.]

79. My 77, March 13, 11 p. m. Article 1 of Reich law published this morning dated Linz, March 13, effective same date declares Austrian constitutional law of March 13 concerning reunion of Austria with Germany to be also Reich law. Article 2 states that existing Austrian laws remain in effect until further notice. Labor Front established in Austria and leader authorized to assume control of Austrian League of Trade Unions and to liquidate the sneaks [*sic*] (Socialist Labor Organization in former Patriotic Front).

National political referat abolished. Pembaur garrisoned staff will now constitute themselves into agency to receive claims for damages suffered in the past by National Socialists. Hitler expected to arrive Vienna this afternoon.

WILEY

863.00/1469 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 14, 1938—4 p. m.
 [Received March 14—2:30 p. m.]

124. Inquiry at the Foreign Office reveals that Ribbentrop and Weizsaecker are departing by plane this afternoon for Vienna in order to discuss with the Austrian authorities a number of questions involving an ambassador, the status of foreign missions in Vienna and that of Austrian missions abroad. There will also be numerous and difficult questions of treaty relationships of third nations to Austria.

No formal attitude has yet been worked out but Foreign Office officials are inclined to think that from today, with the promulgation of law both in Germany and Austria, Austria becomes an integral part of the German Reich. The plebiscite to be held on April 10 is regarded as a "confirmation" somewhat as was the practice when Hitler assumed the Presidency on the death of Hindenburg and that action was subsequently "confirmed" by a vote in Germany.

It is believed at the Foreign Office that there will be no more reason for foreign states to maintain diplomatic representatives in Vienna than there is for them to retain such representatives in any other city in Germany. It is true that there is precedent for foreign diplomatic representatives in Munich, Stuttgart and elsewhere following the inauguration of the German Empire but at that time the German states were in confederation and Germany had not been centralized and amalgamated to the present extent.

Prince Bismarck⁶⁸ to whom I was talking made it very clear that the German Government has not yet assumed a definite attitude on any of these questions and that the foregoing represents merely the tentative conception of members of the Foreign Office.

WILSON

863.00/1436½

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] March 14, 1938.

The German Ambassador⁶⁹ came in to see me this evening immediately after leaving the Secretary of State. The Ambassador told me that he had handed to the Secretary in its German text a formal communication⁷⁰ he had been instructed by his Government to make to the Government of the United States quoting the texts of a German decree and of an Austrian decree promulgated yesterday declaring the union of Austria with the German Reich. The Ambassador remarked that these texts had been published by the press here and that he supposed I had seen them. I said that I had and that I thought they also had been telegraphed to the Department by our missions in Berlin and in Vienna. I asked the Ambassador if there was anything further in the communication he had delivered to this Government other than the text of these two decrees and he said merely the further statement that the Austrian Legation and the Austrian Consulates in the United States had been instructed to turn over their archives and to subordinate themselves to the German Embassy in Washington and to the nearest German consular officers. I made no comment.

The Ambassador seemed to find my failure to make any further remark somewhat exasperating and he gave me the impression of laboring under a very considerable degree of nervous excitement and tension. He then broke out with the remark "This is a great day, a wonderful day, for Germany". I again made no comment.

Mr. Dieckhoff then embarked upon a tirade which lasted certainly for ten minutes and which, in view of his usually extremely courteous and pleasant manner and in view of the fifteen years I have known him and have maintained extremely friendly personal relations with him, struck me as all the more extraordinary. He commenced with the assertion that no matter what Germany did, the rest of the world was always ready to inveigh against her, to question her good faith,

⁶⁸ Prince Otto Christian von Bismarck, Deputy Head of the Political Department of the German Foreign Office.

⁶⁹ Hans Heinrich Dieckhoff.

⁷⁰ For translation of communication, see Department of State, *Press Releases*, March 19, 1938, p. 374, or *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, series D, vol. I, document No. 378, p. 594.

to malign and maliciously to misinterpret her actions and her purposes, and that the present moment was another example of that phenomenon. He said Austria has always desired an *Anschluss* with Germany, and both the Weimar and the Austrian constitutions provided for such amalgamation. Only through the inequity of the Versailles⁷¹ and the Saint-Germain treaties, said the Ambassador, was such a union made impossible at the end of the World War. He continued, saying that it was now evident to the whole world that the Austrian people unanimously desired to become an integral part of the German Reich.

At that point I interjected and said that so far as the impression of the world was concerned, it would seem to me that the impression created had been that the Austrian people had not been given an opportunity of determining that question and that the use of physical force must necessarily be considered as having obscured any considered and expressed determination by the Austrian people of what they themselves desired.

The Ambassador then went on to exclaim, "If you were in Vienna today you would not feel that way. You would see for yourself that every Austrian wishes to become a citizen of the German Reich". To this I made no comment.

The Ambassador then continued by stating, "And if the Austrians are not permitted to have a plebiscite, that would be nothing new. You will remember that when the French occupied Alsace and Lorraine after the World War, Poincaré⁷² announced that the mere manner in which French troops had been received by the populace in those two provinces was sufficient proof that the citizens of Alsace and of Lorraine desired to become Frenchmen once more". At this point I mentioned that it seemed to me that the precedent selected by the Ambassador was not a singularly happy one.

The Ambassador then went on to revile the press in the United States. He said that the news columns and the editorials in all of the American newspapers were filled with calumny and lies and that no effort was ever made to treat Germany or German policy objectively or even to deal with the issues in an impartial manner.

I reminded the Ambassador that we had had many conversations in the past months on the subject of the relations between our two countries and on the subject of the press, both in the United States and in Germany. I reminded him that it was absolutely impossible for the press or the people of the United States to take a dispassionate point of view with regard to certain occurrences which had taken place during recent years in Germany. I stated to him that there

⁷¹ See article 80 of the Treaty of Peace, signed June 28, 1919, *Foreign Relations*, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, vol. XIII, p. 198.

⁷² Raymond Poincaré, President of France, 1913-20.

was instinct in the spirit of every American citizen two great principles upon which the United States had been founded and had grown to its present stature. I said these two principles were the freedom of religious worship and the right of free speech and of a free press. I told the Ambassador that, as I had said to him frequently, so long as there were very great elements in our population who saw the members of their own race or of their own religion in Germany deprived of these rights which were considered fundamental by every American citizen, that prejudice would persist and I was sure that with his knowledge of human nature and with his long acquaintance with this country, he must realize that that was the fact.

The Ambassador then remarked, "But the Jews here are only a small proportion of your population. Why should you permit them to dominate the press and to dominate public opinion?"

I replied that while the Jewish element in the population of the United States was, as he said, only a small percentage of our total population, nevertheless, the people of the United States felt that that element among them was as much a part of the United States as any other element of the population; that we felt they had contributed greatly to the progress and to the well-being of the nation; and that while I could under no conditions accept the Ambassador's statement that our press or our public opinion was dominated by the Jewish element in our population, nevertheless, in view of the fact that most Americans had Jewish friends whom they regarded highly and whom they admired as fellow citizens, the feelings and the sufferings of this part of our people very naturally necessarily had its effect upon the views and sentiments of the non-Jewish part of our population. I reminded the Ambassador in as much as he was undertaking to dissect the component parts of public opinion in the United States, that the members of other churches, both Catholic and Protestant, felt quite as strongly with regard to the two principles I had mentioned as the Jewish element in the United States.

I reminded the Ambassador that in previous conversations I had told him of my own early friendships in Germany and of the great benefits I as an individual had received from those friendships, and of the cultural benefits I had been privileged to obtain from Germany, and that therefore he knew that as an individual I was far from prejudiced and had always endeavored to see both sides to the German contention since the War and had fully appreciated the fact that in their dealings with Germany during the past twenty years injustices had been committed by other powers which I had always hoped would some day be righted through peaceful and reasonable negotiations such as those which Stresemann⁷³ had endeavored to undertake. I

⁷³ Gustav Stresemann, German Foreign Minister from 1923 until his death in 1929.

stated, however, that in view of his knowledge of the American people and of the way in which public opinion in the United States reacted, the Ambassador would realize that the feeling now existing on the part of so large a proportion of our population would be very greatly intensified if new acts of repression and persecution were undertaken by the German authorities against Austrian citizens because of the latter's religious beliefs.

The Ambassador concluded our conversation by stating in the most vehement manner that the German Government as a result of its experience with the American press during the past years from which it had never received anything except malignant and malicious treatment would not be greatly concerned by any intensification of that feeling on the part of the press in this country.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

863.00/1468 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 14, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received March 14—3:43 p. m.]

84. From Military Attaché. Thousands of German troops of all arms, complete organizations with full equipment horse and motor transportation have poured into Austria in the last 24 hours by rail, motor and auto bus. German police both city and country S. S. and S. A. by the hundreds in Vienna. Estimate number German troops now in Austria 100,000. Of these 30,000 are in and around Vienna. Mechanised corps with parts or all of Second and Third Divisions present. All membership former Austrian Federal Army to take oath of allegiance to Hitler immediately.

WILEY

740.00/323 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Davies) to the Secretary of State

MOSCOW, March 14, 1938—9 p. m.
[Received March 14—5:40 p. m.]

69. 1. Litvinov⁷⁴ told me today during the course of a conversation that the European situation was critically dangerous; that the Soviet Foreign Office had been advised formally of the incorporation of

⁷⁴ Maxim M. Litvinov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union.

Austria in the German Reich; that the Austrian Minister had already left Moscow several days ago; that the Chargé d'Affaires was leaving and that the Legation would practically be closed; that he assumed that diplomatic representations of all countries in Vienna would now be terminated; that he definitely believed that responsibility for Austria rested on the Chamberlain Government as a result of the Halifax and similar conversations indicating English acquiescence; that in his opinion in view of developments Chamberlain would encounter difficulty in arranging a satisfactory agreement with Mussolini's acquiescence, Hitler had probably agreed to support Mussolini in the Mediterranean and Spain; that for the immediate present Czechoslovakia was secure but such security was only temporary; that in the event of German attack on Czechoslovakia France in view of her treaty would of course come to the support of Czechoslovakia "otherwise it will also be the end of France"; that under these conditions England would be compelled to come in and support France.

2. In answer to my question he stated that a European war was definitely a possibility this summer and that the aggressiveness of Germany would probably again manifest itself this year.

3. The Czechoslovak Minister advised me today that Czechoslovakia had received a few days ago assurances from Germany that it had no hostile intent; and that Czechoslovakia was not making preparations for immediate military resistance; that in fact the decision with respect to this matter rested not with Czechoslovakia but with France and England.

4. The Austrian Chargé d'Affaires informed a member of my staff this evening that although no definite decision has been reached he may depart tomorrow for Vienna for "a week or 10 days" leaving no diplomatic officer in the Mission.

DAVIES

863.00/1475 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 15, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received March 15—11:50 a. m.]

86. New press chief has just confirmed to the Legation that Austrian Foreign Minister turned over affairs of Ministry this morning to Ribbentrop who arrived last night.

WILEY

868.00/1485 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, March 15, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received March 15—3:25 p. m.]

217. The Prime Minister's speech⁷⁵ in the House of Commons yesterday gives the summary of the events leading up to the German occupation in Austria. He describes the strong British protest of March 11 "against such use of cohesion backed by force". Such action was bound "to produce the gravest consequences of which it was impossible to foretell the issue". He then referred to the full text of Von Neurath's opportunities, [*sic*]⁷⁶ revealing for the first time the arrogance and thinly veiled contempt with which the German Government met the British representations. His statement that Germany's method "calls for the severest condemnation" was met with loud cheers. Concerning Czechoslovakia, however, he in no way committed the British Government to support that country in case of attack. He concluded by stating that Great Britain's defense program would have to be reviewed in the light of the development in the international situation.

The debate that followed revealed a most striking unanimity in the House for accelerating the rearmament and defense program and for resisting German expansion in Europe and the colonies. This unanimity extends to all sections of press comment this morning which agrees that preparedness must be speeded up. The opposition papers, however, advocate the immediate organization of collective security as the only means of ultimately defending the British Empire.

There is much speculation in the press as to what measures the Government will adopt to stimulate rearmament. The consensus is that some sort of industrial mobilization for aircraft production will ensue.

The references to Anglo-German relations in Ward Price's report in the *Daily Mail* of his interview with Hitler on Sunday have received some attention here. When asked if developments in Austria would have any effect on the Anglo-German conversations, Hitler is reported to have replied "on our side, none at all, and I hope [none] on the British side. What harm have we done to any foreign country? Whose interests have we hurt by falling in with the will of the overwhelming majority of the Austrian people to become

⁷⁵ For text of speech, see *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, 3d ser., vol. I, document No. 79, p. 44.

⁷⁶ This apparently refers to Baron von Neurath's communication in reply to the British protest of March 11; see *ibid.*, document No. 56, p. 30.

Germans?" When asked for his reaction to the Anglo-French note of protest, Hitler is quoted as saying "I cannot understand it. These people here are Germans."

KENNEDY

863.00/1519: Telegram (part air)

The Minister in Rumania (Gunther) to the Secretary of State

BUCHAREST, March 15, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received March 18—8:10 a. m.]

40. After discussion of Austria's plight with Minister for Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary and others I would say that the Rumanian Government though watchful for danger signs takes on the whole a calm view relying upon Polish alliance, its engagements with Little and Balkan Ententes and with France, the latter for what it is worth. The lack of interest and firmness to date of England is deplored. The new Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Comnen, for several years Rumanian Minister in Berlin who knows Hitler quite well and had many opportunities of conversation with him, is convinced that Hitler never would have attempted this coup if he had felt there was any danger of war from it; also that Hitler is afraid of war and that a show of determination would deter him from future coups. In support of this view he instances the Italian mobilization on the Brenner July 15, 1934. I am inclined to concur in this opinion.

GUNTHER

863.00/1442½

The British Ambassador (Lindsay) to the Under Secretary of State (Welles)

WASHINGTON, March 16, 1938.

DEAR MR. WELLES: I enclose a confirmatory copy of a message just received from London which has already been conveyed to Mr. Pierrepont Moffat of your Department by telephone.

I am instructed to communicate this message to the United States Government.

Yours sincerely,

R. C. LINDSAY

[Enclosure]

The British Embassy to the Department of State

In a speech which Lord Halifax is making in the House of Lords this afternoon the following passage will occur.

"His Majesty's Government are therefore bound to recognise that the Austrian State has now been abolished as an international entity and is in process of being completely absorbed into the German Reich. They do so indeed without waiting for the plebiscite, the result of which, in view of the circumstances in which it is going to be held, is a foregone conclusion."

This statement foreshadows the intention of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to recognise the *fait accompli* of the absorption of Austria in the German Reich. They are considering the time and method of according recognition and a further telegram on this point is awaited.

MARCH 16, 1938.

863.00/1515 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 16, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 10:30 p. m.]

102. Hitler left for Germany last night, press announces he will return for country-wide plebiscite campaign. Jews excluded from vote in plebiscite, text of which to read "Do you adhere to our leader Adolf Hitler and thus to the reunion of Austria with the German Reich which was carried through on March 13, 1938?"

Appointment Seyss-Inquart as Reichstatthalter⁷⁷ now officially announced. Steinhausel implicated in Dollfuss assassination now Chief of Police Vienna. Frick⁷⁸ and Schacht⁷⁹ in Vienna.

Process of taking over Austrian police in German system under way. Numerous police and *gendarmérie* formations sworn in today. Rumored transfer to North Germany of large numbers Austrian police whose place is to be filled by Reich police.

Regarding army see Military Attaché's telegrams.

Reports of arrests and details of Nazi "clean up" which reach the Legation are identical with those in the American press. This is period of efficient terrorism. Comprehensive list of "enemies" had been carefully prepared. Money and private property being seized wholesale. Jewish department stores plundered. Suicides continue. Last night Major Fey killed wife and child and self.

Large percentage "non-Aryans" in Vienna implies situation of great and tragic consequences.

Austrian Jews unable to leave. Many with American connections calling at Legation.

⁷⁷ This office was that of Governor and personal representative of the Führer, which existed at the time for Bavaria and other provinces.

⁷⁸ Wilhelm Frick, Reich Minister of the Interior.

⁷⁹ Hjalmar Schacht, Reich Minister without Portfolio.

Connection established with several branches of police but effective intervention difficult because of their confused organization.

Two Americans under arrest Walter Salus whereabouts unknown and Gisela Gehbin in Elizabeth Promenade. Latter charged with Comintern activities. I understand she is interested in publishing business here and London, and put out Schuschnigg's recent book *Throes [Thrice] Austria*.^{79a} Officers of the Legation still endeavoring interview her.

Claims of Austrian creditors arising from Austro-German clearing agreement to be paid immediately. Exchange fixed at 2 schillings to 1 mark.

Numerous Nazi relief and work programs announced.

Situation here is worse than it ever was in Berlin.

WILEY

863.00/1509 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 16, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received March 16—5:12 p. m.]

67. My March 13, 11 a. m.⁸⁰ In his speech before the Chamber of Deputies this afternoon Mussolini reviewed the recent history of Austro-Italian relations stating that the policy of the Rome protocols had been altered by changed conditions in Europe, by the attitude of the sanctionist powers which had tried to strangle Italy and by creation of the Rome-Berlin Axis. He explained that he had counselled Austria to make terms with Germany and in April 1937 had told Schuschnigg that the independence of Austria was a matter which concerned Austria primarily and that the Rome-Berlin Axis was the fundamental base of Italian policy. With regard to the plebiscite decreed by Schuschnigg the Duce said that when he learned of it on March 7 he had counselled against it.

To those who had asked why Italy had not intervened to save Austria Mussolini replied that Italy had never assumed any written or verbal pledge to protect Austrian independence and that the Austrians themselves would have been the first to resist any such intervention since recent events had shown that the majority of Austrians were in favor of the *Anschluss*, adding that it was better to accept rather than oppose an inevitable historic development.

With reference to any possible menace implied by the presence of Germany on Italy's frontier Mussolini stated that Hitler's assurances

^{79a} The original title of this book, first published at Vienna in 1937, was *Dreimal Österreich*. The American edition had the title *My Austria*; the British edition, *Farewell Austria*, both published in 1938.

⁸⁰ Not printed.

on this point had been categorical and that moreover Italy's frontiers were sacred and would be defended. He said that in German eyes also the Austrian crisis had been a test of the Rome-Berlin Axis and that both countries now know that it was not a diplomatic construction only for ordinary times but a solid base for their relations founded on similar ideology and manner of life. He concluded that the two could now march together side by side to bring about peaceful collaboration among all peoples.

While it seems apparent that the speech was intended in the first instance to reassure public opinion in Italy and to answer local criticism which in many circles has manifested the fear that Italy now plays a secondary role in the Rome-Berlin partnership, the Duce apparently attempted also to reaffirm the solidarity of the Rome-Berlin Axis and to demonstrate that although Italy may have had little to say in the development of recent events, its acceptance of an inevitable development has not weakened its position and that its fundamental policy continues to be based upon the association with Germany.

His reference to the inviolability of Italian frontiers may also be deemed to constitute an answer to those critics in Italy and abroad who infer that among the next German moves will be infiltration among the German-speaking populations of the Tyrol.

PHILLIPS

124.63/97a

The Assistant Secretary of State (Messersmith) to the Chargé in Austria (Wiley)

[Extract]

WASHINGTON, March 16, 1938.

DEAR WILEY: There is so much that I would like to write you about that I feel that at the best this letter will be very sketchy but there are just a few things I want to tell you for your background. First of all, let me say that words would be inadequate to tell you how I feel about developments in the Austrian and general situation and how much my heart goes out to our Austrian friends. The barbaric hordes have swept over Austria again and, while the situation must be recognized as temporarily gone, I am for one not yet sure that German domination of Austria is a permanent matter. Certainly for the present the *status quo* will have to be reckoned with and no one can foretell the future. I personally have had and have no illusions and think there is no doubt but that the steam roller will move on unless major developments take place in the general picture.

We are faced by some important decisions here. First of all, you can take it that there will be no change in our policy no matter what may take place elsewhere. The President and the Secretary are determined

that we shall hold on to the line that we have taken. There will be no swerving from it in any detail. The Secretary is making a very carefully prepared speech on Thursday⁸¹ of this week before the Press Club on our foreign policy and you will get a copy of it in due course in the pouch. It should be carefully read by every member of the staff and every word in it must be carefully weighed by our people for they have been so weighed here. It should give all of our people abroad, as well as our people at home, a very clear conception of the broad lines of our policy to which we intend to adhere. I am telling you this as I think it will be interesting for you to know that we intend to stick to these principles.

Now as to the immediate future of our establishment in Vienna. We got your telegram No. 78 of March 14, 2 p. m. [*a. m.*] and are not making any reply for the present as decisions are involved which we do not intend to make now and you will appreciate that they are decisions of a major character. We have not recognized the puppet state of Manchukuo and have no intention of doing so for the present. We have not yet recognized Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia and, although that situation is a little different from that of Manchukuo, the basic principle is the same. Whether we will recognize what we can only see as the forcible absorption of Austria is still another question presented in a slightly different form but we may find the basic principle involved identic. Although the German Ambassador has told us here that the Austrian Legation and Consulates have been turned over to him, we have no word from the Austrian Minister. We see no reason for being in a hurry. We are studying the basic legal questions. We will have to make a decision sometime but we have not made it yet and may be long in making it, whichever way it is made. It is an important decision not only as respects our establishment but as it affects our economic relations with Austria under our trade agreements program and general most-favored-nation treatment which she is now enjoying. All these questions you will appreciate require the most careful study.

We are in a somewhat better position than some of the other Governments as we have no Minister whose status is in question and no officer assigned there who has to leave because of the change in order to avoid serious inconveniences. All of our career Foreign Service officers there have dual commissions. It is correct, I believe, as you point out in your telegram, that none of our career officers has an exequatur but you can go back to the memoranda which I made of the conversations I had sometime back with the Secretary General

⁸¹ March 17; for text of speech, see Department of State, *Our Foreign Policy: Address by the Honorable Cordell Hull, Washington, March 17, 1938* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1938).

of the Austrian Foreign Office in which he made it clear that, so far as the Austrian Government is concerned, it was not interested in the question of exequaturs and did not see any reason why we should be if they were not. It was the receiving state which was principally interested in exequaturs as, so far as the sending state is concerned, the officer executes his functions under the statutes of the sending state and exequatur from the receiving state is not necessary to the legality of his acts in the sending country. The Foreign Office said that they were receiving our officers as diplomatic officers but took it for granted that they would exercise any consular functions which our Government might choose to give them. That was a matter of no concern to them and was quite agreeable to them. Of course the situation is changed through the disappearance of the Austrian Government but certainly we must take it that the new Government is taking over the obligations of the old in this respect. You can function in your capacity as Consul General and the other officers can function in their consular capacity and I am wondering whether the new authorities will question the situation, at least for the present. In any event, this is the way in which we wish you to proceed as it seems the correct way. Whenever we take any decisions in principle, you will of course be informed.

It is very important that we have a well functioning consular establishment in Vienna and I am sure that you appreciate this. The functions which you can perform so far as we are concerned as Consul General are in many respects more important even than those which you could perform as Chargé d'Affaires either before or now. You and the other officers in Vienna have a very real opportunity for public service, which I am sure you appreciate, and I know we can depend upon you all.

Sincerely yours,

G. S. MESSERSMITH

863.00/1518 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 17, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received March 17—2 p. m.]

129. The March 16th issue of the *Reichsgesetzblatt* contains the following important dispositions with respect to Austria which entered into effect as of that date.

1. All Reich laws promulgated since the entry into force the law of reunion of Austria with Germany of March 13, 1938 likewise apply to Austria unless exceptions are specified.

2. The following earlier Reich laws are henceforth to apply in Austria annulling all Anglo-French [*sic*] provisions:

(a) The Reich flag law of September 15, 1935 with the provision that Jews are forbidden to display the colors.

(b) The law of December 14, 1933 against the formation of new parties.

(c) The law of December 1, 1933 and July 3, 1934 for the protection of the unity of party and state.

(d) The Reichstatthalter law of January 30, 1935 with the proviso that instructions of Reich Ministers to the Reichstatthalter in Austria require until further notice the endorsement of the Reich Minister of the Interior.

(e) The decree of October 18, 1936 for the execution of the Four Year Plan.

(f) The law of February 3, 1938 instituting a registration obligation for German nationals abroad.

3. Seyss-Inquart is named "Reichstatthalter in Austria".

4. The Austrian Federal Government henceforth bears the designation "Austrian Provincial Government" (Landesregierung). It is to be situated in Vienna and the Reichstatthalter will direct and distribute its functions.

5. The Reich Minister of the Interior is to be the central authority to effect the incorporation of Austria within the Reich. He may delegate his authority to a "Reich Commissioner for Austria" who is to be stationed in Vienna and is to be named jointly by the Reich Minister of the Interior and the Reich Commissioner for the Four Year Plan. The latter may also confer authority upon the Reich Commissioner for Austria.

Comment—the provision for a Reich Commissioner for Austria (as yet unnamed) bears comparison with the similar step taken for the reincorporation of the Saar.

WILSON

863.00/1520 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 18, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received March 18—9 a. m.]

133. The following measures with respect to Austria were enacted in laws signed yesterday which go into force immediately.

1. The Reichsmark is made legal tender in Austria beside the schilling at the rate of 1 mark equal 1.5 schillings.

2. Reich Minister of Economics is authorized to amend all existing payment restrictions between Germany and Austria or to cancel them wholly or partially.

3. Reich Minister of Finance is authorized to declare partially or entirely duty free goods of Austrian origin.

4. The management of the Austrian National Bank is given over to the Reichsbank and the National Bank will be liquidated by the latter for the account of the Reich. The entire personnel of the Austrian National Bank is likewise taken over.

5. The German railroads take over the Austrian Federal railroads both as to capital and operation.

WILSON

863.00/1528 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 18, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received March 18—12:20 p. m.]

111. Numerous laws and regulations affecting Austria announced Berlin which I suppose Embassy is reporting.

British Minister telephoned from London. He confidentially informed British Chargé d'Affaires that a Consul General would arrive about April 15th.

French Legation doubtful whether French Minister will return.

Nuncio has had no instructions and has not been able to establish relations with anyone. States Germans seem to have adopted certain conditions that diplomatic missions do not exist and never existed. He considers situation church bad and that of "non-Aryans" one-third of Vienna population utterly hopeless. He anticipates intensified terror after so-called plebiscite April 10 and thinks Miklas also arrested and fears that he, Schuschnigg, Hornbostel, et cetera, transported indefinitely perhaps killed in order to prevent their correcting German allegations regarding methods used vis-à-vis Austria.

Diplomatic status and immunity getting more tenuous every day and question of free entry has not been worked out. This is particularly important in respect of gasoline since we are compelled to use our cars constantly for protection cases. Also understand certain foodstuffs may be rationed.

Reference telegram No. 131, March 17, 8 p. m. from Berlin.⁸² Should I try to establish unofficial relations with Von Stein?⁸³ He was German Counsellor here.

WILEY

⁸² Not printed.

⁸³ In telegram No. 40, March 19, noon, the Secretary of State stated that he had no objection to the Chargé in Austria seeing Von Stein (363.6315/9).

863.00/1529 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 18, 1938—8 p. m.
 [Received March 18—4: 52 p. m.]

115. Have just seen Polish Minister. He said he talked with Ribbentrop when here. Latter informed him German point of view was that all treaties with Austria became juridically extinct upon incorporation in Reich. Germany, however, would make every effort to meet questions which might arise in equitable manner. Ribbentrop added that Legation in Vienna would be given diplomatic immunities until April 10.

An American who is entirely reliable spent last evening with group composed of officials and party members. Von Stumm of the Foreign Office stated that Germany would be in Czechoslovakia before summer. Czechs would be given possibility of remaining undisturbed within own small racial frontiers provided they gave complete autonomy to Sudeten Germans.

Schwerin, editor of *Essener National Zeitung*, told informant that project for Schuschnigg's trial for high treason had been abandoned. He would be transferred to Dachau and "broken".

WILEY

701.6311/390b : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)⁸⁴

WASHINGTON, March 19, 1938—3 p. m.

27. For your information. The following statement was made to the press by the Department on March 19, 1938: ⁸⁵

"On March 17, 1938, the Minister of the Republic of Austria, Mr. Edgar Prochnik, informed the Department of State that, as a result of the developments which have occurred in Austria, that country has ceased to exist as an independent nation and has been incorporated in the German Reich; that therefore the Austrian mission to this country, of which he has been the head, has been abolished; and that the affairs of the mission have been taken over by the Embassy of Germany. The German Ambassador has informed the Department of State that he has assumed the functions hitherto performed by the Minister of Austria.

"The events pertaining to the changes which have taken place in the status of the Austrian Republic will necessitate, on the part of the Government of the United States, a number of technical steps, which are now being given appropriate consideration."

At his press conference today the Secretary of State, in response to inquiries concerning the Austrian incident, said:

⁸⁴ The same telegram was sent on the same day to the Chargé in Austria as No. 41.

⁸⁵ Department of State, *Press Releases*, March 19, 1938, p. 375.

"The day before yesterday I discussed fully the principles governing peaceful and orderly international relations and their application to present conditions in European and other world areas.

"The extent to which the Austrian incident, or any similar incident, is calculated to endanger the maintenance of peace and the preservation of the principles in which this Government believes is of course a matter of serious concern to the Government of the United States."

HULL

863.00/1603

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

VIENNA, March 19, 1938.

[Received March 30.]

SIR: Supplementing my despatch No. 161 of March 19, 1938,⁸⁶ I have the honor to review certain of the events which culminated in the incorporation of Austria in the German Reich.

There is, however, an element of tragedy in the fact that there was no period of transition. The prisons are filled with those who had no chance to flee.

From sources of information which I consider reliable I am informed that Seyss-Inquart himself was duped by the German tactics. He had no idea that the independence of Austria would be extinguished. He foresaw a National Socialist Austria with himself as Chancellor. This is confirmed by a foreign correspondent who had the opportunity of talking privately with Seyss-Inquart when he was en route to Linz on March 5. Seyss-Inquart told him categorically that the independence of Austria would be maintained.

Also Dr. Wilhelm Wolf, who succeeded Dr. Guido Schmidt as Minister for Foreign Affairs, entered office believing that he was to be a member of the cabinet of an independent state. The speech which he delivered whereby he turned over the Foreign Office to Herr Ribbentrop was put in his hands already drafted fifteen minutes before he was to speak. I am told it came as a considerable shock to him. My impression is that the German Government and National Socialist Party in Germany took over Austria by a series of surprise moves which the local National Socialist leaders were obliged to accept with the best grace they could. Rumors have it that disillusionment in Austrian Nazi circles has not been long in coming. The "plums" are going to the German Party comrades.

⁸⁶ Not printed.

Despite the great reception which was given to Hitler when he came to Vienna, I have seen nothing to change my opinion that the National Socialist movement in Austria is definitely a minority movement. The crowds which welcomed Hitler were great in number. An important percentage, such as school children, government functionaries and clerks, veterans' organizations, etc., were given orders to turn out. That part of the populace which showed great and spontaneous enthusiasm may be estimated as not representing more than a small fraction of the population. It may be recalled that when Napoleon entered Vienna there were those who threw roses in his path. The hundreds who visit the Legation each day bring in stories of grief and tragedy.

The Polish Minister, M. Gawronsky, who has always been pronouncedly Nazi in his sympathies and whose connections were almost entirely Nazi, states that if there were to be a really free election "today" for union with National Socialist Germany, not ten percent of the population would vote in favor. He foresees, though, that the plebiscite of April 10 will be conducted in such a way as to assure a gigantic victory for Hitler.

Many priests have been arrested. The Bishop of Graz has been two days in prison, and the Prince Bishop of Salzburg was placed under house arrest for three days. Cardinal Innitzer, at the instance of Seyss-Inquart, called in person upon Hitler in the Hotel Imperial and had a fifteen minute interview with him. Subsequently a statement appeared in the press on March 16 which stated that the Cardinal had expressed his joy to Hitler at the "reunion" of German Austria with the Reich and the will of the Austrian Catholics to work with all their strength at the German reconstruction. The Nuncio tells me in confidence that while Cardinal Innitzer did sign a statement, the text of the one which appeared was not that which he had approved. The Nuncio added that Cardinal Innitzer was a weak man. Monsignor Cicognani also remarked that he feared the situation had only one solution: war.

As present the greatest activity prevails in ferreting out Austrian official archives. When the Wilhelmstrasse learns the exact nature of the relations between Italy and Austria, the results may be illuminating and call for some private explaining.

Various estimates of arrests have reached me. Probably in Vienna many thousands have been detained. The S. S., the S. A. and the Gestapo are active day and night. Houses are being searched; money, private property, even the knives, forks and spoons are being confiscated in Jewish homes. The last day or so added attention is being paid to Legitimists. As I write this, the news reaches me that Prince Fürstenberg, an ex-Ambassador and a man of advanced years, has just been taken from his home. Princess Starhemberg, the mother

of Prince Ernst Rüdiger Starhemberg, has also been detained, though subsequently released.

President Miklas allegedly has made his peace with the new régime. There will be a pension, a home, a car and even a sentinel.

First hand accounts of conditions in the prisons, congestion, treatment of prisoners, lack of sanitary facilities, etc., are most distressing.

The Chancellor is still under guard somewhere in the Belvedere. The night of the debacle, the Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires was asked by telephone if he would motor Dr. von Schuschnigg to Hungary. He agreed to do so, but the Chancellor never appeared. I am told on reliable authority that three different times since then arrangements have been made for him to leave the country, but that each time he refused to go. The obvious interpretation is that he has declined to sign certain statements which would substantiate the euphemistic German version of what took place. Rumor has it that he will not be tried for high treason but interned at Dachau.

There are rumors in the Diplomatic Corps of a monster "Moscow trial" at which ex-government officials will be tried. I doubt this seriously. There may, though, be some sort of an auto-da-fé in order to whitewash the Nazis of complicity in the murder of Dollfuss, to make Planetta a martyr instead of an assassin.

The "suicides" of Major Fey and Neustädter-Stürmer may indicate where the "guilt" will fall. In this connection it may be recalled that the role played by Major Fey and others has never been fully clarified. The arrest of Mr. Louis Rothschild⁸⁷ and the attention which is being paid to the archives of the Credit-Anstalt, the Phoenix, etc., indicates that much financial dirty linen will be re-washed, probably very much in public, in an endeavor to establish moral justification for anti-Semitic measures.

Bürgermeister Schmitz, Director von Hornbostel of the Foreign Office and a long series of other high government officials are under arrest.

Dr. Guido Schmidt will apparently receive a post in Germany. Five minor officials of the Foreign Office will also be retained in public service.

There are varying estimates of the amount of the non-Aryan element of the population of Vienna. The orthodox Jews, baptized Jews, those partly Jewish and those married to Jews are believed to approximate about a third of the population of the city. The full force of the blow has come so suddenly and the measures which have been taken against them are so drastic that within a short time a condition of great distress may be expected, if it is not already here.

⁸⁷ Austrian banker.

The most interesting aspect of the demise of Austria and the advance of Germany to the Brenner is the effect the new situation will have on the Rome-Berlin axis.

The axis has received a blow. However, the weakness of the Chamberlain-Halifax government and the cabinet crisis in France has apparently decided Mussolini to throw in his lot with Hitler. The axis instead of being weakened is probably fortified, with the center of gravity nearer Berlin. The question now arises: how far and in what direction will the Duce endeavor to follow the *via imperialis* hand in hand with Germany?

Respectfully yours,

JOHN C. WILEY

124.63/98 : Telegram

The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

VIENNA, March 22, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received March 22—5:40 p. m.]

134. Your 40, March 19, noon.⁸⁸ Saw Von Stein this morning. He said that he had no authority whatsoever but would be delighted to help personally in every way possible.

I gave him memoranda covering all pending cases. He promised to have them looked into promptly.

He described all legations as in liquidation but assured me that diplomatic immunities would be scrupulously observed for the present.

In view of your 41, March 19, 3 p. m.⁸⁹ and the fact that the results of forthcoming plebiscite may be taken for granted I venture to suggest that this Legation be officially put into "liquidation". Its functions are already entirely consular in nature and it appears advisable to regularize them at least provisionally with the German Government. It might be well to request assurances regarding continued use of codes.

I think the departure of the Military Attaché should be accelerated and his transfer announced.

The Commercial Attaché will need several weeks to liquidate pending affairs. In view of his diplomatic status it would seem advisable that he should then be transferred. Stebbins could usefully remain for some months as Trade Commissioner to dispose of remaining matters.

The Visa Section is in a state of siege. This will continue for protracted period. Otherwise pressure on the office appreciably lessening. We have many but only minor protection cases. Important

⁸⁸ See footnote 83, p. 455.

⁸⁹ See footnote 84, p. 456.

American interests such as Vacuum Oil, International Telephone and Telegraph, et cetera, are being taken over by already established German companies with headquarters in Berlin.

Vienna from now on can be considered only as German provincial city. It will rate only a small Consulate General at most. I believe Morgan⁹⁰ and Lord⁹¹ admirably suited to run this office for the foreseeable future. Morgan has excellent technique in dealing with new local authorities. Lord has administration exceedingly well in hand. Latter's child has just had most critical operation, is in plaster cast and cannot be moved for months.

Within a few weeks most of the American clerical staff could slowly be transferred to other offices. The reduction of the native personnel should be as gradual and humane as possible.

I should be grateful for intimation before April 1 whether I may give notice on apartment.

WILEY

124.63/98 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Austria (Wiley)

WASHINGTON, March 23, 1938—7 p. m.

51. Your 134, March 22, 6 p. m. While we shall undoubtedly change the status of our representation in the reasonably near future we are not yet prepared to put the Legation in "official liquidation" with a view to converting it into a Consulate General only. When this time comes, our consular treaty with Germany⁹² is so liberal that we see no necessity for seeking further assurances regarding requisite privileges and immunities.

Military Attaché will shortly be transferred to Praha. Commerce Department is planning to designate Richardson as Trade Commissioner and Stebbins as Assistant Trade Commissioner temporarily and instructing them to remain with Commerce clerical staff at your disposition until they receive further instructions.

From our point of view the Consulate General in Vienna will be one of our most important offices. The interest in developments in Austria, the refugee problem, the widespread connections of Americans with Austrian individuals and firms are such that we consider that your most effective work, even if it is not dramatic, will be performed in the course of the next few months. There is no present intention of moving you for some months to come and the Department

⁹⁰ John H. Morgan, Second Secretary of Legation.

⁹¹ John H. Lord, Second Secretary of Legation.

⁹² For text of Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Consular Rights, signed at Washington, December 8, 1923, see *Foreign Relations*, 1923, vol. II, p. 29.

is looking forward to profiting by your best efforts in helping tide over a difficult and delicate situation.

We shall have ample time to consider questions of staff and others affecting the establishment in a routine way by mail.

HULL

863.00/1628

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extracts]

No. 38

BERLIN, March 23, 1938.

[Received April 2.]

SIR: I have the honor to set forth certain impressions of the popular reaction in Germany to Hitler's triumph in Austria, particularly such overtones and variations of emphasis as are not disclosed in the controlled press which for the most part has provided only a monotonous abundance of uncritical and indiscriminating praise and adulation.

It may be said at the outset that the Austrian victory has been the greatest success achieved during the five years' existence of National Socialist Germany, its appeal to the popular imagination having far outshone that of the victory in the Saar. Apart from the more naive who regard the Führer as infallible (and these are many, if indeed not the majority of the population), the intricacy and subtlety of Hitler's diplomacy has not always been understood by certain sections of the public who have entertained misgivings and have had to endure much sacrifice before the advent of the latest crowning achievement in Austria.

First place in the initial burst of popular exuberance over the conquest of Austria is perhaps taken by the feeling that Germany is now indubitably the most powerful nation on the Continent, if indeed not in the world in a military sense. Admiration is felt for Hitler's diplomacy which, five years after his accession to the leadership of a weak and dejected nation, should produce such a success without the firing of a single cannon. Tribute is furthermore paid to Hitler's historical mission in being able for the first time to lay the basis of a Pan-Germanic Reich motivated from Germany, an aim projected as far back as the Frankfort Parliament of 1848 which, however, no statesman in the intervening 90 years had been able to bring about. With an enthusiasm in no way impaired by the recollection that Austria itself was prepared for union with Germany following the break-up of the Hapsburg Empire after the War, the public, echoing the press, eulogizes Hitler as a greater German figure than either Charlemagne or

Bismarck, and as a leader who, although he has been favored to some degree by fortune, has played out his fate with the stroke of genius to yield a victory of the first magnitude without loss of life by war.

In addition to these sentiments of patriotism and the natural response that success of the most brilliant kind evokes, there is a deep-rooted popular conviction that Austria will be of very material benefit to the Reich. With a hope that outruns analysis of trade and economic problems the German public looks upon Austria as a promised land which will supply the Fatherland with milk and butter, will provide it with necessary timber and iron ore, and will open up a paradise for "Strength through Joy" vacationers. Leaving it to his leaders to work out the time and method the laborer feels that the union will inevitably result in an improvement in his standard of living, while German business men, in those lines not likely to suffer from Austrian competition, await impatiently the day when they will be able to expand their internal markets.

By what might be called the underprivileged groups in Germany, the conquest of Austria is received with somewhat mixed feelings. Many Catholics believe that the desire to placate the preponderantly Catholic Austrian public may lead to a better treatment of that Church and may indeed pave the way for an eventual settlement with the Vatican. Other Catholics, however, who are convinced that National Socialism is not to be reconciled with Christianity, mourn the disappearance of Austria as the last bulwark in Central Europe representing and embodying Catholicism in a form unadulterated by German National Socialism and Italian Fascism. The latter group regard it as of some significance that one of Hitler's first actions was to appoint an anti-Catholic Gauleiter (Bürckel of the Saar-Palatinate) to manage the plebiscite and direct Party affairs in Austria. (While this consideration carries some weight, it would appear that Bürckel was chosen primarily because of his ability and experience gained in reincorporating the Saar within the Reich.) By the Jews, of course, the annexation of Austria is regarded as a catastrophe, while the small minority of intellectuals, completely impervious to patriotic pride, view it with despair as signifying the extinction of the last sanctuary where German tradition and culture had been permitted to survive the stultifying influence of National Socialism.

One of the prices to be paid under a dictatorship is the annihilation of a public conscience, and hence the mobilization of brute force to secure the Austrian triumph does not bother the general public overmuch although it has caused certain misgivings among the minority who still believe that adherence to the spirit as well as to the letter of the law in international relations is the best guarantee of peace. Even in these circles, however, indignation is mitigated by a feeling

that Schuschnigg, as a minority dictator, employed bad faith to perpetuate his harsh and unpopular rule by an electioneering trick. In short, there are very few Germans, irrespective of association with the Party, who are not touched with pride at being a German—the older whose recollection of the post-War days of humiliation is still vivid, the younger whose imagination has been fired by National Socialist creed and accomplishment.

Whatever may now be the state of jubilation, the critical days and nights of March 11 and 12 yielded some tense moments. The fury of the German press attacks upon Schuschnigg and the termination of the late evening broadcast on March 11 with Seyss-Inquart's request for troops, appears to have left Berlin, at least, in an atmosphere of eerie tension. Even the announcement of the next day, that the German troops had entered Austria and were being welcomed as deliverers of the nation, did not entirely reassure apprehensions. Foreign travelers returning to Berlin from other parts of Germany report that they were besieged with many questions as to what really was happening. (Even as yet, apparently, the German public does not accept uncritically the news furnished by the controlled press and radio.) In particular, the question was uppermost in many people's minds as to what the other powers might do, as it appeared almost unbelievable to the German public that some form of intervention might not be attempted. It is not too much to say that the inaction of other countries has led to a feeling of revulsion and contempt for these countries, even including Italy, which is regarded as being outbluffed, and the growth of a belief that Germany is invincible and can work its will where it pleases.

Respectfully yours,

HUGH R. WILSON

702.6211/867

The German Embassy to the Department of State

[Translation]

The German Embassy has the honor to inform the Department of State that on Saturday, March 12th of this year, a protest demonstration of anti-German organizations took place in front of the Consulate General in New York, caused by the reunion of Austria with the German Reich. The demonstrators, under the control of the police, marched in a long file past the building in which the Consulate General is located, uttered cries in chorus, and carried the usual placards with anti-German inscriptions.

On last Saturday also, March 19th, a demonstration against Germany took place in front of the Consulate General in New York.

WASHINGTON, March 24, 1938.

863.00/1576 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 25, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received March 25—3:35 p. m.]

153. Reference my telegram 146, March 22, 6 p. m.⁹³ This afternoon's papers announced that the plebiscite in both Germany and Austria on April 10th will be held on the following question: "Do you approve of the reunion of Austria with the German Reich effected on March 13, 1938, and do you vote for the (electoral) list of our Fuehrer Adolph Hitler."

Reich Germans and Austrians are to use different colored ballots in order to ensure the separate count of the Austrian and German vote.

WILSON

760C.60M15/368

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Davies) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

No. 1074

Moscow, March 26, 1938.

[Received April 20.]

SIR: The past two weeks here is aptly described by what the British broadcast described recently as the period of "most serious intensity and horror", incident to the absorption of Austria by the German Reich, and on the heels thereof the following of Poland's ultimatum to Lithuania. I submit herewith a report of the situation as it developed from this viewpoint.

The audacity and completeness with which Hitler invaded Austria shocked and generally benumbed diplomatic opinion here. The Soviet Government, through Commissar Litvinov, promptly came to the support of France in giving out an announcement through the press that if the Austrian incident were followed by German aggression against Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union would go to Czechoslovakia's aid and that a "way would be found". The implication generally accepted here was that the U. S. S. R. was serving notice on Poland in particular, and possibly on Rumania as well, that if necessary the Soviets would violate territorial boundaries to go to the aid of Czechoslovakia.

Respectfully yours,

JOSEPH E. DAVIES

⁹³ Not printed.

863.00/1588: Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, March 28, 1938—7 p. m.
 [Received March 28—4:26 p. m.]

157. The declaration of the Austrian Catholic bishops endorsing the *Anschluss* and acknowledging the achievements of National Socialism (which is undoubtedly carried in the American press) is given prominent place in all the morning papers and is counted upon greatly to enhance a favorable vote in the Austrian plebiscite. The Party press portrays the statement principally as a concession to the Church which "is desirous of finding its way to the new State".

The ultimate effect of the statement upon State-Church relationships still remain obscure. In some quarters a comparison is drawn between this step and that taken by the German Catholic bishops before the Saar plebiscite, a move, however, which later produced no positive results in ameliorating treatment of the Church. On the other hand it is seen that the declaration may stimulate efforts at a new adjustment which the cogency of the Austrian Catholic problem might possibly impel.

WILSON

863.00/1698

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

No. 56

BERLIN, March 30, 1938.
 [Received April 13.]

SIR: I am transmitting herewith a memorandum entitled "Austrian Development—Information and Opinion" prepared by Mr. Gilbert, Counselor of Embassy. Mr. Gilbert has compiled this memorandum from a number of conversations which he, I and others in the Embassy have held and has endeavored, I think most successfully, to give a picture of opinion here.

I commend this memorandum to the Department's attention and am sure that it will be found interesting.

Respectfully yours,

HUGH R. WILSON

[Enclosure]

Memorandum by the Counselor of Embassy in Germany (Gilbert)

AUSTRIAN DEVELOPMENT—INFORMATION AND OPINION

I feel that expressions of view in diplomatic circles in Berlin regarding the Austrian development have now reached a state where

they are susceptible of summarization in respect of fact and opinion. I submit the following derived from my diplomatic sources here. I have appropriately, I feel, accorded special weight to the views of representatives of states which, while vitally interested in the preservation of European peace, are not involved as partisans in European politics. It is scarcely necessary for me to say that I present these expressions entirely objectively.

1. The basic situations and the sequence of events leading to the incorporation of Austria into the Reich are seen to be substantially as follows:

(a) The position of Austria has long been felt by the majority of Austrians to be untenable in a political sense and even more definitely so in a fundamental, economic sense. Among numerous indications, the former was demonstrated in the 1919 plebiscite wherein, before it was halted by the Powers, the vote was approximately 95% for *Anschluss* with Germany; and the latter by the Austro-German Customs Union project of 1931,⁹⁴ which received virtually unanimous support throughout Austria.

(b) The policy of a number of powers was, as explicit in Vienna, to prevent an Austro-German union and in effect to militate against mutually satisfactory Austro-German relationships.

This policy took the form of financial assistance to Austria by Great Britain and France being associated with at least tacit political engagements.

(c) A form of intervention in Austrian affairs furthermore existed through the adoption of an attitude by a number of powers including the Succession States against "restoration".

(d) Aside from National Socialism, the people of Germany entertain the most intense feeling respecting "Germanism" and racial unity. This feeling has been stimulated to a point of action by the National Socialist régime.

(e) The Schuschnigg régime was obviously a minority dictatorship. In respect of purely internal Austrian questions its support was very limited. It operated not only against National Socialists and other elements favoring *Anschluss*, but also against other groups, particularly the Socialists. The consequent situation in Austria was such that a repetition of internal strife accompanied by bloodshed was always relatively imminent.

The restrictive measures of the Schuschnigg Government against National Socialists were notably harsh. This was a constant source of anger and irritation in Germany and to a man of Hitler's temperament was provocative.

⁹⁴ See *Foreign Relations*, 1931, vol. 1, pp. 565 ff.

(f) Such was the situation when Hitler summoned Schuschnigg to Berchtesgaden, where he was peremptory in his demands on the Austrian Chancellor.

There is a belief, backed by certain collateral evidence, that at that time Hitler, while planning to place Austria definitely under complete German influence, which type of intervention he believed the majority of Austrians desired, neither planned or wished the complete suppression of Austrian sovereignty which the subsequent sequence of developments brought about.

Whether or not they are to be accepted entirely on their face value, a number of official German pronouncements would seem to indicate this, in particular Hitler's exchanges with Mussolini. In any event, the Italians seemed to have had reason to believe that Austrian sovereignty would in some measure be preserved, although whether there was an Italo-German understanding to this effect is not clear.

(g) There seems to be little doubt, however, as later events showed, that plans had been formulated in advance to a degree in Germany and certainly in Austria, for rapid and thorough taking over of governmental control in Austria.

This does not, nevertheless, create a necessary presumption that annexation had been definitely contemplated. Advance measures taken in Germany can reasonably be construed as preparations for employment in emergencies arising either within Austria or from the outside; and measures in Austria can be regarded as prepared by Austrian National Socialists anticipatory to the assumption of at least a large degree of power.

(h) Such acquiescence as Schuschnigg accorded Hitler's demands in Berchtesgaden was presumably under duress.

Upon his return to Vienna Schuschnigg took steps to invalidate his agreement. There is evidence that he was in contact with Otto, the two being drawn together by a common urge to defeat union at all costs. It is asserted that Otto persuaded Schuschnigg that his sole immediate enemy was the National Socialists and persuaded him to come to terms with the Socialists, and that Schuschnigg began arming the Socialists with a view to sending them out of Vienna, where they were normally in opposition to him, to the Austrian frontier where they could be counted upon to combat a German entrance.

The plebiscite projected by Schuschnigg was a device to indicate to the world that the majority of Austrians were against union with Germany. No one pretended, however, that it would have been, or indeed under the circumstances could have been, a fair ballot.

While no one ventures to state with any exactness how the figures would have run in an hypothetically free Austrian vote, the opinion

of those to whom I have talked seems to be that a majority, albeit probably a small one, would have been for union. American press representatives in Vienna returning to Berlin have largely agreed that from 55% to 60% would have voted for union.

The situation in Austria was further complicated by the representatives of certain powers, if not their respective Governments, having urged Schuschnigg to resistance without, however, the prospect of according corresponding material support.

(i) The circumstances described above created an internal situation wherein active strife in Austria was certainly a possibility and many regarded it as a definite probability.

Hitler asserted that this was the reason for his ordering the entrance of German troops. The extent to which this was justified by the reason given, will presumably remain permanently a matter of opinion.

Another reason for military action is that elements of an emergency from a German point of view were undoubtedly present, such being, for example, the possible attitude of Italy in the event of civil conflict in Austria. It is noted here that the troop movements followed the lines of a German General Staff plan to be operative in an emergency.

A concomitant feature of the participation of the German Army in Austria, which may not have been absent from the minds of National Socialist leaders, is that common action in Austria has operated in a special way to unite the Army and the Party.

(j) A belief is prevalent here that the complete separation of Austria's sovereignty came into being more through the rush of circumstances than by definite previous design. On the other hand, extreme German and Austrian National Socialists had consistently cherished the desire that annexation should at some time take place and they had unquestionably worked to that general end.

A circumstance impelling Hitler to decree annexation is said to be the British and French notes of protest. He felt that a continuing Austrian sovereignty in any form would occasion a continuous attempted outside intervention. This taken together with the internal Austrian situation is felt to have determined Hitler to settle the whole question once and for all.

2. Appraisals of the situation now created take the following lines:

(a) Despite any other solutions which may have been contemplated, the incorporation of Austria into the Reich is now a permanent accomplished fact.

(b) While admitting that there is no valid moral objection to the union from an internal German or Austrian standpoint, and admitting that it will presumably be of economic advantage to the majority

of the Austrian population, the happening remains intensely disturbing in respect of both the manner and the fact of its accomplishment.

In regard to manner, the crossing of a frontier by armed forces, no matter what the reason, is disquieting per se. The precedent established is extremely distasteful from a juridical point of view and the action suggests the stimulation of similar action in other possible directions both by Germany and by other states.

In regard to fact, the augmentation of Germany's size and strength is unwelcome as emphasizing a disequilibrium in the continental balance of power. There is not perceived to be a single state in Europe which sees a permanent political advantage for itself in the new situation with the possible exception of Hungary which may entertain hopes of its eventually working favorably for her territorial ambitions.

An important example of the immediate foregoing is Italy. Despite Italian public statements, Italy undoubtedly intensely dislikes and resents the presence of Germany at the Brenner. Being forced, however, to accept the new situation, Italy may make the most of it by seeking German support for compensatory advantages elsewhere. Therein undoubtedly lies a grave danger. It is felt, nevertheless, that nothing can fully compensate Italy for her fundamental loss of security and her susceptibility to unwelcome direct pressure from Berlin. From this point of view the hope is expressed that in the immediate European situation Italy might possibly now be more inclined to seek a Great Power general understanding.

There thus may conceivably have been set in motion that drawing together of Europe against the power of a single state which has at times been a European reaction under similar circumstances.

(c) Certain more immediate apprehensions are felt both over the new situation in Austria and over popular repercussions to this happening in Germany.

In respect of Austria, retaliatory measures are apparently being taken by those now in power against individuals and groups whom they look upon as their former oppressors. A question is as to how thorough in a German sense the Nazification of Austria will be and as to how "German" or how "Austrian" in agency and form. The racial complications in Vienna are very great. There are estimated to be three hundred thousand pure Jews in Vienna, together with an indeterminate but very large number of non-Aryans. These individuals have been most important in Austrian financial and economic life. Thus a complete application of the "Nürnberg" Aryan principles⁹⁵ would create widespread dislocation. There is also a large Czech population and considerable numbers of various Balkan

⁹⁵ See *Foreign relations*, 1935, vol. II, pp. 391 ff.

nationalities. It is suggested that for tactical reasons vis-à-vis world opinion complete National Socialist measures are in suspense pending the April 10th plebiscite, but that on the conclusion of the plebiscite thorough-going and probably harsh measures may be undertaken. If this should prove to be the case, it is possible that dissatisfaction and perhaps violence will be the order of the day in Austria over a protracted period and that international involvements are not excluded.

Should the elimination of Jews become an active project an ameliorating circumstance in respect of business dislocation is that for some time the Austrian Government has unostentatiously been carrying out measures productive of a gradual reduction in numbers of Jews in the banking, legal and medical professions, in which the Jews had exercised something of a personal monopoly, the long range plan being to reduce the total number of Jews in these professions to the approximate ratio of Jews in Austria to the total Austrian population.

In respect of Germany, the Austrian "success" has evoked a widespread popular self-satisfaction and a degree of arrogance which suggests a disquieting readiness to embark on adventures in other directions. Whether this will find expression in governmental action is of course unknown.

(d) There are current certain beliefs which cannot be substantiated that Czechoslovakia will be "next". The press indicates that the Austrian development has created repercussions among the Sudeten Germans; and the course of the Austrian affair unhappily suggests an analogy of method as applied to Czechoslovakia.

(e) As an example of the widespread nature of the reactions to the Austrian happening in the international field, it is said that certain local occurrences are disquieting to Belgium in respect of Eupen and Malmédy. The representative of a neighboring state asserts, however, that the Belgians would be glad to be rid of these communes which it is alleged they accepted at the instance of the French at Versailles, and that Belgium desires to find a way for their return to Germany if such could be devised without loss of prestige.

(f) In association with the Polish-Lithuanian situation there are beliefs current that Germany and Poland have come to some kind of politico-territorial accord. One of the interpretations is that Memel will be given to Poland in return for a permanent adjustment of the Danzig and Corridor questions, involving the relinquishment of territory to Germany. This has of course been one of the "classical" solutions of the Corridor problem. A variant of this is that Poland and Germany are in accord that, in addition to the Danzig and Corridor adjustment, Germany will take Memel and that Poland will be supported in moving through Lithuania and Latvia and taking the port of Riga.

I can obtain no direct evidence here whatsoever that such German-Polish projects are on foot. This and the Belgian question are cited chiefly as examples of possible action which it is felt the Austrian development may have inspired and as an indication of the prevalent feeling of uncertainty regarding the future.

It is felt, however, that the enormous task of governmental and administrative consolidation in Austria will occupy Germany for some time to come and that thus under any circumstances no further external moves are imminent.

(g) It is perceived here to be entirely understandable that popular sentiments in Great Britain and France over the Austrian development will presumably for some time work against if not entirely prevent a British-German understanding, which was one of the aims of the Chamberlain Government. The representatives of the small European Powers here regard this with regret, inasmuch as they have felt that some such understanding would have a restraining influence on possible German external action.

To expand on this, the representatives of many small states, from a frankly self-interested and practical point of view, strongly express their feeling that mere protest and admonition, without seeking a deeper understanding, directed toward a people and a government which, however mistakenly, believes it is acting in line with morality and right, will, as human nature has repeatedly demonstrated, serve chiefly to impel a state in the position of Germany toward a greater *intransigence* and thus perpetuate a threat to peace.

P[RENTISS] G[ILBERT]

BERLIN, March 28, 1938.

863.00/1616a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, March 31, 1938—6 p. m.

31. Personal for the Ambassador. There is widespread interest in this country in the treatment being accorded to former Chancellor Schuschnigg. We realize that any intercession on our part in favor of a non-American would probably be resented by the German Government as an interference in their domestic affairs and might accordingly have the opposite effect from that desired; nonetheless I hope you will avail yourself of any available opportunity that may present itself to point out in your personal capacity the widespread interest in this case and the favorable effect on public opinion should he be permitted to leave the country. This whole matter is naturally left to your entire discretion.

HULL

124.63/108b : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, April 5, 1938—6 p. m.

34. On March 21, 1938, the following formal note was sent to the German Ambassador:

"Excellency: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your notes dated March 14⁹⁶ and March 16, 1938,⁹⁷ respectively, quoting a German law of March 13, 1938 and referring to the status of the Austrian Minister and the Austrian Legation in Washington. I have taken note of the contents of these communications.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Signed: Cordell Hull"

Please address a formal note to the German Foreign Minister as follows:

"Excellency: I am directed by my Government to inform Your Excellency as follows:

On March 17, 1938, the Minister of the Republic of Austria, Mr. Edgar Prochnik, informed the Department of State that, as a result of the developments which had occurred in Austria, that country had ceased to exist as an independent nation and had been incorporated in the German Reich; that therefore the Austrian mission to this country, of which he had been the head, had been abolished; and that the affairs of the mission had been taken over by the Embassy of Germany. The German Ambassador has informed the Department of State that he has assumed the functions hitherto performed by the Minister of Austria.

The Government of the United States finds itself under the necessity as a practical measure of closing its Legation at Vienna, and of establishing a Consulate General. In the circumstances I am directed by my Government to request provisional consular status for Mr. John C. Wiley, Consul General; Mr. John H. Morgan and Mr. John H. Lord, Consuls, and Mr. G. Frederick Reinhardt and Mr. Thomas R. Flack, Vice Consuls.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration."

We plan to give text to the press at 1 p. m. Washington time April 6th.

Please repeat to Vienna for information.

HULL

⁹⁶ Note of March 14 not printed, but see memorandum by the Under Secretary of State of a conversation with the German Ambassador, March 14, p. 442.

⁹⁷ Not printed.

863.00/1744

Memorandum by the Vatican Secretary of State (Cardinal Pacelli) to the American Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) ⁹⁸

As to your investigation about some rumors concerning the attitude of the Church towards the new rulers in Austria and the possibility of an agreement in this regard between the Holy See and the Nazi Government, I am happy that you brought up this matter so as to allow me to give you my personal views which of course cannot reflect any positive information from the official circles and are just delivered to your confidential use.

The sudden statement of the Austrian Catholic Hierarchy in reference to the new Government, as it was given to the Press, was evidently the result of some compulsory influences. Their unexpected declaration immediately after the military invasion of the country, did not receive any approval either previously or afterwards from the Holy See, as the official Vatican organ, the *Osservatore Romano*, stated immediately after the issue of such declaration. One is rather inclined to think that the text of this statement might have been prepared, at least in its main points, by a Governmental Press Bureau, if not by the Government Commissioner Buerckel himself, and that the signing thereof by the Bishops might have been the result of a political pressure rather than of their free initiative and intention. Under this pressure as a matter of fact the Bishops have overlooked to quote in the text of the declaration the fundamental principles of the freedom of the practice of Christian religion, of the respect of the rights of the Church and of the abolishment of the anti-Christian propaganda, a clause that in view of the persecution in Germany could have appeared quite natural. Rather on this occasion they should have expressed the hope that the beginning of a Kulturkampf should be avoided in Austria and that the Kulturkampf in Germany should be quieted down, a hope, though, which in consideration of the clear evidence of the facts could not be well founded and which—as it happened at the time of the Saar Plebiscite—would undoubtedly be deluded.

Being confronted with so much confusion and critics among Catholic and non-Catholic circles at such a declaration made by the Austrian Bishops, the Holy See did not delay, through the *Osservatore Romano*, to sever itself from the said declaration with great tact and marked firmness.

Upon this Vatican statement immediately followed the call to Rome of Cardinal Innitzer, Archbishop of Vienna, and the same official

⁹⁸ Copy transmitted to the Department by the Ambassador as an enclosure to his despatch No. 206, April 19; received April 26.

Vatican paper, the *Osservatore Romano*, published his open statement in its original German text (English translation of it follows here below). From the text of this declaration and from the above attitude of the Vatican authorities one can easily understand that the Holy See will never be ready to give its approval to any agreement of any Bishop to any Governmental action which might be in contrast with the Divine Law and the freedom and the rights of the Church.

You know that a diplomatic Concordat was concluded and signed between the German Reich and the Holy See a few years ago and that official diplomatic relations do exist as there is an Apostolic Nuncio in Berlin and a German Ambassador to the Holy See. But, no matter what pretexts are set forth by the German Government, the real fact is that since the early time after the Concordat was signed a more or less open attitude against all clauses accepted in the Concordat was adopted by the German Government. The Holy See has used all possible ways to protect the freedom of the Church and of the Catholics, keeping itself ever ready to do the best in order to avoid any more bitter conflict, and being always prompted by the desire of avoiding to make the situation more and more difficult.

Even now, I feel sure that the Holy See would always be willing to agree and to deal fairly with any political authority whatsoever, but before a real understanding is reached there must be at least the beginning of the evidence of good faith on the other side: evidence that so far has been completely lacking in this instance, for which the possibility of an agreement between the two Powers is out of question for the time being.

I think it will be very fine if you will convey to your Friend at home these personal private views of mine. Ever in my personal judgment, no better opportunity than this for trying to carry on the plan that we had thought of while in America and that I know is amongst your aims. It would make the world think over the ever increasing necessity in the present troubles of keeping in touch with the Supreme Moral Powers of the world, which at times feel powerless and isolated in their daily struggle against all sorts of political excesses from the bolsheviks and the new pagans arising amongst the young "Arian" generations.

I still think that the planned provision would increase the prestige of the American Government which would appear solely directed to use all means for insuring the peace of all peoples.

You can judge yourself of the inconvenience in this very crucial moment of the European political life that the American Government

is without a direct source of information from and a straight and intimate connection with the Vatican circles.

C[ARDINAL] P[ACELLI]

I am sure that you have seen in the Press the text of the statement issued by His Eminence Cardinal Innitzer, Archbishop of Vienna.

Anyway, the English translation of same is following here below:—

“1) The solemn statement of the Austrian Bishops of the 18th March of this year did not intend evidently to express an approval of what was not and is not reconcilable with the Laws of God, with the freedom and the rights of the Catholic Church. Furthermore that statement cannot be interpreted by the State and the Party as a duty of conscience of the faithful nor must it be used for propaganda purposes.

2) For the future the Austrian Bishops request:

a) That in all matters pertaining to the Austrian Concordat no change be made without previous understanding with the Holy See.

b) That in a particular way all rules in connection with the schools and the educational activities as well as in the training of the youth might be arranged in such a way as to respect the natural rights of the parents and the religious and moral formation of the Catholic youth, according to the doctrine of the Catholic religion.

c) That the propaganda against religion and the Church be forbidden.

d) That the rights of Catholics to proclaim, defend and practise Catholic Faith and the Christian Laws in all the fields of human life with all the means allowed by the present progress of our day science be respected.

Rome, April 6, 1938.

(Signed) Th. Cardinal Innitzer.”

863.00/1678 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, April 11, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received April 11—9:10 a. m.]

176. Following are the approximate provisional results of yesterday's plebiscite and Reichstag election on the issue of Austria's union with Germany: in the former Reich territory 44,000,000 affirmative 437,000 negative votes giving an affirmative percentage of 99.02; in former Austrian territory 4,267,000 affirmative 11,281 negative votes giving an affirmative percentage of 99.75.

WILSON

124.63/110 : Telegram

*The Chargé in Austria (Wiley) to the Secretary of State*VIENNA, April 28, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received April 28—8:14 a. m.]

200. Referring to the Embassy's telegram 202, April 27, 3 p. m. from Berlin.^{98a} Shall close Legation April 30, 1938. Please telegraph instructions regarding accounts thereafter. Am establishing Consular Section as American Consulate General today.

WILEY

863.00/1798

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, July 21, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR: I have received a secret and personal telegram from Ambassador Bullitt in Paris⁹⁹ saying that Mr. Bonnet¹ had approached him, officially and formally, but in the strictest secrecy, with regard to a communication which he had just received from the French Consul General in Vienna in which he stated that a few days ago Frau Schuschnigg had been permitted to see her husband. She had found him in an attic room in which he was being kept in solitary confinement. He was required to do all his own housework and looked ten years older and was in a very bad state of health. His mental condition had seemed even to be worse. According to Frau Schuschnigg, the guard had turned away for a few moments and Dr. Schuschnigg had time to say to his wife "for God's sake, kill me. I cannot stand this solitary confinement any longer. I am going mad and would rather die at any minute". Mr. Bonnet went on to say that Frau Schuschnigg had implored him to make some *démarche* which might help her husband. He in turn was appealing to Ambassador Bullitt and through him to me and the President to do something to help this unfortunate man. Ambassador Bullitt informed Mr. Bonnet that he did not know whether our Government might be able to be of any assistance but that he was certain, in any event, that, if we should feel able to take any steps, it would be essential that he should not say to anyone in the Cabinet or in the Quai d'Orsay that he had made the request. Mr. Bonnet assured Ambassador Bullitt that he would not mention the request to any living human being.

^{98a} Not printed; the Ambassador in Germany reported to the Department that he had been informed by the German Foreign Office that Wiley had been placed in charge of the Consulate General in Vienna (125.975/22).

⁹⁹ Telegram No. 1126 of July 18, 8 p. m., not printed.

¹ Georges Bonnet, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

You will readily appreciate that we have been following here with the keenest interest the situation of Dr. Schuschnigg. The information which has reached us from time to time has not been reassuring. We have the definite feeling here that Dr. Schuschnigg always conducted himself as a good Austrian and as a good patriot and that he is deserving of proper treatment. There is wide sympathy for him in this country and I am of the opinion that there is a very keen interest here in what may happen to him. It is obviously impossible for this Government to take any action, officially or directly, on his behalf. I am hopeful, however, that the German authorities will realize that not only in this country but practically everywhere German interests will not be helped by the kind of treatment which is being accorded to Dr. Schuschnigg. It is not impossible that at a favorable moment and one which you may consider opportune, you might entirely unofficially, bring to the attention of Mr. Goering, or others in the German Government, the very deep interest which I and so many in this country have in the treatment which is being accorded to Dr. Schuschnigg and the hope that this will in every way conform with international practices. The treatment which he has so far received would not seem to be in accord with such practices.

I leave this matter entirely to you as to whether you should in any way take it up with the appropriate German authorities. I need not tell you that I am not informing anyone here of this action on my part and am confining myself to informing the President on his return and to sending a copy of my letter to you to Ambassador Bullitt.

With very good wishes,
Sincerely yours,

CORDELL HULL

863.00/1801

Memorandum by the Consul General at Vienna (Wiley)²

VIENNA, August 10, 1938.

I occasionally see Frau von Schuschnigg, the erstwhile Vera Czernin, bride by proxy of the former Chancellor. She tells me that the treatment that they both received while detained in the Belvedere was indescribable; that they both survived was nothing short of a miracle. They were in the custody of Austrian Legionnaires.

Dr. von Schuschnigg, according to his wife, is now confined in a small room under the roof of the Hotel Metropole, which is the headquarters of the Gestapo. Since his detention there, two months more or less, he has not been out of the room. I asked if it was a former

² There is no indication in the files as to how this memorandum reached the Department. The earliest receipt date stamped on the document is August 23.

servant's room in the hotel. She replied "Not even". He was under guard night and day. There was an average of four Austrian Legionnaires on duty all the time. It was practically impossible for him to sleep, since during the night they whistled, sang and amused themselves in a provocative way. They greatly enjoyed "teasing" him.

Dr. Schuschnigg was not allowed to see any newspapers. The only exception was on July 25th, when the press was devoted to commemoration of the "heroes" who murdered Dollfuss.

As to their treatment in the Belvedere, Frau von Schuschnigg stated that she had carefully prepared a diary containing all details and that this diary was in a safe place.

Frau von Schuschnigg is permitted to see the ex-Chancellor for ten minutes every Friday, but never alone. She is not permitted to write him or to receive letters from him. She is not permitted to receive any money from her husband and is supporting herself and his young son by his previous marriage from her own very limited funds. Moreover, she is not permitted to see her own children from her former marriage. Prince Fugger, her divorced husband, is serving in the German air force in Spain.

She describes the ex-Chancellor's physical condition as very bad and states that he is utterly crushed. She fears very much for his life. For the state of affairs in general, she blames the Gestapo rather than the Party. Indeed, she has been in touch with high Party officials who are endeavoring to intervene. It is their desire to obtain a declaration of loyalty from the ex-Chancellor, which she states that he is quite willing to give, and to send them to some remote spot in Pomerania east of Stettin where they would live under an assumed name.

Recalling the events of March 11th, Frau von Schuschnigg declared that her husband had not realized how hopeless the situation was. Zernatto and others had been better informed through their spies and had fled at 5:30 in the afternoon. After the Chancellor's resignation, the Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires had a car ready in order to drive him across the frontier. Dr. von Schuschnigg refused to leave so long as the group of young members of the Patriotic Front who were trapped in the P. F. headquarters were not in safety. Seyss-Inquart assured him that it was not necessary for him to flee; that three motor cars would be at his disposition at any time he wished to leave the country. The ex-Chancellor telephoned to Frau von Schuschnigg, then Countess Czernin, and asked her to meet him at the Belvedere. Seyss-Inquart telephoned at least every hour and kept assuring him that everything was ready for his departure when he wished to leave. On Saturday the telephone calls from Seyss-Inquart ceased. On Sunday, the 13th, one of the ex-Chancellor's aides came to the Belvedere and said that the motor cars had not materialized

from Seyss-Inquart, that the Chancellor should attempt to escape at once. The moment for escape was past; the building was surrounded with a cordon of S. S. men.

The ex-Chancellor had had complete confidence in Seyss-Inquart's friendship and personal loyalty to him. He is convinced, however, that Seyss-Inquart deliberately betrayed him and held out the promise of transportation and safe conduct across the frontier in order to prevent his taking advantage of other means of escape.

Frau von Schuschnigg added that the ex-Chancellor had always been extremely devout and had derived great inner strength from his faith. His betrayal by Cardinal Innitzer and the latter's attitude towards the National Socialist Party had completely crushed him. She said that he was no longer devout nor strengthened by faith.

Frau von Schuschnigg is convinced that war is imminent, that it will come in October or November at the latest. I was unable to determine whether this represented information from a reliable source or the forecasts of clairvoyants.

J. C. W[ILEY]

863.00/1800: Telegram (part air)

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, August 25, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received August 26—6:50 a. m.]

400. The following respecting Schuschnigg has been disclosed in strict confidence by a customarily well informed German source:

Mussolini has twice personally intervened in Schuschnigg's case, once in April and once during the last few days. Aside from personal considerations Mussolini is understood to have based his plea on Schuschnigg's having been Chancellor of a State which was in friendly special relations with Italy.

It is understood that the present plan respecting Schuschnigg is that he will not be tried but that a document will be issued giving a history of his policy and activities and which will in effect charge him as a "German" with acting against the interests and the will of the "German" people. Following the issuance of this document Schuschnigg will remain in "preventive custody" until interest in his disloyalty has died down, whereupon he will be released and permitted to live as he chooses.

I wish to make clear that there is of course no assurance that this plan will be carried out.

Incidentally it is expected that Horthy³ while he is here will likewise speak for Schuschnigg. Moreover, there is a wide feeling among

³ Nicolas Horthy, Regent of Hungary.

Germans, including members of the Party, against what is understood to be the present treatment of Schuschnigg. The difficulties seem to lie in that his case is in the hands of the Gestapo against which even powerful Party members often cannot prevail.

WILSON

863.00/1804 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 17, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received September 17—1:10 p. m.]

454. Personal for the Secretary. I had another frank talk with Weizsacker about Schuschnigg. I told him I had a letter from you that the President was interested and that of course I made no official request in the circumstances but the conditions of his imprisonment and his health were reported as so bad that a scandal might break out and jeopardize still further the relations between our two lands. I asked his advice about how to proceed in a way to give hope of success.

Weizsacker replied that if he had his way Schuschnigg would be released with a medal showing him to be "the man who had done the most for the *Anschluss*" but that the Chancellor was in such a state of hatred towards him that the mere mention of the name threw him into a fury. I was not the only Ambassador, Weizsacker added, that had interested himself in this matter but he doubted whether any Ambassador could accomplish anything useful in the circumstances. He so emphasized the word "Ambassador" that the thought has occurred to me whether another approach might be more fruitful. The only approach I can think of would be for the President if he judged it wise to summon the German Ambassador and tell him of the reports, add that favorable treatment would have a happy effect upon American public opinion as evidencing German magnanimity and ask that a message in this sense be sent to Hitler. (It will be noted that I suggest a positive approach rather than a warning as I imagine this is the only type of appeal that might influence Hitler.)

Such an approach might have useful results. In conference with my advisors here we were all of opinion that my going to Goering on the subject would do more harm than good but we had considered an approach to Hitler. In view of what Weizsacker says however I am dubious about that also.

Weizsacker added that he questioned whether Schuschnigg's health was as precarious and treatment so bad as we have been led to believe. I told him of course nothing as to the sources of our information.

WILSON

863.00/1806 : Telegram (part air)

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, December 9, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received December 10—9 a. m.]

708. Special reference to Embassy's 454, September 17, 6 p. m. An acquaintance from Munich temporarily in Berlin who although not a member of the Party is very close to Party circles in Munich has informed me privately respecting the matter of Schuschnigg in the following sense.

He states that it has been determined that Schuschnigg will be brought to trial. This, however, would not be precisely a trial of Schuschnigg but rather a "symbolic trial" of the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg dictatorship under the charge of its illegality. This, I feel, cannot be expressed in English with complete lucidity. He understands that from an exhaustive research in Vienna of the archives of the former Austrian Government documents have been found which will be placed in evidence in support of this charge and that among others former President Miklas will testify as a witness.

My informant said that although presumably Schuschnigg would be present as the "symbolic criminal" the proceedings would not be aimed at personal punishment for Schuschnigg. Schuschnigg might indeed be condemned to say 6 months imprisonment in a fortress but that as the time he has already been in confinement could presumably be deducted from the sentence he would not suffer further imprisonment.

On the score of Schuschnigg personally he understood that the present intent was that following the trial he would be released and free to live anywhere in Germany upon his agreement that he would not leave the country.⁴

I asked him how what he told me could be reconciled with the violent personal animosity Hitler was supposed to entertain towards Schuschnigg. His reply was merely "Well, Hitler no longer talks that way".

In response to my question as to when the trial might occur he said that the matter of time was always difficult to forecast but that he believed it might take place not long after the first of the year.

My informant said that I could take what he told me as actual present intentions and not in any respect as mere rumor. I can only say that my acquaintance is someone in whom I normally have confidence. I cannot appraise this further. It is nevertheless of interest and perhaps of some significance to compare the foregoing with the third paragraph of my No. 400, August 25, 2 p. m.

GILBERT

⁴ Kurt von Schuschnigg remained a prisoner of the Germans until released by the Allies in 1945.

THE GERMAN-CZECHOSLOVAK CRISIS¹

I. SITUATION FROM THE AUSTRIAN "ANSCHLUSS" THROUGH THE CRITICAL PERIOD IN MAY

760F.62/131 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, March 14, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 12:25 p. m.]

394. I have had a talk with Osusky, Minister of Czechoslovakia. He said that events in Austria had greatly increased the dangers to which his country is exposed. The future is in the hands of France and Great Britain. For some time he has been telling the French Government that his country, a small country, cannot have a policy in Central Europe independent of the policy of France and Great Britain. It is essential for his country that France and Great Britain define definitely their policy in Central Europe and state the extent of the commitments which they are prepared to fulfill in support of such policy.

He said that he has been greatly encouraged since the debate on foreign affairs 2 weeks ago in the Chamber of Deputies to observe that not a single dissenting voice has been raised in any political group against the declaration of Chautemps² and Delbos³ that France would fulfill her obligations to Czechoslovakia in case of necessity. I asked about Flandin.⁴ Osusky said that Flandin stood alone. He went on to say that in the tour of speech making visits he has been making recently to French cities he has found without exception that people feel that French assistance to Czechoslovakia is not primarily a matter of protection for Czechoslovakia but of protection of a vital French interest.

He said that "quite recently" the French Government had advised the British Government as follows:

We (the French Government) are absolutely determined in the event of aggression by Germany against Czechoslovakia to go immedi-

¹ See also Department of State, *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, series D, vol. II, Germany and Czechoslovakia 1937-1938 (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1949), hereinafter cited as *German Documents*, ser. D, vol. II; and *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, third series, vols. I and II, edited by E. L. Woodward and Rohan Butler (London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1949), hereinafter cited as *British Documents*, 3d ser., vols. I and II, respectively.

² Camille Chautemps, President of the French Council of Ministers.

³ Yvon Delbos, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

⁴ Pierre Etienne Flandin, leader of the Left Republicans, or Party of Democratic Alliance.

ately to the assistance of Czechoslovakia. We do not ask you (the British Government) to take any commitment. But we do submit to your consideration the following: you wish to avoid being drawn into war over Central Europe; we shall go to war immediately if Germany strikes at Czechoslovakia; in that case you will inevitably be drawn into the war, if not at first, then at a later stage to protect your own interests. The only way in which you can be sure that there will be no war involving England, will be for you to let it be known that you are firmly decided, as we are, to go immediately to Czechoslovakia's assistance in case she is attacked. If that is known Germany will never attack.

I asked Osusky if it would be possible to settle the differences between Czechoslovakia and Germany by parley and agreement. He said that this was utterly impossible. The minority problem is only a pretext. There is in fact no minority problem. A treaty exists to which 14 states are parties covering the problem of minorities,⁵ and procedure is provided to deal with any question concerning minorities. Hitler is not interested in the German minority in Czechoslovakia. He has said, and it has been repeated to the Czechoslovak Government: "Why should I whose role it is to purify the German race concern myself with these 3½ million half Jew half Slav Germans of Bohemia?"

Osusky said that the real problem is the following: for the first time in recent history Germany finds no other large power in a position to contest the German drive for domination of Central Europe Italy having sold out her position for Ethiopia. The only country which stands in the way is a small country, Czechoslovakia. Hitler has been trying in every way to persuade Czechoslovakia to drop her alliances with Russia and France and go over to the German camp. This the Czechoslovak Government has refused to do seeing clearly what would be in store eventually for Czechoslovakia. Hitler is therefore now determined to isolate Czechoslovakia, to neutralize her and then to use Czechoslovakia as a bridge across which would flow the expansion of German force throughout Central and Eastern Europe to the Black Sea.

In view of this, Osusky said, concessions to Germany would be worse than useless. The only policy for Czechoslovakia is resistance and the country is determined to resist to the utmost any attempt on her independence.

I have an appointment to see Léger⁶ late this afternoon.

WILSON

⁵ Reference may be to the treaty between the Principal Allied and Associated Powers and Czechoslovakia, signed September 10, 1919; *Foreign Relations*, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, vol. XIII, p. 808. This treaty was not between 14 states but similar minority provisions were contained in treaties with other countries. See also *ibid.*, pp. 116-119.

⁶ Alexis Léger, Secretary General of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

760F.62/1471

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] March 14, 1938.

The Minister of Czechoslovakia⁷ called to see me this morning. The Minister was obviously very gravely apprehensive and deeply concerned at the course of events in Europe. He told me that the position of his Government, he had been instructed to say to me, was that publicly announced by Prime Minister Hodža some ten days ago,⁸ namely, that Czechoslovakia desired to maintain friendly relations with Germany; that the Republic would deal in a fair, equitable and conciliatory manner with the German minorities in Czechoslovakia; that these minorities, however, would be dealt with on an equality with the other component races in Czechoslovakia and would, under no conditions, be given a privileged or autonomous position; finally, that if Czechoslovakia was attacked or was confronted with any effort at intervention of a physical character in her domestic concerns, Czechoslovakia would fight to the last ditch.

The Minister stated to me that the Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin had been instructed to express the concern of the Government of Czechoslovakia over the presence of German troops in Austria in view of the fact that the boundary between Austria and Czechoslovakia was undefended and, secondly, to register a formal protest against the flight of German military planes over Czechoslovak territory. These representations have been made by the Czechoslovak Minister to Marshal Goering⁹ himself. In reply Marshal Goering has stated that the German troops in Austria would be instructed not to proceed to any point within Austria less than fifteen kilometers from the Czechoslovak frontier and that an immediate investigation would be made of the reported flight of German planes over Czechoslovakia.

Mr. Hurban stated that, of course, this was not very reassuring. He said that the mere expression of willingness to keep German troops fifteen kilometers from the boundary between Austria and his own country meant nothing at all. He said that during the past few days Czechoslovakia had made no representations whatever to Germany with regard to the Austrian situation, believing that the problem was a general European problem and that until and unless the great European powers took action, it was absurd for a small country like Czechoslovakia to take any action.

The Minister then inquired as to what the point of view of this Government might be and what, if anything, it intended to do. In

⁷ Vladimír Hurban.

⁸ March 4; see *Documents on International Affairs*, 1938, vol. II, p. 113.

⁹ German Minister for Aviation.

reply, I stated that the general principles in international relations which this Government supported had been repeatedly and officially announced both by the President and by the Secretary of State. I said that it had been and remained our hope that the other governments of the world would likewise undertake to govern their international relations on such foundations. With regard to the immediate situation in Europe, I said that this Government had taken no action, had made no representations and intended to make none. I said that the policy of the United States, which I was sure the Minister knew, as supported by the majority of the people of this country, was to remain completely aloof from any involvement in European affairs. I added that as the Secretary of State had frequently said, this Government believed neither in a policy of involvement nor in a policy of hermit-like isolation; that insofar as any involvement in purely European entanglements was concerned, the Administration would follow completely the traditional policy of the United States.

The Minister said that he already had taken it for granted that this was the case and had so informed his Government by cable on Saturday.

I took occasion to felicitate the Minister upon the signing of the trade agreement between our two countries.¹⁰ He said that the final signature of the agreement had been a matter of very real satisfaction to him and to his Government and that he had been impressed with the change of sentiment in the press which had been made evident, even in New England, since the agreement had been signed. He added that during the past few days he had been talking to some of the congressmen whom he knew personally and who had been so openly antagonistic to negotiation and that he had found them well satisfied with the result. They had said to him, he remarked, that the attitude they had taken had only been due to the pressure brought to bear upon them by some of their constituents.

S[UMNER] W[ELLES]

760F.62/2114

The British Ambassador (Lindsay) to the Secretary of State

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

His Majesty's Ambassador is instructed to inform the State Department in confidence as follows:

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have been considering the best way of following up the suggestion that the position

¹⁰ See vol. II, pp. 223 ff.

of the German minority in Czechoslovakia should form the subject of joint and early consideration between themselves and the French Government. They feel an endeavour should be made to persuade the French Government to join with them in bringing home to the Czechoslovak Government the danger of the present situation both for the independence of Czechoslovakia and for the peace of the world.

Lord Halifax¹¹ has therefore instructed His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris¹² to speak to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs pointing out the danger of a situation in which following upon the incorporation of Austria in the Reich¹³ the various sections of the German minority in Czechoslovakia are uniting more completely than before and feeling is running high among them, with a consequent increase in the character of their demands, while at the same time opinion in Germany is in a state of exaltation and the momentum created by the spectacular success in the case of Austria may well carry the German Government forward to further operations with a much greater risk of disturbance of the peace. His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris will draw the attention of the French Government to the fact that the Prime Minister's statement in the House of Commons on March 24th that "the inexorable pressure of facts might well prove more powerful than formal pronouncements and in that event it would be well within the bounds of probability that other countries than those which were parties to the original dispute would almost immediately be involved" has tended in some quarters to be misunderstood and that a contingency which was stated to be in the nature of a probability and is in fact no more than that is being too readily assumed to be in the nature of a certainty. Sir Eric Phipps will correct any such impression and will point out to the Quai d'Orsay that any such misconception would increase the danger of the situation. In the circumstances he will urge upon them that it is of the greatest importance that the Czechoslovak Government should make every effort to reach a settlement of the German minority problem by negotiations with representatives of that minority (which should cover the whole field of the problem and have as their object a comprehensive and lasting settlement) and that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government should use all their influence in Prague in furtherance of such a settlement.

WASHINGTON, April 13, 1938.

¹¹ British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

¹² Sir Eric Phipps.

¹³ On March 13. See *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 135, p. 140.

760F.62/215 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, April 22, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received April 22—2:55 p. m.]

637. The Minister of Czechoslovakia, Osusky, informs me that a crucial stage will be reached by the first of next week in the negotiations between his Government and the Sudeten minority. He said that his Government was making far reaching proposals in an effort to satisfy this minority and to make it possible for Czechoslovakia to live at peace with Germany.¹⁴ The response to these proposals would prove whether the minority demands were made in good faith or whether they were merely a pretext behind which lies the aim of Germany to destroy Czechoslovakia. If the latter turns out to be the case Czechoslovakia is determined to resist with all her force any demands for further concessions which would only weaken her and ultimately bring about the collapse of the country.

I asked whether he believed that if Germany took aggressive action against Czechoslovakia France would march. Osusky said that the last 3 weeks had witnessed a "hellish" campaign of propaganda in France directed against Czechoslovakia by Germany, Italy and Poland.

French opinion had never realized until the German aggression against Austria exactly what France's commitments to Czechoslovakia might some day entail. The realization of what these obligations meant had been a shock and paid propagandists had exploited the situation in every conceivable way. Osusky said, however, that he believed this campaign had failed in its effort to create a state of mind favoring the repudiation of France's obligations towards Czechoslovakia. In any case the essence of the problem is that Czechoslovakia's salvation rests with Czechoslovakia alone. If the Czechs are determined to fight—and they are in fact determined—rather than permit German encroachment, then France and England will be obliged to come to Czechoslovakia's assistance. The Germans know this and knowledge of it will deter them from any direct attack on Czechoslovakia, but only so long as Czechoslovakia stands firm and refuses to give way to intimidation.

Osusky said that Czechoslovakia's action in recognizing the conduct [*sic*] of conquest of Ethiopia was, of course, an abandonment of principle. Czechoslovakia, a small state in the most exposed position in Europe, had been prepared to stand up for principles as long as other states did likewise. When it became clear, however, that Eng-

¹⁴ See "Memorandum on the Nationality Policy of the Czechoslovak Republic," April 26, *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 160, p. 188.

land and France had thrown principles overboard there was no other course for Czechoslovakia but to follow suit in an effort to defend her own interests. Osusky said that he only hoped that out of the evil which Czechoslovakia had been obliged to commit, some good might result.

Osusky said that he had suggested to Marchandean¹⁵ in a recent conversation that if the Tripartite Monetary Agreement¹⁶ could now be reaffirmed publicly by the three parties to it, such action coming at this time after the formation of the new French Government and the relaxation of European tension, would be of tremendous psychological value in broadening the base of confidence in Europe. He had also suggested to Marchandean that if the Tripartite Agreement could be extended to Central Europe in some fashion or other (he did not know exactly how), it would be a vital element in promoting stability in that area. I asked what Marchandean's reaction had been. Osusky said that he had promised to study the matter.

WILSON

760F.62/224 : Telegram (part air)

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, April 28, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received April 28—9:30 a. m.]

205. The German press has been building up day by day the Czechoslovak situation. Each day the facts and arguments used tend to show the unbearable plight of the Sudeten Germans, the justification of the demands of Henlein¹⁷ and that the only conceivable reason for the refusal of Henlein's suggestions would be hostility to Germany. As a result the public mind is prepared for almost any eventuality, even perhaps for action similar to that which happened in Austria.

This does not necessarily mean, however, that such action is contemplated. The German press in its handling of the Czechoslovak question has characteristically operated in waves, no doubt inspired by a desire to exert each time some particular form of pressure. It is thus equally arguable that the attitude of the German press can be explained by a desire to put pressure on Beneš¹⁸ to acquiesce as far as possible in Henlein's demands.

The Consul General at Cologne has reported unusual activity among the Rhineland units of the army and rumors have reached us of

¹⁵ Paul Marchandean, French Minister for Finance.

¹⁶ Signed by the United States, France, and the United Kingdom, September 25, 1936; see *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, pp. 535 ff.

¹⁷ See *German Documents*, ser. D., vol. II, p. 242.

¹⁸ Edouard Beneš, President of Czechoslovakia.

military activity in the neighborhood of Czechoslovakia. It is felt, however, that this, if it exists, may either be a further form of pressure or may be relatively normal troop movements which the anxieties of the time tend to construe as ominous.

Henlein's speech of April 24 is popularly referred to here as an "ultimatum". However, it is pointed out that the employment of somewhat ambiguous language and general terms in Henlein's demands may have been intentional in order to leave the door open for negotiations. In this connection it is significant that Henlein did not mention the word "autonomy".

There is also some talk here that Henlein went further than Berlin would have wished. The best opinion nevertheless concurs that in view of the nature of the long standing relationship between Hitler and Henlein the Chancellor was in full agreement with both the timing and the content of the speech.

The Czechoslovak Minister told me that he believed that what is under consideration is a development of the principle of the unity of the German race, wherever it may be found, under the direction of National Socialism. He advances the thesis that this so to speak spiritual preparation will be undertaken in various quarters and when the necessary state of mind has been brought about geographical rearrangements will follow. He thinks, however, that this is a long way off. Whether this may be as definitely true as the Minister states is, of course, an open question. It can be understood, however, that the Czechs would desire to spread such a concept in order to awaken sympathy for Czechoslovakia by reason of a common danger.

It is consistently stated from Praha that the Czechs would fight. Again, however, this is the tactically sound position for the Czechs to take in order to give Germany pause and to claim outside assistance. With all sympathy for the Czechs and their gallant impulse toward armed resistance, the vital question is whether such resistance would provoke a general war.

The Czechoslovak Minister stated that he felt the situation to be most serious. He said that he had urged Beneš for a long time to come immediately to an agreement with Henlein. Unfortunately it had been too long delayed; it should have been made before the Austrian affair at any price. He nevertheless hoped that an understanding could be reached now. No time was to be lost. He nevertheless feared very much that the Czechoslovak Government might look upon Henlein's demands as a maximum while here in Germany they were obviously regarded as a minimum.

The Minister stated that he hoped strongly that the Chancellor's visit to Rome would result in moderation in respect of Czechoslovakia. It would be to Italian interest regarding the Danubian basin to influence the Chancellor in this sense.

In respect of the immediacy of any German action concerning Czechoslovakia, Hitler's proposed visit to Rome and his absence over a period of some days is reassuring.

The attitude of the British Ambassador and of the French Chargé d'Affaires as expressed to us is that an opportunity may yet be seized, and should be seized, to obviate the possibility of a general war. It is felt that the fundamental British policy is the prevention of such a war and if it is not so already that this is tending to become a French policy. Important developments in French policy are expected as a result of the current Franco-British conversations at London.¹⁹

As advanced by the two Embassies here the general thought is to reach such an understanding with Berlin, with the assistance of an understanding with Rome, that German desires or even German unshakable intentions may be so to speak "canalized" in a manner to maintain the general peace. The basic policy in accomplishing this is seen to rest (a) on Germany's own desire to avoid war; (b) on the psychological factor of a deep seated German ambition to achieve the esteem of other states and peoples and especially (c) on the declared policy of friendship with Great Britain.

In its more immediate application this policy is described as (a) "capitalizing" Hitler's public declarations that he is opposed in principle to minorities; thus it is hoped to avoid the complete breaking up of the Czechoslovak state through action by Hungary or Poland which might create new minorities; (b) that time is necessary in order that British and French public opinion may be informed respecting the true situation in Czechoslovakia, in particular that of the Sudeten Germans, and thus lessen the strain upon the French due to their alliance with Czechoslovakia in the event that something happens; (c) to avoid at all costs a clash either initiated by the Germans or by the Czechs.

The French Chargé d'Affaires was especially strong in asserting that public opinion should be brought to realize that in the same circumstances other strong countries would take a position similar to that being taken by Germany with respect to the Sudeten Germans and that the attitude of other governments should be predicated on this realistic concept.

I naturally do not know to what extent the foregoing reflects the attitude of London or Paris.

Unless some swift change should intervene any immediate developments in this affair will undoubtedly depend on three factors, (a) whether or not internal disturbance develops in Czechoslovakia; (b) on the degree of conciliation shown by Beneš; and (c) the decision of Hitler alone.

¹⁹ See telegram No. 656, from the Chargé in France, April 26, 8 p. m., p. 44.

I expect to see Goering today and Ribbentrop²⁰ tomorrow but I should be much surprised if I learn anything more definite than the foregoing.

Copies air mailed Praha, Paris, Rome, London, Brussels.

WILSON

760F.62/239 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, May 6, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received May 6—5:50 p. m.]

225. In a conversation with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires who has just returned from a trip through the Sudeten German area, he stated that, disagreeable as the admission was to him, at present undoubtedly 90 percent of the Sudeten Germans favored union with the Reich. He said, however, that this was almost entirely due to the depressed economy of the area, that he regarded proposals examined during the Franco-British conversations at London that Great Britain employ economic means to offset German influence in Central Europe as the most valuable feature of the conversations, and that if Great Britain would purchase Sudeten-German products to a degree sufficient to create Sudeten-German prosperity the urge to unite with Germany would disappear. This view is nevertheless discounted by others here familiar with the situation who feel that the issues and sentiments have grown beyond the problem of economics.

In respect of the possible role of Russia in Czechoslovak affairs the Chargé d'Affaires stated that Russia would under no circumstances move to the military assistance of Czechoslovakia unless France moved. He added that French action in turn certainly depended on British action. He said furthermore that Russian military support of Czechoslovakia was complicated by the attitude of Poland and Rumania especially the former, which was that the passage of troops over her territory would be regarded as a cause for war. He trusted, however, that the attitudes of these two states could be overcome provided a general common action were joined against Germany.

WILSON

760F.62/238 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, May 6, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received May 6—4:30 p. m.]

226. With reference to the Embassy's telegram No. 223, May 5, 4 p. m.,²¹ the French Embassy confirms that France and Great Britain

²⁰ Joachim von Ribbentrop, German Minister for Foreign Affairs.

²¹ Not printed.

will make parallel *démarches* at Praha.²² According to the French the chief feature of these will be a statement to the Czechoslovak Government that up to the present sufficient concessions have not been made to the Sudeten Germans. It was explained that the background of this position is that France cannot give blanket guarantees of assistance to Czechoslovakia to be operative under all conditions and that any concept of assistance carries with it the right to advise respecting a situation which might lead to war.

The French will not make a *démarche* here. They will be "covered" by an agreement that the British Ambassador will say to the Germans that "Great Britain recognizes that France is in a special position respecting Czechoslovakia and that Great Britain cannot be indifferent to any matter whatsoever which affects French interests."

It was stated that the concept back of the foregoing is that a degree of unity in French and British action backed by the arrangements for general staff conversations will serve to strengthen the diplomatic positions of both of the two powers.

The French Embassy understands, however, that the cardinal policy of the British both in Praha and in Berlin is the employment of every effort and device to avoid a general war.

The French Embassy also expressed the hope that Mussolini may likewise exercise an influence on Hitler during the Rome visit²³ to restrain Germany from taking action inimical to the general peace.

WILSON

851.50/164 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, May 9, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received May 10—12:40 p. m.]

739. . . .

2. Czechoslovakia. I asked Daladier if there were any truth in the report that he had decided to go to war with Germany if Germany should attack Czechoslovakia. "With what?" he replied. He went on to say that the contentions in Europe today depended on force and force alone. He had been able to improve French airplane production in the past month from 42 planes to 84 planes per month. This improvement was however totally inadequate to cope with Germany's production which probably amounted to nearly 500 planes per month. The British had had difficulties with their airplane produc-

²² See *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 195, p. 265.

²³ May 3-9.

tion and it would be many months before they could reach a total of 250 planes per month.

When he had been in London the British consistently had described their state of preparedness as worse than it really was. The reason for this had been that they wished to make it entirely clear that they were unwilling to engage in war on the continent for Czechoslovakia or any other purpose than the defense of their immediate interests in the coast of the channel.

With the present disparity between the French air force and the German air force it was impossible for France to go to war to protect Czechoslovakia.

An additional ugly element in the situation was the development of the Nazi movement in Luxemburg. Until recently the French had felt that they could count on Luxemburg either for cooperation or at least benevolent neutrality in case of war between France and Germany. At the present time the Nazi movement in Luxemburg was so powerful that the possibility must be envisaged that Luxemburg might fall into Nazi hands. It was true that the Russians had 6,000 planes; but there was some doubt as to their quality and it seemed exceedingly unlikely that the Soviet Union would take any offensive action in Europe to help Czechoslovakia. The Poles had promised the French that they would not participate in any German action to break up Czechoslovakia and had denied that they had ever had the slightest intention of participating in such action. On the other hand if autonomy should be granted to the Sudeten Germans of Bohemia, Poland would demand autonomy for the Poles of Teschen District of Czechoslovakia.

I asked Daladier how the Czechs had received the *démarche* of the British and French Ministers in Praha advising them to make concessions to the Sudeten Germans.²⁴ Daladier replied that the Czechs had appeared to be most conciliatory and that the British and French Governments hoped that the Czechs might attempt to reorganize their country on a federal basis taking Switzerland as a model. I asked if he did not feel that any such reorganization would simply be the first step toward partition of Czechoslovakia. He replied that he believed this would be the result and added that he had considered the position of Czechoslovakia entirely hopeless since the annexation of Austria by Germany. He added that Germany would not need to take any military action against Czechoslovakia in order to get anything she might desire. Economic pressure would be sufficient.

I derived the definite impression from this portion of our conversation (which was much more detailed than the report given above) that

²⁴ May 7, 1938, *British Documents*, 3d ser. vol. I, doc. No. 171, p. 241, and doc. No. 186, p. 259.

French and British action with regard to Czechoslovakia will be based on the assumption that the ultimate dissolution of Czechoslovakia is inevitable and that the best that can be hoped for is that such dissolution will take place without bloodshed in such a way as to save the face of France and of England.

[For the remaining portions of the telegram, see page 192, and volume III, p. 164.]

BULLITT

760F.62/248 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 11, 1938—noon.

[Received May 11—8:30 a. m.]

745. My 739, May 9, 7 p. m. The impression I derived from my conversation with Daladier regarding possible French action in case of a German attack on Czechoslovakia was confirmed last night when Chautemps²⁵ expressed to me his belief that aside from protesting France would do "absolutely nothing".

On the other hand Léger said to me yesterday that if Germany should attack Czechoslovakia France automatically would go to war at once and England inevitably would be obliged to follow.

I have talked with many other French politicians since my return and I believe that the point of view expressed by Léger is much further away from reality than the point of view expressed by Daladier and Chautemps.

Incidentally Paul Reynaud²⁶ does not expect the present financial and economic difficulties of France to be worked out satisfactorily in the immediate future and looks forward to a day when he will be Minister of Finance in a cabinet of National Union that will extend from the Communists to the extreme Right.

BULLITT

760F.62/259 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

WARSAW, May 13, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received 3:55 p. m.²⁷]

69. 1. Warsaw has now become a focal point of quandary in terms of Britain's, France's and Germany's desire to ascertain Poland's position in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia. In

²⁵ Camille Chautemps, Vice President of the French Council of Ministers.

²⁶ French Minister for Justice.

²⁷ Telegram in two sections.

British and French eyes, Poland might conceivably adopt any one of the following three courses:

- (A) to sit tight;
- (B) to grab the Polish minority in the Teschen District;
- (C) to block Germany's eastward expansion.

In my opinion Poland's natural preference in the matter would be to "sit tight" or at least to await the turn of events before making a final decision. On the other hand a Polish grab of the Teschen District in the event of a German seizure of the Sudeten land might conceivably entail a dual purpose.

(1) to block the extension of the German frontier along the Polish southern border.

(2) to recover the valuable coal lands of Teschen which the Poles continue to feel were stolen in 1920 by the Czechs while the Poles were elsewhere occupied.²⁸

2. My observations prompt me to believe that unless definite guarantees for Poland's security were granted both by Britain and France, Poland could not be expected for the following reasons to adopt a protective role necessary to Czechoslovakia's position.

(A) As pointed out in my despatch No. 194, October 7, 1937 and my despatch No. 433, April 13,²⁹ one of Beck's cardinal policies (in his direction of Poland's affairs) might be characterized as "active neutrality", which is attributable to his deep-lying belief (inherited from his old master Pilsudski) is the purpose and legitimacy of Poland's pursuance of a neutralist policy as a means of saving Poland from the fate of becoming a battle ground for her bigger neighbors. In connection therewith I believe that, in anticipation of Germany's some day attacking Czechoslovakia either in form of a military move or an "inside job", the Polish Government has kept alive her misunderstanding with Czechoslovakia in order to build up such a record adding that if and when the time came when the League might call upon Poland to support Czechoslovakia, either by military assistance or to serve as a passageway for a Russian punitive expedition or both, Poland might point to this record of misunderstandings as a legitimate reason to refuse these requests for support. (Of pertinent interest I note that Polish official circles continue to be of the opinion that Hitler still prefers to accomplish his objective vis-à-vis Sudetens by means of an "inside job" and to so confuse the issue as not to risk Germany's involvement in a consequent war of major proportions.)

(B) Poland's own position vis-à-vis Germany is far from comfortable for she always faces the possibility of: (a) Germany's turning her aggressive attention towards the Corridor and Upper Silesia;

²⁸ See *Foreign Relations*, 1920, vol. I, pp. 36 ff.

²⁹ Neither printed.

(b) German—vis-à-vis the German and Ukrainian minorities—machinations are even now afoot.

Hence I do not believe Poland could be expected to “stick out her neck” in initiating a movement entailing the protection of Czechoslovakia which might provoke the suspicion and subsequent ire of an aggressive minded and power drunk Germany unless Britain, particularly, and France would give assurances of accepting their part of the responsibility entailed in such a project and unless Britain and France would grant adequate guarantees for Poland’s security.

(Section 2.) 1. In my recent strictly confidential conversations with informed officials the following has come to light: official circles here received reports through confidential channels indicating Britain had come to accept Berlin’s insistence that settlement of the Sudeten question was a matter outside the domain of a general settlement of European grievances. This to my mind is important if true for such policy together with the impression fast gaining ground here that Britain and France would be willing to put up with almost any arrangement in respect to a settlement of the Sudeten question providing it did not drag them into a war may be expected to have an important effect not only on Polish policy but also upon the entire situation in Eastern and Central Europe.

2. Of pertinent bearing, Polish official interest is engaged by its confidential reports of this morning to the effect that Henlein’s present visit to London was engineered by Noel-Buxton, Laborite, who was a strong advocate of Sudeten’s autonomy. These reports moreover indicate that Buxton had arranged unofficial and informal meetings between Henlein and several British Cabinet officials who, according to the reports, might be expected to urge Henlein to be moderate in his demands.

3. Polish officialdom, in the absence of further news in connection with Henlein’s visit, confidentially expressed their opinion that Henlein’s visit coming as it did on the eve of the Czech Government’s publication of its program outlining a new status for minorities and on the eve of the forthcoming municipal elections might conceivably mean that Henlein possibly having gained some advance knowledge of the contents of the Czech Government’s minority proposal and having been dissatisfied with those findings had gone to London either in search of support for his position or as a grandstand play whereby he might subsequently create the impression abroad that he enjoyed support in British quarters.

4. My informants moreover felt that Hitler would welcome Henlein’s London visit for Berlin would thus be able to place some of the responsibility in connection with bringing about a peaceful settlement between the Sudetens and the Czech Government at the door of 10

Downing Street. In this connection the newly arrived German Ambassador to London imparted to Polish Ambassador Raczynski that Hitler was anxious to minimize Berlin's hand in such a settlement. In fact, Hitler wanted the outstanding grievances to be settled strictly between Henlein and the Czech Government.

BIDDLE

760F.62/262 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, May 14, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received May 14—5:00 p. m.]

407. 1. Following is substance of a conversation this afternoon with Masaryk, the Czechoslovak Minister who stated that he got his information about Henlein's visit from Vansittart,³⁰ Winston Churchill³¹ and Harold Nicolson.³² Collating this information which he thought was remarkably uniform, he found that Henlein had told these men, and presumably others, that the demands of the Sudeten Germans could now be summarized as follows:³³

- (1) Autonomy concerning municipal and county councils;
- (2) A delimitation of territory, but always within the Czechoslovak State, for the purposes of outlining this sphere of local-autonomy;
- (3) The Sudeten Germans are willing to accept international mediation, even that of the League of Nations, to effect a peaceable settlement;
- (4) A central office (Volksrat) to look after German affairs in Czechoslovakia;
- (5) They are willing to retain ordinary democratic voting procedure in the National Parliament;
- (6) Foreign affairs, the judiciary, the army and national finance to rest in the hands of the central Government;
- (7) The Sudeten Germans to determine how a "proper proportion" of the national budget, after allowance for the expenses of the national services to remain under central control, should be expended in the autonomous territory;
- (8) The judiciary to remain neutral—that is, no party judges as in Germany;
- (9) Renunciation of the Russian alliance,³⁴ but on this point Henlein told the British that his party is willing to try their hand at conversion by democratic methods through their representatives in Parliament.

³⁰ Sir Robert Gilbert Vansittart, chief diplomatic adviser, British Foreign Office.

³¹ Member of Parliament, and former First Lord of the Admiralty.

³² Member of Parliament, and former Counselor of the British Embassy in Germany.

³³ For British memoranda on Henlein's conversations in London, see *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, Appendix II, p. 630.

³⁴ Agreement for mutual assistance, signed May 16, 1935, League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CLIX, p. 347.

Henlein explained that his Carlsbad speech was made under stress of the excitement of the German annexation of Austria, and that he and his lieutenants are now less keen about being a part of Germany, although he believed a majority of his party still favored it. However, he predicted that "a new loyalty would awaken" if the Sudeten Germans secured the concessions outlined above.

He gave the impression that he is convinced the Czechoslovaks would fight if any military *putsch* were attempted, even though it was backed by Germany. He said he understood this and was willing that the central Government should continue to keep its forces along the frontier just as they are now.

Masaryk's own impressions, after his 2-hour talk with Henlein, were as follows:

Henlein was discouraged by his reception here. He was told that the British could not view any violence with unconcern, so much so that he told Masaryk that he thought the British would go to war if the Germans treated Czechoslovakia like they did Austria. Also he realizes that in the event of fighting the German territory of Czechoslovakia would be the first to suffer and would be the first battlefield.

Henlein was on the defensive during his visit here. He was under constant attack for his Carlsbad intransigence, and was told that the British did not believe he could control his own people and that they feared some overt act which would start bloodshed.

Henlein gave Masaryk the impression that he, having reflected a little after the first blush of enthusiasm following the Austrian *Anschluss*, has now decided that he would be much better off to be the governor of a semi-autonomous portion of Czechoslovakia than he would be as a second rate Seyss-Inquart.³⁵ He has learned by observing the progress of events in Vienna.

Masaryk is convinced that Hitler had nothing to do with this visit, and regarded it as encouraging that Henlein came here without asking permission from Berlin. Masaryk considered the "demands" as completely acceptable, except for the Russian alliance which will not be surrendered, he said, without a substantial *quid pro quo*.

The Minister said that he had advised his Government this afternoon to start negotiations with Henlein Monday morning, while the memory of his London visit is still fresh in his mind. He said that Praha has not yet started any talks with Berlin and that his Government still hopes to get the British to put up enough of a serious show of opposition to discourage Hitler from moving in for some time. He thinks that Hitler has enough on his hands just now to keep him

³⁵ Arthur Seyss-Inquart, Austrian National Socialist leader, and "Lord Lieutenant" (Reichsstatthalter) after the incorporation of Austria into Germany, March 13, 1938.

occupied and that the longer an open issue with Germany is avoided the more chance there is that some solution can be found.

On his own account he finds the British officials much less firm and determined than they apparently made themselves appear to Henlein. He says he is still hearing the same vague advice that they have been pouring in his ears for the past 3 years but nothing definite enough for his Government to make up its mind what to do.

In the long run if Hitler lasts he looks for Germany and Russia to get together. In that event the Berlin Baghdad dream of pre-war days will become a reality and Western Europe will relapse to an enlarged Portugal. The British realize this, he says, but cannot make up their minds how to stop it. He says that Halifax is more in favor of a determined stand than Chamberlain and that Halifax was very discouraged by the depressing spectacle he has just witnessed at Geneva when all pretense at international decency was thrown out of the window.

2. I have the impression from Foreign Office officials that their concerted efforts with the French at Praha and their own approach at Berlin have not yet produced any really satisfying results. Uncertainty regarding the outcome, and suspicion of real German intentions is still apparent in these circles. They are groping for a way to keep the issue from coming to a head and are more apprehensive of some irresponsible acting on the part of Henlein's supporters, thus offering Hitler an excuse for violent action, than anything else. These officials professed yesterday to have had no prior knowledge of Henlein's visit, but the opportunity was doubtless not lost to have impressed upon him his own responsibility for keeping his followers in hand. Masaryk's account of the advice given to Henlein has all the ring of authenticity and his own disappointment at the cautiousness of the British Government's stand, a further indication that it has no present intention of going beyond the position stated by the Prime Minister on March 24.³⁶ See my 377, May 5, 9 p. m.³⁷

Copies to Paris, Berlin, Rome, Praha.

KENNEDY

740.00/387 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 16, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 5:40 p. m.]

773. I called this afternoon on Bonnet who has just returned from Geneva. Bonnet said that he had taken over the direction of the

³⁶ *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 114, p. 95.

³⁷ *Ante*, p. 50.

foreign affairs of France³⁸ when there were no more cards in France's hand. The one bright spot was that the British had expressed to him and Daladier³⁹ in London the fullest determination to stand by France and a complete understanding of France's difficulties.

On the other hand the British at first had said that they had no intention of doing anything to protect Czechoslovakia. They had described Czechoslovakia as a combination of rags and patches stitched together by the Versailles Treaty that no one should die to protect. Daladier and he had made the British understand, however, that France would be in honor bound to go to war if German troops should march into Czechoslovakia and that France would fulfill this obligation.

The British had agreed finally to intervene both in Berlin and in Praha—on the other hand to inform the Germans that they were certain that France would march in case Czechoslovakia should be invaded by the German Army and that England would be drawn into the war; on the other hand to press the Czechs to make concessions to the Sudeten Germans sufficient to satisfy both the Sudeten Germans and Hitler.

Bonnet said that when Henderson, British Ambassador in Berlin, had made these remarks to Ribbentrop, Ribbentrop had replied that Germany was glad that Great Britain was working in this sense and that Germany would not march troops into Czechoslovakia during the period of the British effort to find a solution unless Sudeten blood should flow. In that case Germany would feel obliged to protect the Germans on the Czech side of the frontier.

Bonnet said that his whole policy at the present time was based on allowing the English full latitude to work out the dispute. He felt that if it were possible to adjust this dispute without war the British could do it and efforts by France could only muddy the waters since France was allied to Czechoslovakia.

Bonnet went on to say with the greatest vehemence and emotion that he believed a French declaration of war on Germany today in order to protect Czechoslovakia would mean the defeat and dismemberment of France. The French had a good army but since in the matter of refusal of the Belgians to permit the passage of French troops a French attack on Germany would have to be confined to a frontal attack on the "Siegfried Line" between Luxemburg and Strasbourg. This meant the almost immediate death of the whole of French youth. Furthermore French aviation was in a most lamentable condition and could not hold the air against German aviation. Moreover, there were no antiaircraft guns to protect Paris and

³⁸ On April 10, 1938.

³⁹ Edouard Daladier, President of the French Council of Ministers.

other vital French centers. Moreover, the total supply of gas masks to protect the civilian population was 30,000. Germany would control the air completely and would be able to destroy Paris and every French factory.

He had had recently discussions of the utmost importance with the Poles, the Rumanians and the Russians. The Poles had made it clear that they would not march with France if France should go to war with Germany to protect Czechoslovakia. They had furthermore stated categorically that if a Russian Army should attempt to cross Poland to attack Germany or to defend Czechoslovakia, Poland would at once declare war on the Soviet Union.

He had had a similar discussion with Comnene, Foreign Minister of Rumania. Comnene had stated to him equally categorically that an attempt by Russian troops to cross Rumanian territory would result in an immediate declaration of war by Rumania on the Soviet Union.

The Yugoslavs had made it clear that they would not go to war to support Czechoslovakia.

The British had stated that while they knew they would be drawn eventually into a war between France and Germany [apparent omission] enter such a war at the outset.

The result of a French declaration of war on Germany in support of Czechoslovakia would be therefore that two of France's allies would be at war with the third and France would be fighting Germany alone—with Italy waiting to pounce.

Bonnet added that there were a number of members of the French Cabinet notably Mandel ⁴¹ who believed that France should go to war with Germany now since they thought that in spite of France's present weakness vis-à-vis Germany she would never again be relatively stronger and because they felt that the Russian Army could crush Rumania quickly and deliver a serious blow against Germany. Bonnet earnestly desires [*sic*] the latest reports from Coulondre, French Ambassador to Moscow, indicated that 70% of the officers of the Soviet Army on the European frontier had been shot in the recent purges and said that neither he nor the French General Staff believed that the Russian Army could take any offensive action in Europe.

On this subject he had attempted to have a thoroughgoing conversation with Litvinov ⁴² at Geneva and had asked Litvinov pointblank what the Soviet Union would do if Germany harmed Czechoslovakia. Litvinov had replied that the Soviet Union would wait to see what France would do, and had been completely evasive when he had asked

⁴¹ Georges Mandel, French Minister for the Colonies.

⁴² Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and representative on the Council of the League of Nations.

how the Soviet Armies could get across Poland and Rumania to attack Germany.

Bonnet said his conclusion was that if France should be provoked to going to war with Germany at the present time on a point of honor the result would be even more terrible than the result when France had gone to war in 1870 on the basis of the insult contained in the forged Ems telegram. So far as he was concerned he would fight to the limit against the involvement of France in war at the present time. He added that he was not at all sure what the attitude of the Cabinet would be and implored me to do what I could to calm those who wanted war, like Mandel and Herriot.⁴³

Bonnet said that Osusky, Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, was to call on him this evening at 8 o'clock to indicate to him the concessions Czechoslovakia was prepared to make to the Sudeten Germans. We discussed the question of these possible concessions and Bonnet expressed the opinion that Beneš might decide to provoke war at the present time by an exceedingly clever maneuver. He might make concessions to the Sudeten Germans which would appear considerable and generous but would stop short of being satisfactory or even a satisfactory basis for discussion. If the Sudeten Germans then rejected these terms, as Beneš would expect, and should start riots, the Czechoslovak Government would put down these riots, and the ensuing bloodshed would provoke immediate German intervention and a French declaration of war. Bonnet said that he was so fearful that the concessions to the Sudeten Germans would be carefully designed to be inadequate that he would rigorously refrain from expressing to Osusky or to the Czechoslovak Government any opinion as to the concessions until he had learned from the British that these concessions would prove to be satisfactory to the Sudeten Germans and to the German Government.

In spite of the fact that Bonnet, Daladier and Chautemps all realize that the present moment is the most unfavorable one since the Armistice for France to risk war, I believe that if Czechoslovakia should make concessions and then Germany should march into Czechoslovakia and the Czechs should resist, popular pressure for France to declare war on Germany might easily become uncontrollable after a period of a week or more. The Communists would certainly be for war; the Socialists in large measure would be for war and various elements in the Center and the Right, such as those represented by Herriot and Mandel, would be for war.

As a fair example of the emotional state of France I submit the following remarks of Delbos⁴⁴ who after beginning an evening with

⁴³ Edouard Herriot, President of the French Chamber of Deputies.

⁴⁴ Yvon Delbos, former French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

me, by the statement that he was utterly opposed to France going to war, ended the evening by saying that if it should come to a choice between violating France's pledged word and risking the destruction of France and of Europe he was in favor of the latter course. "We have been defeated but we have never been contemptible. If we should abandon our honor because of fear we should be no better than any other nation."

BULLITT

760F.62/264 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

LONDON, May 16, 1938—9 p. m.
[Received May 16—6:40 p. m.]

411. For the Secretary and Under Secretary. My 407, May 14, 6 p. m. Saw Lord Halifax this afternoon. With regard to the Czechoslovak situation he told me that Henderson, the Ambassador in Berlin, had seen German officials on Friday or Saturday and much to their surprise the Germans instead of telling them to mind their own business had said they hoped the British would continue to exert their influence on the Czechs to make a workable arrangement for the Germans. They asked whether the French were part and parcel of the plan to urge Beneš to be reasonable in his treatment of the Germans and Henderson assured them that they were. Again Hitler expressed his supreme contempt for the French. Halifax said that on his way back from Geneva he stopped off and saw Bonnet who urged him to work as hard as he could for a settlement in Czechoslovakia so that the French would not be faced with a crisis which they definitely do not want to face.

Halifax believes that Henlein did not come here without Hitler's assent and that his main purpose was to get a reaction and see what he could do with first hand talks to convince some of the people in England that his Carlsbad speech was not so far off the line of possibility. Incidentally Ribbentrop told Henderson that the Carlsbad speech was a good starting point for the negotiations.

Halifax said that he had asked the Rumanian Minister, a great friend of Beneš, whether his impression that Beneš was a great promiser but not a great deliverer was still correct. The answer was that Beneš hated the Germans and that is why he got himself up to his eyes in the League of Nations. When that started to weaken he turned to Russia and France and with the situations in those countries looking a little shaky he is very likely to be reasonable in his dealings

with Henlein. I asked Halifax whether he thought Henlein could hold his followers in line and he said he thought that very likely Henlein could, especially if he talked with assurances from Berlin. On the whole Halifax said he felt fairly optimistic about the situation. He says he still remembers that in his personal conversation Hitler reserved to himself the right to expand in Eastern and Central Europe among his own people but that he does not want to go to war. So Halifax says that the British are trying to keep to the attitude of saying to Germany, "Now we are urging Beneš to make a reasonable and sensible deal" but at the same time saying, "Be as reasonable as you should because if you touch the spring it may go off and then you may not do as well as you think"—a sort of veiled threat.

KENNEDY

760F.62/265 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 17, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received May 17—8:10 a. m.]

777. Personal for the Secretary. The Czechoslovakian situation is so critical that while I will concede there is an excellent chance of a peaceful settlement, I nevertheless believe the Department should be prepared to face a major European war before August 15.

BULLITT

760F.62/271 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, May 18, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received May 18—1:40 p. m.]

88. In reply to my questions this morning the Minister for Foreign Affairs said that the situation here is easier, that he has no fear of a military attack by Germany, that he has a positive statement from the German Government that it does not intend to attack this country but desires a peaceful solution of the questions between this Government and the Sudeten Germans and is consequently counselling the latter to be moderate. Replying to my inquiry as to how long he thought this assurance valid, he said "for the present". He added that Germany's attitude was due to her fear of a European war for which her army is not prepared.

He said that the positive declaration of France of her intention to come to the aid of Czechoslovakia if attacked and the real interest shown by the British Government have had a definite effect on the

situation and another factor is that when Hitler was in Rome Mussolini gave him clearly to understand that he was not disinterested in the Central European region.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that Henlein's visit to London had had a good effect upon him and was causing him to be more moderate and that the Government expects to commence negotiations with him within the next few days. This morning's press states that the Committee of Political Ministers concluded its discussions of the nationalities statute in principle yesterday and that the Prime Minister will begin direct negotiations with the representatives of the German, Hungarian and Polish minorities within the next few days.

The Swiss and Danish Ministers who have been in touch with some of the Sudeten German leaders told me yesterday that those leaders feel that they have gone too far in their demands and now desire to find a possible compromise. There is some fear, however, that the leaders may not be able to control their followers who have been so influenced by propaganda that they do not reason and may get out of control.

CARR

760F.62/285 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, May 21, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received May 21—3:20 p. m.]

260. I am sending (my 259, May 21, 1 p. m.⁴⁵) a telegram describing this morning's press concerning incidents in Czechoslovakia in which 100 people are reported wounded. Whether true or not, the publishing of such affairs is a grave matter and tends to prepare the German people for any developments. Newspaper men tell me that further reports have been received of the shooting of two Sudeten Deutsche by Czech troops.

Both the British and French Ambassadors regard the situation as really serious. Henderson has obtained instructions from his Government to keep in close touch with Ribbentrop and to persist in his advice for moderation. It is presumed that similar action is being taken at Praha. According to press sources, concentrations of the Czech Army are taking place. The British Minister at Praha has telegraphed rumors of German troop movements but neither Henderson nor ourselves has any confirmation thereof.

While this does not necessarily mean an outbreak of hostilities either now or later, the tension is in many respects alarming. It does mean,

⁴⁵ Not printed.

however, that tension will continue in Europe unless and until this problem of the Sudeten Germans is liquidated.

I have been giving serious consideration as to whether there is any step which I can propose to you which might be useful. You might wish to consider whether it would be advisable to instruct Carr and myself to say orally to the respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs that the United States is concerned at the dangerous situation which seems to be developing, that the only interest of the United States in the matter is the preservation of peace in Europe as elsewhere, that my Government earnestly hopes that a peaceful solution to this problem will be found.

I believe that, in order that such a step may carry any weight, approach must be made to both parties to the dispute and thus be essentially non-partisan. However, the resentment in the German Government against America is such that suggestions from us may not carry the full weight which they would under ordinary circumstances.

WILSON

760F.62/277 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 21, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 8:05 p. m.]

807. The Polish Ambassador Lukasiewicz, who returned yesterday from Warsaw, stated to me that without question Poland would declare war immediately on the Soviet Union if the Soviet Union should attempt to send troops across Polish territory to support Czechoslovakia. He stated that if Soviet airplanes should cross Polish territory en route to Czechoslovakia they would be attacked at once by Polish planes. He stated that there was a considerable concentration of Polish planes close to the Polish-Rumanian frontier for the specific purpose of attacking Russian planes attempting to cross in this neighborhood.

The Polish Ambassador went on to say that if Russian troops should attempt to cross Rumania en route to Czechoslovakia he was certain that the Rumanian Government would declare war at once on the Soviet Union (see my telegram No. 773, May 16, 5 p. m.) and that Poland would declare war simultaneously on the Soviet Union in accordance with the Polish-Rumanian alliance.⁴⁶ He added that if Soviet planes should attempt to cross Rumania it might be impossible

⁴⁶ Treaty of mutual guarantee, signed January 15, 1931, League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. cxv, p. 171.

for the Rumanian air force to stop them; but that it was not excluded that the Polish air force would send sufficient planes to Rumanian territory to assist the Rumanians in attacking Russian planes which might attempt to cross Rumanian territory.

It seems fairly clear therefore that Bonnet's prediction is well founded that an attempt by the Soviet Union to bring aid to Czechoslovakia would result in declarations of war by both Poland and Rumania.

My feeling with regard to the gravity of the present situation has not diminished.

BULLITT

760F.62/278 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 21, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received May 21—8 p. m.]

808. Osusky who returned a few days ago from Praha has just informed me that the concessions which the Czechoslovak Government will make to the Sudeten will be: (1) use of German as an official language, in the law courts et cetera; (2) complete control by the Sudeten of their own schools, (3) representation of Sudeten in local administration in the proportion that their numbers bear to the whole population. "They are," said Osusky, "to be treated no longer as a minority but as a nationality."

I asked him if he expected the Sudeten to accept these conditions. He said that when he had left Praha the Czechoslovak Government had believed that these concessions would be accepted; but that the picture had changed since then. Hodza⁴⁷ had invited Henlein to come to Praha for a discussion and Henlein had disappeared. Hodza had ordered the Czechoslovak police to discover where Henlein was.

In the course of the next 10 days the Czechoslovak Government would announce these concessions whether or not the Sudeten should accept them.

The mobilization of one class of reserves of the Czechoslovak Army had been decided upon, Osusky said, about a week ago and was not a reply to the German stationing of troops on the Czech border yesterday. The Czechoslovak Government had decided that the defenses on the German border were inadequately manned and that it must call out one class of reserves in order to avoid a surprise attack.

Osusky said that the two Germans who had been shot in Bohemia today had been distributing Nazi propaganda and had tried to escape

⁴⁷ Milan Hodza, Czechoslovak Prime Minister.

on motorcycles and had refused to stop when summoned to do so. They had therefore been fired upon and killed.

Osusky went on to say that Czechoslovakia was absolutely determined to fight to the last man in case German troops should cross the border. He added that under no conditions would the Sudeten be permitted to form "storm battalions" or to arm themselves.

I asked him if he did not believe war was imminent and he said that he feared we might be at the verge of a war which would end in the destruction of all Europe. He felt Germany could not be scared off unless England and France unitedly should evoke that they would march to defend Czechoslovakia. He said that he believed France would march but was doubtful about England.

I ventured to express the opinion that there could be no doubt about England. England would not promise to march in defense of Czechoslovakia. Osusky said that in that case war was inevitable. He expressed the belief that the Soviet Union would not be able to send troops to Czechoslovakia but that the Soviet air force might be of considerable assistance.

The impression I gathered from this conversation with Osusky was that the Czechs prefer to see their nation succumb in a conflagration which will destroy all Europe rather than to make the large concessions which alone would satisfy Hitler and the Sudeten.

BULLITT

760F.62/280 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 22, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received May 22—5:15 p. m.]

810. Personal for the President: I addressed to you 2 days ago the following letter which cannot reach you by pouch for another week. Yesterday's events seem to me to justify telegraphing it:

Dear Mr. President: I hope this letter will reach you before Europe blows up. At the moment it looks to me as if the Czechs had decided that in the long run it would be better for them to have general war rather than give the Sudeten a sufficient autonomy to satisfy either Henlein or Hitler. They will shoot some Sudeten and Hitler will march across the Czech frontier.

The question of whether or not all Europe shall go to war is therefore ceasing to be a question of finding a basis for compromise between the Czechs and Germany. It is becoming a question of whether or not France will march when the Germans cross the Czech frontier. Neither you nor I can decide that question for the French Government; but we can both have a certain amount of influence on the decision.

I feel that it would be an unspeakable tragedy if France, to support Czechoslovakia, should attack the "Siegfried Line" between Strasbourg and Luxemburg which is the only point at which attack is considered possible by the French general staff. As you know French airplane production is now about 45 planes per month; British about 80 per month. The Germans, at worst, even when changing types, produce 300 per month and at best 500 to 600 per month. The French have no anti-aircraft artillery worth mentioning and are just beginning to produce it. There are only 30,000 gas masks available for the entire civilian population of France. The slaughter of the entire younger generation of France would be certain and every city in France could be leveled to the ground by German planes. The French even under such circumstances would hold out and the war would be a long one involving England and all Europe. There could be only one possible result: the complete destruction of Western Europe and Bolshevism from one end of the continent to the other.

The chances are today that the French will carry out their pledge to Czechoslovakia as a matter of honor—whatever the cost. If you believe as I believe that it is not in the interest either of the United States or civilization as a whole to have the continent of Europe devastated I think we should attempt to find some way which will let the French out of their moral commitment.

I do not believe that any general appeal for peace by you at the present time would be effective. Today the Governments of both Germany and Italy hate the United States so heartily that neither one would accept any such proposal as you were thinking of making last January.⁴⁸ Moreover there would not be time to summon representatives to Washington. Both Germany and Italy might however accept a specific proposal of a limited nature.

I am fully aware of all the objections to the suggestion which I am about to make. If you should act on it you would be accused of involving the United States in European politics and sacrificing another small nation to Hitler. But I feel that when the people of the United States realize, as they soon will, that general war in Europe is imminent they will not only accept but will demand some action from you which may promise to stop it.

If and when a German march across the border of Czechoslovakia seems imminent I think that you should take action of the following nature:

Call to the White House the Ambassadors of England, France, Germany, and Italy. Ask them to transmit to Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler, and Mussolini your urgent invitation to send representatives at once to The Hague to attempt to work out a peaceful settlement of the dispute between Germany and Czechoslovakia. Add that if the four Governments desire, a representative of the United States will sit with them. You should also make a personal appeal of the sort that

⁴⁸ See pp. 115 ff.

you know best how to make referring to the fact that we are the children of all the nations of Europe, that our civilization is a composite of all the civilizations of Europe, that just as we are grateful for Shakespeare so are we grateful for Beethoven, that just as we are grateful for Molière so are we grateful for Leonardo da Vinci et cetera, that we cannot stand by and watch the beginning of the end of European civilization without making one last effort to stop its destruction; that you are convinced that the only result of general European war today would be an Asiatic despotism established on fields of dead.

After a general conversation with the four Ambassadors you might reinforce your action by personal conversations with each Ambassador stressing to the German Ambassador the fact that France will fight and England will fight, that war in Europe today can end only in the establishment of Bolshevism from one end of the Continent to the other, that your proposed conference will leave the Bolsheviks beyond the swamps which divide the Soviet Union from Europe and are Europe's real eastern boundary. I think that even Hitler would accept under such circumstances.

The conference at The Hague would probably have to recommend that a plebiscite be held in Czechoslovakia to determine the will of the different peoples of that country. If the Czechs should refuse to hold such a plebiscite the French would have an escape from their desperate moral dilemma and general European war would be avoided.

You would be accused, or the man sent to The Hague as your representative would be, of selling out a small nation in order to produce another Hitler triumph. I should not hesitate to take that brick on my head and I don't think you should either if thereby you could avoid a general European war.

I could make this letter 50 pages long filled with explanations, but as between you and myself I feel no explanations are needed. You, at least, will know that I have not become either a cynic or a lover of Hitler. I have thought this matter over night after night and I am convinced that this highly unpleasant course is the one that we should pursue and the only one that offers a chance of success.

If you should consider that this proposal is sound I think you should work out at once your statement to the Ambassadors so that you can spring it at a moment's notice. The moment has not yet arrived; but it may soon.

It would be fatal I believe to communicate your intention to any government including the British. They would at once relax their own efforts to reconcile the Czechs and Germans because they would feel that at last they were getting the United States tied up in European political problems. Furthermore they would in confidence, tell all their friends in Europe and you could certainly in that event count on refusals from Hitler and Mussolini.

You would of course make it clear to the people of the United States that your action was directed toward this one emergency and that you had no intention of involving the United States in all the disputes of Europe.

In addition I believe that it would help immensely if you should call in St. Quentin ⁴⁹ and tell him that you hope France will not commit suicide and if you would authorize me to say the same thing for you to Daladier.

In any event as soon as you have considered this suggestion will you please send me a telegram containing one word either "affirmative" or "negative".⁵⁰

Concluding paragraphs of letter not telegraphed since they are entirely personal.

BULLITT

760F.62/281 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 22, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received May 22—6:55 p. m.]

811. For the Secretary and Under Secretary. Bonnet has just read to me a memorandum which the British Ambassador in Berlin presented to Ribbentrop last night. The memorandum stated *inter-alia*:

The British Government had been urging moderation on the Czech Government.

The French Government had informed the British Government many times in the past few days that if German troops should cross the frontier into Czechoslovakia France would carry out the terms of her alliance with Czechoslovakia, mobilize at once and declare war on Germany.

The German Government was aware of the friendship and close collaboration of the British and French Governments and it was impossible to conceal the fact that if France should be drawn into war by Germany attacking Czechoslovakia Great Britain would be obliged to support France.

The limits of a war started in this manner could not be predicted. Countries remote from the original site of the conflict would be drawn in at an earlier or later date. There was then a phrase couched in diplomatic language which meant, if it meant anything, that Great Britain would go to war in support of France immediately.

The memorandum ended with a description of the common interests of England and France and their common devotion to democracy and human freedom.

⁴⁹ René de Saint-Quentin, French Ambassador in the United States.

⁵⁰ No reply to this message has been found in Department files.

Henderson, the British Ambassador in Berlin, reported that Ribbentrop became livid with rage on hearing the contents of this memorandum. He called Henderson's attention to the fact that in addition to the two Sudeten killed yesterday the Czechs had wounded 80 more. He said that Great Britain should properly give her advice to the Czech Government and not to the German Government.

Ribbentrop finally concluded by saying that Germany would protect Germans on the Czech side of the frontier and that even though England were to take the course outlined in the British Government's memorandum, Germany would not hesitate to make war any more than she had hesitated in 1914.

Bonnet said that during the whole of last night he had been in agony as he had feared that Hitler would order immediate mobilization of two German classes in reply to the Czech mobilization of two classes. He said that the British would press the Czech Government tomorrow to make really great concessions to the Sudeten. I asked him if Osusky, the Czech Minister in Paris, had informed him as he had informed me of the concessions that the Czech Government was prepared to make (see my telegram No. 808, May 21, 9 p. m.). He said Osusky had not given him this information and when I repeated to him the terms of these concessions he said that they would certainly be totally inadequate.

Bonnet said that the British Government would certainly press the Czech Government to make greater concessions than these and would demand that the Czechoslovak Government make concessions which would really satisfy for the moment both Henlein and Hitler. If the Czech Government should refuse to make such concessions after advice by the British, the French Government would say to the Czechoslovak Government that it fully supported these concessions and that the Franco-Czech Alliance⁵¹ would be placed in question if Czechoslovakia did not accord the concessions.

Bonnet, who was acutely disturbed, then implored me to have our Government do whatever it could to work out a solution of the conflict. He asked me if it might not be possible for our Government to instruct our Minister at Praha to call on Beneš and state that the Czechoslovak Government would not have the sympathy of the American Government if it should not attempt seriously to produce a

⁵¹ Treaty of mutual guarantee, signed October 16, 1925, League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. LIV, p. 359.

peaceful solution of this conflict by making concessions to the Sudeten Germans which would satisfy Henlein and Hitler.

Bonnet then said to me that last night a telephone call had come from Charlottesville, Virginia, from the President to Daladier. Daladier had been unavailable and when he, Bonnet, had tried to get the President on the telephone at Charlottesville the reply had been that the President had already left for a fishing trip. I should be obliged if you would inform me whether or not this is true as I was unable to offer any explanation of the reason for the call.⁵²

Bonnet went on to discuss the chances of France declaring war if the German troops should cross into Czechoslovakia. He was much depressed when I told him that Blum⁵³ with whom I spent several hours today was passionately in favor of war and that Blum had predicted that all the Socialists would vote for war.

Bonnet said that the French Senate would vote unanimously against war. He feared, however, that the resistance of the Senate would be inadequate. If the Germans should mobilize the French would be obliged to mobilize. The Germans would probably then send an ultimatum to France. In the face of an ultimatum from Germany war would be inevitable.

Bonnet again urged that our Government should reinforce the British action in Praha. He added that he was more convinced than ever that a French attack on Germany at the present time would result in the destruction of France. Again he predicted that Paris would be destroyed meter by meter by German air attacks. The Polish Ambassador had just informed him that Poland positively would not march against Germany. Rumania would not march. France's only assistance at the outset would be Negrin⁵⁴ and Stalin⁵⁵—a pretty pair!

I assume that the British Government is keeping you fully informed with regard to the efforts it is making in Praha and in Berlin. I believe that if the British Government should make in Praha as strong a *démarche* as it made in Berlin last night and if the Czechs should refuse to accede to the British demands the French would bring great pressure on Czechoslovakia.

But Beneš can throw the Continent into war by shooting some more Sudeten. And the question is whether or not he has decided that it is in the interest of Czechoslovakia to provoke war now, when the support of France and England is almost certain. From a mass of reports, verbal and written, I am inclined to believe that Beneš pre-

⁵² No further record regarding this matter has been found in Department files.

⁵³ Léon Blum, leader of the Socialist Party and former President of the French Council of Ministers.

⁵⁴ Juan Negrín, Spanish Premier and Minister for Defense.

⁵⁵ Joseph V. Stalin, Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party.

fers war to real concessions. Under such circumstances I believe that a statement to Beneš by the American Minister in Praha of the nature suggested by Bonnet is fully justified. If Wilson in Berlin could inform the German Government that such a *démarche* had been made in Praha Ribbentrop might listen favorably to urgings of patience, in spite of the German Government's hatred of the United States.

BULLITT

760F.62/285 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, May 23, 1938—11 a. m.

75. Your 260, May 21, 6 p. m. We appreciate your suggestions as to any step we could take which might be useful in the present crisis but after consideration have decided that for the present at least a simultaneous approach to Berlin and Praha would not be advisable.

HULL

760F.62/323 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 23, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received May 23—7:35 p. m.]

821. Massigli's⁵⁶ description of the situation this afternoon was that "The crisis continues—merely its first phase has been successfully passed thanks to the military measures taken by Praha and to the resumption of British-French solidarity at Berlin."

He said that the French Government has made no *démarche* as yet today at Praha but that the French Minister there will receive instructions this evening to urge: (1) that no further military measures be taken by the Government; (2) that every effort be made to meet the demands of the Sudetens; and (3) that negotiations with them be hastened with a view to avoiding tension throughout the whole of the election period which does not end until June 12.

According to Massigli the British Minister at Praha has already been supplied with new instructions to counsel conciliation and further concessions but he does not know whether these instructions have been acted upon.

On the whole he appeared sanguine and extremely pleased as he put it that the first game of the set had gone to the French side.

⁵⁶ René Massigli, Director of Political and Commercial Affairs, French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

He agrees that it is problematical that the British can repeat their performance of Saturday⁵⁷ at Berlin in the event of another acute rise in temperature.

BULLITT

760F.62/332 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, May 24, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 11 p. m.]

265. Weizsaecker⁵⁸ asked me to call this evening and told me that he desired to talk with me about the anxious days we had passed in respect to Czechoslovakia.

He then went over some of the information which I have already telegraphed and which need not be repeated. He added that the fact that the Czechs had moved troops to the border and had called reserves to the colors had caused and still caused him grave concern. I inquired whether during this period the Czechoslovak and German Governments had been in direct contact. He replied that the Czechoslovak Minister had called on him on Friday last and that the German Minister had been in touch with Hodza on Saturday. I inquired whether an explanation had been given by the Czechs for calling their reserves to the colors. Weizsaecker hesitated and then sent for his book of telegrams and handed me a telegram from the German Military Attaché in Praha, sent late on the night of Saturday the 21st.

The telegram stated that the Attaché had made three inquiries of the military authorities in regard to the Czech movement of troops to the border and the calling of the reserves. The answer to the first inquiry had been that the reserves were to be called for practice. The answer to the second inquiry was that the reserves had been called and the troops moved for the maintenance of order among the Sudeten Deutsche. The third inquiry he made in person to the Chief of the General Staff who informed him that these military activities had two purposes: (a) the maintenance of order in the areas, and (b) to resist a threatened German attack based on the fact that "8 to 10 German divisions were preparing to march toward Czechoslovakia and were gathered in Saxony". I inquired of Weizsaecker how he saw the future and mentioned the fact that Henlein and Hodza were apparently getting together. Weizsaecker replied that perhaps there was some reassurance to be had from this conversation nevertheless he preferred to see deeds rather than words. He felt that the situation could not remain as it was; the Czechs must recall their troops from the

⁵⁷ May 21; see *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 250, p. 331, and doc. No. 254, p. 334.

⁵⁸ Baron von Weizsaecker, State Secretary in the German Foreign Office.

frontier, dissolve the class called to the colors and thus reestablish the previous situation. Also it would be infinitely preferable if regulations were issued granting a measure of autonomy and self government to the Sudeten Deutsche rather than the mere entering into negotiations which could be prolonged interminably. I inquired whether the German Government had made plain to the Czechoslovak Government its insistence for the reestablishment of the military *status quo ante*. Weizsaecker replied that they had not but that he had informed Henderson and hoped that the British Government would take it up in Praha.

He reminded me that when we had talked before he had expressed apprehension as to the attitude of certain elements among the Czechs which seemed determined to provoke a crisis, relying on outside assistance. The fact that the Chief of General Staff who unquestionably was well informed should make an assertion that 8 or 10 divisions were concentrated in Saxony when he must have known the contrary, seemed to give justification for his apprehension. I said I knew little about internal affairs of Czechoslovakia and inquired whether the army played an important role in political decisions. He replied that unfortunately they played a predominant role and that while Krofta⁵⁹ and Hodza might be willing to make concessions Beneš seemed to be siding with the intransigent army attitude.

Repeated to Praha, London, Paris.

WILSON

760F.62/334 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 24, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received May 24—7:16 p. m.]

826. For the Under Secretary. Bonnet this afternoon read to me the instructions which he telegraphed last night to the French Minister in Praha.

He ordered the French Minister to say to the Czechoslovak Government that the conversations which had been started with Henlein must be carried to a successful conclusion which would settle the Sudeten question and give Europe a chance to live at peace.

The French Government desired to see the Czechoslovak Government demobilize at once the classes which have been mobilized. This mobilization was a useless provocation to Germany. The information of the French Government and the information of the British Military Attaché in Berlin indicated that there was no mobilization of German troops whatsoever on the Czech frontier.

⁵⁹ Kamil Krofta, Czechoslovak Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The elections of last Sunday had shown that Henlein represented 82 percent of the Sudeten. It was being argued that this figure would be even larger if certain elections had not taken place in districts controlled by the Czechoslovak Army. It was being argued that the Czech mobilization was merely a method of preventing the Sudeten from expressing themselves freely. This accusation might have serious effects on the position of Czechoslovakia in the world especially in England.

The French Government must insist that the Czechoslovak Government in its dealings with the Sudeten now pass from words to acts and make concessions to the Sudeten which would insure a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

Bonnet added that the British Government was advising the Czechoslovak Government in a similar sense; but was permitting the French Government to take the lead in Praha since the French Government still had more influence in Praha than the British Government.

Bonnet said that his information from Praha indicates that Beneš was much more stiff necked about concessions to the Sudeten than either Hodza or Krofta. He expressed the opinion that Beneš had been more consistently wrong about foreign policy than any statesman in Europe. Bonnet added that he had stated today to Osusky, the Czechoslovak Minister in Paris who is leaving for Praha this evening, that if Beneš should refuse to make sufficient concessions to quiet the Sudeten and guarantee peace in that portion of Europe at least for 2 or 3 years France would know who was attempting to set fire to Europe and would not be driven into war to please Beneš.

Bonnet communicated that he thought that Osusky who hates Beneš would counsel the giving of all necessary concessions to the Sudeten and predicted Osusky might emerge from the present situation as Foreign Minister or Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia.

Incidentally, Osusky said to me today that Hodza had telephoned to him to say that he had found Henlein much more reasonable than he had expected and that he desired him (Osusky) to come to Praha to participate in the further conversation with Henlein.

Bonnet said that no one in Berlin had been able to get any information as to Hitler's personal reaction to the events of the past weekend but both the British and French Governments were convinced that Germany would not strike now but would wait to see whether or not the Czechs would make real concessions to the Sudeten. Bonnet added that he had had a long talk with Sir Eric Phipps, the British Ambassador in Paris, this afternoon and that the point of view of the British Government was precisely that of the French Government.

Bonnet was elated by the turn of events and said that he would labor day and night with the full support of Daladier and the other members of the French Government to make certain that the conversations now in progress between the Czechoslovak Government and Henlein should not be broken off.

In spite of the favorable turn in the situation I feel that the Czech-German conflict still contains so much danger of war that we must anticipate further crises.

When it becomes known in France that the Government is pressing the Czechs to make considerable concessions to the Sudeten and Hitler there will be an outburst of criticism. Public opinion has evolved so rapidly in France during the past 2 weeks that this country, sadly and tragically, but with a fatalistic resignation has accepted the idea that once more France will be obliged to go to war with Germany. And the Communists affected by Jews of all classes, who are unanimously eager for war against Hitler, will make full use of this mood.

I still fear that there may be disturbances in the Sudeten districts of Bohemia and that the Czechs may shoot a considerable number of Sudetens and that German troops will cross the border. Under such circumstances French mobilization would be almost inevitable and mobilization almost inevitably would be followed by war.

Bonnet said to me today that he hoped that I might be able, in some public speech in the near future, to express the hope of the United States that peace in Europe might be preserved, urging moderation on all concerned. As I shall have to make three public speeches this week, I feel that it might be appropriate for me to employ the ceremonies of memorial day (which we shall celebrate on Sunday, May 29 this year) at the American cemetery at Suresnes to say a few words in this sense. I shall submit any speech which I intend to make to the Department.

BULLITT

760F.62/396

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] May 24, 1938.

The French Ambassador called this morning with his new Counselor of Embassy, Mr. Truelle. After discussing the German-Czech crisis over the Sudeten and some of the personalities involved on the German side, the Ambassador said that he had noted two occasions that Mr. Bonnet, in his talk with Ambassador Bullitt, had expressed the hope that the American Government might find it possible to counsel restraint and compromise on the Czechoslovak authorities.

He asked whether a reply had been sent to Mr. Bonnet and, if so, whether we had taken the action requested. I replied that a good deal of thought had been given to developments in Europe and that we were watching them almost from hour to hour. Thus far, however, we had made no approach to any government in Europe, but that the situation was so fluid it was difficult to predict what stand, if any, we might take in the future.

The Ambassador made no comment other than to say that he had watched different statements issued from time to time at press conferences by the Secretary (he instanced the one issued after the Austrian crisis⁶⁰) and said that when we did express ourselves, such statements always conveyed a clear cut indication of policy or opinion, which was not lost upon anyone who chose to examine them carefully.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/334 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, May 25, 1938—4 p. m.

313. Your 826, May 24, 8 p. m. In view of the gravity of the situation, the President feels that it would be preferable to have the announcement of the hope of this Government, in the sense you have indicated made here in Washington either by him personally or by the Secretary of State or by both. Of course, statements supplementary to any announcements made here might be made by you in the addresses you contemplate. The Department will be glad to receive the texts you intend telegraphing.⁶¹

HULL

711.0012 Anti-War/1553

Statement to the Press by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] May 28, 1938.

With reference to the critical situation involving countries in Central Europe, I desire to say that the Government of the United States has been following recent developments with close and anxious attention.

Nearly ten years ago the Government of the United States signed at Paris a treaty providing for the renunciation of war as an instru-

⁶⁰ See telegram No. 27, March 19, 3 p. m., to the Ambassador in Germany, p. 456.

⁶¹ The proposed text for delivery on Memorial Day at the American cemetery was transmitted to the Department by the Ambassador, in telegram No. 837, May 27, 4 p. m. (123 Bullitt, William C./418).

ment of national policy.⁶² There are now parties to that treaty no less than 63 countries. In that treaty the contracting parties agree that "the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means." That pledge is no less binding now than when it was entered into. It is binding upon all of the parties.

We can not shut our eyes to the fact that any outbreak of hostilities anywhere in the world injects into world affairs a factor of general disturbance the ultimate consequence of which no man can foresee and is liable to inflict upon all nations incalculable and permanent injuries.

The people of this country have in common with all nations a desire for stable and permanent conditions of peace, justice and progress, and a most earnest desire that peace be maintained no matter where or in what circumstances there may be controversies between nations.

760F.62/369 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 30, 1938—midnight.
[Received May 31—1:18 p. m.]

850. Reference to my telegram No. 846, May 30, 1 p. m.,⁶³ contrary to Bonnet's statement to me last night that Osusky had told him that the concessions which the Government of Czechoslovakia would make to the Sudeten would go far beyond those indicated in my 808, May 21, 9 p. m., Osusky, Czech Minister to Paris, who returned last night from Praha, said to me today that the concessions would be precisely those outlined in my telegram under reference.

He said that the Sudeten would be offered (1) the use of the German language as an official language for all purposes, (2) that they would be given control not only of the program of education in the Sudeten schools but also of the expenditure of the school budgets—with reservations for protection of the Czech and non-Nazi minorities in the Sudeten region, (3) that they would be given a proportionate share in domestic administration, finance, interior, et cetera.

I asked if the Sudeten would be permitted to have their proportionate share in the officers corps of the Czechoslovak Army. Osusky replied that this question had not yet been raised by the Sudeten and that it would of course have to be examined with extreme caution.

⁶² Treaty signed August 27, 1928; *Foreign Relations*, 1928, vol. 1, p. 153.

⁶³ Not printed.

Osusky said that although Henlein had not returned personally to talk with Hodza two of his representatives had been in constant contact with Hodza. Hodza had conferred with them again yesterday, and had telephoned to Paris today to say that he was hopeful that Henlein would accept the concessions indicated above as the basis for settlement. Hodza moreover had said that he expected Henlein to call on him again next week.

Osusky added that whether or not Henlein should accept these concessions it had been decided that they would be offered to the Sudeten and would be presented to the Czech Parliament in the form of government-sponsored draft laws and voted in the month of June or July at the latest.

Osusky asserted that Henlein and the other Sudeten leaders had been greatly impressed by the treatment accorded by Hitler to Seyss-Inquart and the other Austrian Nazi leaders. Henlein and the other Sudeten leaders realized that if Germany should take over the Sudeten districts they would become ciphers and the Sudeten districts would be administered by emissaries from Berlin.

Osusky added that the elections of last Sunday and yesterday had demonstrated that there were still many Germans in the Sudeten districts who did not desire to become slaves under a Nazi dictatorship but preferred to live as free men. He asserted that the sincere Roman Catholic Sudeten who had been overwhelmed by the cowardly obeisance of Cardinal Innitzer⁶⁴ to Hitler had begun to recover their courage and that the Catholic Church element might prove to be a strong force for the preservation of Czechoslovakia as a free and independent state.

Perhaps the most important statement that Osusky made was that the Czechoslovak Government had decided to accord to the Polish minority in the Teschen District and to the Hungarian minority in Slovakia the same privileges that would be accorded to the Sudeten. I asked if the same privileges would be accorded to the Ruthenian minority and he stated the Ruthenians were too primitive and uneducated to be able to take governmental responsibility.

Osusky said that there was one thing which the Government of the United States might be able to do which would be of great help to Czechoslovakia. A large portion of the population in the Sudeten regions of Bohemia had become Nazi owing to economic misery. This was due to the fact that world trade had collapsed and the great exporting industries of the Sudeten area—glass, porcelain and textiles—were unable to sell their wares abroad. He expressed entire satisfaction with the terms of the recent trade agreement between the United States and Czechoslovakia; but added that the Czechoslovak

⁶⁴ Theodore Innitzer, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Vienna.

Government was informed that the American Jews, especially the large department store owners, were at the present time refusing to make normal purchases of Czechoslovakian glass porcelain and textiles because these articles were produced in regions which were largely controlled by Henlein. The aversion of American Jews to German goods had been extended to include goods produced in the Sudeten districts. He hoped that the American Government, without seeming to take any action whatever, might be able to convey to the American Jews who were normally purchasers of these articles that they would be doing the greatest possible service to Hitler if they should refuse to buy goods from the Sudeten regions and thus increase the economic misery which was pushing the Sudeten into the arms of Hitler.

Osusky said that the Czechoslovak Government was fully aware that while the Russians might be able to send planes to Czechoslovakia without provoking grave international incidents by flying at night to Czechoslovakia along the exact border between Poland and Rumania any attempt by the Russian Army to march across either Poland or Rumania would lead to immediate declarations of war against the Soviet Union by both Poland and Rumania.

In conclusion Osusky said that the publication of the memorandum which Henderson had read to Ribbentrop on May 21 had produced such a shock in German Government circles that there was a definite chance that Czechoslovakia would be permitted to work out in peace a reconciliation of the problem presented by the German, Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia. He believed moreover that such a reconciliation, used constructively, might be the starting point for a general reconciliation in Europe and the basis for peace on the Continent.

BULLITT

760F.62/370 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, May 31, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 1:30 p. m.]

851. There has been considerable comment in the French press concerning Secretary Hull's statement with regard to Central Europe and the Briand-Kellogg Pact.⁶⁵ This comment covered the following points:

(1) The Secretary purposely chose the time for this declaration due to the situation in Central Europe on the eve of the second elections in Czechoslovakia;

⁶⁵ Statement of May 28, p. 520.

(2) The declaration was considered as a support of the efforts of England and France towards a peaceful solution of the Czechoslovak question;

(3) It was of extreme importance since it was a public declaration indicating the interest of the United States in the maintenance of peace in Central Europe.

BULLITT

II. RENEWED GERMAN PRESSURE (JUNE-AUGUST)

760F.62/401: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 8, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received 6:10 p. m.]

899. François-Poncet, French Ambassador to Berlin, who has been in Paris for the past 3 days and will return tonight to his post, expressed to me this morning most serious apprehension with regard to the Czechoslovak situation.

He described at length his recent conversations with Ribbentrop and said that those conversations invariably ended by Ribbentrop striking the table and saying that Germany was now a nation of 75,000,000, with the strongest army in the world, which could crush any opposition, which it was entirely ready to use and would use in defense of the Sudeten Germans. François-Poncet said that he invariably reminded Ribbentrop that it was his duty as Minister for Foreign Affairs not to prepare war but peace and that if Germany should attempt to gain her aims by war she would get a reception from France and England which would surprise her and that the United States would be in the offing.

Poncet said that under such conditions as these it was of course extremely difficult to carry on diplomatic conversations. He was nevertheless about to make a final effort. He had suggested to the French Government during this visit that he should be empowered, on his return to Berlin tonight, to propose to the German Government that there should be an informal tripartite discussion between representatives of England, France, and Germany—preferably Henderson, Ribbentrop, and himself—to attempt to work out a settlement of the German-Czech conflict on the understanding that if it should be possible to reach agreement the Czechs would be told by England, France, and Germany unitedly that they would have to accept the settlement. Poncet said that he would approach this matter with the greatest delicacy and the utmost secrecy.

I asked him what basis of solution he would suggest. He said that he would suggest immediate and full autonomy for the Sudeten regions.

Poncet added that the German press had been instructed to keep excitement about Czechoslovakia at white heat and that he expected some sort of a political move by the Germans and the Sudeten against the Czechs about June 14 immediately after the results of next Sunday's elections should become known. He thought that it was possible that the Sudeten might announce that since the elections were the equivalent of a plebescite showing that nearly 95 percent of the Sudeten were Nazis of Henlein's party, they should be given immediate autonomy and if such autonomy should be refused they would take it. Poncet hoped that his diplomatic move in Berlin might anticipate and prevent such action by the Sudeten.

He went on to say that all his information indicated that Beneš would not offer the Sudeten a sufficient degree of autonomy to satisfy them even for a moment unless the greatest possible pressure should be placed on him. He alluded again to the possible danger that the Czechs themselves might decide that Czechoslovakia would never find a more favorable moment to fight than the present moment and might therefore precipitate an incident in the Sudeten regions which would bring the German troops across the border and force France to march.

Poncet said he feared equally that some Sudeten-German might decide to precipitate a war; or that some emissary of Goering might order the Sudeten leaders to precipitate war.

In conclusion Poncet said that he felt that we were just now beginning to enter a period in which war would be imminent for a number of months. He expected a series of crises. He considered it improbable that the Germans would provoke war deliberately before the 15th of July when their major crops would be harvested. A bloody incident in the Sudeten regions might, however, precipitate war at any time.

I saw Bonnet again last night at dinner. He had no further information with regard to any immediate concessions by the Czechs to the Sudeten.

In spite of the momentary calm I continue to believe that the situation is most serious. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that your speech at Nashville⁶⁶ has been regarded throughout Europe as a powerful factor for peace. Bonnet, Poncet and other Frenchmen have spoken of it in the highest terms of praise and from a gentleman who has just come from Berlin, where he has close connections with the German Army, I gathered that your words had inserted a large question mark in the calculations of the German Government.

BULLITT

⁶⁶ Delivered at Nashville, Tenn., June 3; for text of speech, see Department of State, *The Spirit of International Law* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1938).

760F.62/442 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 23, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 1:41 p. m.]

987. Daladier⁶⁷ said to me yesterday that he considered the present appearance of an improvement in the general European situation a mirage. Nothing had yet been settled and he was not optimistic that any settlement could be achieved. He believed that the Czechs would make a reasonable offer to the Sudeten but he had no confidence that this offer would be accepted either by the Sudeten or by Hitler. He believed that while France should continue to insist that the Czechoslovak Government should make the most reasonable offer possible to the Germans, France should not hesitate to go to war if Germany should invade Czechoslovakia after such an offer should have been made.

I asked if he were sure that the Czech offer would be a reasonable one. He said that he felt confident that it would be. I asked if this confidence was shared by the British Government and if he were certain that the British Government would stand by Czechoslovakia in case the Sudeten and Hitler should reject the Czech proposal and attempt to use force.

He then replied that it would make no difference to him what the British conclusion might be. [If] the French Government should judge the offer reasonable and the Germans should then attempt to use force against Czechoslovakia, France would go to war immediately whether England liked it or not. France could not preserve her honor if she should run away from war.

As you will observe there has been a great stiffening in Daladier's personal attitude.

I participated later in a conversation between Daladier and Osusky, Czechoslovak Minister to Paris. Daladier began by thanking Osusky for the great efforts he had made to persuade the Czechoslovak Government to make large concessions to the Sudeten. He said that he realized the task which the French Government had imposed on Osusky was a most disagreeable and difficult one. He added for my benefit that the French Government had had the question of the concessions which the Czechoslovak Government should make to the Sudeten studied with the utmost care. The French Government had then informed Osusky of the nature of the concessions it would expect the Czechoslovak Government to make and had asked Osusky to go to Praha and see to it that these concessions should be made. He (Daladier) was entirely ready to support Czechoslovakia to the limit

⁶⁷ Edouard Daladier, President of the French Council of Ministers.

if these concessions should be made and Germany should refuse to be reasonable.

I then suggested that I had heard yesterday from a man who had talked with Beneš 2 days ago that the concessions might be rendered illusory by a system of gerrymandering. I had been told that Beneš proposed to organize the country on the basis of three large districts: Bohemia in which the Sudeten minority would be outnumbered greatly by the Czechoslovak majority; Moravia in which the Polish and German minorities would be greatly outnumbered by the Czechs and Slovaks; Slovakia in which the Hungarian and Ruthenian minorities would be greatly outnumbered by the Slovaks.

Osusky admitted that this would be the solution proposed; but argued that there was nothing unnatural in the arrangement and finally stated flatly that there would be no autonomy offered to racial areas. There would be complete administrative autonomy for villages, municipalities and departmental districts; there would be autonomy for schools with control of school budgets by the local authorities; but the Ministry of National Education would not be abolished and would have oversight over school programs.

In the ensuing discussion it became evident that Daladier's personal acquaintance with the geographic and racial problems of Czechoslovakia was not profound and that he had absolute confidence in Osusky whose assurances that the Czechoslovakian Government would make the fullest and most generous concessions possible carried, to him, complete conviction.

Osusky stated that the proposals of the Czechoslovak Government would be presented to the Sudetens before the first of July. Whether the Sudetens should accept them or not they would be presented in the form of papers to the members of the Czech Parliament immediately after the first of July and would be voted on by the Czechoslovak Parliament shortly after July 15.

Osusky said that he had received from his Government today the information that the leaders of the Sudeten had appeared to be relatively reasonable and conciliatory in their most recent conversations in Praha. For the moment therefore it appears that the Czechoslovak Government will have the full support of the French Government for the concessions that it will propose—which may or may not be sufficient to produce a temporary appeasement.

Day before yesterday I had a long conversation with Osusky in the course of which he explained in detail the demands of the Sudeten and the attitude of the Czechoslovak Government toward these demands. The only new development concerns the demand of the Sudeten for a German National Assembly in which all Germans living in the area along the German frontier or otherwise in Czechoslovakia

should be represented and the supplementary demand that the President of this assembly should be *ipso facto* a member of any Czechoslovak Government.

Osusky said that the Czechoslovak Government had decided definitely to reject the demand that the President of any such assembly if one should be permitted should be *ipso facto* a member of the Government. As to whether or not such an assembly should be permitted had not yet been decided definitely. Hodza⁶⁸ had said to representatives of the Sudeten that he could see no reason for such an assembly and had asked them to specify in detail what such an assembly would do if one should be formed. He had not yet received a report from the Sudeten leaders.

Osusky asserted that if such a reply should be forthcoming and should show good grounds for the existence of such an assembly it would be considered seriously.

In view of Osusky's statements to Daladier in my presence last evening, however, I am inclined to believe that the Czechoslovak Government has already decided that there shall be no such assembly and it seems possible that this will be the point of acute dispute.

BULLITT

760F.62/485

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Ambassador in Germany
(Wilson)*⁶⁹

In the course of a conversation on routine matters von Weizsäcker raised the question of relations with Czechoslovakia. He said that the German press was moderately quiet but that one should not be deceived by this—the tension was there and he and other moderate minded men were growing daily more apprehensive. He felt that Beneš was being deliberately dilatory with the belief that the *Konjunktur* was right⁷⁰ and that he had no intention of making any real concession to Henlein.

He deplored the situation Great Britain was in. Great Britain was offering to act as mediator, but at the same time Chamberlain had made his declaration of April [*March*] 24⁷¹ to the effect that if France was involved there was no guarantee that Great Britain could stay out. Analyse these words and there was nothing but a statement of fact. Nevertheless, uttered in this connection it came near to guaranteeing England's entry on behalf of Czechoslovakia. Hence any advice the British Minister gave to Beneš was counteracted by the belief in Beneš' mind that Great Britain was with him anyhow. Weizsäcker

⁶⁸ Milan Hodza, Czechoslovak Prime Minister.

⁶⁹ Transmitted to the Department by the Ambassador in his despatch No. 233, July 9; received July 19.

⁷⁰ i. e., the "balance of forces" was favorable.

⁷¹ In the House of Commons; *Parliamentary Debates*, 1937-1938, 5th ser., vol. 333, pp. 1401-1413. See also *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 114, p. 95.

felt strongly that Great Britain should clarify its position, not only with Beneš in private conversation, as had been done, but Chamberlain should say in public that if Beneš made no effort to settle this Sudeten Deutsche problem by peaceful methods, then he ran great risk of losing the sympathy of the British public. Such a declaration, Weizsäcker thought, would put Great Britain in a proper posture to bring its influence to bear on Beneš, and would allow them to mediate successfully this extraordinarily difficult problem and obtain a successful solution in a matter in which their responsibility was most heavily engaged.

I asked whether Weizsäcker had talked this way to Henderson. He replied that he had and that Henderson was now in England. Also von Dirksen ⁷² was of course instructed in the same sense.

HUGH R. WILSON

BERLIN, July 9, 1938.

760F.62/474: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, July 13, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received July 13—2:10 p. m.]

1104. As I have had conversations far too numerous and voluminous to report with President Lebrun and nearly all members of the Government and a number of generals during the past few days it has occurred to me that you might be interested in a consensus of their opinions:

France will go to war if the German Army enters Czechoslovakia.

It is possible but not probable that Hitler will order such action in cold blood. The diplomatic constellation at the moment is unfavorable for such action by Germany. Not only France but also England would fight, the Soviet Union would send airplanes, Poland and Rumania after a brief period of neutrality would enter the war on the side of France and England, Hungary and Italy would remain neutral. The general hatred of Germany in America would lead to eventual support of France and England by the United States.

Under these circumstances it would be folly for Hitler to provoke war and up to date he has displayed great diplomatic acumen. It is improbable therefore that he will order German troops to cross the Czech frontier unless the Czechs give intolerable provocation by shooting a considerable number of Sudeten.

It is possible but not probable that such provocation will be given by the Czechs. The concessions to be offered to the Sudeten may be so inadequate that the Sudeten may attempt to develop para-military

⁷² Herbert von Dirksen, German Ambassador in the United Kingdom.

formations which the Czechs would have to disperse by force. War would be produced by the ensuing incidents.

Hitler probably will wait until the diplomatic situation is more favorable to Germany. He needs another card in his hand and has a good chance of drawing Hungary. Fully realizes Nazis are making great headway among the land hungry Hungarian peasants by promising to divide the great estates.

Meanwhile Germany has begun to construct with feverish haste a second great fortified line behind the present Siegfried Line. This new line extends from the North Sea to the Swiss border. From the North Sea to the Moselle it is an independent line. From the Moselle south to Switzerland it is a development in depth of the existing Siegfried Line. It is being constructed by the Army Engineering Corps assisted by the Labor Front and all other available laborers. It will not be a concrete construction like Maginot Line but will be so strong that every part of it will require bombardment by heavy artillery for reduction.

No field of free maneuver even by way of Belgium or Holland will be left to the French or British Armies, and action in aid of any country in Eastern or Central Europe will be rendered almost too costly in lives to contemplate. This line will be in a fair state of preparation in 2 months.

If German troops should enter Czechoslovakia at the present time even if France and England should go to war at once to aid Czechoslovakia, Germany would be in full control of Czechoslovakia within 3 weeks.

The war in Spain will end in a Franco victory unless general war should come this summer and French troops should assist the Barcelona Government. This would produce an Italian attack on France and the North African colonies of France.

The next French financial crisis will come in October or November. The present Government may then fall and if war does not break out this summer there may be another critical period in the autumn.

BULLITT

760F.62/476 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, July 13, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received 8 p. m.⁷³]

1107. Today I discussed with Bonnet, Daladier's speech of yesterday, which unquestionably was reproduced in full by the American press, the conclusion of which however I am attaching to this telegram

⁷³ Telegram in two sections.

Bonnet said that he had felt for some time that Daladier should express publicly the thoughts which the French Government had been expressing to the German Ambassador in Paris. It was his opinion and Daladier's that the German Government had behaved with genuine restraint during the events of the period of May 20 and it was their hope that a solution of the question of Czechoslovakia might result in much better relations between France and Germany. Daladier had prepared this speech carefully and it was entirely sincere. Both he and Daladier believed that if a solution of the dispute between Germany and Czechoslovakia could be reached efforts should be made at once to work out genuine reconciliation between France and Germany.

I asked Bonnet for his latest information from Praha and he replied that the German Ambassador daily kept informing him that Beneš intended to make proposals which would be ridiculously inadequate from the point of view of the Sudeten and Germany whereas the French parliamentarians including the Minister of Public Health, Rucart, who has just returned from Praha kept informing him that Beneš was attempting to do everything that he could to work out a reconciliation and that he was convinced of achieving success.

Bonnet said that his own mind was so confused by these contradictory reports that he had ordered the French Minister in Praha to come to Paris next Friday⁷⁴ to report to him personally.

We discussed the possibility that Hitler might feel so sure of adding Hungary to the ranks of Fascist states during the next few months that he would act for the moment with restraint vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia. Bonnet said that the French Minister in Budapest had been in Paris recently and had been so optimistic with regard to the situation in Hungary that he, Bonnet, had sent to Budapest investigators to discover whether or not the French Minister had any real idea of the situation.

At the close of our conversation Bonnet asked me whether or not there might be a possibility that if the tension between Czechoslovakia and Germany should again become extremely dangerous President Roosevelt might be willing to act as arbitrator of the Czechoslovak-German Sudeten dispute. I replied that I could give nothing but a personal and unofficial opinion as I should have to consult my Government before making any reply; but that I considered that this was precisely the sort of European dispute in which the United States would desire to avoid involvement. To enter into the internal arrangements of a small state in the center of Europe would certainly not appear to the American people an appropriate portion of the duties of the President of the United States.

⁷⁴ July 15.

The text of the important portion of Daladier's speech follows in section 2.

(Section 2.) "A few weeks ago events in Central Europe seemed bound to expose the maintenance of peace to a severe and dangerous test. Nevertheless the rupture of equilibrium which then threatened to drag the nations into an irreparable catastrophe has been avoided, thanks to the assistance of all the elements of good will, in which the peaceful determination of Great Britain and of France was matched by that of other nations and particularly, it is my duty to say, by that of Germany. I will add that in this circumstance the French Government wished to express confidence in the peaceful aspirations which the Chancellor of the Reich has always publicly avowed.

The French contribution to the work of conciliation which was imposed on both sides was all the more active, all the more sincere and steadfast, because the solemn engagements which bind us to Czechoslovakia are, for us, imperative and sacred. The French Government, like the entire French people, is, indeed, animated by two equally strong sentiments which, I am sure, are understood by men of all countries devoted to peace and honor: the desire not to have to put these sacred engagements into execution and the will never to go back on our word if, unhappily, this hope should be disappointed.

Today, when, thanks also to the self control and perfect loyalty of the Czechoslovak Government, it has been possible to arrange a friendly procedure which justifies all hopes of an equitable and lasting settlement, we can measure the path traversed towards the same goal by the three foreign governments most immediately interested in promoting this work of peace. I have never believed and I never will believe in the inevitability of war. This recent experience justifies us to have faith in the future. We do not want to regard as fortuitous the meeting of these good wills so freely and spontaneously manifested. What it has been possible to achieve once must remain capable of achievement until the final settlement of the problem in question.

Better use can henceforth be made of the forces of peoples who have learned to esteem one another on the field of battle in mutual understanding and the organization of peace.

By this method, and, I believe, by this method alone, may an end be put to the suffering and distress which, today, in so many countries have made human life so painful and so precarious."

BULLITT

760F.62/482 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, July 18, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received 8:30 p. m.]

1125. I discussed with Bonnet this afternoon the Czechoslovak situation and the exchange of letters between Daladier and Chamberlain.

Bonnet said that the letters had been relatively unimportant as they had added nothing new to understandings already reached. They

had been exchanged merely because of the impending visit of the King and Queen.

In his letter Daladier had set forth French policy vis-à-vis the situation in Czechoslovakia and had made it clear that if the German Army should cross the frontier of Czechoslovakia France would march. He had then asked if he could count on England maintaining the same position that Chamberlain had indicated England would maintain on April 28⁷⁵ and had maintained in practice on May 20. Chamberlain had replied that England would continue to maintain this position "which" said Bonnet "means that England will march with us."

Bonnet added that in spite of the visit of the French Minister in Praha who was here last week end he had not much new light on the situation. The French Minister believed that Beneš would go far in his concessions of local administrative autonomy and expected the Czechoslovak Government to have its proposals in final form on July 22nd.

Bonnet said that he had other information which indicated that the concessions which would be offered by the Czechoslovak Government would be altogether insufficient to appease even temporarily the Sudeten and that their publication might result in serious disturbances among the Sudeten population. He feared that the Czechs would put down such disturbances by force, that many Sudeten would be killed and that Hitler would march across the frontier.

Bonnet added that he had instructed the French Minister to say to Beneš immediately on his return to Praha that he hoped Beneš realized fully that the one country which could gain nothing from general European war at the present time was Czechoslovakia since whichever side might win no statesman would ever again be so idiotic as to put together a state even faintly resembling Czechoslovakia in its present form.

Walter Lippmann⁷⁶ who has just returned from Praha where he had a conversation of 2 hours with Beneš is most pessimistic. He is inclined to believe that the dispute is unsolvable since the Czechs will not offer the Sudeten anything but a permanent status as an inferior minority and the Sudeten will not accept any such status.

Lippmann said that Beneš seemed fully prepared to face the eventuality of war and had stated he was certain the Soviet Union would enter the war at once, bombard German cities and march an army to Czechoslovakia across Rumania. (Incidentally Bonnet said to me today that he was not at all certain that Russia would march or even send airplanes).

⁷⁵ See *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. I, doc. No. 164, p. 198.

⁷⁶ American journalist.

Lippmann said that Beneš had indicated that if the Sudeten should reject the Czechoslovak proposals and should start physical manifestations they would be put down by force. Lippmann also asserted that Beneš had said that under these circumstances German troops probably would cross the frontier and occupy the Sudeten portions of Czechoslovakia and then propose peace.

As I indicated to the Department in my 1104 July 13, 4 p. m., the feverish preparations which the Germans are making to develop a line of fortifications from the North Sea to the Swiss border which includes a development in depth of the present Siegfried Line continue to increase apprehension in the French Government and Army that Hitler will use any large incident in the Sudeten regions as the signal for crossing the Czechoslovakia border.

BULLITT

760F.62/493: Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, July 21, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 7:40 p. m.]

145. My 144 July 20, 4 p. m.⁷⁷ In a lengthy interview today President Beneš discussed with me the Sudeten German proposals just published. He thought the publication of the memorandum was unfortunate but did not think it important. It might actually be beneficial by making clear the character of the Sudeten demands. He added that it had not been published by the Czechoslovak authorities.

He said that the Sudeten proposals contemplated splitting up the National Parliament into racial groups. The Government will not accept that because it is not workable. Nor will the Government accept the division of the territory of the state among racial groups for the same reason. Moreover, racial subdivision of the state would accentuate the racial rivalries and differences and besides create a large number of new minorities because in each racial subdivision would be found groups of persons of other races and speaking languages other than those employed by the majority. Thus instead of solving existing difficulties these Sudeten proposals would not only fail but create a host of new problems. The Government will not agree to subdivision of parliament and state territory into racial subdivisions for another reason which is that so far as the Sudetens are concerned it would prove the first step in the separation of the German areas from the state. He added "we have to watch that." The proposal for the practice of the National Socialist philosophy in substance or form would not be accepted in any circumstances. He

⁷⁷ Not printed.

said that in order to show good will the Government would accept as many as possible of the Sudeten proposals and combine them with their own proposals into the statutes now in preparation.

The Government would grant decentralization along lines of historic trends into four provinces, Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia and Ruthenia. The Central Government at Praha with the National Parliament would have charge of the most important national matters including the most important legislation. Each province would have its own diet elected by the people and would legislate for itself within certain limits specifically in regard to agriculture, industry, schools and many other matters of local concern in respect to which conditions are different in the different provinces. Likewise they would have their own administration and elect their governments. Slovakia is to be included in this arrangement as an answer to the Heinka [*Hlinka*] ⁷⁸ agitation.

Within the provinces there would be small divisions called districts and corresponding roughly to counties and townships in the United States which would have their own governments and local officials elected by the people. The fullest measure of self government possible will be granted including racial proportionality of employees in the government, national and provincial, liberal provisions in regard to languages, local control of municipalities, trade, schools and other things.

It is expected that the drafts of the new laws will be ready by Monday at the latest when they will be given to the Sudeten Germans and the opposition parties for study and comment with a view to an adjustment of views before they are laid before Parliament where it is planned to invite the fullest and frankest possible discussion with the hope that the opposition parties can be induced to vote for them. The President emphasized that it was of the highest importance to afford opposition parties every reasonable opportunity to make known their views and to contribute to perfecting the proposed laws. I inferred that this may take another week or so at least.

The President spoke feelingly about statements that had been made here and abroad that he had been opposing concessions to the Sudetens and delaying reaching a solution of their difficulties. He said that the exact reverse was the truth. He had always been opposed to the highly centralized form of government which exists here and which was brought about by the law of 1927. Although then a minister he had refused to sign that law, had disagreed with the then Prime Minister about it and had advised President Masaryk to veto it. Nevertheless it became a law. Now it is necessary to return to the condition previously existing. He said that when the Sudeten memoran-

⁷⁸ Monsignor Andrej Hlinka, leader of the Slovak Peoples Party.

dum of June 7, 1938⁷⁹ was received he gave it immediate consideration and he showed me his various memoranda of his reaction to the proposals many of which had "yes" opposite them. He had placed his views before the members of the Government and had exerted all the pressure possible and had found it necessary to persuade each member as well as each party leader separately to act favorably. With some he had had considerable difficulty. All of that consumed much time. He repeated that except for his insistence upon the utmost possible concessions to the minorities the present situation would be far less favorable.

Repeated to Paris, Berlin; cipher text to London.

CARR

760F.62/508: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, July 25, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received July 25—2:40 p. m.]

1156. Bonnet said to me today that the British Government had stated officially to the German and Czechoslovak Governments that the British Government would be glad to tender its good offices for the purpose of finding a settlement by agreement of the dispute between the German and Czechoslovak Governments with regard to the Sudeten regions of Czechoslovakia.

Bonnet added that the German Government had welcomed this proposal but that the Czechoslovak Government was reluctant to accept.

Osusky, the Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, had called on him yesterday afternoon to say that the Czechoslovak Government did not wish to make any decision with regard to this British proposal before consulting the French Government. Bonnet said that he had advised the Czechoslovak Government to accept the proposal and had said that the French Government supported fully this British initiative.

Bonnet said that he had as yet no information as to whether his advice to the Czechoslovak Government would be followed.

In any case he felt that this British proposal would turn out advantageously for France. If the Czechs should refuse British mediation the British then would make it clear that they were not prepared to go to war in order to maintain the dominance of 7 million Czechs over 3½ million Germans. It would then be possible for France to take a similar attitude. In case the Czechs should accept there would be a possibility of a settlement of the dispute. At least the British would

⁷⁹ Addressed to the Czechoslovak Prime Minister, along the lines of the Carlsbad demands of April 24.

be fully involved in the question of the Sudeten regions of Czechoslovakia and France would be certain of British support if the worst should come.

In further discussion of the question of European peace Bonnet displayed more optimism than he has evinced for many weeks.

BULLITT

760F.62/528 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, July 29, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received July 29—5:10 p. m.]

699. Embassy's 679, July 26, 6 p. m.⁸⁰ A member of my staff was given the following outline of the background leading up to the selection of Lord Runciman as mediator in the Czech Sudeten dispute.

The Foreign Office said that ever since the crisis at the weekend of May 21 the Czech Government on the one hand and the Sudetens on the other had been jockeying for position and it had become increasingly clear that sooner or later they would take position which will in fact constitute a deadlock, the results of which could of course be very serious. The Foreign Office had considered the matter of an international commission but for a number of reasons this had not been adopted. The Foreign Office had gradually come to the conclusion that it would be necessary for an Englishman to undertake the task of mediation and Lord Runciman who in every respect was most admirably qualified agreed to undertake it.

On July 18 the British Minister in Praha was instructed to take the matter up personally with Beneš. In these instructions it was pointed out that the French Government had been urging that concrete proposals be made to the Czech Government but the British Government was against taking this line. The position of the Czech Government and the Sudetens indicated that they were approaching a deadlock. Should the Czech Government ask their Parliament to adopt the nationality statute as a whole, this might lead to a plebiscite which, in view of the delicate situation, would raise a number of problems which would be extremely difficult to surmount. The British Government had decided to select a person of outstanding repute to undertake investigation and mediation. Both sides must agree to facilitate his task. Should the Czech Government refuse this offer, with all the dangers inherent in the present situation, the British Government would have to consider whether it must make the response

⁸⁰ Not printed.

of the Czech Government public, with the attending explanations that the British Government had not yet approached the Sudetens. The British Government agreed to press the German Government to be helpful. If both sides accepted the suggestion, the idea would be a joint announcement by the Czech Government and the Sudetens. Lord Runciman was ready to proceed to Czechoslovakia when the deadlock appeared to be imminent.

On July 23 the British Minister put the proposal to Beneš, who was very upset. The Minister withdrew to let Beneš consider the question. A short time after, the British Minister was handed the Czech Government's reply.⁵¹ This in substance accepted the proposal and asked that Lord Runciman be sent at once. (It will be noted above that the British proposal was to send Lord Runciman when the deadlock became imminent. The Foreign Office said they were quite agreeable to advancing the date of Lord Runciman's departure but this forced them to move more quickly with the other parties concerned than they had originally intended).

The British Minister was then instructed to get in touch with Herr Kundt, Herr Henlein's representative, and handed him a brief written statement of the function which Lord Runciman would fulfill as investigator and mediator and invited the Sudetens to cooperate and facilitate this mediation. The Minister reported on July 26 that, in a cautious reply, Herr Kundt stated that he welcomed an objective study of conditions. This has been taken by the Foreign Office as an acceptance on the part of the Sudetens.

On the same day the British Ambassador in Berlin explained to Weizsäcker the steps taken and pointed out that the German Government had always stated that they were in favor of any agreement which was mutually agreeable to the two parties. The British Ambassador expresses the hope that the German Government would give its help and advice to the Sudetens. The British Ambassador warned Weizsäcker that it was feared that a leak to the press might lead to an announcement before the German Government's reply could be made. (Lord Runciman's mission was announced that afternoon in the House of Commons). Weizsäcker replied that he personally was in favor of this proposal but that he must, of course, refer the inquiry to his Secretary of State.

On July 27 the British Ambassador reported that Herr Ribbentrop had given a discouraging reply, objecting to Lord Runciman's mission on the grounds that the matter had been made public. The Foreign Office said this was "childish".

Asked whether the Foreign Office thought the matter had been referred to Herr Hitler, they said it was impossible as yet to tell. They

⁵¹ *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. 1, doc. No. 537, p. 620.

did not, however, regard Herr Ribbentrop's attitude as a serious obstacle in itself. They felt that the German press comment has been good and the German Embassy in London was well disposed.

Lord Runciman is leaving on August 2, assisted by R. J. Ford who served on the Simon Commission to India and lately on the Standstill Agreement, and by Ashton-Gwatkin, who is being detached temporarily from the Foreign Office "and its payroll" for this purpose.

In reply to an inquiry the Foreign Office said that the French Government had been helpful and had approved this plan but they had to be careful because they were in the awkward position of laying themselves open to being charged by the Czechs with trying to use this as a pretext to get out of their alliance with Czechoslovakia.

The Foreign Office said that should the President or the Secretary feel that he could make some public statement expressing approval of Lord Runciman's mission this would have a favorable effect on world opinion and Lord Halifax would naturally be much gratified.

KENNEDY

760F.62/556

Memorandum of Conversations, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)

[WASHINGTON,] August 5, 1938.

The Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires, the Yugoslav Chargé d'Affaires, and the Polish Chargé d'Affaires called on me one after the other this morning, each one to ask about Ambassador Wilson's visit to Praha.⁸² They were aware that we had disclaimed any direct connection between his trip and the Czechoslovak-Sudeten negotiations, but all three pointed out that the coincidence of his arrival with that of Lord Runciman was so marked that they wished I would tell them in confidence the circumstances of his trip. I told them that for some time the idea of a visit on behalf of Ambassador Wilson to neighboring capitals had been under consideration as we found that frequent informal contact between American representatives who were dealing with the same problems was exceedingly useful. The fact that Mr. Wilson's visit coincided with Lord Runciman's arrival was purely fortuitous. As a matter of fact he was remaining in Praha less than twenty-four hours and was visiting Warsaw on the same trip.

With varying degrees of feeling, they all expressed regret that there was not a more definite intention on the part of the United States to join Britain in settling the Czechoslovak-Sudeten controversy than appeared. They all referred to an article, or editorial, in the London *Times* to this effect. All three then went on to say that they had scant

⁸² See despatch No. 233, August 6, from the Minister in Czechoslovakia, *infra*.

hope that the Runciman intervention would be successful; that the problem was as nearly insoluble as any they could imagine; and both the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav Chargés d'Affaires expressed the opinion that even if Henlein should want to effect a compromise this would not be approved by Germany.

The Czechoslovak Chargé told me that he had just received a telegram from Praha indicating that Goebbels had given instructions to start in a new press campaign against Czechoslovakia.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/673

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

No. 233

PRAGUE, August 6, 1938.
[Received September 6.]

SIR: The Honorable Hugh Wilson, American Ambassador to Germany, accompanied by his son and Major Arthur W. Vanaman, Assistant Military Attaché for Air, arrived in Prague by plane from Warsaw about noon on Thursday and left this afternoon by plane for Berlin. His visit here was very beneficial in a number of ways. He had an opportunity at dinner at the Legation last night to confer with a member of the Foreign Office and with the British, French and Swiss Ministers. This morning he was received by the President with whom he conferred for an hour and a quarter and then by the Minister of Foreign Affairs who conversed with him for some time. We then attended a luncheon at the British Legation given for Lord and Lady Runciman which gave Mr. Wilson an opportunity to talk with that gentleman.

In the course of Mr. Wilson's conversation with the President, the latter explained that he had always realized the logic and the necessity of maintaining good relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia. He had been the first Foreign Minister of any of the new states set up after the World War to visit Berlin. All through the meetings of the League of Nations and Locarno he had kept the question of good relations with Germany steadily in mind. Things had gone fairly smoothly until sometime after Hitler had come to the head of the German Government. Even Hitler had at first seemed to be favorable to good relations between the two countries and on three different occasions had sent him, President Beneš, personal messages in relation to the desirability of entering into a treaty with Germany similar to that between Germany and Poland.⁸³ The last of these messages was received about a year and a half ago. The President said

⁸³ Nonaggression agreement, signed January 26, 1934. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. CXXXVII, p. 495.

that he had responded that he would be glad to enter into such a bilateral pact but only with the knowledge of Great Britain and France. Apparently, Germany was unwilling to agree because nothing further was heard after January, 1937.

The President said he had recently had conversations with the German Minister in regard to the adjustment of relations between Germany and this country. It was agreed between them that if an agreement could be worked out with the Sudeten Germans on the basis of adequate concessions the way might be open for the adjustment of relations between the Reich and Czechoslovakia. The German Minister had expressed his thanks for the President's attitude, but that was the 27th of July and no reply has yet been received.

Mr. Wilson inquired whether it was true that Germany had requested President Beneš to withdraw from the pact with Soviet Russia.⁸⁴ The President said it was not. He said that the pact with Russia would only go into operation in the event that Czechoslovakia should be attacked and France should move to her aid. Hence if Germany had no intention of attacking Czechoslovakia, the existence of the Soviet Pact could not have any possible adverse effect upon Germany. I understood him to say that he had made this clear to Germany. Mr. Wilson, however, said that in Berlin withdrawal of Czechoslovakia from this pact was looked upon as one of the chief objectives, and it will perhaps be recalled that the German Minister stated to me last winter that Germany could not permit Czechoslovakia to be a base for Russian planes which could fly from Prague to Berlin in an hour.

The President said that he had secret information that after the National Socialist Meeting at Nuremberg, there would be a resumption of the propaganda attacks on Czechoslovakia from Berlin. He said he understood that François-Poncet was also of that opinion and that he was pessimistic in regard to the future. Mr. Wilson said that he knew François-Poncet's views but that they were usually inclined to be pessimistic. Mr. Wilson said he himself was not inclined to believe that Germany contemplated a military attack upon Czechoslovakia, for he believed that Hitler who knows what war means and whose whole course has been to avoid bloodshed if possible, is not disposed to throw his people into another war and shed German blood. Moreover, he and the Germans know that they cannot wage a long war, and they take it for granted that France will attempt to aid Czechoslovakia and that thus Great Britain may be drawn into any conflict that may be started between Germany and Czechoslovakia and a long war result. Moreover, determined as Hitler is to better

⁸⁴ Mutual assistance agreement, signed May 16, 1935, League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CLIX, p. 347.

the condition of his people and willing as he is to operate exceedingly close to the danger line and take great risks, it is doubtful whether he would be willing to throw the German people into a war with all the disastrous consequences which such a war might be expected to have. Mr. Wilson said he had a strong belief that the work now going on in building fortifications on the French front as well as the violent propaganda over the radio and in the German press are not the forerunner of a military attack on Czechoslovakia, but are designed to upset the nerves of the British and the French in the hope that they will eventually become so exasperated that they will relinquish their interest in Czechoslovakia and let Germany do as she pleases. Mr. Wilson thought also that the work on the fortifications might be aimed at producing on the French mind such an impression of the enormous cost of fighting through those fortifications into Germany that the French General Staff would advise the Government to give up the idea of marching to the aid of this country. He explained that of course these were only opinions. One could not know what was in Hitler's mind. The appalling fact was that the decision as to whether there should be war or peace in Europe rested with one man.

Mr. Wilson told the President that he thought he saw a slight change in the attitude of some of the members of the National Socialist Party. He then related a conversation with one party leader in which that individual had said that some of the leaders believed that the time had come when they could begin to readjust the relations of Germany to other countries and put them on a more normal basis. The revolution was over. Hitler had achieved his objective in relation to Austria; the Czechoslovakian question remained to be settled, and then they could approach the Jewish question. With these questions out of the way all other questions could be solved by negotiation. Even the colonies question could be solved by negotiation. Certainly Germany would not fight over colonies. Mr. Wilson then mentioned what he had said to the individual about the sentiment in American circles toward Germany and how if it continued to grow might even approach a warlike quality, and also how it was important that something be done to retard the growth of that sentiment and lessen the tension. He explained, however, to President Beneš that it was important not to be misled by the existing anti-German sentiment in America, especially that on the Atlantic seaboard where the Jewish controlled press had great influence. The sentiment in that region does not indicate the nature of American public opinion as a whole. He called attention to the great area west of the Allegheny mountains which has less interest in foreign affairs than the coastal region and said that the inhabitants of this area might express a certain degree of indignation towards Germany and interest in and sympathy with

Czechoslovakia, but there was a wide difference between those expressions and a willingness to go to war in behalf or against either. He said that there was no ground for the belief that the people of the United States would support any policy of military aid to any country of Europe. President Beneš indicated that was in accord with his understanding. In fact I have never seen any indication that he had a different opinion, although he did in February [*March*] mention the subject when talking with Mr. Hoover⁸⁵ and was told by the latter that the people of the United States were overwhelmingly against another European adventure.

The conversation then drifted to the Sudeten German question. The President said he was convinced that the majority of the Sudeten Germans do not want to go to the Reich. He later qualified this statement somewhat to show that he meant those above thirty-five years of age. He admitted that the younger Sudeten Germans were in favor of being transferred to the Reich and gave as a reason that they do not think and have nothing to lose. He stressed his belief that the great majority of the more mature Sudeten Germans wish to stay in Czechoslovakia. Mr. Wilson said that he had heard that economic conditions in the region on the German side of the boundary had been bad but that the German Government had been able to do so much for the inhabitants that their condition stood out in sharp contrast with that of the inhabitants of the Sudeten area on the Czech side of the boundary. The President said that that might be true and that the Government probably should have done much more for the inhabitants of the German area on the Czech side. Certainly it was now necessary to be liberal with parts of those areas such as Carlsbad and Marienbad where the conditions were bad.

The President then went over much of the ground covered in his conversation with me and reported in my No. 145 of July 21, 6 p. m., 1938, in relation to the provisions of the proposed legislation which is being discussed with the Sudeten Germans. He showed us on the map the area running around the Northern border of Moravia and Bohemia, the Western border of Bohemia and the Southern border of Bohemia and Moravia in which the majority of the Sudeten Germans reside and which they now wish converted into an autonomous state and pointed out that such a state would comprise a strip of territory 2600 kilometers in length and a few miles wide in which there could be no communication between the several sections of it except through the main part of Bohemia inhabited for the most part by Czechs. If the Sudeten demand were agreed to there would be left in the area in question some 600,000 Czechs who would constitute a minority and

⁸⁵ Herbert Hoover, former President of the United States, visited Prague March 4-6, 1938, during his European tour.

there would be left outside the area some 700,000 Germans who would continue to constitute a minority. He said that the Sudeten plan with respect to this area was administratively absurd and impossible.

The President then said that he had welcomed the appointment of Lord Runciman and that he hoped he would be able to bring about some amelioration of the situation between the Sudeten Germans and the Government. (In regard to Lord Runciman's appointment, please see my No. 153 of July 28, 11 a. m., 1938).⁸⁶ He made it clear, however, as he had to me at our last interview that the Government would not agree to give the German area the complete autonomy which the Sudeten leaders demand because that would be merely preparation for secession and the transfer of them and the territory to the German Reich.

Mr. Wilson and I after leaving the President called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs and had a short interview in which Dr. Krofta went over some of the ground covered in our conversation with the President.

We then attended the luncheon at the British Legation given for Lord and Lady Runciman. Mr. Wilson was seated next to Lord Runciman and had an opportunity to talk at length with him. I had a short conversation with Lord Runciman after luncheon in the course of which he recalled with much apparent pleasure his visit to Washington and his conversation with the Secretary of State and Assistant Secretary Sayre. He was quite reserved in referring to the nature of his mission in Prague and while indicating in no way any optimism about being able to bring the Government and the Sudeten Germans into agreement, he said that he appreciated the great difficulties of the task he had assumed and would regard it as well worth while if even a few things could be accomplished.

Ambassador Wilson, his son and Major Vanaman departed for Berlin as already stated about four o'clock this afternoon.

Respectfully yours,

WILBUR J. CARR

760F.62/563 : Telegram (part air)

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, August 13, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 7:30 p. m.]

383. Little fact and ample rumor have characterized the last few days in respect to the Czechoslovak question. The common people

⁸⁶ Not printed; see telegram No. 699, July 29, 6 p. m., from the Ambassador in the United Kingdom, p. 537.

of this country are now aware of the intense activity in the Rhine-land fortifications, and the calling to the colors of reserve forces for "maneuvers" and as a result popular apprehension is mounting.

The fundamental point at issue between the Czechs and the Sudeten Germans seems to be the formation of provincial racial units with as much autonomy as the Swiss cantons. The Czechs are apparently willing to grant large autonomy to the communes and "bezirke", for which perhaps "counties" is the best translation. They are not willing to grant geographical autonomy to the larger provincial unit. Such autonomy is a fundamental demand on the part of the Sudeten Germans.

Apparently both the French and British continue to advise the Czechoslovak Government to use every means at their disposal to reach a solution. In this connection the Rumanian Minister here told me most confidentially that the other members of the Little Entente had warned Beneš that he must make every effort to solve this problem. They felt that as allies they had a right to express their view that the Sudeten problem should not be allowed to lead to war. The Rumanian Minister is unaware of the exact wording of the message given Beneš but believes that the foregoing is the sense.

The German press maintains its hostile and menacing tone emphasizing every incident and distorting its meaning. This in spite of the express desire of the British that outside pressure should be abandoned in order to create a state of mind which would facilitate Runciman's mission.

My British colleague has handed me a confidential paper prepared in the Foreign Office which discusses the possibility of a plebiscite among the Sudetens and reaches the conclusion that such a plebiscite would be impracticable, inconclusive, and might perhaps provoke that very disorder and excuse for German intervention which it is in the general interest to obviate. Henderson tells me that the British Embassy at Washington has given you a copy of this paper.⁸⁷ No one who has not studied the question deeply on the spot is capable of expressing a considered opinion as to whether a plebiscite would be advantageous or not. Nevertheless the suggestion arises more and more frequently not only among foreign diplomats but among Germans that the political implications of a plebiscite are calculated to appeal to the democratic conception and might reduce this particular problem to a local issue rather than to one which threatens the peace of Europe.

WILSON

⁸⁷ Not printed.

760F.62/571 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 16, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received August 16—6 p. m.]

779. I had a talk this afternoon with Masaryk. He thinks any sudden move by Hitler within the next month is improbable and that the time of greatest danger will be September 15 when the annual Nazi Congress meets at Nuremburg. By that time the German maneuvers and test mobilization will be in full swing and public opinion in Germany aroused to a high degree of excitement. It can only be expected that Hitler will want to produce something dramatic before the Nazi Congress and this, in Masaryk's view, will be at least a very dangerous speech. Masaryk is, however, as unwilling as others to draw any fast conclusions from what is now taking place or to indulge in any prophecies. He repeated with great emphasis, however, what has been said before: that there is no question whatever but that if Germany attacks Czechoslovakia, the Czechs will fight as long as they possibly can. Opinions vary as to how long this resistance could be kept up. The most optimistic view is 6 months, which Masaryk thinks is absurd. But he thinks they could make a very good showing for a month. The Soviet Ambassador, who recently returned from a protracted visit to Moscow, has told Masaryk that speaking with the full authority of Stalin he had no hesitation in saying that if Czechoslovakia is attacked Russia will fulfill her treaty obligations to the letter the minute that France moves.

Masaryk is sure, he says, that Hitler will endeavor to attain his ends without war and that he personally does not desire war in spite of his hatred of Czechoslovakia and the pressure of his more violent advisers; certainly, in Masaryk's opinion, if Hitler were convinced that a world war would result from a German attack on Czechoslovakia, it would not take place. Masaryk therefore naturally attaches the greatest importance to any support, moral or otherwise, which Czechoslovakia can receive from the outside world.

His attitude towards the Government here seemed to me to indicate some degree of bitterness. He feels that, with a view to laying the ground for an understanding between the four great European powers and keeping Great Britain out of a war, the Government would be willing to sacrifice Czechoslovakia. Speaking naturally as a protagonist of his own country, he said he did not believe the British realized fully the supreme importance of the existence of Czechoslovakia as an independent state. If Czechoslovakia falls, he said, nothing will keep Germany from the Black Sea. He has urged on the

Government here time and time again the advantages which would accrue from economic aid to Yugoslavia and Rumania which would be welcomed by the governments of those countries now on the way to economic dependence on Germany. He thought he had made some impression on Lord Halifax in this connection. His idea is that economic strengthening from Great Britain of Rumania and Yugoslavia by increased British purchases in those countries would in the long run be of even more assistance to Czechoslovakia than similar direct assistance. Exports from Czechoslovakia to Germany have been gradually reduced in order to lessen Czechoslovakia's economic dependence on Germany to a point where Czechoslovak exports to Germany including Austria, represent only 19% of their total exports. They were formerly 40% to Germany alone. Any corresponding weakening of the economic ties of the Danubian countries on Germany would therefore contribute to strengthening the position of Czechoslovakia and blocking Germany's expansion to the east. Hungary, of course, occupies a strategic position in the Danubian area of vital political and economic significance to Czechoslovakia and Masaryk attaches the utmost importance to the results in the forthcoming visit to Germany of Admiral Horthy.⁸⁸ Concluding his remarks Masaryk said that his country would always be grateful to the United States for the generous attitude they took in negotiating the trade agreement which had been of invaluable assistance to his country.

JOHNSON

760F.62/575 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 17, 1938—10 p. m.
[Received August 17—7:40 p. m.]

787. My 779, August 16, 8 p. m. In the view of the Soviet Ambassador with whom I had a talk this evening the key to the Czechoslovak situation lies entirely in London and in firm action by the British Government. Hitler is playing, as in the past, a game of 50 percent bluff which would be called by a strong stand at Berlin. The British and French are pressing Praha to the limit he says and talking in tones of persuasion to Hitler. This in Maisky's view is a mistake. The situation is too critical to talk to the Germans in any language except the only one they understand, that of force and Hitler is not prepared to face a general war. The present immense mobilization in Germany and resultant excitement of the people will offer

⁸⁸ Nicolas Horthy, Regent of Hungary.

Hitler a temptation that may be too strong for him to withstand, if he thinks there is a gambling chance that Great Britain will not fight. Maisky astonished me by saying he was not sure if Hitler did attempt to attack Czechoslovakia that France would fight. If France lived up to her commitments, Russia would move at once (by inference, if France would not fight, Russia will do nothing) and Great Britain would of course eventually be drawn in. Maisky can see little hope of a successful outcome of the Runciman mission or of any real settlement of the Sudeten question in the present setup. He says that while he may be wrong and is no prophet, peace will depend on whether Hitler is willing to take the gamble in which he has succeeded so often before. Maisky minimizes the significance of reports, which he says according to their own information are accurate, of increasing dissatisfaction in Germany. This would completely disappear with the first military success against Czechoslovakia. The Ambassador agrees with other observers in putting the time of the Nazi Congress at Nuremburg as the danger point.

Subjugation of Czechoslovakia is the key to Hitler's whole plan of expansion according to Maisky and he outlined his not altogether novel views on this subject at some length, which I will send in a subsequent telegram.⁸⁹ The deduction is that Hitler cannot afford a setback over Czechoslovakia, once the situation has developed to the point where it would be defeat for him to accept a reasonable negotiated settlement. Hence the prime necessity for the Western Powers to call his bluff now.

Maisky gave the most curious impression of self confidence, that he feels that Great Britain and France are the ones in real danger; and that Russia can take care of herself.

Copies to Berlin and Praha.

JOHNSON

760F.62/589

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] August 19, 1938.

The Czech and Yugoslav Chargés d'Affaires both came to see me this morning to discuss the situation in Central Europe. Both expressed the opinion that the Secretary's speech,⁹⁰ particularly when

⁸⁹ Telegram No. 794, August 18, 8 p. m., p. 65.

⁹⁰ Radio address, August 16, entitled "International Relations and the Foreign Policy of the United States", Department of State, *Press Releases*, August 20, 1938, p. 117.

coupled with the President's Kingston speech,⁹¹ was causing Berlin anxious thought.

The Czechoslovak Chargé said that a telegram received this morning from his Government was more optimistic. He said the Czechs were inclined to be more impressed by Lord Runciman's impartiality. They were less fearful now that he would put pressure on the Czechs to "accept a radical solution". They felt that England was playing for time until her rearmament program was further advanced. They were also trying to convince Lord Runciman that the great contribution that England could make at the moment was to give economic and financial assistance to the Danubian States to prevent their falling under the sway of Berlin. As to military measures, they did not believe that Germany would project war this year, but if she did harbor such intentions they felt that the period of the Nuremberg Conference was the most critical.

The Yugoslav Chargé said that, as he sensed our analysis of the situation, we were not immediately alarmed, though we felt the situation in Central Europe remained very serious. He added that he had lived many years in Praha, and was skeptical of any working solution. He talked a little bit about the attitude of the Little Entente States toward Hungary, and expressed his conviction that Hungary would resist German pressure to the utmost, and that the forthcoming visit of the Regent to Berlin, though widely advertised, would not change this policy.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/597 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 24, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received August 24—5: 15 p. m.]

815. My 799, August 19, 8 p. m.⁹² This afternoon I had a talk with Lord Halifax regarding the Czechoslovak situation. He said that their information from Berlin was very disquieting. Indications are accumulating that Hitler is planning to settle the present crisis in Czechoslovakia in his own way and if he can on his own terms before the end of September. The Foreign Secretary says he thinks that his informants may have reached over precision in their reports but nevertheless the developing situation is causing them great concern here. He is apprehensive that Hitler may attempt to force the issue before

⁹¹ Delivered on August 18, at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada, Department of State, *Press Releases*, August 20, 1938, p. 123.

⁹² Not printed.

Lord Runciman can make his recommendations. Moreover the reports from Lord Runciman do not hold out very great hopes of a satisfactory outcome. Faced with this situation the British Government he said is in a quandary as to what is the wisest thing to do. If Hitler "collars" by force what he wants in Czechoslovakia no force which France, Great Britain, and Russia can assemble could possibly prevent his accomplishing his purpose. If the three countries moved after the event it would therefore mean a war of indefinite duration to force Germany to disgorge what she had taken, with no assurance even in the case of victory that Czechoslovakia could be reconstituted along the lines of its present set up.

As he sees it there are two major considerations involved in Great Britain and her associates bringing force to bear on behalf of Czechoslovakia. The first is the purely moral issue based on treaties and various international commitments about the meaning of which there can be no doubt. However, the moral issue involved in fighting or not to force Germany to disgorge a conquered Czechoslovakia is no greater than the moral issue involved with Japan in China, and Italy in Abyssinia. The second consideration would be the question whether France and Great Britain in their own self interest should join the issue immediately on Germany's attacking Czechoslovakia, in an attempt to forestall a perhaps inevitable war with Germany in the future, a war which would have to be fought with a Germany that had accomplished her purpose in Czechoslovakia and mobilized in her favor the resources of all the Danubian countries. A war fought now, however, on the grounds of self interest would narrow itself down to Great Britain and France fighting for the Czechs as against the Sudeten Deutsch. This Lord Halifax thinks would be a most dubious issue on which to wage a war and he indicated that in his opinion the Sudeten grievances against the Czechoslovak Government are indeed very soundly based.

Lord Halifax said that he is now therefore confronted with the problem of whether to encourage the French immediately to implement their obligations to Czechoslovakia in the event of an attack by Germany or to discourage the French from such action. If Hitler risks the gamble that France and Great Britain will not fight, marches into Czechoslovakia and settles the issue by force and France, encouraged by Great Britain, then attacks Germany, Europe will have an immediate war on its hands which might last months or even years. Lord Halifax did not attempt to answer these questions and considerations nor did he say what his Government is going to do but stated them as propositions which are part of the background in their present dilemma.

As I understood Lord Halifax he endeavored to convey the meaning to me that although without any precise knowledge of what

German intentions are he and his Government are more than apprehensive of an armed German move against Czechoslovakia and all alternative actions which suggest themselves are beset with dangerous possibilities. At present the British Government stands by the Prime Minister's declaration of March 24 which was to the effect that the consequences of a German attack on Czechoslovakia could not be foreseen. Lord Halifax said that he thought it would be helpful in deterring Hitler if Lord Runciman could possibly issue some public statement before the Nazi Congress at Nuremburg in the middle of September to the effect that he believed there existed possible and practicable bases for a peaceful settlement between the Czechs and Sudeten Deutsch. He gave me to understand that this idea is being examined with Runciman now. He pointed out, however, the danger in such a statement if possible and practicable bases for settlement of the issue did not in fact exist and it is apparent that Lord Runciman has not yet been willing to declare to his government that they do exist. The background of this horrible situation Lord Halifax said is of course the mentality of Naziism which "comes from the devil" and that there might not be any lasting peace in Europe until that spirit is killed. They were dealing with a man who for all practical purposes is a madman and from that fact arises all of the uncertainty.

Lord Halifax spoke with warm appreciation of the President's speech at Kingston, Ontario, and of your radio speech of August 16. He believed that these speeches had had a useful effect. He then said, but made it clear that he was not making any request, that if either you or the President could find it possible to make some further declaration directed toward the existing danger in Central Europe at some time before the Nazi Congress meets at Nuremburg he believed it might have a wholesome effect in restraining Hitler.

The Foreign Secretary is a calm personality not given to over emphasis or exaggeration. I believe that he meant to convey to me his sense that the situation at Berlin is not better but worse and is developing dangerously.

JOHNSON

760F.62/598 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, August 25, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received August 25—4 p. m.]

170. The Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me yesterday that this Government continues to receive information indicating that Germany is planning a military move against this country. A recent message from Czechoslovak Minister at The Hague stating that American

holders of stocks in German enterprises were selling them on the Amsterdam exchange on the strength of information from persons close to Schacht⁹³ that it was wise to do so was interpreted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs as an indication that Germany is preparing some drastic action though he stated that he still held the belief that it would not involve an armed attack.

This last view is also held by Veverka⁹⁴ with whom I also spoke yesterday. He believes that Germany can obtain nearly all it wants through patient and peaceful methods. He recognizes, however, that the danger always exists that sudden impulse or false information may cause Hitler to make a sudden move against this country. He does not see how the existing problem can be settled on a cantonal basis without Czechoslovakia going over into the German orbit as this development would ultimately permit the different cantons to vote for secession from the state and that this would be almost certain to occur because the majority of the Sudetens fear to express their real feelings under the terrorist methods employed by the more fanatical elements in the area and by the Reich. In Veverka's opinion the important thing is the preservation of the territorial integrity of Czechoslovakia and hence the lesser evil might be relinquishment of present alliances and entry into German orbit with the idea of some time in the future withdrawing therefrom as has been done before in the history of the Czechs and which might be possible again especially if the Danubian States could be induced to join in such a move. He expressed some doubt, however, whether public opinion would support such a move and stressed the growing militant attitude on the part of the younger element in this country and the possible eventual difficulty of controlling it. He expressed little confidence that France, now a second rate power, would really fight for the preservation of Czechoslovakia and he places little faith in England. He together with other officials of the government are expressing their chagrin at England's attitude which is pushing this country into greater and greater concessions which will probably not satisfy the Reich in any event and at the same time is giving no guarantee or indication of protection in case the sacrifices fail and Czechoslovakia is held accountable.

The Legation is informed by a member of the Runciman mission (Ashton-Gwatkin) that all haste is being made to find a solution prior to Nuremberg meeting so that fire may be taken out of Hitler's pronouncements on Sudeten question. It is the purpose of the mission to have proposals for the settlement emanate from the Czech negotiators. While line of approach was not disclosed it is known that the cantonal or other district defining system is receiving serious con-

⁹³ Hjalmar Schacht, German Minister without Portfolio and President of the Reichsbank.

⁹⁴ Ferdinand Veverka, former Czech Minister in Austria.

sideration of the mission as supported by plans for economic collaboration in the Danubian basin with England agreeing to purchase certain amount of porcelain and glass produced in the Sudeten area.

The British Minister in a chance meeting last night said he was by no means pessimistic over the outlook but on the other hand was not warranted in expressing optimism.

CARR

760F.62/605 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, August 26, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received August 26—2:25 p. m.]

1350. Massigli said to us this morning that developments in the Czechoslovak situation were of a disquieting nature. A few days ago the German Ministers at Bucharest and at Bled had stated categorically to the Rumanian and Yugoslav Governments that if the Czechoslovak problem was not solved one hundred percent in accordance with demands of the Sudeten Germans the German Government would intervene. These declarations coupled with the furious attitude of Goering when informed by Vuillemin^{94a} that France would go to Czechoslovakia's aid in case the latter were attacked by Germany, as well as Goering's efforts to persuade Vuillemin that if a conflict should take place it would be the Czechoslovaks who had provoked it and therefore the French promise of aid would not have to be fulfilled, make it appear that the German Government may have decided to settle the Czechoslovak question by force at an early date. Certainly the German Government is attempting to produce that impression.

Massigli said that the new difficulties which had arisen regarding the Spanish problem as a result of Franco's reply were closely linked with the Czechoslovak situation.

The French Government had authentic information that Franco's original intention had been to reply in a more favorable sense but that his reply had been altered upon the insistence of the German and Italian Governments.

The Foreign Office's information is that while the army leaders in Germany are opposed to risking armed intervention in Czechoslovakia the party heads are strongly in favor of such a move professing to believe that Great Britain and France are bluffing and that when it comes to a showdown they will not go to the support of Czechoslovakia. Hiler is hesitating and reserving his decision. Massigli said that the problem of European peace depends upon Great Britain and France being able to convince Hitler that they are in deadly

^{94a} Gen. Joseph Vuillemin, Chief of the French Air Staff.

earnest and will in fact go at once to the assistance of Czechoslovakia if the latter should be attacked. The French Government does not as yet know what Simon⁹⁵ will say in his speech tomorrow but Massigli states that it is not so much what is said in public addresses which must necessarily be of a general character as what can be said directly by the British Government to Hitler that may be decisive in deterring the latter from casting Europe into war next month.

BULLITT

760F.62/607 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, August 26, 1938—midnight.
[Received August 27—10:25 a. m.]

1355. I discussed the general situation with Bonnet this afternoon. He had been most impressed by the conversations of the German Ministers in Bucharest and Bled with the Rumanian and Yugoslav Governments (reported in my 1350, August 26, 4 p. m.) and said that they seemed to indicate that Germany really intended to use force against Czechoslovakia in the near future.

I asked him if he did not feel that a contrary interpretation was possible, to wit: that the German Government desired to convince the governments of Europe that they would use force against Czechoslovakia in order that they might get from Czechoslovakia all the concessions they desired without fighting. He said that this also was a possible interpretation but that he feared that if Germany should begin to take active measures which looked like preparations for immediate war against Czechoslovakia the Czechs would strike. He said that the Czechs were in a very excited state of mind and that it would not take great provocation from Germany to set Czech airplanes in motion.

He said that the Czech Government had informed the French Government that it intended to introduce at once 3 year military service. He added that he had advised the Czech Government not to do this; but merely to keep under arms the present class which would be released from the army normally in the month of September. He said that he believed the Czechs would follow his advice.

He read to me the report which he received today on Runciman's latest negotiations in Praha. This dealt especially with Runciman's conversation with Henlein. Runciman reported that Henlein had been amiable but adamant. Henlein had said that he was entirely prepared to accept a settlement of the Sudeten question within the bounds of the Czechoslovak State. But had insisted that unless the

⁹⁵ Sir John Simon, British Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Czech Government should restore to Sudeten Germans at once all posts which have been taken away from Sudeten Germans and should withdraw the Czech *gendarmérie* from the Sudeten areas he would not be able to restrain the mounting anger and excitement of the Sudeten populations. Henlein added that a solution satisfactory to the Sudeten must be found before the cold weather set in. The economic misery of the Sudeten populations owing to unemployment was so great and would be so augmented by the onset of winter that a revolt of the Sudeten would be certain.

Bonnet added that he was continuing to say to the English that he considered that Runciman should not hurry his work. It was most valuable to have him in Praha for the purpose of information. It was most valuable to have him in Praha in order to negotiate between the Sudeten and the Czechoslovak Government. If he should be able to bring about a settlement by negotiation so much the better. If not, it was absolutely essential that he should declare publicly his opinion with regard to a just settlement of this dispute.

Bonnet said that if Runciman should declare his opinion the French Government would be guided in its actions by his opinion, whatever the opinion might be. If Runciman's opinion should be rejected by the Czechoslovak Government the French and British Governments would refuse to support the Czechoslovak Government by force of arms. If on the other hand Runciman's opinion should be rejected by the Sudeten the British and French Governments would support the Czechoslovak Government by force of arms. In case Runciman should express no opinion and simply go home with the statement that his mission had been a failure war could be expected almost at once.

Bonnet then said to me that he was much disturbed by the position which the Poles were taking at the present time. They were acting as if they desired nothing better than the disintegration of Czechoslovakia which would enable them to regain the Teschen District.

He said that he had tried to point out to the Polish Ambassador in Paris how dangerous the disintegration of Czechoslovakia would be for Poland but had been able to make no impression.

From the source, which when I was Ambassador in Moscow I always found to be the most accurate and the best informed, I received word a few days ago that the Soviet Government had prepared to the last detail a plan to march to the aid of Czechoslovakia across Poland. This source alleged that the Soviet Government had gone so far as to inquire officially of the French Government whether the French Government would be obliged to support the Polish Government in case the Russian Army should cross Polish soil to support Czechoslovakia.

I asked Bonnet if it were true that the Soviet Government had approached him with any such request for information. He replied that the Soviet Government had. I then said that the exact statement made to me was that the Russian Government had put the question in this way: that in case Germany should invade Czechoslovakia and France should then attack Germany and Polish troops should occupy the Teschen District, would France be obliged to support Poland? Bonnet replied that this was exactly the form in which the inquiry had come to him and he had replied that clearly the French Government would have no obligation whatsoever to support Poland.

Bonnet went further and said that recent conversations between the French and Russian Governments led him to believe that if Germany should enter Czechoslovakia the first additional war to start would be war between the Soviet Union and Poland.

He said that this of course filled him with immense disquiet. He was not at all sure that in such an eventuality Rumania would not support Poland and declare war on the Soviet Union. The result would be that France's three allies would be fighting each other and France and England would be left alone to face the attack of Germany and Italy.

I said that under these circumstances it seemed to me that a certain hesitation on the part of the Poles was comprehensible.

I then asked Bonnet if he had any information with regard to the situation in Hungary. He said that he had much information as to the development of the Nazi movement in Hungary but none indicating any danger of an immediate installation of a Nazi Government in Hungary. It was possible of course that if Hitler felt certain he would soon have Hungary in the Nazi camp he would not attack Czechoslovakia in September.

The crisis which he expected for September might therefore be averted temporarily but if Hitler's hopes with regard to Hungary should prove to be true the position of Czechoslovakia would become totally impossible in the latter months of this year.

Bonnet said that the French and British Governments had decided to treat Franco's reply calmly and to attempt to continue negotiations with him. It was obvious that Hitler wanted the conflict of the powers over Spain to be at fever heat during the month of September. The Soviet Government had informed the British and French Governments that it desired to break off all contact with Franco and end the work of the Committee of Nonintervention. The British and the French felt that it was wiser to temporize until the Czech crisis should have reached one or another solution.

Bonnet added that there had been no improvement whatsoever in the relations between France and Italy.

760F.62/614: Telegram

The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State

Moscow, August 29, 1938—9 a. m.

[Received August 29—9 a. m.]

271. Referring to my telegram 270, August 27, 11 a. m.⁰⁸ The Soviet press today carries a despatch from Praha to the effect that the Czechoslovak Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to journalists that the German Government had made a *démarche* in a series of European capitals namely, London, Warsaw, Bucharest, Belgrade and others, to the effect that further delay in the solution of the nationality problem might cause the German Government to give active support for the protection of Sudeten Germans.

The German Embassy states that no such *démarche* has been made in Moscow but that the German Ambassador has called on Litvinov in the last few days in respect to other matters and the Czechoslovak situation was also discussed. I understand that Litvinov stated to the German Ambassador that the chief interest of the Soviet Government in this question was directed towards opposing the extension or strengthening of National Socialist Germany and that if there were another form of government in Germany the Soviet attitude would be quite different. Litvinov, I am informed further, stated that he was convinced that the Czechs would offer no provocation to Germany and that therefore in any conflict which might arise between the two countries Germany would be the aggressor. In that case he was convinced that France would come to the aid of Czechoslovakia and that England would be forced in even against the wishes of Chamberlain and that in such an event the Soviet Government would remain faithful to its treaty obligations and would "hold to its word and do its best". I also understand that the German Embassy here has reported to Berlin that it believes that even in the event of a general conflict the Soviet Government would limit its aid to some aircraft and war supplies and the possible use of submarines in the North and the Baltic Seas to threaten German communications with Scandinavian countries but that no extensive military participation on the part of the Soviet Union was to be expected.

In regard to immediate developments, I have received the impression from the German Embassy here that in their opinion the danger lies in the fact that apparently Hitler is not convinced that England and France would come to the aid of Czechoslovakia in the event of a German-Czech conflict and that until that doubt is expelled or complete autonomy granted to the Sudeten Germans no relaxation in tension may be expected. In the light of the foregoing some step on

⁰⁸ Not printed.

the part of the British Government to make unequivocally known its position in the event of a German-Czech conflict would be regarded as salutary.

In my opinion even the Germans, with the possible exception of Hitler himself, realize that in the event of a general conflict in Europe the Soviet Union is in a position to derive the maximum profit with the minimum risk; for that matter, what alignments may take place or what the course of military operations may be, the internal strain on the various countries involved in war will prepare the way for a social upheaval within those countries which will manifest itself in various forms and in varying degrees of intensity. This country has declared that it would fight to defend its territories and it must be assumed that this limitation on its war policy is based on some realization that its main strength lies in the weight of its physical mass and not in any capacities as a powerfully organized state. It has bound itself by treaty to take positive action in the case of certain eventualities involving other countries, but those very agreements offer lines of escape from actual participation if so desired, and the general geographical factors themselves render dubious the efficacy of that participation. It is true that Soviet Russia has made itself the advocate of peace and has chosen to make public [profession?] of its alignment with the democracies of the world by [*but?*] the misguided policy of the Kremlin can be characterized on [*as?*] a championship, preferably passive of a war in which the Soviet Union would be sufficiently involved to reveal the weakness inherent in the ponderous structure of the Russian State, and its profession of democracy is an artifice invented for export purposes with a view to sustaining the sentimental support of a state order which is now Socialist, principally in name, and which for all practical purposes operates solely as an autocratic despotism. At the present moment the Soviet Government as a result of immediate circumstances is concentrating its animosity against Nazi Germany and in order to curtail the power of that state would welcome any measures to that end provided the costs would be borne principally by others. But concurrently the Soviet Government must still be recognized as the avowed enemy of what it chooses to call the capitalist system and as such would, in the attainment of its objective as regards Germany at least, be inclined to envisage with equanimity the precipitation of eventualities within other countries which might result in the substitution of social and economic orders more in harmony with its own.

KIRK

760F.62/615 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 29, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received August 29—9:05 a. m.]

831. My 829, August 27, 5 p. m.⁹⁷ Referring to the *démarche* made by Germany at Moscow,⁹⁸ Bucharest and Belgrade, Masaryk last night showed me two telegrams from Praha giving the substance of confidential reports received from the Czech Ministers at Bucharest and Moscow. These messages were essentially as follows:

The Rumanian Foreign Minister informed the Czech Minister that the German Minister, Fabricius, told him, acting on instructions from Berlin, that Germany does not wish war on account of Czechoslovakia but cannot tolerate much longer the ill-treatment of Germans by the Czechs and will help them with all available means. If France should intervene it would not be Germany that could be blamed for the consequences.

The German Legation in Belgrade is said to have told the same thing to Stoyadinovitch,⁹⁹ leaving out the last part about France.

The German Ambassador in Moscow, according to information furnished to the Czech Minister by Litvinoff, made a similar *démarche* and told Litvinoff and Potemkin¹ that in the event of the failure of Lord Runciman's mission war seemed inevitable and Germany would not be responsible for it. Litvinoff is said to have advised the German Ambassador that Germany should leave Czechoslovakia alone; that Czechoslovakia would defend herself, aided by Russia in fulfillment of her obligations, and that even England would in the end be forced to intervene.

Masaryk who, needless to say, is under great strain, seemed very nervous and distracted and made no pretense of hiding his immense anxiety. He did say, however, that he still thought that there was a chance that a German attack might be averted and he thought that in spite of all the unfavorable indications pointing to such an intention on the part of Germany.

JOHNSON

⁹⁷ Not printed.⁹⁸ See *German Documents*, ser. D, vol. II, docs. No. 332, p. 529, and No. 398, p. 633.⁹⁹ Milan Stoyadinovitch, Yugoslav Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.¹ Vladimir P. Potemkin, Soviet Vice Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

760F.62/628: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 30, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received August 30—3:15 p. m.]

838. I have just talked with the Prime Minister. He had just concluded a meeting with the Cabinet and is leaving for Balmoral to join the King and Queen for 4 days. He does not look well at all.

The gist of the conversation was that he is very much disturbed about the Czechoslovak situation. All the information that he gets with the exception of the report from Gwatkin, Runciman's aide, is that Hitler has made up his mind to take Czechoslovakia peacefully if possible but with arms if necessary. The advice is that Hitler believes that France is not ready to fight and that England does not want to go in. Runciman feels that if the matter were one just to be decided between the Sudetens and the Czechs it could be settled amiably but unfortunately it rests with Hitler.

I asked him whether he thought Hitler was affected by the speeches from America or Sir John Simon's² the other night. He said he thought that psychologically the two speeches in America—the President's and the Secretary's—and Simon's had had an excellent effect, but he is advised that very little of the proper information, so far as world peace is concerned, gets to Hitler any more; the ring around him is keeping him high up on a mountain peak, so to speak; the group that want to go to war which he thinks unfortunately includes Ribbentrop are advising him that, since France is not prepared to go and England will not come in, now is the time to add increased prestige to Germany's cause.

I asked him if he had made up his mind yet whether he was disposed to go to war if France went. He said he was very much afraid that they might be forced into it but he definitely would not go until he was absolutely forced to. He also said that he had an agreement with the French that they would not declare war until they had consulted with the British. He said they had been very loath to give this commitment even though the choice was between breaking their treaty obligations or fighting a war they knew they would lose, but Chamberlain said that the British convinced them that they were to await this agreement if they were expected to go along.

He said Henderson had advised him that no more speeches should be made because instead of giving courage to the moderates to fight against a war in Germany, it was having the opposite effect and was urging them to get into it.

² Address by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, at Lanark, Scotland, August 27, 1938.

Chamberlain said that in spite of all this he is still hopeful that war will be averted. He thinks Hitler's speech will come on Tuesday³ and until then the matter will remain as is. Beneš and Henlein were to meet today but up to 4 o'clock here Chamberlain had had no word. Chamberlain opposes those in his own Cabinet who believe that Hitler must be struck at now or else his prestige will increase so much it will be impossible to stop him at a later date. Chamberlain feels that this is not necessarily true; that the *Anschluss* lost Hitler a great deal of public opinion in the United States and he refuses to believe that the smaller countries—Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and others—are willing to have themselves regimented as the Austrians have been.

My own impression is that he regards war as about a 50-50 chance; that even if Hitler strikes my own belief is that his influence will be to keep France out; if France goes it will still be some time before he goes but his own opinion is that he will have to. He says he is advised that Hitler believes that the war will be over, if they march into Czechoslovakia, before you can say the word "knife". Chamberlain does not agree with that at all, figuring the Czechs will give him a battle and that public opinion will be aroused and force France and England into the fray. Chamberlain says public opinion in England today is definitely against going to war for Czechoslovakia but what it will be if France declares war is another matter. He still has very definitely in his mind that it is easy enough to get into war but what have we proved after we are in and he is always hopeful that something may happen for the good of the world if he stays out. He still is the best bet in Europe today against war, but he is a very sick looking individual. He is worried but not jittery.

Code text by mail to Paris and Berlin.

KENNEDY

760F.62/627: Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, August 30, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received August 30—2:35 p. m.]

217. In a conversation which I had with Count Ciano⁴ this morning he gave me the impression that although Italy stood behind Germany in the matter of the Czechoslovak crisis it wished to have no direct connection with it. He did not appear to be unduly anxious but insisted that the responsibility for the future devolved entirely upon Beneš. If the latter was reasonable and prepared to make

³ September 6.

⁴ Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

practical concessions, Ciano maintained there would be no danger but if on the other hand such concessions were denied the blame would rest entirely with the Czechoslovak Government.

Ciano did not believe that any decisive action would be taken by Germany until after the Nuremberg Congress early in September. Although he was confident that Germany did not wish for war he did, however, admit the possibility that some incident between Czechs and Sudetens might be a signal for a German move.

Ciano manifested considerable interest in the eventual position of the United States should hostilities break out. While I said that it would be impossible to predict the ultimate role that the United States might play it must be remembered that any European war might well be a long drawn out affair which might give rise to the same situation that had developed between 1914-1917. In concluding I expressed the hope that Italy would take advantage of its close relationship with Germany to exercise a restraining influence in the event of a real crisis.

PHILLIPS

760F.62/631 : Telegram

The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State

Moscow, August 31, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received August 31—6:55 a. m.]

273. The Czechoslovak Minister here states that he regards the conversation between Litvinov and the German Ambassador referred to in my 271, August 22 [29], 9 a. m., as a part of the series of *démarches* which Germany is said to have recently been making in various capitals and he characterizes the Ambassador's observations to Litvinov as a bid for Soviet neutrality in case of a conflict. The Minister says that the German Ambassador presented to Litvinov the argument that the intervention of France against Germany in aid of Czechoslovakia would amount to an act of aggression on the part of France and that consequently the Soviets need not be bound to intervene and adds that Litvinov in rejecting this argument declared that if Germany should move against Czechoslovakia his Government would live up to its commitments to the full.

The Czechoslovak Government, the Minister continued, would go far in concessions in the present crisis but that there was a limit to such a course and that if that limit should be reached his country would fight and fight on a larger scale than was generally believed possible. He felt sure that France and the Soviet Union would come to the aid of Czechoslovakia and although he avoided specifying the exact nature of Soviet aid, he preferred personal confidence in

the efficacy thereof. He admitted, however, that the position of England had not been definitely clarified in spite of the fact that the British Government must realize the danger which an unchecked Nazi Germany combined with Italy constitutes in Europe and particularly in the Mediterranean. The Minister added that he does not believe that Germany in reality wants a general war and that the justification for any optimism lies in the hope that the British Government will declare to Germany that England will not stand aloof in the event of a conflict and thus confront the German Government with the choice between a compromise in the Czechoslovakia controversy and the necessity of engaging in a major conflict. Other democracies the Minister felt should also make clear their position against aggressor states and in that connection mentioned appreciatively the recent utterances emanating from the highest sources in the United States. The Minister concluded with the statement that he believed that Hitler personally who is reported to be in an abnormally nervous state at the moment, was not convinced that England would move and that it would require the operation of that conviction to restrain him from pursuing his present course as well as some "psychological pressure" to enable him to desist from that course before it should lead to its inevitable end.

KIRK

760F.62/633 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, August 31, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received 3:45 p. m.]

1372. I talked with Bonnet last night. He said that the British Government had decided yesterday afternoon to give Henderson, British Ambassador to Berlin, an instruction to be read to the German Government in which it would be made entirely clear that if German troops should cross the Czechoslovak frontier and France should go to war against Germany England would go to war on the side of France.

Bonnet is still inclined to believe that the present German preparations for war and demonstrations of a readiness to go to war are to be regarded as part of an effort to intimidate the friends of Czechoslovakia and to obtain a settlement of the Sudeten question satisfactory to Hitler by a gigantic bluff rather than by war.

Guy la Chambre, Minister for Air, who was with us pointed out however that the present mobilization in Germany of 1,800,000 men is so expensive that it is hard to believe that Germany is making such

a colossal expenditure simply for the purpose of backing up a diplomatic maneuver.

Bonnet laid great stress on the factor of Poland in the present situation. He said that if any responsible statesman in Poland should express himself in such terms as you and the President had expressed yourselves he believed there would be no risk of Germany starting war. He said that his chief nightmare at the moment was the prospect that if the Soviet Union should attempt to send an army to the support of Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Poland would both declare war on the Soviet Union. He went on to say that he felt certain from his most recent conversations with the Russians that the Soviet Union not only would give a pledge to Poland not to attempt to cross Polish territory under any circumstances but also would be prepared to supply arms and ammunition and other war materials to Poland if Poland would support Czechoslovakia actively. He said that he realized that the Poles would be entirely justified in considering worthless any promises made by the Soviet Union not to enter Polish territory but hoped something might be done if the Soviet Union should actually hand over war materials. At the present time it was clear that Poland and Rumania would do everything possible to remain neutral as long as possible. This meant that aid from the Soviet Union could not reach Czechoslovakia except in the form of airplanes.

The opinion of the French Minister for Air with regard to the Soviet air force was that the ablest Soviet designers and constructors of planes as well as shop foremen had been killed in the recent "purges" and that the quality of the Soviet planes was decreasing.

Bonnet said that he considered the latest Czech proposals reported in my No. 1370 of August 30, 6 p. m.⁵ to divide Czechoslovakia into 23 cantons and permit each canton to elect its own prefect was a most important concession. He did not have much hope that it would be accepted by the Sudeten but felt that it would afford Runciman a good basis on which to continue his negotiations.

In conclusion Bonnet said that if it should be possible to get through the month of September without war as a result of some sort of a temporary compromise on the Sudeten question he intended to inaugurate in October an intense effort to reach agreement between France and Germany.

In general France remains calm and unconvinced that war is inevitable. Members of the Government and the military are alert and ready for any eventuality. The people of France outside Government circles are still enjoying happily the summer holidays.

BULLITT

⁵ Not printed.

760F.62/634 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the
Secretary of State*

LONDON, August 31, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received August 31—3: 15 p. m.]

846. I have just seen Lord Halifax. He told me that the cable he received from Runciman this morning is not quite so encouraging. Runciman says that Beneš is not going through as he should and Runciman told Halifax to twist Beneš' tail which Halifax has just done with a cable. The Czech proposition was given to Henlein yesterday and they have asked until Thursday or Friday to give Beneš an answer. I hope to have a copy of the proposition tonight or tomorrow from Masaryk.

Public opinion here is definitely against going to war for Czechoslovakia. Halifax says that the French do not want to fight either. Halifax asked me what would be the reaction in America if the Germans went into Czechoslovakia, with the Czechs fighting them, and England did not go along. I told him a great deal would depend on the attitude the President would take as to whether he thought England should be encouraged to fight or whether he would contend that they should stay out of war until the last possible minute. Halifax told me he would keep in touch with me on this problem because it is obvious they cannot prepare for this emergency without tipping their hand to Germany. I asked him whether, with the information he has up to the minute, he thought Germany was bluffing. He says he does not think it is all bluff. He thinks that Hitler hopes to get everything he wants without fighting and that by taking advantage of the situation as he thinks he sees it, it might be as good a time as any to march.

I asked him how the Spanish situation was coming. He said there were no new developments. He thought that if the Czechoslovak matter was settled and out of the way they could look forward to peace for some time. He said that what is causing all the trouble with the Italians and the Spanish situation is that both the Italians and the English, when they signed the agreement, believed that the war would be over within 2 months. Halifax, therefore, does not take the hostile attitude toward the Italians that some people think perhaps he should take because, while the Italians agreed only to furnish supplies and equipment to their people who were fighting in Spain at the time the agreement was signed, he thinks now that they are doing that and probably adding on enough to offset what they think the Spanish Government are getting from France and Russia. He wishes it were not so but feels it is no reason to have a row about it yet.

I talked to him about the Jewish situation. He said he was not very well up on it except that Winterton⁶ had told him [apparent omission] do in Berlin about placing Jews in Rhodesia and Kenya, but just how many they cannot tell yet. He believes that as settlement is attempted on the Jews in Austria and Germany, other countries who want to get rid of their Jews will be encouraged to throw them out, hoping that America, England and France will find some way of taking care of them.

Vansittart is back more or less in favor here, I judge, and is being consulted a great deal on moves that are being made.

Halifax reiterated this morning that they are instructing everybody to make no more speeches on the German-Czechoslovak situation, believing that all has been said that should be said. He feels very strongly, as does Chamberlain, that silence on their part and hoping on our part will get the best results.

I would appreciate some opinion from you as to policy of handling the British attitude if Hitler marches and England decides not to. I think that Chamberlain and Halifax would appreciate your reaction and judgment as to what should be done on this as far as the United States goes.

KENNEDY

III. CONCESSIONS BY CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND INTENSIFIED GERMAN MILITARY PREPARATIONS (TO SEPTEMBER 15)

760F.62/640 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 1, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received September 1—8:35 a. m.]

410. In a talk with Weizsäcker I said that I had noted the critical attitude of the German press towards Simon's speech⁷ and asked him to explain it. He replied that in his view the British had continuously (*a*) urged the Czechs to be reasonable, and (*b*) sensible about it if they were not reasonable. He thought a further step was necessary, namely (*c*) that they should warn the Czechs that unless they were reasonable British patience with them would be exhausted. He went on to say that each week this thing endured made it more dangerous. They had no definite news here of how Runciman was progressing. It was probably wise of Runciman not to express opinions. They certainly hoped and wished for his success.

⁶ The Earl of Winterton, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees; see pp. 758 ff.

⁷ Address at Lanark, Scotland, August 27, 1938.

Weizsäcker then asked me bluntly what I thought about the situation. I told him that certainly the Sudeten and Czech claims were widely divergent, so widely as to appear incompatible but that nevertheless with good will and real desire on both sides no problem is insoluble and that there was at least a certain comfort that the Sudeten Germans were willing to talk and to talk details with Runciman.

Weizsäcker then said that what he had chiefly in mind was that I would tell him how I felt about the whole situation. I replied that I would give him the view of a foreigner living in this country and that it was in effect as follows. That all counsels would prevent the Government from military action. There was apprehension throughout the world at the continuation of the German military maneuvers at what seemed to be a critical moment in the negotiations with Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless when patience would produce so many advantageous results I could not conceive that the leader of Germany would throw his country into a struggle with the grave risk entailed of provoking France and Great Britain. However strongly Germany regarded the Sudeten problem its importance was incomparably less than the enormous importance of a general war. Even if Germany emerged the victor they would have lost infinitely more than they could possibly think of gaining in the Sudeten German area. Weizsäcker did not comment on what I had said.

If you have any suggestions as to my attitude in any future eventuality please give me the benefit thereof.

WILSON

760F.62/641 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PRAHA, September 1, 1938—noon.

[Received September 1—10:52 a. m.]

173. . . .

The Runciman mission has shown much activity in the past 24 hours. Yesterday Runciman saw Kundt* and Gwatkin went to Marienbad to see Henlein. The aim obviously is to reach an agreement before the Nuremberg meeting takes place. There is much apprehension here about what may occur at that peace gathering.

The Government is also active. The inner cabinet council had a 2-hour session yesterday. It is reported the Government's new plan will be published on Friday. An outline of it has been given to the

*Ernst Kundt, deputy in Parliament of the Sudeten German Party.

Sudeten Germans and is reported to embrace a system of local or county administration more liberal than that of the Departments of France and less than the counties in Ireland under which the provinces would be divided into gaue or cantons, each to be invested with comprehensive autonomous powers. It is said that the majority of officials in the German cantons would be of German nationality and that the Germans would have greater opportunity than at present to introduce their own ideas in regard to public works, health, budget and have generally unrestricted freedom in the organization of their cantonal affairs. It is emphasized however that this would not be the Swiss cantonal system. A central government with control of police, *gendarmarie* and army would continue to exist. President Beneš is said to be in full charge of the negotiations with the Sudeten Germans and to be pressing for a solution. Henlein has not indicated his attitude in respect to the new plan and my informant is of the opinion that he will reject it and if so that the Government will produce another. Every one believes that the decision in any event will be made by Hitler.

The official expressed concern lest certain important personages in England should influence Hitler in Nuremberg to demand a plebiscite which the Government would have to refuse and which if held would not produce a result truly representing the views of the population.

So far the Runciman mission has unquestionably served a most useful purpose especially in bringing about the surveyed change in the attitude of the British Government and press.

CARR

123 Kennedy, Joseph P./109 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, September 1, 1938—4 p. m.

492. Personal for the Ambassador. The President and I have read your recent telegrams with the utmost interest. With reference to the last paragraph of your 846, August 31, 5 p. m., I feel that the recent public speeches and public statements of the President and myself, which were prepared with great care, accurately reflect the attitude of this Government toward the European and world situation, and that it would not be practicable to be more specific as to our reaction in hypothetical circumstances.

For your information our attention has been called to the appearance here of a special telephonic interview with you copyrighted by the *Boston Evening American* and the International News Service. This will undoubtedly be regarded as unfair to other agencies and

would, if the practice were pursued by our representatives abroad, result in great confusion.

HULL

760F.62/642 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 1, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received September 1—2: 45 p. m.]

174. I have just been informed by one closely associated with the Sudeten moderates that last week the intransigent attitude of the more radical Sudetens created virtual panic among the Czech negotiators. Beneš took charge of the negotiations, received Kundt and others and gave them an outline of the plan reported in my telegram 173, September 1, noon. The German Chargé here flew to Berlin and returned with approval of Sudeten continuance of negotiations. If this plan should not prove successful my informant says Runciman will propose a plan of his own which would involve a division of the historic provinces of Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia into some 23 gaue or cantons, each with local self-government in a form not yet defined. The experts who have worked with my informant in drafting the plan in collaboration with members of the Runciman mission say that the plan will not work, will be enormously expensive, will create innumerable differences among the members of the population over the districting and will require at least a year to put it into operation. If eventually proposed, notwithstanding its imperfections, it will be because of Runciman's conviction that nothing less will be acceptable to the Germans. My informant said that it is believed that if proposed the plan would make Great Britain responsible for eventual solution of the Sudeten question especially as it includes a proposal for a British loan of perhaps a billion crowns which conceivably might go to the relief of the Sudeten areas.

CARR

760F.62/645 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 2, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received September 2—1 p. m.]

1384. For the Secretary and the President. The British Ambassador Sir Eric Phipps, who returned from London last night, called on me this morning and *inter alia* said that Henderson, British Amba-

sador in Berlin, had been instructed to inform the German Government that the British Government hoped the German Government would be under no illusions as to the hardening of British public opinion against Germany.

Weizsaecker, Undersecretary of the German Foreign Office, dined with Henderson the night of his arrival in Berlin and Henderson attempted to make clear to Weizsaecker without saying so flatly that if German troops should enter Czechoslovakia and France should declare war on Germany it would be almost impossible for Great Britain to avoid fighting on the side of France. Weizsaecker said to Henderson that he hoped he would repeat what he had said to Ribbentrop since Ribbentrop was still absolutely convinced that Great Britain would not go to war on the issue of Czechoslovakia. Henderson had seen Ribbentrop at the latter's country place yesterday and had unquestionably repeated to Ribbentrop what he had said to Weizsaecker.

The British Ambassador went on to say that it was Henderson's opinion that some agreement must be reached before the Nuremberg Congress and that the Czechs must be compelled to offer a compromise acceptable to the Sudeten and the Germans.

I inquired if Henderson and Runciman did not consider the latest proposal for division of Czechoslovakia into 23 cantons, each canton to have the right to elect its own prefect, an acceptable settlement. The British Ambassador replied that on the contrary Runciman had been most disappointed by the proposal. Runciman was finding it extremely difficult to deal with Beneš. Beneš would make him promises of concessions in general terms which would be nullified by the wording of the proposals.

The British and French Governments today were making intense efforts to persuade Beneš to make further concessions. If it should be impossible to get Beneš to do this it was conceivable that before the Nazi Congress Runciman himself would put forward publicly a proposal for settlement of the dispute.

The British Ambassador said that Chamberlain and the other members of the British Government took an extremely grave view of the present situation. The chances of preserving peace seemed to be about 50-50. If France should go to war on behalf of Czechoslovakia after the Czechs had accepted what appeared to British and world public opinion a just proposal it was inconceivable that Great Britain should remain out of the war.

760F.62/652 : Telegram (part air)

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 2, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received September 3—6 : 30 a. m.]

413. Last night Heath⁹ met Captain Wiedemann whose special relationship to the Chancellor is known to the Department. Wiedemann discussed the Czechoslovak situation and said that he feared that the way the situation was developing Germany and other countries despite their desire for a peaceful solution might "slide" into war. He said that the danger of using a procedure of "bluff" was that one did not know at just what point a continuation of "bluff" would bring about a war. He said that the crying need of the moment was "clearness". He further said by "clearness" he meant that Germany might state clearly the minimum terms which it would accept and what it would do if these terms were not agreed to; that Great Britain should set forth unequivocally what its actions and attitude would be; and third that Czechoslovakia should state what its maximum concessions would be. He avoided replying to an inquiry as to whether Germany had frankly made known to Great Britain just what minimum terms it would accept in the treatment of the Sudeten Deutsch. He spoke rather bitterly of the Simon's [*sic*] speech and implied that his insignificant mission to Halifax had not been satisfactory. He indicated that in his last conversations with Halifax he had drawn a parallel between Great Britain's failure to make clear its position at the beginning of the war and the present situation. He said that while he was alarmed over the way things were going he nevertheless had "the feeling [rather than?] the hope" that war would be avoided. He said that analysis of recent developments gave little justification for such a hope but that nevertheless he "felt" that war would be avoided. He said that he was voicing his personal views and impressions; that he had not seen Hitler for 8 days.

He then turned to the question of German-American relations which he said were "hopelessly bad" and indicated that he realized Germany's faults in this connection.

He then said that it had been alleged that the leaders of the American Government actually desired a war because of the effect that it would have in solving the unemployment problem and enabling the President "under special war powers to put through various measures" which would be blocked or crippled in Congress during peace times. He inquired if this were true. Heath replied that such an allegation of irresponsibility on the part of the leaders of the American Government was utterly unfounded; that the President and other members of

⁹ Donald R. Heath, First Secretary of Embassy in Germany.

the Government had made it perfectly clear that America regarded war as disaster and not as a solution of any internal or other problems. Wiedemann then referred to a statement made to him by an American banker that if a general war should break out in Europe over the Sudeten question within 6 months America would inescapably take part. Heath said that no one could predict what if any action America would eventually take if such a catastrophe occurred.

He inquired as to the economic situation in America. To the statement that there had recently been some improvements in production he said it was a relief to hear it since in periods of increasing prosperity there was less likelihood of military action.

Wiedemann went on to say that while the German Government and the German people did not desire war yet, the generation which had come of age after the war in Germany had no faith in Germany's obtaining reasonable objectives through a policy of conciliation and peaceful negotiations and was psychologically disposed to approve an aggressive policy of force. He said that this generation had seen Germany badly treated while she was following a conciliatory policy and on the other hand had seen National Socialism make gains for Germany by a policy of aggressiveness.

He went on to say that he thought National Socialism had reached "the turning point". When asked whether the turn would be toward conservatism or extremism he laughingly replied that its policy could hardly be more "extremist" than it had been.

WILSON

760F.62/718

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] September 2, 1938.

The French Chargé d'Affaires called this afternoon to read me the text of the confidential instructions sent the French Ambassador at London on August 31. These were to the following effect:

The French Government was very pleased with the recent speech of Sir John Simon and thought that the British Government was quite right to be preoccupied about not hurting Hitler's pride. On the other hand, the French Government hopes that the British won't believe that Simon's speech or instructions based upon it will effectively stop Hitler if he and his advisers really plan to go ahead. Only a belief that it would be impossible to localize a German-Czech conflict would stop Hitler.

The French Government hopes that the British will give further thought to the position of Italy. Trouble in Central Europe would

be the great opportunity for Mussolini to profit by the Rome-Berlin axis which thus far has brought him in no dividends except the *Anschluss*. Leaving aside the question of a possible move in North Africa, it is not improbable that the moment trouble should break out in Bohemia Italy would intervene more actively in Spain, to the great discomfort of England and France. In order to minimize any temptation to Germany in this respect the French Government agrees for the present not to make any change in its Spanish policy despite the unfortunate answer of General Franco on the non-intervention plan.

The French Government congratulates Lord Runciman and has noticed recent signs of Czech conciliation. The great problem is now to force the Sudetens to be more reasonable. One fortunate factor not to be overlooked is the following: As Hitler allegedly is only interested in backing up the Sudetens any time these declare themselves satisfied Hitler can claim a great diplomatic victory, and he can achieve this result at any time by instructing the Sudetens to declare themselves satisfied.

As the Reich has, in effect, mobilized, France has had to take certain precautionary measures but has made these public judging it more advantageous to spread the news.

The French Government's final plea was that the British should recall that the smaller countries in Europe plus Poland will in the last analysis be guided by the British decision and that the more strongly Britain speaks at present the more firmly they can be held in line.

The Chargé d'Affaires hoped that this information would be of interest to the Secretary and the President. I thanked him for his courtesy in communicating it to us.

The Chargé then went on to say that he had been a little worried by the press reports that Great Britain was pressing us for a definition of what we would do and what our attitude would be in the event that Britain went to war. I told Mr. Truelle that the press reports were scarcely accurate. He was glad to hear that, but even so he felt that any attempt, direct or indirect, "to put pressure" on American public opinion was psychologically wrong; that American public opinion, which was already almost unanimous, would gradually move in the right direction under wise leadership but that it would move in the other direction if the impression arose that foreign interests were attempting to influence it.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/706

The British Ambassador (Lindsay) to the Secretary of State

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

His Majesty's Ambassador has received instructions to communicate the following information to the Secretary of State:—

Lord Runciman's mission to Prague to act as investigator or mediator between the Czechoslovak Government and the Sudeten Germans was undertaken to prevent a deadlock arising in the negotiations between the two parties, as seemed probable at the end of July, and to suggest means for bringing them to success.

The constitutional question, viz., provision of some degree of home rule for the Sudeten Germans within the Czechoslovak Republic is the immediate issue confronting Lord Runciman. After his arrival in Prague his first task was to study the suggestions proposed by the two sides. It became clear, however, at a meeting between the Czech and Sudeten representatives on August 17th that there was too wide a gulf between the respective proposals to permit of continuous negotiations on this basis. Lord Runciman prevented the Sudeten party from closing the door on further negotiations and was considering a new basis for their resumption when he learnt on August 21st that new and much more generous proposals were being put forward by M. Beneš of which the most important features were:—

1. Creation of local autonomous districts in the Sudeten areas.
2. An exchange of German for Czechoslovak officials.
3. Withdrawal of Czechoslovak police from the German district.
4. Important financial and economic concessions.

Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin returned to London on August 25th and reported that the Sudeten leaders regarded these proposals as a suitable basis for negotiations. Discussions had already taken place between M. Beneš and Dr. Hodza and the Sudeten leaders on August 24th and on August 25th at which the atmosphere was good, although it was somewhat disturbed by the issue on August 26th of a Sudeten party manifesto authorising party followers to defend themselves if attacked.

In view of the close approach to the Nazi Congress opening at Nüremberg on September 5th at which some definite pronouncement on the Sudeten problem might be expected from Herr Hitler, Lord Runciman has emphasised to M. Beneš the urgency of reaching an early agreement in such a form that it could be published before the Nüremberg meeting. M. Beneš indicated that the negotiations were proceeding satisfactorily and hoped that publication might be possible soon after his next meeting with Dr. Kundt on August 30th. From conversations on August 28th with Sudeten leaders who had been in contact with Herr Hitler it became clear, however, that they did not regard

M. Beneš' proposals as adequate, and that Herr Hitler had indicated that the Sudeten question must be solved on the basis of Herr Henlein's eight Carlsbad points of last April which go beyond M. Beneš' offer of August 21st.

On August 29th Lord Runciman received from M. Beneš a written memorandum purporting to amplify the Czech proposals. This document in Lord Runciman's opinion marked a retreat from practical suggestions to academic principles and appeared to justify Sudeten scepticism. He feared that publication of the Czech proposals in this form might do more harm than good. Negotiations meanwhile are proceeding and it is to be hoped that M. Beneš' recent proposals may still be made to serve as an agreed basis for detailed negotiations between the Czechoslovak and Sudeten leaders in the near future.

To sum up, a considerable advance towards agreement would appear to have been made recently in Prague largely owing to Lord Runciman's efforts. The present situation, however, gives cause for serious anxiety since it is evident that the German Government, while ready to give Lord Runciman's mission a chance, are not prepared to stand aside and wait much longer for present negotiations to produce a satisfactory result. Early in August information was received by His Majesty's Government of extensive military preparations in Germany, including the calling up of reservists, the formation of reserve divisions, extension of service of second year recruits throughout October, conscription of labour for completion of German fortifications in the West, and measures empowering the military authorities to conscript civilian goods and services. These measures amount to partial mobilization and indicate that the German government are determined to find a settlement of the Czechoslovak question this autumn, if necessary by force. His Majesty's Government have, moreover, received numerous other indications from various sources to this effect. Nor is it certain whether the German Government's real objective is to secure to the Sudetens adequate rights of self-government within Czechoslovakia or whether they are aiming at nothing less than the break-up of Czechoslovakia as an independent state.

These anxieties formed the background to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech at Lanark on August 27th, and it is because of them that His Majesty's Government decided to repeat once more the warning given by the Prime Minister on March 24th. Time is short, for it seems certain that Herr Hitler will have to speak about Czechoslovakia at the Nüremberg Congress between September 5th and September 12th, and failing any outward and visible sign of progress before the Congress he may feel obliged to make an unpleas-

ant pronouncement, possibly backed up by an appeal to force, based on the right of self-determination and perhaps demanding a plebiscite. He might, however, be restrained from committing himself to any such extreme action if agreement could be secured between the Czechoslovak Government and the Sudeten Germans without further delay as to the basis for a comprehensive settlement. Every effort is being made by Lord Runciman with the support of His Majesty's Government to establish such a basis.

His Majesty's Government are anxious to acquaint the United States Government of the foregoing because of the serious menace which the present situation represents for the peace of the world. They accordingly desire that the United States Government should be aware of the efforts which His Majesty's Government are making in order to restrain Germany from arrogant and forcible action, and at the same time to induce the Czechoslovak Government to make without further delay or evasion the far-reaching concessions which are necessary if an agreed settlement is to be reached between the Czechoslovak Government and the Sudetens.

WASHINGTON, September 3, 1938.

760F.62/660 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

WARSAW, September 5, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received September 7—5:30 p. m.]

168. For the President and Secretary. This morning's conversations with Polish officialdom revealed in effect following:

1. Beck stated his opinion that news that President Roosevelt was remaining close to desk over weekend on top of the force of implications of his recent effective Canadian speech on heels of the Secretary's recent effective address had undoubtedly had sobering effect on Nazi officialdom in terms of a "stop look and listen" sign. Indeed the tempo of American public opinion was factor of consideration to greater extent than Berlin would care to have known.

2. He added that his reports indicated that the gap between Beneš' recent offer and the reported Sudeten counterproposal was sufficiently narrow to prompt his belief. The way was open for a peaceful settlement if Hitler really wanted one.

3. Beck continued to feel that there were as yet no signs that Hitler with whom alone amongst Berlin Nazi circles the final decision rested had come to any definite decision. Beck added an expression of his feeling that while the Nazi Government had gone very far this

time and while it would be difficult for Hitler to "climb down" nevertheless Hitler was neither as prudent nor as bold as the world considered him.

BIDDLE

760F.62/666 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 6, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received September 6—10:32 a. m.]

869. From a thoroughly reliable official source the following strictly confidential information has been obtained which may supplement information from other sources in the Department's hands.

1. At the end of last week the British Ambassador in Paris had a conversation with Bonnet in the course of which he indicated that Runciman had a plan up his sleeve which in the main consisted of Henlein's Carlsbad proposals and he asked Bonnet what would be the attitude of the French Government if Beneš should reject it. Bonnet is reported to have replied that if the Czechs should reject a plan which Runciman and the British considered fair and equitable, French opinion would find it impossible to support the Czech attitude. The British Ambassador asked Bonnet to tell that to Beneš.

2. The British Dominions have been kept currently informed of the course of recent developments. The only Dominion that has thus far officially defined its attitude is Australia. In a long telegram received on Saturday it expressed disapproval of Beneš' machinations and in effect advised the British Government that if the Czechs did not satisfy the Sudeten Germans they should be told where to get off.

This will no doubt prove a useful lever in the hands of the British both internationally and in due course nationally vis-à-vis the opposition. It may be of interest to note how these things are worked here. For example the same source states that prior to Simon's Lanark speech the French Chargé d'Affaires was instructed to ask whether it would be possible for Simon to go beyond Chamberlain's May 24 [23] statement¹⁰ and likewise that Halifax's memorandum of his conversation showed that he told Cambon that this would not be possible because of public opinion in this country and in certain of the Dominions. The telegraphic report of this conversation which was sent to the

¹⁰ Made in the House of Commons and reported in the press of May 24.

several Dominions omits the reference to public opinion in certain of the Dominions.

3. There was cited as illustrative of German political ineptitude in the face of events working rapidly in Germany's favor that at the end of last week a telegram was received from the British Embassy at Berlin stating that the German authorities had indicated that German fleet maneuvers would shortly take place in the North Sea but they would not occur nearer than 30 miles to the British coast. Despite the present comparative sizes of the German and British fleets the spectre of a German fleet operating within 30 miles of the British coast is said to have touched off traditional emotions.

KENNEDY

760F.62/692

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)

[WASHINGTON,] September 7, 1938.

The Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires¹¹ made his daily visit at half-past twelve. He said that they had heard over the short wave last night a Czechoslovak announcement giving the latest Czech proposals in fuller detail than had appeared in the press.

According to this broadcast the limits of the Czechoslovak concessions would be as follows:

1. Recognition of the principle of proportionate representation.
2. Recognition of the principle of proportionate employment in the civil service.
3. Compensation for losses suffered by the Sudetens in the past.
4. Reinstatement of German police in German areas.
5. A linguistic law based on nationality.
6. Economic relief to the Sudeten Germans.
7. Equality of nationality (no minorities in the future).
8. Linguistic autonomy.
9. National groups to be recognized in districts where they have a majority.
10. Special Governmental departments with official representation of nationality groups.
11. Nationality groups to have the right of appeal.
12. Registers to be kept for nationality identification.
13. If new laws are required to carry this out, they will be drafted with the assistance of the Sudeten negotiators.

The Chargé d'Affaires in commenting on the foregoing said that point 4 was the only one which caused him trouble and which if concluded he thought would bring trouble in the future.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

¹¹ Karel Brejška.

760F.62/688 : Telegram

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State*PRAHA, September 7, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received September 7—6:44 p. m.]

178. My 173 and 174 of September 1. Since night before last when the inner Cabinet under the guidance of President Beneš arrived at an outline of new concessions it has not been possible to ascertain either the exact nature or limit of them.

It is once more emphasized by responsible officials here and by leading editors of the local press that these new concessions, the exact nature of which they do not know, will be the absolutely last and final limit and it seems to be the general feeling that the Government would not have gone to the extent it has had it not been for the extraordinary pressure brought to bear by Great Britain which is resented in some quarters on the ground that all concessions have so far been made by the Government and none by the Sudeten Germans. There is a difference of opinion as to the likelihood of the acceptance of these new concessions by the Sudeten Germans. There is a conflict within the party between the conservative and radical elements and the latter group seems disposed to make the Carlsbad demands the minimum which it is prepared to accept. While it is not expected that the "Carlsbad demands" however will be granted by the Government it is understood that despite the apparent recognition by Runciman of the limitations which this country feels it must place upon its concessions strong British Government pressure is being exerted upon Beneš to grant those demands. But the significance of granting them if done would depend entirely upon the interpretation they had placed upon each of those demands which as has been reported are ambiguous or vague. In fact I am reliably informed that the Sudetens themselves are by no means clear about the practical application of some of the expressions they have employed. A non-Czech friend who has been working with the Sudeten representatives says that it is possible to grant the Carlsbad demands and apply them in a manner that would not be dangerous to the state provided always that such application would be consistent with Hitler's intentions which are not known. My friend has been informed by conservative members of the Sudeten delegation that Henlein informed them on his return from Berchtesgaden that Hitler approved their tactics, wished them to work out with the Czechs a peaceful solution satisfactory to themselves but if they failed he would support them in their efforts. My informant was also told that Hitler expressed a willingness to receive a representative of the British Government and discuss the Sudeten question with him. In the event the present proposals of the Govern-

ment should not be accepted by the Sudetens, another plan yet unknown by the Government is in readiness to be proposed either by Runciman or by the Government or even by the Sudetens as may be later determined which if accepted it is said would achieve the form and most of the substance of the Carlsbad proposals but which would leave in the competence of the central Government the questions of territorial integrity of the state, national defense, foreign relations, finance and coinage with general legislation vested in a national parliament as at present.

Considerable apprehension is felt by officials and the press that the Czech people who have not been prepared even for the concessions now proposed may strongly resent their extent particularly if not convinced that they constitute a basis for permanent peace.

Henlein has announced a Sudeten party rally at Aussig for October 15 and 16 and has departed for Nuremberg.

CARR

760F.62/719

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)

[WASHINGTON,] September 7, 1938.

The Counselor of the British Embassy (Mr. Mallet) called this noon to deliver to me for transmission to the Secretary of State a further *Aide-Mémoire*¹² from the British Government bringing the information regarding the Runciman mission up to date. A cursory reading showed that the British Government were conveying to the Czechoslovaks their belief that the Czechs should make concessions at least as far as the Carlsbad points demanded by the Sudetens.

While I was reading the *Aide-Mémoire* I let Mr. Mallet read the U. P. press flash quoting an editorial in the London *Times* making the suggestion that, if all other solutions failed, Czechoslovakia should permit its Sudeten area to secede and join the German Reich. I ventured the opinion that such an editorial might complicate the situation and Mr. Mallet expressed some surprise that it should be published at this juncture. However, he made it clear that if England should have to fight it would be not out of friendship for the Czechs but out of hatred for the Germans. He said that the British were on the horns of a cruel dilemma in as much as if they stayed out of war Germany would have an immense accretion of strength, while if they entered a war, brought about by Czechoslovakia's resistance to Germany, they

¹² Not printed; it was based upon instruction No. 608, September 6, 1938, 5: 15 p. m., to the British Ambassador in the United States; for text of instruction, see *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, 3d ser., vol. II, p. 252.

would in any peace settlement have to avoid the original mistake of putting the Sudetens under the Czechs. Furthermore, it was becoming clearer that the Dominions were isolationist, and there would be no sense in fighting a war which would break the British Empire while trying to assure the safety of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Mallet concluded by saying that the memorandum which reached the Embassy yesterday evening obviously was already somewhat out of date as events were moving quickly but it was the latest news they possessed.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/703 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 8, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 7 p. m.]

1414. Daladier said to me this afternoon that he had sent for the German Chargé d'Affaires last evening (the German Ambassador to France is now at the Nuremberg Congress) and had said to him that he hoped he would make it clear to his Government that whatever course England or any other nation might take the French Government would order immediate mobilization and attack Germany at once if the foot of a German soldier should cross the Czechoslovak frontier.

Daladier said that he had done this in order to make it clear to the German Government that however England might wobble or vacillate there would be no vacillation on the part of France. It was his conviction that if Hitler should be permitted to settle the Sudeten question by a stroke of force there would be no more public law in Europe.

Daladier added that he had said to the German Chargé d'Affaires that he knew the Sudeten had a genuine grievance. They had been badly treated by the Czechs. Moreover the French people believed deeply and sincerely in the principle of self-determination. If the Sudeten desired autonomy they should have autonomy. He was even prepared to say that if the Sudeten should desire to join Germany the French Government, respecting the principle of self-determination, would have no basic objection to this solution. What he could not permit was that Hitler should attempt to settle the matter by force.

Daladier went on to say to me that as I knew he had fought the Versailles Treaty¹³ to the utmost. We were now on the verge of reaping one of the wars the seeds of which had been sown in the treaty. The matter was aggravated by the fact that the Czechs had

¹³ Treaty of Peace signed at Versailles, June 28, 1919, *Foreign Relations, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. XIII, p. 57.

been most brutal in their treatment of the Sudeten. It was true that the Czechs had suffered from the brutality of the Germans for many centuries and that the stick was simply in the other hand now. He was certain that neither Henlein nor Kundt desired confederation with Germany at the present time. Henlein desired to be the leader of the Sudeten of Czechoslovakia for life; Kundt to occupy the next most prominent position. He was equally certain, however, that there was an enormous and growing desire among the Sudeten themselves to be annexed to Germany and the question was whether or not Henlein and Kundt could hold their followers in line for a settlement on the basis of genuine autonomy.

The French Government had now received the text of Beneš' latest proposals. He had read them and had not been able to make head or tail of them. Mental germs like physical increased as one went eastward in Europe. He had been told, however, that the proposals would give the Sudeten a very large measure of autonomy and he hoped that they might be the basis for settlement. He considered (as does every one in Paris) the editorial in the London *Times* yesterday suggesting that the Czechs might hand over the Sudeten area to Germany extraordinarily ill-timed.

I asked Daladier if he believed that Hitler in his speech on September 12 would demand a plebiscite. He replied that he had no idea. I asked what would be the reaction of the French Government if Hitler should demand such a plebiscite and the Czechoslovak Government should refuse it and the British Government should support the idea of a plebiscite. He replied that this eventuality would raise a most crucial and difficult question and he had not yet decided what his position would be. If in Europe each nationality were to be accorded a plebiscite, the map of Europe would undergo some astonishing changes. For example the Poles now in Germany would unquestionably demand union with Poland and the Germans in Poland would demand union with Germany.

I asked what the position of the French Government would be if the Sudeten leaders should demand a plebiscite. Daladier replied that he was certain that the Sudeten leaders would not demand a plebiscite on the issue of annexation to Germany because he was sure that they did not desire to be swallowed up by Germany and replaced, as the leaders of the Austrian Nazi movement had been replaced by Germans from the Reich.

I asked what the position of the French Government would be if the Sudeten should demand a plebiscite on the issue of full autonomy with territorial provisions. Daladier replied that he did not see how the French Government could object to such a plebiscite.

Daladier said that he had taken no further measures with regard to calling reservists to the colors. The number called to date did not

amount to much more than 90,000. He had taken other measures to insure the defense of the frontier. The orders for mobilization and immediate attack on Germany were ready to be issued at a moment's notice.

I expressed to Daladier my personal pleasure on his nomination today of my old friend General Requin as a member of the Supreme War Council. He said that the burden of the attack against Germany if it should have to be made would fall on Requin.

Daladier said that he was fully aware that a French attack on the German line would be very costly and would not get very far. Nevertheless France was bound in the interests of honor and public decency in Europe to make such an attack. No matter what position the British might take such an attack would be made if German troops should cross the Czechoslovak frontier.

I asked Daladier if there were any truth in the rumor that the Italians had mobilized several divisions on the Italian-French frontier. He said that there was no truth in this report. The Italians had taken no military measures directed toward an attack against France.

I asked if it were true that the Russians were concentrating large forces on the borders of Rumania. He said that this was true and that Voroshilov¹⁴ himself had gone to the area to direct the concentration. I asked if he expected the Russian troops to attempt to march through Rumania in case of German attack on Czechoslovakia. He said that they well might and that the Rumanians could put up no real resistance. I said that in my opinion such action would be followed by immediate declarations of war by both Rumania and Poland against the Soviet Union. He said that he considered this highly probable; then laughed and remarked that the world was indeed insane.

Daladier was completely poised and calm as are all Frenchmen and joked me about our being blown simultaneously into the air from opposite sides of the Seine. It is difficult to exaggerate the complete self-control and poise of the French people and the French Government. The spirit of the country today is far superior to the spirit in 1914. Everyone in the country ardently desires peace. Everyone realizes that war means the destruction of every city in northern and eastern France including Paris. Everyone is ready to leave his normal occupation for the trenches tomorrow. There is no fuss, lamentation or hysteria; simply a sense that the honor of France is engaged and that the moment may soon come when it may be necessary again to march.

BULLITT

¹⁴ Klement Y. Voroshilov, Soviet Commissar for Defense.

760F.62/715 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the
Secretary of State*

LONDON, September 9, 1938—10 p. m.

[Received September 9—7 p. m.]

891. My 889, September 9, 7 p. m.¹⁵ The meeting of the Prime Minister and principal Ministers and Foreign Office officials broke up about 6:30. Cadogan¹⁶ told a member of the staff tonight they had under consideration all day the advisability of a strongly worded warning to be delivered orally and privately to Hitler and the possible terms of such a warning. Cadogan said they know that Ribbentrop has deliberately withheld from Hitler all knowledge of Henderson's representations and those of other foreign representatives, and they consider it of vital importance for an accurate presentment of the British views to reach Hitler's ear. He said that the Prime Minister is being strongly urged from quarters both here and abroad (France) to make such a warning and in no unmistakable terms so that Hitler will be under no misapprehension as to the serious consequences which, in the British view, would flow from an attempt to solve the Czech crisis by violence. It was apparent from Cadogan's remarks that the warning they have in mind is to be more sharply worded than any public statement hitherto made by the Government.

Cadogan said that before final decision had been taken regarding this warning to Germany, word came that Ribbentrop had taken Henderson to see Hitler at 4:30 and that at 6:30 they were still in conference, with no report to London of results. The meeting of ministers here was accordingly adjourned at 6:30 as Cadogan said it was obviously impossible to reach a final decision on the question of instructions to Henderson until the result of his meeting with Hitler was known. The Nuremberg meeting is a calamity from their point of view, Cadogan said. Henderson is there without a cipher. They can receive no direct reports from him nor send him instructions except through Berlin and a courier from there to Nuremberg. They have sent urgent instructions to Berlin to get a report of the Hitler meeting as soon as possible. Dealing with Ribbentrop is appalling he said and termed his withholding of information from Hitler, as to foreign representatives, as "criminal".

Adverting to the "warning" which, depending on what Hitler says to Henderson, may yet have to be given, and given urgently, Cadogan emphasized with great earnestness the necessity for secrecy. The warning will be given orally to Hitler and with no publicity whatever. They feel here that with the background of the May 21 experi-

¹⁵ Not printed.

¹⁶ Sir Alexander M. G. Cadogan, British Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

ence it would be fatal to give Hitler any warning in the nature of a threat, of which the German public and the world have any knowledge. Cadogan twice emphasized the confidential nature of this information.

It is not true, as reported in the press tonight that Henderson has yet received any instructions to warn the German Government in terms beyond the previous public declarations of the Government.

KENNEDY

760F.62/723 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 10, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 10—11:10 a. m.]

893. My 891, September 9, 10 p. m. I saw Halifax and Cadogan separately. Halifax says the message was prepared last night, not to be delivered to Hitler but to Ribbentrop, saying that the English had practically decided to go if the French went. After the message had gone with this statement they received word that Henderson was in conference with Hitler so they tried to send word to Henderson to hold up any action on their message temporarily until they had to [the] result of the conversation with Hitler. They finally got Henderson on the telephone last night and found that he had not seen Hitler but he urged them most strongly not to insist on his delivering the message. They don't know what his point of view is but he has sent a messenger with his point of view to Cologne. The British have sent a plane to Cologne to meet the messenger and expect the plane back in London about 4 o'clock this afternoon, and Halifax will communicate with me immediately after he and the Prime Minister have this information.

Their secret information is that Hitler is prepared to march and with that in mind they took preliminary steps yesterday with the Admiralty. They are still of the opinion that there are three alternatives for Hitler: (1) to stir up trouble in the Sudeten area and march in to put down bloodshed, (2) call for a plebiscite and in that way try to get public opinion on his side, and (3) to march and bomb Praha. They all reiterate that if they were doing business with a normal man they would have some idea of what might happen but that they are doing business with a mad man.

They are advised by their confidential sources that Hitler cannot stand out very long; that the generals are a little bit disturbed at the regime. Their secret advices are that Hitler has reached his decision and that he has made up his mind this is as good a time as any to strike.

Halifax and Cadogan think their advices are more than likely correct.

Halifax asked again what would be America's reaction. I said I had not the slightest idea; except that we want to keep out of war. He then asked me why I thought Great Britain should be the defender of the ideals and morals of the democracies rather than the United States—not in a nasty way, but merely for the sake of argument—and I told him that they had made the Czechoslovak incident part of their business, their allies were connected with the whole affair, and our people just failed to see where we should be involved. Cadogan later said he was in complete sympathy with this opinion and wished in heaven's name they could maintain it.

Halifax said the French had advised him they felt they could make trouble for the Germans on the Siegfried Line but felt that the French were not at all convinced the Germans were as invincible as they sounded.

My own observation this morning is that the British are, much against their will, veering away from the stand of keeping out; that unless Henderson's opinion is very strong and he has very good arguments, they are inclined to hand the Germans a stiff note. Halifax said of course there cannot be any good in a war except that a short one might mean the end of this impossible Nazism which, unless destroyed will very likely make it impossible for democracies to live. I asked him how the Prime Minister felt and he said the Prime Minister said last night as he went out, "this really is not as much fun as shooting grouse". So they are quite calm but I feel they sense great danger in the air. Cadogan later told me it is quite possible that nothing terribly important may be said by Hitler at Nuremberg and the meeting may pass off quietly but they do not believe that this is the end by any manner of means.

In reporting these bulletins daily it is difficult to be entirely consistent as with shifting events and protests the topside people are changing their minds as to procedure every few hours. We are staying here all day and as soon as I hear from Halifax again I will send you another message.

KENNEDY

760F.62/725 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 10, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received September 10—11:20 a. m.]

183. The Minister of Foreign Affairs told me this morning that the pressure of the British Government on Hitler has had a distinctly

restraining effect and he does not fear direct action at present. He apparently does not expect an attack on this country by Hitler before next week's speech at Nuremberg. He said that Great Britain has given no formal assurance of military aid and he does not expect that but has no doubt that in case of attack Great Britain will support France in aiding Czechoslovakia. Rumania has not formally agreed to passage of Russian troops across her territory but the Minister of Foreign Affairs does not anticipate difficulty if the occasion therefor should arise and says Litvinov and the Rumanians are to discuss the question at Geneva. The Minister for Foreign Affairs seemed hopeful about negotiations with the Sudetens and said a large part of the Government's last proposal has been agreed to with the conservative wing of the Sudeten German Party. He emphasized that the Government has made its last concessions and that the British Government understands this and approves the Czech position. He said that involved in the Czech Sudeten negotiations is a loan to be made by British banks under protection of the British Government to a group of Czech banks to cover their loans for Sudeten relief purposes.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke with much feeling of your and the President's speeches and their effect on the British and world opinion and said that they had been of great value.

English version of Beneš' speech will be broadcast about 7 this evening Praha time 19.07 meters.

CARR

760F.62/732 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 11, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 6:10 p. m.]

897. My 896, September 10, 9 p. m.,¹⁷ and 891, September 9, 10 a. m. I have just seen Halifax. He read me this morning's despatch from Henderson, in which Henderson urged most strongly that he not be obliged to present the ultimatum forwarded to him for presentation to the German Government; this ultimatum mentioned in my despatch of yesterday.¹⁸ He said he had talked with Goering who, in spite of his "table thumping" speech, Henderson still considers the leader of the moderates; Goebbels, who was also most reasonable; Ribbentrop, whom I judge, is still rather bad; also the head of the Foreign Office (the Cadogan of this office) and they all made it clear that they had definitely presented the British point of view to the Chancellor and

¹⁷ Not printed.

¹⁸ See telegram No. 893, September 10, 1 p. m., p. 585.

they all warned that a *démarche* similar to May 21 would be the worst possible thing that could be done, that if they were to be able to persuade Hitler to remain moderate, action like this would make it impossible. The Government has therefore decided to accept Henderson's viewpoint and to hold up the delivery of the ultimatum until some later time and then only if necessary. Henderson said that it is impossible to keep anything confidential, the Germans are aware that a messenger was sent to Nuremberg and last night they asked Henderson what the reason for it was. He told them that he had received an ultimatum from his Government but that he had urged the Government not to ask him to present it until some future time. Goering indicated that that was by far the wiser thing to do. Henderson still of course is of the opinion that Hitler is in warm mood to make an attack and in his latest information says the air force can move within an hour; the army is prepared to move at once. Goebbels indicated to Henderson that their influence was on the side of moderation provided the Czechs showed much more restraint than they are now showing in the handling of their Sudeten people.

Another incident that seems most significant is that yesterday afternoon the German Embassy here asked if their Naval Attaché might call on the Admiralty. He was granted permission and asked the Admiralty what they meant by moving up their mine sweepers. The Admiral acting under lead from the Foreign Office told him that since things were so uncertain and because he believed that England would positively move if France got into this fight, and that seemed inevitable to him, they were taking these as preliminary precautions. Halifax added that the Admiral went beyond his authority in this statement but he thought rather wisely because the Admiral reports that the reaction of the Naval Attaché was astounding. He said that he did not believe that anybody in Germany had the slightest idea that England intended to fight. Halifax and the Prime Minister were so interested in this reaction that they are considering, within the next 2 hours, the idea of starting a little movement in the destroyer fleet. They will let me know about this a little later this evening. Temporarily they have decided to continue bluffing with incidents like destroyers and mine sweepers and what not and not with words because they do not believe that Hitler would believe them even if they said they were going in definitely.

I am seeing the Prime Minister at 7:30.

KENNEDY

760F.62/739 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, September 12, 1938—noon.

[Received 12:30 p. m.]

1425. . . .

Bonnet said he felt the situation had been improved somewhat yesterday afternoon by the declaration of the British Government.¹⁹ Hitler must now know that if he should march into Czechoslovakia he would have immediate war with both France and England. The question remained whether or not Hitler was so confident of the overwhelming superiority of his air force that he would risk war now.

The negotiations between the Czech Government and the Sudeten leaders were progressing fairly satisfactorily as the Sudeten had been obliged to recognize that the concessions offered by the Czech Government constituted at least a 70 percent concession of their demands.

Bonnet added that he was intensely apprehensive with regard to what Hitler might say tonight. He asked if I thought it might be possible for the Government of the United States to instruct our Ambassador in Berlin to say to the German Foreign Office that in our opinion the negotiations now engaged in between the Czech Government and the Sudeten offered great possibilities of a peaceful settlement of the dispute and that we would regard the use of force at this moment as contrary to the interests of humanity.

I replied that I was extremely doubtful that our Government would wish to make any such *démarche* and still more doubtful that our Ambassador in Berlin could see anyone of sufficient importance before this evening to have any influence on Hitler's speech.

In conclusion Bonnet said that in spite of the dark features of the present situation which made it impossible to predict what the outcome would be he found it difficult to believe that Hitler would make the deliberate decision to plunge Europe into a war which could end only in the destruction of the Continent.

BULLITT

¹⁹ Presumably the warning that the British Ambassador had been instructed to deliver to Hitler on September 11, but which was not delivered; see telegram No. 897, September 11, 5 p. m., from the Ambassador in the United Kingdom, *supra*.

760F.62/751 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 12, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 12—4 p. m.]

431. Henderson returned from Nuremberg this morning. I find his impressions of sentiment are almost identical with what I reported to you in my 425, September 8, 6 p. m.²⁰

He had the impression from various indications in his talks with men in real touch with Hitler that the latter was contemplating a relatively peaceable statement tonight. He feared that the declaration given out by Chamberlain last night would not encourage Hitler to persevere in this policy. (Incidentally he had not received a copy of this statement, nor have I, nor has it been published in the German press). He argued that Hitler feels deep resentment over the claims made in democratic countries that the British warning of May 21 deterred him from military action and that it is unlikely that on the day following a further warning from Chamberlain Hitler will show himself conciliatory.

Henderson read me a memorandum of conversation on September 10 between Halifax and Kennedy which the Ambassador has doubtless reported to you²¹ as well as a memorandum of a conversation between Halifax and the Russian Ambassador in which the latter urged that the British Government make a more categorical repudiation of the *Times* suggestion regarding the fate of the Sudeten Deutsch.

The Russian Ambassador apparently also suggested a joint *dé-marche* to Germany in which the United States might be induced to join. Halifax replied in respect to the first suggestion that he thought sufficient denial had been made, in regard to the second that the French had already apprised him of the Soviet suggestion.

The British manager of the American Express Company states that families of British residents are already leaving Berlin. He had discussed their departure with a Secretary of the British Embassy and the Vice Consul had stated that they were suggesting that such departure should be made.

Repeated to London and Paris.

WILSON

²⁰ Not printed.

²¹ See telegram No. 893, p. 585.

760F.62/749 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 12, 1938—11 p. m.

[Received September 12—6:37 p. m.]

907. Tonight following a meeting of the Prime Minister and principal Ministers to consider Hitler's speech Cadogan who was present at the meeting gave to a member of the staff the following résumé of what in his opinion the impression of the Ministers had been:

The speech contained highly offensive expressions which 20 years ago no one would have believed a man holding a position of such responsibility could have made. It does not seem, however, that Hitler has closed the door entirely nor yet put his hand to the trigger. The speech is not obviously as extremely bad as it might have been in spite of its offensive nature and the Ministers were unwilling to reach any final conclusions or decisions tonight. The Cabinet will meet tomorrow afternoon at 3 when more definite views can be formulated.

The Undersecretary of State did not give the impression that he felt the speech had contributed in any way to relief of existing tension.

KENNEDY

760F.62/763 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 13, 1938—9 a. m.

[Received September 13—8:20 a. m.]

1432. As I tried to convey to you discreetly over the telephone last evening I had a conversation with Bonnet about an hour after Hitler had finished speaking.

Bonnet had already talked with Daladier and assured me that Daladier as well as himself considered that the speech was not so dangerous as they had expected. Bonnet added that he felt that Hitler had left open the door to further negotiations.

Bonnet said that he expected to receive a call from the British Ambassador this morning in the course of which the British Ambassador would probably say to him that the British Government felt that it would be impossible for Great Britain to support Czechoslovakia in a refusal to accord a plebiscite. He intimated that the French Government would follow the line of the British Government in this regard.

The center of interest has now become Praha. It seems certain that the British and French Governments will urge Beneš to make further concessions so that the autonomy accorded to the Sudeten

will be absolute. If Beneš should refuse it is not impossible that Runciman might issue the sort of statement referred to in my 1401, September 6, 6 p. m.,²² recommending either the fullest possible autonomy for the Sudeten and other nationalities of Czechoslovakia or even a plebiscite.

The fact which emerges from all discussions of this question at the moment is that neither the British or French Governments believe that in the long run it will be possible to keep the Sudeten under Czech sovereignty. In consequence every effort will be made to persuade the Czechs to permit the Sudeten to go their own way preferably via the preliminary stage of complete autonomy.

BULLITT

760F.62/767 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 13, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received September 13—11:35 a. m.]

910. My 907, September 12, 11 p. m. Just saw Sir Samuel Hoare.²³ I asked him his reaction on speech. He told me the Foreign Office felt that conditions had not been improved at all and that the speech meant absolutely nothing except that the trouble was still present. He said Chamberlain, Halifax, Simon and he felt there was more hope in the situation, provided the local disturbances did not generate real trouble particularly because of the reference Hitler made to France and to the Anglo-German naval treaty²⁴ and because he did not do the building up for a war that would seem necessary. I feel however that they are asking themselves supposing there is no war now; how much better off is the whole situation and where do they go from here?

Hoare said that of course if they weather the storm he believes Chamberlain will move quickly with Hitler to see what can be done on a permanent basis.

He said they are watching an increase in espionage activities particularly along the water front and also the movement of German ships for the purpose of concentration for their needs in the event of war.

All of this group in referring to Hitler always call him the mad man.

KENNEDY

²² Not printed.

²³ British Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

²⁴ For correspondence concerning the treaty, see *Foreign Relations*, 1935, vol. I, pp. 162 ff; for text, see British Treaty Series No. 22 (1935).

760F.62/770 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 13, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received September 13—1:15 p. m.]

186. The immediate reaction to Hitler's speech was one of relief in that he did not make any specific declaration for a plebiscite for direct action nor did he refer to the Government proposals. On second reflection, however, his statement was credited with cleverness in putting Czechs in the difficult position of choosing consequences from taking strong measures against unquestionable outbreak of incidents with resulting accusations that Government is using "terroristic" and "brutal" methods or of facing condemnation for not keeping order if incidents are not firmly suppressed. People in the city last night assumed a resigned attitude and while a feeling of gloom was evident each individual seemed prepared to make any sacrifice required for the defense of the country. Some satisfaction was gained from the fact that Hitler indicated that his fortifications were not yet complete and from his admission that Germany was confronted by the hostility of the democratic bloc of countries and therefore that war could not come at the moment from the outside in. Hope is expressed here that England may now step forward and as the leader of the European democracies show some form of indignation against the portentous sections of the speech. Indignation was naturally aroused here over abusive treatment of President Beneš but it was felt sure the accusations were so outrageous that the lie would be automatically sent back in the face of the maker. Anyone listening to Hitler's speech in the light of the temper of the Sudeten people could not avoid the feeling that he was assuming the awful responsibility of inciting that people to violence with all its possible consequences. The outbreaks that occurred during the night and this morning are therefore not surprising. Serious incidents occurred at Eger and Aussig where several Sudetens and at least one Czech were killed, and serious injuries to Czechs are reported from other areas. Government has not definitely decided on measures to be taken other than those reported in my telegram 185, September 13, 1 p. m.,²⁵ but [those feeling?] apprehension of war commencing from inside out are apparently planning maximum civil measures as a start hoping to avert as long as possible resort to military steps.

CARR

²⁵ Not printed.

760F.62/799

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 14, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 2:10 p. m.]

1454. As I told you over the telephone last night Daladier called Chamberlain on the telephone yesterday and proposed to him that the British and French Governments should invite the German Government to meet them in an immediate conference to work out a settlement of the Sudeten dispute. Chamberlain, whose French is not good, had difficulty in understanding and the message was finally transmitted through the British Ambassador in Paris.

This morning I talked with the British Ambassador who expressed the opinion that the suggestion was not a happy one. His people in London were inclined to doubt that the German Government would accept such an invitation. It might be possible to obtain German acceptance if Italy should be added.

The British Ambassador then read to me the telegrams which he received this morning from Praha. A vitally important one which must be treated as strictly confidential was from Runciman. As I have informed you the French have been doing their utmost for some time to persuade Runciman to make an important pronouncement. Bonnet urged this with intensity yesterday. Runciman's reply of this morning states that he considers that it will be impossible for him to make any pronouncement so long as there is disorder in the Sudeten regions. He feels that the statement which he has prepared would not serve to calm the Sudeten although it might form a basis of agreement in case calm should previously have been established in the Sudeten regions. I ventured to suggest to the British Ambassador that Runciman seemed to be putting the cart before the horse as I could see no possibility of calm being restored in the Sudeten regions except as a result of a statement in definite terms issued by Runciman. The British Ambassador said that he too feared incidents in the Sudeten region would continue until Hitler would be forced to cross the border; but that Runciman was on the spot and that the British Government would have to accept his judgment.

Runciman added that he had sent two members of his staff, Gwatkin and Peto into the Sudeten area to investigate the incidents and attempt to produce an atmosphere of calm.

You will recall that Runciman said to Henlein before the latter's visit to Hitler that if agreement should not be reached before September 15 he would issue a pronouncement. It seems possible that the trip of Gwatkin and Peto will be for the purpose of assuring the Sudeten leaders that if they can restore order Runciman will speak.

A telegram from the British Minister in Praha to the British Ambassador here informed him that Hodza was ready to discuss the withdrawal of extra Czech military units sent to the Sudeten area for the purpose of restoring order. I pointed out to the British Ambassador that Henlein had broken off all negotiations this morning and had ordered his representatives in Praha to return to the Sudeten area because of the refusal of the Czechs to withdraw the extra troops sent to that area.

The British Ambassador then said that it had become clear to the British Government that the trouble maker in the present situation was Beneš. He had often promised to carry out measures which would produce appeasement but had not in fact put them into effect. He added that for the first time yesterday he believed that the French Government had become convinced that Beneš was really trying to start trouble. This was certainly the view of the British Government.

I commented that for some time it had seemed to me that Bonnet shared this opinion.

The British Ambassador replied that it was a question of degree. He felt that since yesterday the French Government had weakened greatly in its support of the Czechs. He felt that the French at the present time were "ready for peace at almost any price".

It is true that during the past few days the French newspapers have published many maps showing the racial divisions in Czechoslovakia and that public opinion has begun to develop the attitude "Why should we annihilate all the youth of France and destroy the continent of Europe in order to maintain the domination of 7,000,000 Czechs over 3,200,000 Germans?" I am certain, however, that one must add to the British Ambassador's phrase the words "except at the price of honor".

If German troops cross the Czech border except as a result of most outrageous provocation by the Czechs, France unquestionably will declare war on Germany.

I discussed the general situation with Bonnet this morning. While I was talking to him Daladier called him on the telephone to inform him that the Czechs without informing the French Government in any way had issued orders for the mobilization on the German frontier of a number of motorized divisions. Daladier expressed the opinion to Bonnet that this was most grave and Bonnet replied that it was outrageous that the Czechs at a moment when everything depended on calming the Sudeten and not provoking the Germans and at a moment when the Sudeten were demanding the withdrawal of extra Czech troops, should send new divisions into the Sudeten area without previous consultation with the French Government. Bonnet went on to say that he felt that the Czechs were not playing straight with the

French and he felt that they had failed to play straight so often with France that the French would be fully justified in washing their hands of their obligation to the Czechs. He added that the one issue which could now force France to attack Germany would be if Hitler should send the German Army across the Czechoslovak border. Nothing else would produce general European war.

Bonnet was most apprehensive that there would be further incidents in the Sudeten area today. He again expressed the opinion that it was absolute folly for Runciman to delay longer his pronouncement. He said that he thought that a pronouncement by Runciman was the single thing which could calm the Sudeten and that if Runciman should delay longer than today or tomorrow the Sudetens were apt to get completely out of hand and a large number be shot by the Czechs and Hitler march in. He said that he would continue today to urge the British Government to have Runciman speak at once.

With regard to the proposal originally made by Daladier over the telephone to Chamberlain, Bonnet said that while the British had not yet accepted it they had received the idea with favor and had informed him that they were thinking along similar lines. I of course did not mention my conversation with the British Ambassador, but it seemed to me possible, in view of this statement of Bonnet's, that the British might propose a four-power conference of England, France, Germany and Italy.

Bonnet said that the single rays of light at the present moment were the fact that his reports from Berlin indicated that the German Government had accepted the events of yesterday calmly and the additional fact that there had been no further incidents in the Sudeten regions this morning.

In view of the growing belief among the French and the British that Beneš in his heart of hearts has decided to provoke general European war rather than accept complete autonomy for the subject nationalities of Czechoslovakia, intense pressure will unquestionably be brought on Praha today by the French and British and the French will continue to request Runciman to issue a pronouncement.

BULLITT

760F.62/805 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery) to the Secretary of State

RIO DE JANEIRO, September 14, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received September 14—2:58 p. m.]

213. President Vargas, who is much concerned of course over the recent trend of events in Europe, asks me if I can ascertain as soon as

possible very confidentially from you anything of the Department's opinion and attitude in the face of the present situation.

CAFFERY

760F.62/815 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

WARSAW, September 14, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 7:07 p. m.]

183. For the President and Secretary.

1. Supplementing my No. 182, September 14, noon,²⁶ my noon conversation with Beck brought to light that his recent confidential reports indicated there was a growing inclination in Paris and London official circles to give serious consideration to what might conceivably amount to a partitioning of Czechoslovakia as a potential means of avoiding war. According to his reports the idea of partition envisaged a Czechoslovakia composed of a maximum of Slav races probably either ceding the Sudeten to Germany or setting it up as a unit invested with full autonomy. This to his mind would practically mean giving Germany everything she wanted.

2. Beck's further reports indicated that aforementioned Paris and London circles felt that between the two evils a plebiscite or secession of the Sudeten, Praha might conceivably come to consider secession the lesser of the two.

3. While Beck thought that the gap between the Czech Government's proposal and the Sudeten demands was sufficiently narrow to warrant the belief that the way was open for an amicable settlement provided Hitler wanted a settlement of this character, he was aware that Berlin was now assuming the position that a "confidence crisis" had been reached, in other words Berlin was assuming the attitude that it would be difficult under the circumstances and in view of Beneš' past record for Berlin to have any confidence in the good faith and durability of Beneš' word.

4. Of pertinent interest an experienced observer, just returned here from Berlin, imparted to me his opinion that on the heels of an "incidents racket" Hitler might be expected to appear before the world as the [defender of the?] "imperiled" position of his blood brothers in the Sudeten emphasizing that he must do something about it. At the same time he would probably endeavor to urge Britain to disinterest herself in the problem.

5. Though political circles here are aware that the situation has reached an acute stage and that a continuance of incidents might con-

²⁶ Not printed.

ceivably give rise to situations assuming a grim aspect, their attitude is vigilant but calm.

BIDDLE

760F.62/810 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 14, 1938—9 p. m.
[Received September 14—6:25 p. m.]

439. British Ambassador informs me that he conveyed this morning through the Foreign Office a suggestion that British Prime Minister Chamberlain visit Hitler to discuss Czechoslovak problem. Foreign Office telephoned Munich where Ribbentrop was with Hitler and Hitler extended invitation to come.

Chamberlain will leave London by plane tomorrow arriving Munich 11 a. m. thence to Berchtesgaden. He is prepared to spend several days if necessary to discuss this matter.

British Ambassador requests that this be kept scrupulously confidential until given out to the press.

WILSON

760F.62/843

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] September 14, 1938.

The French Ambassador called on his own request. He really had very little to say in addition to what he said to Messrs. Moffat and Messersmith on yesterday. He covered about the same ground but sought to prolong his inquiry about whether this Government was undertaking any secret communication with Berlin or Prague looking towards the encouragement of peace. I made it definite that this Government is not saying anything secretly either to Berlin or Prague relative to the pending controversy and crisis; that my Government has already said and done any and everything within its policy that it feels would be in the least helpful in preserving and promoting peace; that that is the situation up to this date; that, naturally, this Government is observing with the keenest interest developments from day to day as they involve the question of peace or its alternative. The Ambassador did not seem surprised but proceeded repeatedly to express the thanks of his Government for the interest and the activities of this Government in behalf of peace.

I inquired whether the reports that Germany had greatly outdistanced both France and Great Britain in the production of military airplanes were correct and if so why. The Ambassador did not controvert this point but said that the airplane program in his country

and the agency handling it had broken down sometime ago and hence their difficulties and delays. I inquired whether, in his opinion, Germany was depending on her superior airplane equipment primarily to win any war she might embark upon, and the Ambassador replied that in his opinion, she was. I then inquired whether, in his judgment, Germany could by its destructive effects on cities like Paris and London, from the air, force France and Great Britain into submission. The Ambassador said that this could not be done; that tremendous damage and injuries, of course, would result, but that aircraft attacks alone could not win a war.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

760F.62/805 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery)

WASHINGTON, September 15, 1938—11 a. m.

107. We view the situation in Europe as still very grave with one great imponderable being the estimate which Germany may be making of the eventual attitude of England and France. Since the decision of Chamberlain to fly to Germany and have an interview with Hitler, it is obvious that any appraisal must be purely provisional. As to our own attitude, we have considered that my speech of August 16, the President's speech at Kingston, and my statement at the time of the anniversary of the Kellogg-Briand Pact,²⁷ all three of which were prepared with considerable care, accurately reflect our views with regard to the immediate European and the general world situation. We have not made any *démarche* at individual capitals believing that it was better for our position to be a matter of public record.

In these circumstances you will appreciate that we have likewise had to decline to speculate as to what might be our attitude in any situation involving contingent possibilities.

HULL

760F.62/846 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery) to the Secretary of State

RIO DE JANEIRO, September 15, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 6:15 p. m.]

214. Department's 107, September 15. The Minister for Foreign Affairs told me confidentially this afternoon that he has been receiving suggestions from the various interested parties on both sides of the controversy in Europe for Brazil to take an attitude favoring their

²⁷ Statement issued on August 27, 1938, Department of State, *Press Releases*, August 27, 1938, p. 147.

respective interests. He set out that Brazil in case war eventuates desires in formulating a policy to act "in combination with the United States".

He then said that President Vargas had received most confidentially information from Mussolini that Italy would be compelled under its military agreement with Germany to go to Germany's assistance only if the latter were attacked by Russia. Mussolini added that Italy would not go to the assistance of Germany if the latter were attacked by England and France alone unless France should augment her aid to the government of Barcelona.

Aranha believes this information to be accurate as it is in line with recent Italian efforts to persuade Brazil of their friendship; for instance, they have recently notified him of their entire acceptance of all of the recent Brazilian laws and regulations designed for the control of foreign activities in this country.

CAFFERY

IV. FROM BERCHTESGADEN TO GODESBERG (SEPTEMBER 15-25)

760F.62/827 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 15, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 11:45 a. m.]

1465. The news of Chamberlain's visit to Hitler has been received by all circles in France except the Communists, other agents of the Soviet Government and certain Jews, with intense satisfaction and a relief that approaches gayety.

The *Humanity* the Communist organ contains an extremely sour comment by Peri but the Socialist *Populaire* contains an editorial of wholehearted approval by Blum. The rest of the press applauds.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is of course delighted. The chief aim of Bonnet's foreign policy has been to engage England's intervention in the affair of Czechoslovakia. Before Daladier and Bonnet took office the British had refused consistently to become seriously involved. Chamberlain's personal visit to Hitler is therefore a personal triumph for Bonnet and he is gleeful. As I informed the Department last night by brief telegram after finding a conversation with Mr. Messersmith unsatisfactory due to atmospheric conditions, Bonnet feels that the danger of general European war has disappeared.

The story being circulated by the French press that Daladier suggested Chamberlain's visit to Hitler is untrue.

As I informed the Department Daladier telephoned to Chamberlain and suggested that there should be a conference of representa-

tives of England, France and Germany. His conversation with Chamberlain was most unsatisfactory due in part to Daladier's total lack of knowledge of English and Chamberlain's imperfect knowledge of French. Yesterday afternoon all Bonnet knew was that the British thought some sort of a conversation should be held with the Germans. The British Ambassador informed me last night at about 9 o'clock that he had communicated Chamberlain's intention to visit Hitler in Berchtesgaden to Daladier only at 8 o'clock.

It is certain that the French Government will support any arrangement that Chamberlain may be able to make with Hitler. As I have pointed out repeatedly to the Department in my telegrams since the beginning of last May the only reason why the French have been ready to go to war on behalf of Czechoslovakia is because of the point of honor involved. The feeling here today is that Chamberlain will take care of that point of honor completely and that the French Government will be justified in the eyes of its own people and the world in following his lead, whatever that lead may be and however unpalatable to Czechoslovak authorities.

In considering French opinion it must be remembered that the number of persons who believe that France should fight in order to maintain her traditional power and prestige in Central and Eastern Europe has diminished steadily during the past year. Aside from a few permanent officials of the Quai d'Orsay and Paul Reynaud²⁸ there are almost no persons in positions of influence who still feel that France should fight to uphold this traditional policy. Moreover, the conviction that the Treaty of Versailles is one of the stupidest documents ever penned by the hand of man is now general, although not admitted by men like Mandel²⁹ who share responsibility for its terms. Both Daladier and Bonnet fought the Treaty of Versailles and wrecked their careers temporarily by telling the truth about the treaty when the truth was unpopular. Both are convinced that the treaty must be revised and at bottom regard an alteration in the Czechoslovak State as a necessary revision—the necessity for which they pointed out nearly 20 years ago.

Daladier, for example, said to me a few days ago that he had had a considerable argument with Mandel who had wished him to mobilize the French Army which he had ended by saying to Mandel that he did not intend to sacrifice the entire youth of France merely to white-wash the criminal errors that had been committed by Mandel and his friend Clemenceau and the other members of the Big Four during the conference which produced the Treaty of Versailles.

Both Daladier and Bonnet have said to me recently that as soon as the Czech affair is settled they hope to enter at once into negotiation

²⁸ French Minister for Finance.

²⁹ Georges Mandel, French Minister for the Colonies.

designed to bring together Germany and France in genuine friendship. They hope that these negotiations will result in cooperation between Germany, France, England and Italy and that peace may be established in Europe. It is now their hope that Chamberlain's talk with Hitler may be the beginning of this negotiation.

BULLITT

360F.1115/1 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 15, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 15—12: 25 p. m.]

192. Although work is progressing on our bombproof shelter and a place of temporary refuge has been obtained in the country conditions here are such that no adequate protection could be afforded to a large number of Americans in addition to the combined staffs and their families who number over one hundred.

During the present situation the Legation and Consulate General have had innumerable inquiries from American citizens in Czechoslovakia for advice whether to leave the country. Up to the present time both offices have replied that there was yet no reason for believing that such a necessity had arisen at the same time advising orally that the situation was obvious to all and individuals concerned as to their safety should use their own judgment. I feel that the moment is now at hand to advise inquirers as to the difficulties they will encounter in case of a sudden outbreak of hostilities when frontiers would be closed and to suggest that unless compelled to remain they should seriously consider prompt departure. The Consul General states that according to registration there are at the moment roughly 250 Americans in Praha and 2000 in Czechoslovakia as a whole plus some 5000 border line cases. The brunt of the responsibility will be in Praha where train and air accommodations are already becoming congested. Furthermore, if war should begin, evacuation would then be virtually impossible because of the geographical position of Czechoslovakia in relation to the transportation facilities to other countries.

CARR

760F.62/836 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 15, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received September 15—3: 30 p. m.]

199. The first reaction upon the receipt of the news of Chamberlain's visit to Hitler was of stunned surprise and general disbelief. The

news of the visit having been confirmed reactions here may be divided in general as follows:

1. It is generally thought that Chamberlain's visit constitutes a last desperate effort to avoid an immediate outbreak of war and his courage in defying tradition and in risking a loss of prestige is generally recognized. There is, however, a sharp divergence of opinion concerning (1) the reasons for choosing this line of action and (2) the general position he will assume in his conversations with Hitler, and the possible outcome.

2. Some, basing their opinion on what they consider the weakness of Chamberlain's past conduct of affairs, believe that his decision was made merely in desperation and that this indicates a weakening British position with the result that he will attempt to obtain peace at almost any price.

3. Another group reject the foregoing on the ground that Chamberlain could not consider a policy which would inevitably result in a terrific blow to the prestige of himself, his party, and the nation. They explain the reasons for the visit as (1) the necessity of informing Hitler face to face of the true situation as regards the British position in case of war, the assumption being that Hitler's entourage have kept him misinformed alleging that the British were only bluffing and at the same time to obtain a specific statement of Hitler's minimum desires not only as regards Czechoslovakia but also regarding Germany's future aims; and (2) that if war should break out in spite of this final effort British, the Dominions' and world opinion would be back of the British Government and would place the responsibility for the conflict entirely on Hitler. It is pointed out that if Chamberlain had desired merely to "sell" Czechoslovakia he could have done so more easily and with less risk by staying at home.

The same group in general feel that Chamberlain will take a firm stand and demand a solution which, though entailing great sacrifices on the part of Czechoslovakia, would fall within the framework of a general European settlement. Therefore Chamberlain would attempt to obtain a clear expression of Hitler's price for a general settlement and then would have to decide whether this price or war would be more costly first to the British Empire and secondly to France and her allies. This group feel that Chamberlain is proceeding on a carefully thought out plan along those lines and that he will attempt to initiate conversations which might eventually lead to the four power negotiations which have long been his desire. However unwilling France might be to exclude Russia, it is thought that she might agree to this to avoid war.

3 [4]. The Russians and Czechs here fear that if Chamberlain instead of issuing a clear warning attempts to bargain with Hitler, Czechoslovakia may be irrevocably sacrificed. It is also suggested

that if developments indicate that Czechoslovakia is likely to be sacrificed the Czechs may appeal to the League in order to bring Russia into the negotiations. Code texts to London, Paris, Berlin.

BUCKNELL

360F.1115/1 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr)

WASHINGTON, September 15, 1938—9 p. m.

62. Your 192, September 15, 1 p. m. We consider it most important for you to avoid the panic or at least confusion that might result from your giving any widespread advice to Americans to leave Czechoslovakia until you consider it absolutely necessary. In view, however, of the geographic situation involved we approve your cautioning Americans if they make inquiry that if trouble should come it would be almost impossible for them to get out of Praha in any orderly fashion and probably to any country other than Hungary or Poland.

HULL

760F.62/1010

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)

[WASHINGTON,] September 15, 1938.

The French Ambassador called this noon to see what our reaction was to the visit of Chamberlain to Hitler. He said that the liberal elements in New York were fearful of what this might bring forth, but he had told them that he thought it a good move which should be tried. In any event, no one had suggested anything better. Several newspaper men had asked him for off the record conferences and he had taken this point of view.

He asked whether we had any confirmation of reports that the Germans had put as a condition to Mr. Chamberlain's trip the holding of a plebiscite under international control. I told him that we had no information to that effect. He asked what we thought about it. I told him that no matter what transpired, the visit would give us thirty-six to forty-eight hours of respite and that that definitely was to the good; for instance, I had seen no reports of rioting in Sudetenland this morning. The Secretary would undoubtedly be questioned at the press conference, and, if so, was planning to say that the historical meeting between the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Chancellor of Germany was being observed with the greatest interest by

all nations which are concerned in the preservation of peace. The Ambassador said he thought that would be useful and that it would not set off any unfavorable reactions.

As a matter of fact, the Secretary in his talk yesterday had informed the Ambassador that there had been a new flare-up of isolationist sentiment. He had not appreciated it at the time, but in the last twenty-four hours he had been studying editorials from all over the country and appreciated that there had been this small flare-up. On the other hand, the tone of the great New York papers struck him as most helpful and as seeing the picture in its major proportions.

I told the Ambassador that the President was coming straight to Washington instead of going to Hyde Park and would be here at about seven o'clock tonight. The Ambassador said that this change of plans would give considerable comfort in Europe in that they would feel that he was following developments with his usual keen interest.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/1018

Statement Issued by the Department of State, September 15, 1938

At his press conference this afternoon Secretary Hull, when asked if he would comment on the visit of Prime Minister Chamberlain to Chancellor Hitler, said:

"The historic conference today between the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Chancellor of Germany is naturally being observed with the greatest interest by all nations which are deeply concerned in the preservation of peace."

760F.62/855 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 16, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received September 16—noon.]

195. The return of Runciman to London today is announced by the press. He stated last night in my presence that his mission was at an end. He had failed except in prolonging the negotiations. Ashton-Gwatkin said that it is clear now that an agreement with the Government was not desired by Germany. Negotiations were making progress when suddenly the Moravska Ostrava incident ⁸⁰ occurred more or less organized by Frank and other radical members of the party with the object of furnishing a pretext for breaking off relations. He has no doubt that the subsequent disturbances in the Sudeten area were

⁸⁰ Henleinist (Sudeten National Socialist) demonstration, September 8.

deliberately inspired and directed from Germany. He said that the Sudeten ultimatum of Tuesday night³¹ was accepted by the Government upon the condition that a responsible member of the Henlein group would come to Praha and arrange for preservation of order if the emergency measures were met. The Sudetens refused and hence the measures were continued and extended. Henlein and Frank have now apparently gone to Germany while other moderate Sudeten leaders have returned to Praha.

Responsible Czech friends familiar with the Sudeten area confirm arming of Sudetens reported in my telegram No. 191 of September 15³² and say there is real danger of civil war on account of the rising feeling among the Czechs which may soon break their self control.

There seems to be almost complete lack of information about Chamberlain's purpose in going to Berchtesgaden. There continues to be distrust of Chamberlain in press and other circles. The Czechs continue as firm as ever in declaring they will fight rather than accept a plebiscite or secession.

CARR

760F.62/863 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 16, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received September 16—4:40 p. m.]

203. My telegram 199, September 15, 7 p. m. The reaction in many circles here following Chamberlain's announcement upon his return to London and the statement supposedly issued by the Wilhelmstrasse both of which were broadcast by the British Broadcasting Company is a cynical belief that Czechoslovakia has been "sold down the river" and that Hitler's desires in this area will be met in one way or another. This, it is felt, will result in a very great diminution of tension and the only fear expressed is that the Czechs may not accept dismemberment and decide to resist. If such resistance is sufficiently effective and long enough drawn out there remains the possibility, if not the probability, of such a conflict growing into a general war.

In this connection the Minister in a private conversation with the Czech delegate this morning was given the personal view that French support could no longer be depended upon and that the failure of Great Britain and France clearly to make their intentions known long ago constituted the international crime in the circumstances since

³¹ September 13.

³² Not printed.

there would have been no difficulty in reaching an advantageous agreement with Germany at that time.

Code text to Paris, Berlin, London.

BUCKNELL

760F.62/866 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 17, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received September 17—10 a. m.]

950. The Cabinet meeting is still on but I asked Cadogan to see me and bring me something to report at once. He says that Chamberlain found Hitler in a very bad mood. Those around him had just reported another incident in the Sudeten area in which 300 Sudetens were killed. Chamberlain said he knew nothing of that and urged Hitler not to take it for granted unless it was confirmed. The sum and substance of the conversation after this bad start was that Hitler wants the recognition at once of the principle of self-determination. Chamberlain told him he was not prepared to make any such agreement until he had a chance to consult with the Cabinet and possibly Parliament. Hitler told Chamberlain that the latter was familiar with his ideas on race and that it was not necessary to repeat them but he insisted that something be done immediately. Chamberlain told him that he must return home and received an agreement from Hitler that he would not march—although Chamberlain was convinced that the order was about to be given when he arrived—unless an extremely big incident took place in the Sudeten area. I do not know just what comfort Chamberlain expects to get from this promise, because Cadogan says they have evidence that the groundwork is laid for an incident large enough to furnish the Germans with an excuse to come in.

Chamberlain then told Hitler that, of course, if the British did not agree to this principle and Hitler went in, England would be obliged to go in with France, and Hitler said he was perfectly willing to take on a world war.

I am leaving now to see the Military Attaché who saw Cadogan just before me and I am hoping to see Halifax at the conclusion of the Cabinet meeting. Cadogan told me this morning that Halifax had said he regarded it extremely unlikely that an agreement would be reached at the morning meeting and that they would probably have to adjourn until this afternoon or this evening.

I received very good information this morning that there are many rumblings among members of the Cabinet. First, they are displeased that the so-called inner Cabinet is being conferred with constantly. This inner Cabinet consists of Simon; Hoare and Halifax. In addition to that there are intimations among them that if Chamberlain tries to force the principle of self-determination there will be a row in the Cabinet.

I will send you a message on the reaction of the French Ambassador within a short time³³ and an account of my talk with Halifax as soon as I can see him. Then if at all possible I will try to see the Prime Minister, either tonight or tomorrow, but I judge if he is having a row in the Cabinet he would rather not discuss the matter with anybody outside.

My own opinion from my discussions and from what I have heard from the other members of the Cabinet last night and this morning is that the issue is going to be self-determination or war and the responsibility for declaring war, I think, will be left with the anti-Chamberlain group. The Labor people up to now have played along very well but Cadogan is not sure what will happen.

KENNEDY

760F.62/896 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 17, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received September 17—4:25 p. m.]

453. In respect to the Berchtesgaden meeting the Foreign Office is taking the position that nothing can be said until the second meeting scheduled for next week. At the same time they are intimating that the brevity of the communiqué issued by Hitler and Chamberlain is not to be interpreted as an unhopeful sign.

Weizsacker returned from Berchtesgaden last night and lunched with me today. He said that as soon as the more than 2 hours talk between Chamberlain and Hitler was finished Hitler came into the room where he and Von Ribbentrop were seated and recounted the conversation to them. Weizsacker added he was therefore in a position to give me an exact account of the facts.

Weizsacker said he could best summarize the situation as follows: Chamberlain has returned to England leaving the understanding with Hitler that Chamberlain is in personal agreement with the idea of a cession of territory in the Sudeten area, in other words with a [practical?] solution. To my question as to whether method had been agreed upon Weizsacker replied that neither plebiscite, direct cession or other method had been explored, that the entire phase of method was open.

³³ See telegram No. 966, September 19, 3 p. m., p. 618.

Chamberlain made it very clear that no commitment could be made prior to consultation with his colleagues in the Cabinet and Daladier. Discussions with these gentlemen would be at once undertaken. Early next week, Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday, Chamberlain would meet Hitler again at Godesberg near Bonn for a further conference.

In the course of his discussion of the matter with his advisers Hitler suggested that he proceed to England to see Chamberlain next week instead of the latter coming to Godesberg. He was dissuaded from this position by his advisers.

Chamberlain seems to have created a favorable impression on Hitler. The latter spoke of him as "a man with whom you can deal".

That the apprehension of premature publicity was present in Chamberlain's mind and the memory of the³⁴ the forthcoming explosion seems to be [evident?] from the fact that Weizsacker reports that Hitler's first words to Von Ribbentrop and himself afterwards were, "Who is Madame Geneviève Tabouis?"³⁵

Weizsacker added that it seemed reasonable to believe that Chamberlain would not have gone as far as he did had he not been fairly sure that he would gain the adhesion of the Cabinet and of the French. Other advices from Paris lead him to hope that the French would acquiesce.

We speculated as to how the Czechs themselves would answer any suggestion of cession of territory and Weizsacker felt that if a default were made by the Great Powers in concert and thereby termination [apparent omission] outside assistance were eliminated that the Czechs would hardly resist.

I have no means of knowing how far Von Weizsacker was authorized to tell me what he did. I therefore earnestly request that this information be kept scrupulously confidential.

I have not repeated to Paris and London. You will judge whether it is wise to repeat certain portions of it.

WILSON

760F.62/891 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 17, 1938—10 p. m.

[Received September 17—8:30 p. m.]

960. My 950, September 17, 1 p. m., and 958, September 17, 6 p. m.³⁶ I have just left the Prime Minister. He confirmed all of the story sent you in my telegram this morning reporting my conversation with Cadogan. He said he was thoroughly convinced that Hitler had

³⁴ Sentence apparently garbled at this point.

³⁵ French political journalist.

³⁶ Latter telegram not printed.

intended to march within 72 hours after he arrived; that the stories of tragedies happening to the Sudetens are being fed to him and Chamberlain was amazed that a man in such a responsible position could be influenced by such ridiculous tales. After the preliminaries had been gone through he and Hitler and the interpreter went off to Hitler's room. Hitler made a remark that seemed to throw a different light on his character to the effect that when he had received the Prime Minister's request to come and visit him, he really felt that he should go to the Prime Minister; that he did not think it fair to bring an old man down to visit him. With the exception of that one remark, however, Chamberlain came away with an intense dislike for him. He said he is cruel, overbearing, has a hard look and thoroughly convinced Chamberlain that he would be completely ruthless in any of his aims and methods. When the conversation started Hitler told him that if the principle of self-determination, which Hitler said by the way he did not create, was not agreeable to the British, then there was no sense in talking. Chamberlain asked him then if that meant that he would attempt to get the results he wanted by using force and Hitler said, "Absolutely, and I will chance a world war if necessary". Chamberlain said, "If that is the case why did you bother to have me come here because if that is all there is to it, the conversation had better stop at once". Hitler eased up a little at that and they started the discussion.

Hitler said he will not stand for any delay in the principle of self-determination and for that reason Chamberlain decided to come home at once to confer with his colleagues because he told Hitler he could not make that declaration there. He asked Hitler if the Sudeten region came under the Reich what assurances had they that the rest of Czechoslovakia would not sooner or later fall into his hands. Hitler said he had no interest in the rest of Czechoslovakia at all; in fact he had no further interest in the acquiring of any lands in Europe; that he had taken back 7 million Austrians and now he wanted 3 million Sudetens. Chamberlain said of course you have to take Hitler's word for that. Hitler kept referring to the fact that he did not want the dagger in his side.

Chamberlain said to Hitler, "I will go back to England and talk with my colleagues. What assurance have I that you will not give the order to march?" Hitler said, "I will not give any military orders unless some terrific incident happens in the Sudeten area." Chamberlain thinks he will probably adhere to that.

Hitler suggested to Chamberlain that England use its influence to have the Czechoslovak police disbanded as they were causing great trouble. Chamberlain said Runciman confirmed that today to him.

With reference to today's happenings, Chamberlain reported this conversation to his Cabinet and asked them for authority to accept the principle of self-determination and after quite some discussion with [them?] I judge he was finally given authority by his colleagues to tell Hitler that Britain will accept the principle of self-determination but that he wants a chance to discuss what the method is to be. He has also been authorized to talk with Daladier and Bonnet who arrive tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

It becomes more and more apparent as I talked with Chamberlain that his confidence in the French becomes less and less. He received a report which Sir Samuel Hoare confirmed to me tonight that the French aviation situation is so bad that it is appalling. The French do not want to fight and they will probably blame whole thing on the British. Chamberlain said that the public will probably not believe that any more than it did the report that Daladier had advised him to go to Hitler. Chamberlain said Daladier did not know anything about it until 5 hours after the American Ambassador had been told.

I asked him what he thought the Czechs would do. He said "talk big but probably accede"; he said he expects however that if they agree they will ask England for a guarantee of protection for the maintenance of the balance of the state and Chamberlain said, "Of course I do not expect to give this but I may not be averse to it on condition the Russians are unwilling to make any commitment except to urge England to fight and if there is a disagreement to refer it to the League of Nations.["] Chamberlain said that would not be very effective with the Germans occupying the Sudeten area. Chamberlain said he talked with the Labor group and I have talked tonight with Dalton, Herbert Morrison and Citrine, all of whom I have seen, and I judge that since they have been talking about cooperation of Russia, France, and England the Prime Minister has rather put them in the box, as he expressed it, and in their conversations with me they made it very clear that they were going along with Chamberlain.

When I saw Sir Samuel Hoare he had just finished seeing the editor of the *Daily Herald* and Sir Walter Layton the editor of the *News Chronicle* and he was trying to persuade them to have the papers strong on the side of peace. I judge he had been spending the last 2½ hours seeing all of the newspaper men to urge peace. He felt that the *Herald* would play ball. He hoped that Layton would but was not quite sure yet.

The Prime Minister contemplates suggesting, if he meets an agreement with Hitler on the principle of self determination, orderly elections and protection of peace and order while the plans are being worked out. On the subject of protection he asked me if all the coun-

tries join in whether the United States would—not a question to be discussed now but something that might be put up later—and I am sending it on to you so that you might be giving it some thought.

He told me also that he said to Hitler that the Czechoslovak thing is merely an incident and what is Germany going to do on all of these problems. Hitler said he was too occupied and worried about the Czechoslovak problem to think about anything else but Chamberlain said that before he left he had an intimation from Hitler that if this problem were settled quickly he would discuss the other matters.

Chamberlain believes that the public here will be with him if the problem is put up in the right way and he works it out decently with the French, the Czechs, and Hitler; otherwise he does not know but he says he has to take the responsibility and believes in his own aim and he is going to battle for that.

I asked Sir Samuel Hoare whether there was any probability of calling Parliament and he said not at least until Chamberlain had another talk and that he hoped not until they got these problems out of the way.

Chamberlain confirmed the general impression which has been widespread in official circles here that Ribbentrop has an extremely bad influence on Hitler.

KENNEDY

760F.62/897: Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 18, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received 2:50 p. m.]

456. I just had a long talk with Henderson who is more moved than I have ever seen him waiting in visible impatience the decision in the Cabinet in London and the results of the talks with Daladier. Chamberlain did not give Henderson a real glimpse of what was in the former's mind, contenting himself with presenting a résumé of the conversation with Hitler. Henderson is extremely apprehensive of any procrastination. Indeed he said he was in despair over the fact that for 4 months he had preached urgency, that nobody at home had listened to him and he felt himself a "voice in the wilderness".

He did not attempt any more than did Weizsaecker to give me a detailed account of the conversation at Berchtesgaden. Nevertheless the impression I got of the situation checks with what Weizsaecker told me and even the same phrase "cession of territory" was used. Henderson explained that this was the phrase the Prime Minister had employed and that it probably was synonymous in his mind with self-determination.

Henderson brought out the telegrams he has sent his Government in the past 48 hours. The main points he made are as follows: The Prime Minister's coming headed off military action. Hitler has promised Chamberlain, and will keep his word barring catastrophic events in Czechoslovakia, that he will make no military move until the next meeting can be held with Chamberlain. Henderson has reported vigorously that if the Western Powers declined to adopt right of self-determination or even adopt it with a lot of conditions there will be no use talking to Hitler again. Indeed, the latter will march and a general European war will be the result. If, on the other hand, France and Great Britain are willing to adopt unconditionally "self-determination" they should be able in their conversations with Hitler to win certain concessions as to the method of putting this into effect. A further essential point Henderson has urged is that immediate pressure be put on Beneš to accept the idea of self-determination. There is of course the grave risk that Beneš will refuse or that if he accepts a revolution will break out among the Czechoslovak people. In this event there will be German intervention and a local war.

Henderson argues and has so reported that if it must come to war the choice lies between a general war on a bad cause involving the reputation of the democratic principle of self-determination or a small war of limited scope. There is no question in his mind as to what the choice should be. As he phrases the matter France and England must choose between unconditional adoption of the principle of self-determination and fighting Germany. If they choose the first they will be faced with the necessity, repugnant as it may be, of coercing Beneš into acceptance. If the principle is accepted some form of coercion of Beneš is inevitable still—either a friendly pressure by France and Great Britain or armed pressure by Germany.

He is reporting as well a gathering of troops in the Austrian area north of Vienna. He believes though he is not sure, that certain military preparations are being made in the vicinity of Breslau (in this connection see my 451, September 15 [17], noon,³⁷ reporting Military Attaché's summary). Our Military Attaché has just informed me that the Chief of Staff and the Commander in Chief received the Military Attachés in east Prussia for dinner last night. Obviously therefore no incident was contemplated.

Henderson informed me that on the eve of his departure from Nuremberg he had received a telegram from his Government to remain and to notify Ribbentrop that an urgent communication was coming.

Inasmuch as he recognized the danger of a further warning, he neither notified Ribbentrop nor remained in Nuremberg and so in-

³⁷ Not printed.

formed his Government. This episode must have occurred at almost the same moment as Henderson's statement to the Press.

Henderson saw Goering [at?] Karinhall yesterday afternoon and urged him to do what he could to see that peace was maintained whatever the provocation until Chamberlain could talk again with Hitler. Goering reassured him on this, said that Hitler's word had been given and that barring catastrophic upheaval in Czechoslovakia no steps would be taken until further negotiations had been started. Goering said emphatically that any conditions attached to the acceptance of "self-determination" would be useless and provocative and urged Henderson so to report to his Government. Goering spoke with confidence of their state of preparation and in respect to the air said that they were stronger than Great Britain, France and Czechoslovakia put together. Henderson states that he did not bluster but his very quiet was ominous.

Goering said that he was awaiting the visits of the Polish Ambassador and the Hungarian Minister, that he was expecting both of them to talk about their minorities in Czechoslovakia and to request that these be taken care of in any settlement. Goering said that he proposed to tell them that Germany was interested in the Sudeten Germans alone and not in the fate of any of the rest of Czechoslovakia.

For reasons reported in my 453 I am not repeating this message to Paris or London. You may desire to apprise them.

WILSON

760F.62/884 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 18, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received September 18—6:43 p. m.]

202. I was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs this afternoon who said that while he was without definite information of what took place at Berchtesgaden he believed that Chamberlain had gone with no definite proposals and that he had received a bad impression from his conversation with Hitler who is thought to have demanded that a certain part of Czechoslovakia be ceded to Henlein and his followers.

He said that there have been concentrations of troops in Germany of a character indicating an intention to attack this country. A secret message had been intercepted indicating that Germany was prepared to take action against this country on the 22nd or 23rd of September. Four regiments of German police had been prepared to follow the troops into this country as was done in Austria. That in-

formation was considered yesterday in a special Cabinet meeting and last night couriers were sent to Paris and London with a full statement of the immediate danger Czechoslovakia feels, asking the decision of those governments as to what steps if any they propose to take and informing them that Czechoslovakia had deferred mobilization pending notification to France and Great Britain. He believes that if France and Great Britain even now show a united front and real firmness a German attack could be averted. There is no mistaking the fact that he believes danger to be real and imminent.

In respect to Soviet aid he said that it still remained on the initiative of France but privately they had intimation that Soviets might come to the aid of this country independent of France in case of emergency. He said that all was prepared for the passage of Soviet Russian troops over Rumania.

CARR

760F.62/903 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 19, 1938—noon.

[Received 1:30 p. m.]

1503. General European war appears to be closer this morning than at any previous time.

The French Ministers reached Paris from London half an hour ago. They went direct to the Elysée for a Council of State. I have talked, however, with Jules Henry⁸⁸ who was with Bonnet throughout the London conversations.

The Department has unquestionably been informed fully by our Embassy in London in regard to Chamberlain's conversation with Hitler and the decisions of the British Government.

Briefly I gathered from Henry that Hitler stated to Chamberlain that he would incorporate the Sudeten within the Reich peacefully if possible, by war if necessary. Chamberlain asked if he could be assured that Hitler had no further designs on Czechoslovakia than the detachment from the Czechoslovak State of the Sudeten. Hitler promised Chamberlain that he did not wish anything but the Sudeten regions. He said furthermore that he had no intention at the present time of taking up the question of Germans in Poland or Memel or other areas in Europe. Hitler refused, however, to go into any general discussion of the organization of European peace or the limitation of armaments. He was at times intensely excited and at times calm.

⁸⁸ Director of the Cabinet of the French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

When Chamberlain pointed out to him that France was bound by treaty to Czechoslovakia and that if German troops should cross the Czechoslovak border the French would at once attack Germany and that England would not be able to stand aside from the ensuing conflict, Hitler replied that he was a young man of 49 years and that he would live under these circumstances to see the triumph of Germany and a reorganization of peace in Europe.

Chamberlain asked Hitler for assurances in case he should undertake to attempt to persuade the Czechoslovak Government to relinquish the Sudeten to Germany that during the period of negotiations Hitler would not march troops across the Czechoslovak border. Hitler said that he could make him this promise subject to the proviso that great disorders or a revolution in the Sudeten region should not compel him to act.

Chamberlain therefore left Berchtesgaden on the understanding that he would submit to his own Cabinet and to the French Government the proposal that the Czechoslovak Government should be asked to relinquish the Sudeten region to Germany. The British Cabinet approved this proposal and last night Bonnet and Daladier approved it. The French were definitely of the opinion that a plebiscite could not and should not be organized. It was also decided that Great Britain would participate with France and other countries in a guarantee of the Czechoslovak State which would remain after the amputation of the Sudeten.

Daladier and Bonnet at the Elysée are now engaged in acquainting their fellow members of the Cabinet with the results of their conversations in London and the British are engaged in attempting to persuade the Czechs to relinquish the Sudeten voluntarily.

The situation which will arise if the Czech Government should refuse to permit the Sudeten to enter the German Reich will be desperate. As Chautemps said to me this morning just before the Council of State began the Czechs unquestionably would be better off without the Sudeten and with the general guarantee participated in by Great Britain; but for a sovereign state to relinquish any portion of its territory under threats is extraordinarily difficult.

If the Czechs should refuse the British proposals and the German Army then should cross the Czech frontier after a declaration by Great Britain that Great Britain would stand aside the position of France would become one of agonizing tragedy. If France should refuse to attack Germany the people of France would be compelled to witness the spectacle of the destruction inch by inch of Czechoslovakia by the German Army and this horrible slaughter would continue for at least 3 weeks. The French people would become so aroused that there would be strikes and revolutionary demonstrations and in the end public opinion might decide for war.

Chautemps went on to say that on the other hand it was clear that France would be alone in bearing the burden of both German and Italian attack. Even though Great Britain should be compelled to enter the war the British forces could be of real assistance only at sea. The British could put only 65,000 men on the continent of Europe at the moment and their air force would barely be adequate to defend Great Britain. The Russian Army could not enter into active war against Germany because it would be necessary to cross the territory of either Poland or Rumania which would result in immediate war with both Poland and Rumania. The superiority of the German and Italian Air Forces was so absolute over the French Air Force that every city in France and every military objective could be destroyed at will. Even with the full productive capacity of the airplane factories of the United States operating at full speed it would be 2 years before parity in the air could be achieved. For France, therefore, the stake was the entire youth of the country and every building in it. In the end there would be nothing left of any construction on the continent of Europe and small vestige of any race.

If the Czechoslovak Government should refuse to give up the Sudeten and Hitler should enter Czechoslovakia, France therefore will confront the appalling decision either of sacrificing the greater part of the race or of suffering a moral wound almost too great to bear. It is idle to speculate at this moment on the decision which will be determined by many small factors but there is still in France so much of the spirit of the Jacobins and behind that Jeanne d'Arc that I feel the French would march into the furnace.

Daladier, Bonnet and Chautemps have all spoken to me with regard to despatches purporting to give the opinions of officials of the American Government and of the American people, all of which indicate that we desire France to go to war at this time. They have been intensely disturbed by these expressions of opinion—for example by the despatch which appeared in *Le Temps* of September 17, discussing the point of view of the Department of State and indicating that "an authorized personality declared: 'if we admit the right of peoples to dispose of themselves, there is another right which is that of a constituted Government to maintain its national unity'"; and the statement by Senator Pittman³⁹ reported in this morning's press "Czechoslovakia has the right to expect and demand protection from the governments responsible for its creation which pledged it their protection."

I believe that all members of our Government and officials of the different Departments should refrain from any expression of opinion whatsoever tending to make it appear that we believe that France should go to war in order to keep 3,200,000 Sudetens under the rule

³⁹ Key Pittman, Senator from Nevada, and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

of 7,000,000 Czechs. It is entirely honorable to urge another nation to go to war if one is prepared to go to war at once on the side of that nation but I know nothing more dishonorable than to urge another nation to go to war if one is determined not to go to war on the side of that nation, and I believe that the people of the United States are determined not to go to war against Germany.

BULLITT

760F.62/908 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 19, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received September 19—1:15 p. m.]

966. My 963, September 19, 1 a. m.⁴⁰ Cambon has just shown Johnson⁴¹ in strict confidence the text decided upon between the British and the French of a note to be delivered to Beneš as soon as the respective Governments of the two countries have given their approval.

The text of this note has already been sent to the British and French Ministers in Praha for immediate delivery upon receipt of the necessary authorization.

Cambon said that this note contained in essence the entire results of yesterday's discussions. He also said quite frankly that he was sick at the result; that it was the most painful possible experience for his Government which since the war had met with nothing but complete sincerity and loyalty from Czechoslovakia. He said also that he himself felt strongly that the effect of this decision when known would be [deplorable?] and diminish the prestige of Great Britain and France in all the other democratic countries of the world, not to speak of its disastrous effect on the small countries of Central and Southeastern Europe, which have serious minority problems.

The substance of the draft communication to Beneš is as follows:⁴²

1. The British and French Governments declare that they are convinced after recent events that the situation has now reached the point where the maintenance of the German districts within the present boundaries of Czechoslovakia is in fact no longer possible without imperiling the interests of Czechoslovakia and European peace. Great Britain and France are, therefore, constrained to the conclusion that the maintenance of peace and of the vital interests of Czecho-

⁴⁰ Not printed.

⁴¹ Herschel V. Johnson, First Secretary of Embassy in the United Kingdom.

⁴² For text of the Anglo-French proposals, see *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, doc. No. 937, p. 404.

slovakia can only be assured effectively if these German districts are now transferred to Germany.

2. The two Governments point out that there are two possible methods of effecting the change: first, by a plebiscite; second, by a simple transfer. In their opinion the first presents obvious difficulties, the greatest of which would be its repercussions in other countries where minority problems are acute. They, therefore, suggest to Beneš that Czechoslovakia would probably prefer to effect a direct transfer.

3. They then go on to suggest that this transfer would obviously affect those districts containing more than 50 percent of Germans in their population. They suggest that the transfer of the territories and the limiting of the new frontier should be carried out through negotiations by an international commission on which Czechoslovakia would be represented.

4. They suggested that the international commission also be charged with the duty of drawing up a plan for the exchange of populations where those populations may desire to be transferred on a basis of option within a fixed time limit.

5. They suggest to Beneš that if Czechoslovakia accepts these proposals it is only natural that she will expect some form of guarantee of the new Czechoslovak State from the countries which have brought her to this decision.

6. The note here states that the Government of the United Kingdom is therefore prepared to take its part in an international guarantee of the neutrality of the frontiers of the new Czechoslovak State, together with reciprocal military pledges and suggested that this new international guarantee might eventually take the place of certain present existing treaties (Cambon remarked that the provisions of this paragraph were not very precise and said that the obligations of the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty would be unimpaired under the new arrangement).

7. The two Governments paid a tribute to the great sacrifice which they realize Czechoslovakia is being called upon to make in the interests of European peace and do not minimize the extent of this sacrifice.

8. They point out that the British Prime Minister expects to see Hitler by Wednesday at the latest and earlier if possible and urge upon Beneš the necessity for a prompt reply.

Cambon, who personally seemed extremely upset by the decisions framed in this note, said that he does not see how it would be possible for Beneš to give an immediate reply as he has no authority without the consent of his Parliament to accept any such terms.

Cambon pointed out the obvious fact that this note has not been delivered to Beneš and emphasized that the main portion was given in the most strict confidence.

I am seeing the Prime Minister at 4 o'clock.

KENNEDY

760F.62/916 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 19, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 19—3:53 p. m.]

1509. Bonnet has just informed me that the joint telegram of the British and French Governments proposing to Beneš that he should cede at once to Germany the districts containing 52 [50?] % of Germans and over has been despatched to Praha.

I asked what would happen to the Czech minority in these districts and to the German minority in the remainder of Czechoslovakia and Bonnet said that there would be an exchange of populations. I asked him if Chamberlain had discussed this question of exchange of populations with Hitler and he replied that he had. I repeated the question and he repeated the assertion. I asked if Hitler would accept this solution. Bonnet said that since he had asked only for a plebiscite and was being handed the Sudeten Chamberlain was confident he would accept.

Bonnet said further that the British Government had informed Praha officially today that if the British-French proposal should be rejected by the Czechoslovak Government, Great Britain would not come to the support of Czechoslovakia under any circumstances no matter what might happen. On the other hand if the Czechs should accept the proposal Great Britain would be prepared to enter into an international guarantee of the Czechoslovak State.

I asked Bonnet what the position of France would be if Beneš should refuse and he replied that the position of France would be the same as the British position. France positively would not march in support of Czechoslovakia. I ventured to doubt the accuracy of this statement and said that I believed Daladier was more belligerent than he was. Bonnet replied that on the contrary Daladier agreed entirely and it was Daladier and not himself who had conducted the discussion in London in the course of which this point had been brought out.

I said to Bonnet that nevertheless I could not imagine the French public remaining quiet and watching the Czechoslovak Army slowly destroyed by the German Army. Bonnet replied that he could imagine it very well; the people of France desired nothing but peace; at least 80% of the population was opposed to going to war under any conditions in support of Czechoslovakia.

I said that on the contrary I should expect an immense public reaction led by the Communists and the Socialists. Bonnet said that the Communists would make all the trouble they could; but he did not believe the Socialists would, and he did not anticipate any serious internal troubles.

I then alluded to the possibility that the Poles and Hungarians would strike if recession should be accorded to the Sudeten and withheld from the Polish and Hungarian minorities. Bonnet said that it was nonsense for the Poles to take this attitude. The question was one of peace and war in Europe. There were 3½ million Germans involved and only 40,000 Poles (the Poles say 200,000. There are 90,000), and the Poles and Hungarians could perfectly well wait for 2 or 3 months and then have their plebiscites.

I said that I remained pessimistic. What would happen if Beneš should refuse? Bonnet said: "He cannot refuse. We will not let Beneš in order to maintain the domination of 7 million Czechs over 3½ million Germans drive 40 million French people to their deaths and he knows it."

Bonnet said that if the French Government had refused Chamberlain's proposal he would have considered the danger of war enormous. As it was he did not.

Altogether Bonnet was much more confident than I had expected to find him. He had received no indication with regard to Beneš' reaction to the British-French proposal.

BULLITT

760F.62/914: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 19, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received September 19—5:45 p. m.]

970. My 966, September 19, 3 p. m. I have just left the Prime Minister. He did not have much to add to the note which has now been sent to Beneš, the substance of which we cabled you this morning, except to say that he had sent a personal message to Beneš telling him Runciman felt that Beneš' last offer for settlement of the Sudeten problem was entirely beyond hope now; the nature of affairs had reached such a state that nothing but separation of the Sudeten region was possible.

Chamberlain cabled Hitler saying he would probably see him on Wednesday and received a reply from Hitler that that would be very fine. Hitler asked Chamberlain if he could give out a statement tonight with this information about their next meeting. Chamberlain answered not until they had received some indication of Beneš' reply. He said that the French impressed him yesterday as coming over with their tongues out looking for some way to save themselves from war; that although a number of times during the conference there were sad words spoken about Czechoslovakia they were always followed up by,

"We must take a realistic view of the whole question." When the meeting was almost over Chamberlain said he asked Daladier, "Supposing Beneš answered 'no'; what do you propose to do?" Daladier said he supposed he would be held by his treaty and would have to march. Chamberlain, said, "How are you going to reconcile a martial war with the fact that you have already gone on record as saying you do not believe in the principle?" Daladier said he had not thought of that.

My own impression is that unless there is a terrific rise of public opinion all over the world, England does not propose to fight on the Czechoslovak issue.

Chamberlain also told me that Henderson had gone to see Goering to make it clear that the British would regard it as an insult if, while these negotiations were on, Hitler gave the order to march. Goering said that they need not be afraid of that unless there is a catastrophe. I asked Chamberlain what he thought that might be and he said a military coup on the part of the Czechoslovak Army, which he thinks is not at all unlikely because even though Beneš might agree to the terms it is conceivably possible that the army may refuse to. In that event Chamberlain is convinced that Hitler would march at once.

He has had some objection in his Cabinet to the whole plan and he realizes he is going to be charged with the rape of Czechoslovakia, but he always says war is the alternative and, "I can see no rhyme nor reason in fighting for a cause which, if I went to war for it, I would have to settle after it was over in about the same way I suggest settling it now." He looked a little tired and I think he is quite worried. I heard this morning that Oliver Stanley,⁴³ Winterton, Duff-Cooper⁴⁴ and Elliott⁴⁵ were very lukewarm on the whole proposition; that possibly Hore-Belisha⁴⁶ would join them, but on the general principle of trying to work the problem out they have gone along with Chamberlain.

If he gets an answer from Beneš that permits him to move, he will leave Wednesday for Germany.

KENNEDY

760F.62/911 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 19, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received September 19—5:13 p. m.]

462. In these anxious days of waiting the Italian attitude assumes a growing importance.

⁴³ President of the British Board of Trade.

⁴⁴ Alfred Duff Cooper, First Lord of the British Admiralty.

⁴⁵ Walter E. Elliott, British Minister for Health.

⁴⁶ Leslie Hore-Belisha, British Secretary of State for War.

I have discussed with Attolico⁴⁷ the recent indications of Italy's attitude and as we analyzed the letter to Lord Runciman the speech on Sunday and previous communications it would appear that the position is as follows:

Mussolini desires above all to avoid a European struggle; if there must be a struggle between Czechoslovakia and Germany he desires it to be limited. If this appears impossible and a general war results then in his words, "Italy's place is chosen."

The two recent announcements seem to show: (a) Mussolini serves warning on the Czechoslovak Government that the Sudeten-German problem must be settled in the interest of European peace. (b) He serves warning on Germany and holds out hope to the Czechs by declaring his peaceful interest in and friendship for an "independent Bohemian state". (c) He foresees the possibility of a repetition of the same sort of danger arising in the future in respect to the Hungarian and Polish minorities and therefore desires once and for all by one more operation to eliminate future danger spots in the Danube valley.

France. He waves a red flag at France in declaring that if the war is generalized Italy's place is chosen and this is published on the day on which the French Cabinet is discussing Chamberlain's proposal.

Attolico says that the Italians are under the impression of recent events:

A month ago the British discouraged their traders from dealing with Italy.

Two weeks ago the French refused visas to travelers to Italy.

Then came Chamberlain's statement of a week ago Saturday to the effect that England in any case sides with France. This was made more specific by Eden's letter to the *Times*. In Italian eyes the guarantee that Great Britain had given, as a remnant of the Locarno undertakings, has changed into an out and out alliance with France. Italy is logically driven to take definite position in the opposing camp since to remain here if Germany were destroyed it would be Italy's turn next.

The Ambassador urgently hopes that if this present crisis is surmounted it will be followed immediately by a realization of the Four Power Pact. Without it he can see no hope for the maintenance of peace in Europe or for the avoidance of automatic and binding alliances dividing Europe into two camps. The Four Power Pact he continues would fill the purpose originally conceived for the Council of the League of Nations by enabling the great Western Powers in a moment of danger automatically to consult.

⁴⁷ Bernardo Attolico, Italian Ambassador in Germany.

It is curious that in another conversation today with Lipsky, Polish Ambassador, I found him also speculating along these same lines in respect to the Italian attitude.

He says that he is so convinced that warnings and threats to Germany are worse than useless, that he has consistently maintained the attitude in his conversations with Germans that the German Government will be driven by logic and reason to a peaceful settlement rather than one which will risk a European conflict.

Lipsky feels that the Germans consider the Chamberlain visit as a triumph for Hitler. They welcome the step with its possibility of appeasement but nevertheless they have made no public rejoicing over the triumph and indeed have shown by their courtesy and warmth of reception their appreciation of Chamberlain's attitude. Lipsky states further that in his opinion Chamberlain's visit has gone far towards soothing the wounded pride occasioned by the British warning on May 21 with its disastrous result in spurring German military preparation and stiffening their attitude.

WILSON

704.60F62/1 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr)*⁴⁸

WASHINGTON, September 19, 1938—9 p. m.

65. Wilson reports⁴⁹ Czechoslovak Consul General informed the American Consul General in Vienna that he had been instructed to inquire whether our Vienna Consulate General would take over Czechoslovak interests in case of rupture.

We can obviously not agree to take over the interests of any one Czechoslovak Consulate in Germany unless we are asked officially by the Czechoslovak Government to take over Czechoslovak interests, in case of rupture, throughout the Reich. This we will gladly do upon receiving a request to this effect.

We feel it is due the Czechoslovak Government to know, however, that we feel that we may not be in as good a position to further their interests in Germany as some other nation which has not had the divergence of views in its relations with Germany which we have had in connection with some of the matters which have recently come up in our relations with that country.

You should take this matter up with the Czechoslovak Government as soon as possible in the above sense in a spirit of entire willingness

⁴⁸ Repeated to the Ambassador in Germany as Department's No. 160, September 19, 7 p. m.

⁴⁹ Telegram No. 447, September 16, noon, from the Ambassador in Germany, not printed.

to be of any help we can to the Czechoslovak Government in the event of their wishing to have us assume their interests in Germany, but at the same time wishing to be entirely frank.

Report results of your conversation.

A copy of this telegram is being sent to the Embassy in Berlin.

HULL

740.00/4613

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)*⁵⁰

[WASHINGTON,] September 20, 1938.

The French Ambassador called this morning. He said that the decision France had made had been a very painful one, but was due to the fact that France was not prepared to fight. Her inferiority in the air made this out of the question, and he only wished that the Government might be able to explain this to the people as the underlying reason, but doubted whether, as a practical measure, it could do so.

The Ambassador said he had been quite shocked at the tenor of some of the editorial comment in this country during the last forty-eight hours. He had little complaint to make of the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, but there were many editorials that were wounding him as well as a large number of letters, more or less insulting, that were being addressed to his Embassy and to the various French Consulates. He had reported briefly on these attacks to his Government in Paris, but urged them, under no account, to enter into polemics.

The Ambassador went on to say that while he had a high regard for Mr. Blum, he felt that his recent appeal to the President had been ill-advised.⁵¹

As a matter of fact Mr. Jouhaux had seen the President a day or two ago.⁵² The President had referred to this message of Mr. Blum's but pointed out that he did not feel the situation warranted any initiative from him. Such an initiative, if not accepted, might make the situation even worse than it was. Mr. Jouhaux then asked the President if he could not summon a conference. The President had replied that the same considerations would militate against this,

⁵⁰ Photostatic copy obtained from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N. Y.

⁵¹ The "appeal" under reference was a signed editorial by Léon Blum, former President of the French Council of Ministers, in the newspaper *Populaire*, September 18, 1938.

⁵² Léon Jouhaux, President of the Confédération Générale du Travail, was on a visit to the United States.

but that if England and France should summon a conference and invite the United States, he was prepared to accept. Mr. Jouhaux had then asked whether he might make use of this information. The President replied that it should not be given publicity, but that he might discuss it with his friends.

Mr. Jouhaux had naturally reported this to the French Ambassador, but upon being interrogated frankly admitted that he did not know what the President had in mind, whether it was a political conference, a disarmament conference, a conference for the humanization of war, et cetera. He did not know whether the President was thinking in terms of an immediate conference or at a later date, though the Ambassador added that if it were put off too long Germany would have had what she wanted. As Mr. Jouhaux was undoubtedly going to influence both the French and British in the direction of initiating such a conference, the Ambassador thought that it was very important to get the President's ideas a little more clearly before his Government, and to that effect asked me to present this matter to the Secretary of State in order that the latter might be able to give him more specific information when he came to call on the Secretary, probably on Thursday.⁵³

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/1013

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] September 20, 1938.

The Czech Chargé d'Affaires called this noon. He made an impassioned plea for some statement to Czechoslovakia in her hour of need by either the President or the Secretary of State. I told him that the difficulty lay in saying anything that would not be construed at this moment as advice to some nation either to fight or not to fight and that we were unwilling to assume the responsibility of giving any advice either directly or inferentially. I felt that advice which was not to be implemented should not be given. The Chargé said that he was still convinced that Czechoslovakia would fight and that any government which advocated surrender would probably not be able to stand up.

The Chargé then introduced one of his compatriots, Mr. Slechta, Member of the Praha Council, who had collaborated in the preparation of Czechoslovakia's Fourth Plan.⁵⁴ He too joined his pleas with those of the Chargé for some last minute message that would

⁵³ See memorandum by the Secretary of State, September 23 (Friday), p. 638.

⁵⁴ See memorandum of September 7, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs, p. 578.

remove from the Czechs the feeling of being deserted, not to say betrayed, by all their friends. He said that the Secretary's speech of August 16 and the President's Kingston speech had both greatly heartened his compatriots and added that any statement by us might perhaps save the situation.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

760F.62/923 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 20, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received September 20—11:25 a. m.]

1518. While I was lunching with Sir Eric Phipps, the British Ambassador, Bonnet telephoned in great excitement to say that he had just heard from Beneš that the Czech Government had not yet decided what course to pursue but was considering two alternatives; 1, to appeal for general arbitration of the minority question in Czechoslovakia; 2, to accept the British-French proposal.

Bonnet said further that he believed that if Beneš should appeal for arbitration German troops would enter Czechoslovakia tonight. He was therefore about to urge the Czech Government in the strongest terms to accept the British-French proposal at once.

The British Ambassador said he had replied to Bonnet that he was so sure of the position of his Government that, without consulting his Government, he would at once telephone to Praha and tell the British Minister to express the opinion to the Czechoslovak Government that if the Czechoslovak Government should appeal for arbitration German troops would enter Czechoslovakia tonight.

The British Ambassador added that both the French and British Governments had made it entirely clear to Beneš that if he should not accept the British-French proposal and German troops should enter Czechoslovakia no support would be accorded to Czechoslovakia by either Great Britain or France. The British Ambassador then telephoned to the British Minister in Praha and also to the Foreign Office in London which indicated entire accord with his views and actions.

The final Czech reply is expected by Bonnet at 3 o'clock this afternoon.

BULLITT

760F.62/941 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 20, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received September 20—5:45 p. m.]

208. No official information is yet available either as to the Anglo-French terms or probable Czechoslovak reply. The Cabinet is now sitting with Beneš. The British and French Ministers have been promised replies in the early afternoon. I hope then to learn nature of them. After a conversation with a high official of the Foreign Office I am convinced that the published proposals are substantially correct and believe that they will be accepted by the Government. If so, the acceptance would have to be approved by Parliament which would be convened immediately. The Sudeten Senators and Deputies retain the right to vote since individually they still function notwithstanding the dissolution of the Sudeten Party. Slav population is now united on questions affecting the integrity and external relations of the state.

There is deep resentment at the course of the French and the British. My informant said that Czechoslovakia was approached by Germany before the German-Polish Treaty⁵⁵ and asked to conclude a similar treaty and that Czechoslovakia refused unless France and Great Britain could also be included. Germany was unwilling. He implied that had Czechoslovakia not been true to her commitments to France she might have then signed a pact with Germany and today been in a much more advantageous position. He still holds, however, that if Germany should attack this country France would be bound to honor her treaty obligation but he clearly did not feel sure that she would. He was non-committal in regard to Russia.

My informant agrees with me that there is real danger on the German border where the Henleinist Refugee Legion is organizing and menacing Czech customhouses and *gendarmerie* under the guise of protecting the Sudeten population on the Czech side of the border. This is unquestionably part of a plan to create a situation along the border which would furnish a plausible excuse for entry of German troops into the Sudeten region.

In reply to my question whether, assuming acceptance of the Anglo-French proposals as published, the public would support the President and the Government or whether there might be a revolt, the official said he was not certain. The President has great influence and the people have shown extraordinary calmness and self-control but when faced with a proposal to surrender territory they claim historically a part of the country for centuries, essential to it economically

⁵⁵ Signed January 26, 1934, *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. CXXXVII, p. 496.

and in which its main defenses are located the people might overthrow the present Government.

He seemed not to have reached a definite opinion upon this point however.

No information was obtainable in regard to Horthy's reported visit to Hitler but it was thought probable he would demand for the Hungarian minority the same treatment as might be given the Sudeten Germans although he did not regard the merits as equal.

CARR

760F.62/938 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 20, 1938—midnight.
[Received September 20—10:25 p. m.]

210. My telegram No. 208. The Czechoslovak reply does not accept the Anglo-French proposal but after giving reasons for non-acceptance proposes arbitration under Czechoslovak-German Treaty. If this should not be agreeable to Hitler the door is left open for further discussion. The British Minister informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs that this reply will not be acceptable to the French and British Governments and if submitted to Hitler would be likely to invite a German attack at once. British Minister has asked instructions to tell Beneš tonight that the Czech answer is unacceptable, that peace hangs by a thread and if Anglo-French proposals are not accepted the British and French would wash their hands of the matter. The Minister believes that if the proposals are promptly accepted peace can be maintained. If not we may expect the worst. He is reasonably certain as I am that this Government will accept. He expects instructions by midnight and will see the President immediately.

CARR

760F.62/956 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

PARIS, September 21, 1938—noon.
[Received September 21—11:10 a. m.]

1530. Jules Henry has just informed Wilson that after the reply from Praha last night proposing conciliation and arbitration under the 1925 Arbitration Treaty between Germany and Czechoslovakia the French and British Governments at once went back to Praha,

pointed out that it was too late for this procedure, that if further delay took place Hitler would march, and "begged" for reconsideration. The French Minister at Praha telephoned this morning that a reply had now been received which was an acceptance of the Anglo-French proposition. The text of the reply has not yet been received in Paris.

Henry said that it was clear now that the same concessions granted the German minority in Czechoslovakia would have to be conceded to the Polish and Hungarian minorities. In other words Teschen will have to be handed over to Poland and the areas in which the Hungarian population exceeds 50 percent will have to be ceded to Hungary. He said that this question had not yet been discussed by the British and French Governments with the Czechoslovak Government; but it was absolutely clear that this was the only solution. The upshot of it would be that a small Czech State would remain with a homogeneous Czech population.

Henry said that Chamberlain would go to Godesberg tomorrow as planned. Henry is fearful that Hitler will not be satisfied even now and will have dug up further demands to make of the British and French since his last interview with Chamberlain.

BULLITT

760F.62/946 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 21, 1938—noon.
[Received September 21—8:35 a. m.]

1528. The British Ambassador has just informed me that the Czech Government has accepted flatly and unconditionally the British-French proposal. He says that it has definitely been decided that Chamberlain will fly to Germany tomorrow to meet Hitler.

The British Ambassador states that the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia will probably be given to Poland and Hungary outright in districts where they number more than 50 percent of the population, and a special regime will be created for the Polish and Hungarian minorities which may remain in Czechoslovakia as well as for the German minorities.

The British Ambassador added that the reluctance of the Praha Government to accept the British-French proposal had been based on promises from the Soviet Government which the Praha Government had finally decided were inadequate. He said that he had the impression that the Czech Government finally was relieved to have the flat statement from Great Britain and France that if the British-French

proposal should not be accepted the Czechs would receive no support from Great Britain and France no matter what might happen.

The British Ambassador was confident that although it would take some weeks to work out the detailed arrangements the chance that war might break out over the question of Czechoslovakia was almost nonexistent.

BULLITT

760F.82/973 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 21, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 21—4:40 p. m.]

983. I just left Sir Alexander Cadogan. When I arrived they were translating the communiqué from Praha and before I left they brought it in. He read it and prepared to take it to the Cabinet now in session at 10 Downing Street. It is not satisfactory. Hodža⁵⁶ says he is having trouble with the leaders of the political parties and while he hopes to have them straightened out this afternoon, he can give no definite acceptance of the British-French plan. Cadogan was evidently disturbed. He will advise me later today or tonight just what happens on this last note.

He told me that at the conference with the Prime Minister this morning the question of what attitude the Prime Minister would take if Hitler attempted to bring up Polish or Hungarian minorities and Chamberlain has decided he will not discuss anything but the Sudeten situation on the ground that Hitler had made it clear that this was a racial problem, with which point of view Chamberlain has some sympathy. If Hitler insists on talking of these new issues, Chamberlain will adjourn the meeting⁵⁷ and return home.

Public opinion here, I think, is probably a shade against Chamberlain's plan and there is definitely opposition in the Cabinet unless Chamberlain brings back some commitments from Hitler, such as demobilization, a larger percentage of votes in the Sudeten area to carry the plan, some idea of his future steps and two or three others which have not yet been formulated. If Chamberlain does not get these, there is liable to be a break in the Cabinet.

I asked Cadogan about the guarantee to the Czechoslovak State after this Sudeten split up and he told me that England would be

⁵⁶ Milan Hodža, Czechoslovak Prime Minister; resigned September 22, and was succeeded by General Syrový.

⁵⁷ With the German Chancellor, at Godesberg, September 22-23.

a participant in this guarantee for protection against aggression but they did not bar the discussion of the minorities for some peaceful means of secession, so it looks to me that this probably won't mean very much.

I don't think they are misleading themselves into thinking that there is not always a possibility of a war at some time hereafter, but Chamberlain and his advisers are hoping that something can happen before the actual war takes place. He also told me that he did not believe it possible for England under peace time operations to ever catch up with Germany's preparations for war, where the whole influence of the state is behind it, which gives more or less official evidence to the fact that time is not the only needed element that Britain wants for catching up with Germany.

In various ways the leaders of the House still sounding out public opinion and I get the impression it is not particularly helpful to their ideas. Chamberlain still feels strongly that a war is the end of this present civilization—that Communism or something worse is liable to follow.

I am expecting to see some of the Cabinet around 7 o'clock. If anything develops I will cable.

In most gatherings that we attend here the English are spending most of their time apologizing to us for the way England is acting and while if war were declared they would go, they would still be hollering murder because they had to fight for Czechoslovakia. So it looks to me like a pretty tough situation here which will affect public opinion in your favor. You are damned if you do and damned if you don't.

KENNEDY

760F.62/977 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 21, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 6:41 p. m.]

1536. I have talked this afternoon with Paul Reynaud and later with Blum. They both expressed the view that the sense of relief at first felt by the French people at the apparent removal of the immediate threat of war is being replaced by a sense of humiliation and indignation which will increase to such an extent as to cause the overthrow of the Government within the next 2 weeks and the formation of a government of national union.

Blum expressed the opinion which I have heard from others that Chamberlain may encounter at Godesberg tomorrow a series of fur-

ther demands from Hitler which will be impossible for the British and French Governments to accept.

BULLITT

760F.62/978: Telegram

The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State

Moscow, September 21, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received September 21—4:55 p. m.]

301. The Czechoslovak Minister in a conversation today characterized the Anglo-French proposals to the Praha Government as a virtual ultimatum; that it amounted in substance to a dismemberment of Czechoslovakia; that if events followed the course which they were pursuing at present he expected the Germans would move against Czechoslovakia within a day or two and that in that event his country would fight.

He professed to be unable to explain the apparent weakening in the attitude toward Germany of England and especially of France and was outspoken in his criticism of the vacillating policy of the French Government. The treatment of the Czechoslovak crisis he said constituted a danger to both France and England for the future and the effects of their policy was already resolved to itself in the preparations which both Poland and Hungary were making on behalf of their minority in Czechoslovakia although Poland, he believed, would be the next victim of Nazi aggression and need expect no greater protection on the part of France than Czechoslovakia might receive.

The Soviet Government, the Minister stated, had been entirely straightforward in the declaration of its attitude in the present crisis. It had declared that it would fulfill its treaty obligations and he was convinced that the aid which it might render in meeting those obligations would be immediate and efficacious. As to the means which the Soviets would employ in a conflict, the Minister alluded only to the use of Soviet aviation. The fact remained, however, that Soviet aid to Czechoslovakia was dependent upon assistance being rendered to that country by France, and the Minister said in strict confidence that it would be quite understandable if the Soviet Government would not be inclined to move if France did not. The matter of League formalities as provided for in the mutual assistance pact between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union offered no difficulties especially at the present moment while the League was in session but if owing to the Anglo-French attitude German action against Czechoslovakia

was localized the Soviet Government would, in the Minister's opinion, be fully justified in refraining from coming alone to the aid of Czechoslovakia in a form which might be characterized by the German Government as a Communist *putsch* and result in launching the Soviet Union on an undertaking which would repeat the experiences in Spain.

KIRK

760F.62/986 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 22, 1938—noon.

[Received September 22—7:30 a. m.]

471. In a conversation yesterday with the Counsellor of the Embassy the Russian Chargé d'Affaires stated that under no circumstances would Russia lend military assistance to Czechoslovakia except in common action with France. Discussing the general European situation he said that although it might remain for a time in formal existence the Franco-Russian Treaty⁵⁸ to all intents and purposes must be regarded as dead.

Cipher text Moscow.

WILSON

704.60F62/3 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 22, 1938—noon.

[Received September 22—9:55 a. m.]

217. Your telegram No. 65, September 19. The Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that he greatly appreciates your frankness as well as your desire to be of assistance. He has asked me to convey to you the official requests of the Czechoslovak Government to take over in case of conflict between Czechoslovakia and Germany the protection of Czechoslovak citizens and interests in the German Reich. He said he had received what amounted to ultimatums from the Hungarian and Polish Governments demanding for the Polish and Hungarian minorities in this country the same treatment as now conceded to the Germans. He requested that if conflict with Poland and Hungary ensues the United States represent Czechoslovak interests in those countries also.

The moment he said is critical adding he hoped war would be averted but newspaper reports from abroad indicated that Hitler at today's

⁵⁸ The 5-year mutual assistance agreement of May 2, 1935; League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CLXVII, p. 395.

meeting with Chamberlain might enlarge his demands resulting in further pressure on this country. Henlein irregulars he said had occupied Asch and the narrow strip of indefensible territory in which it is included. If these irregulars or German Army elements occupied further portions of the boundary territory the Czechoslovak Army would have to defend itself.

Am repeating to Berlin, Warsaw, and Budapest.

CARR

360F.1115/3 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 22, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received September 22—1:10 p. m.]

219. Your numbers 62 and 63, September 15 and 19.⁵⁹ British Legation is informing British inquirers through the several British Consulates that the situation is critical and that they should be prepared to leave as soon as possible. This they are doing orally after British subjects have first been summoned to the Consulates "to complete registration records"; we cannot follow like method because of having only one Consulate in the country and the large number of Americans scattered over the whole of Czechoslovakia.

The Consulate General has confidentially inquired of the Ministry of Railways as to train facilities for American citizens in case of emergency and has been told that no assurances can be given in such an event that train transportation from Praha to any border could be maintained. In case of war international trains would cease to run and domestic trains would either be partially maintained or completely stopped. Consul General and I are of the opinion that with troop movements the latter would be of little avail. British Legation has had similar results from its inquiries in relation to transportation.

In view of the rapidly increasing seriousness of the situation and practical impossibility of leaving Czechoslovakia in case of possible hostilities on all frontiers I feel that all American nationals here are entitled to some notification without further delay of the importance of arranging to leave the country promptly. Consul General on my instructions has ready for immediate mailing the following circular to American citizens on record in his office:

"Conditions here are such that at any time it may become impossible for American citizens to leave the country. It is therefore of

⁵⁹ No. 63, September 19, not printed.

the utmost importance that every American citizen should take steps without delay to insure his own safety by being prepared for immediate departure. While American citizens must reach their own decisions the Consulate General emphasizes the great risk which would be run by remaining and that Americans who insist upon remaining do so on their own responsibility."

If situation should become worse during the day I propose to have the circular mailed unless I am instructed to the contrary.⁶⁰

CARR

760F.62/998 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 22, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received September 22—4:35 p. m.]

1546. Winston Churchill returned to London last night after having spent 24 hours in Paris. We are reliably informed that in conversation with prominent people here he expressed indignation at the course taken by Great Britain and France in the Czech question, stated that the time had come to say no to any further demands by Hitler, and that British public opinion could be counted on to stand firm on this proposition.

BULLITT

704.60F62/3 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)*⁶¹

WASHINGTON, September 22, 1938—7 p. m.

162. Praha's 217, September 22, noon. In the event that there should be a conflict between Czechoslovakia and Germany and the Czech Minister requests you to assume charge of Czechoslovak interests in Germany you are authorized to accept.

HULL

⁶⁰The Department telegraphed the Minister on September 22 (telegram No. 66, 5 p. m.) that his action was approved, and on September 23 the Minister informed the Department (telegram No. 225, 1 p. m.), that Americans were being notified (360F.1115/3, 6).

The Department authorized the Minister in Hungary to take similar action, at his discretion, with respect to Americans in Budapest (telegram No. 63, September 27, 11 a. m.); the Minister telegraphed the Department (telegram No. 97, September 28, noon) that he had advised all Americans to leave Hungary (364.1115/3, 7).

⁶¹The same, *mutatis mutandis*, on the same date, to the Ambassador in Poland as No. 38, and to the Minister in Hungary as No. 59.

760C.60F/230 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State*PARIS, September 22, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received September 22—5:05 p. m.]

1547. The Czechoslovak Counselor this morning showed to Wilson two notes which he was delivering to the French Foreign Office. The first note stated that yesterday the Polish Minister at Praha had demanded the same treatment for the Polish minority in Czechoslovakia as that given to the German minority. The second note advised that this morning the Hungarian Minister in Praha had demanded the same treatment on behalf of the Hungarian minority. The Counselor said bitterly that if only 6 months ago the French Government had informed the Czechoslovak Government that France would be unable, when it came to a show down, to live up to her obligations the Czechs would still have had time to work out some arrangement with Germany. He asserted that the 1925 treaties had been imposed on Czechoslovakia by France at a time when the former was considering improving her relations with her neighbors. Later when Hitler made his non-aggression pact with Poland he had offered a similar pact to Czechoslovakia which would have guaranteed the country for 10 years. This would have meant giving up the French and Russian treaties and the Czechoslovak Government therefore sounded out the French Government. The latter gave the most definite assurances that the alliance with France could be counted upon to the limit. Even 2 weeks ago the Czechoslovak Government had received definite assurances that France's obligations would be carried out.

The Czechoslovak Counselor, deeply moved, said that his country was threatened with extinction. He spoke of the possibility of Czechoslovakia seeking to join up with Hungary in a sort of dual state.

BULLITT

760C.60F/231 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State*PARIS, September 22, 1938—9 p. m.
[Received September 22—5:38 p. m.]

1548. The Polish Ambassador informed me this evening that he had had another acrimonious conversation with Bonnet this afternoon in the course of which he had told Bonnet that Polish troops were prepared to cross the border and seize the Teschen District at once if

satisfaction should be given to the German population of Czechoslovakia without satisfaction being given to the Polish. He said that Bonnet had used the argument that the Poles should wait and that Poland would receive satisfaction after a few weeks and Hungary would receive satisfaction after another few weeks. The Polish Ambassador said that he had replied to Bonnet that Poland was unwilling to be a party to any such immorality and that the Polish Government was shocked that the French and British Governments should be so unfair to the Czechoslovak Government as to conceal from the Czechoslovak Government that they intended to turn over to the Poles and Hungarians their minorities.

The information of the Polish Ambassador indicated that Hitler would receive Chamberlain most politely and would not shoot Santa Claus. I am sure that it is unnecessary to impress upon you once more that the danger of an entry of the Polish Army into the Teschen District is real and immediate.

BULLITT

760F.62/1198

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] September 23, 1938.

The French Ambassador called on his own request. In reply to some general inquiry about the European situation, he said he had had a news flash to the effect that German troops were crossing the Czechoslovakian border this afternoon. He had no more news than I had about the European situation.

He then brought up the question of criticism by newspapers and individuals in this country of the French and the British because of their recent course regarding Czechoslovakia. I stated that, without going into any discussion of the merits, it was sufficient to say that high officials of this Government are criticized severely by the press, but under our system of the freedom of the press there is no occasion to discuss the inevitability of criticism from time to time both of our Government and governments abroad; that the friendship of the American people for the people of France is so sincere and deep-seated that no criticism by a limited number of newspapers, groups, and individuals in this country would materially alienate the friendly feeling of our people for those of France, and that probably there is as much difference of views in France and England from time to time in regard to acute questions and conditions as he sees in this country with respect to the attitude of France and England.

The Ambassador then referred to the conversation of his fellow-Frenchman, Mr. Jouhaux, with President Roosevelt, after which Mr.

Jouhaux had quoted the President as saying that if he should be invited to attend an international conference he would accept. The Ambassador desired to know what I knew about it. I replied that he might well keep two things in mind; that, in the first place, the President of no country gives out important official information in that manner to an individual citizen, and, in the second place, unless Mr. Jouhaux thoroughly understands English it would be well to verify his version of the conversation before repeating it. I said that I made these observations so that there would be no possibility of the French Government being misled in any way, and that I did so without reference to the merits of the subject under discussion.

The Ambassador then made reference to the Neutrality Act⁶² and its possible operation in the event of war. I replied that I was not in a position to discuss the Neutrality Act or the subject of neutrality; that I was thus careful in my attitude in order to avoid every possibility of misleading the French Government or any other government; that the Congress will convene during the winter; that again belligerent nations in control of the high seas know fairly well what they can have access to in the way of commodities in almost any and every part of the world.

The Ambassador seemed very apprehensive and disturbed about the outlook abroad.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

760F.62/1025 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 23, 1938—noon.

[Received September 23—9:35 a. m.]

479. The feature news in the morning papers is the military reoccupation of the Sudeten border districts by order of the new Praha Government. Lurid accounts are given of the ruthless deportment of the troops who are reported to have opened fire on passers-by without warning, shooting down 16 people in the Eger District alone. Alleged persecution of Hungarian and Polish national groups by the Czech authorities is also emphasized.

The following excerpt from the *Berliner Tageblatt* illustrates the general opinion of editorial comment.

"The lunatic actions of the rulers whom Czechism in this desperate hour has made the arbiters of its fate cuts off all possibility of further

⁶² Approved August 31, 1935; 49 Stat. 1081; amended May 1, 1937; 50 Stat. 121.

quiet development. After a Praha Government had agreed to the proposals which England and France drafted and which the Sudeten Germans were about to implement in order to avoid still more victims, Praha's new Government at Moscow's order, directs its hounds against the still unprotected Sudeten Germans. It is needless to say that now they will not remain without protection a moment longer than the circumstance requires. Long enough Germany warned of the danger of such a criminal act of desperation on the part of Bolshevised Czechism. The time went by unused. Now it is past."

The noon press features reports purporting to demonstrate conclusively that Moscow is completely dominating the Czech Government and has ordered a policy of terrorism centering on the German borders. Sirovy is said to have declared before a Bolshevik mass meeting that in spite of all previous decisions the possibility of war within the next few days is not to be excluded.

WILSON

760F.62/1024 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 23, 1938—noon.
[Received September 23—10:40 a. m.]

224. Entire country calm and orderly except for German instigated disturbances at several points on the border. The Czechs have regained control in most places. Government's prompt restoration of order and the people's full response to the measures have been astonishing in the circumstances. In Praha itself an abnormal calm prevails. Border incidents seem on the increase. Henlein's Freikorps are conducting a campaign of provocation and murderous attack at various points on the frontier. German radio and press exaggerate and wholly misrepresent incidents and unjustly place complete blame on the Czechs. Often the facts are completely reversed by the German press. There is clearly a German effort to provoke trouble and have the world believe the Czechs are responsible. There are some troop movements here. Reserves continue to join army but no general mobilization. Ministry of National Defense says the French forbid Czech mobilization, presumably planned after the Anglo-French proposals.

G-2⁶³ states Hungarians have six classes mobilized and Poles are making secret preparation for action.

CARR

⁶³ Army Intelligence.

760F.62/1052 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 24, 1938—noon.
[Received September 24—11:25 a. m.]

1569. I have just talked with both Bonnet and the British Ambassador. Neither has any exact information with regard to Chamberlain's midnight conversation with Hitler.

Chamberlain left Godesberg at a quarter before 10 this morning. Neither the British Ambassador nor Bonnet expects to have any definite information until some hours after his arrival in London.

The outstanding question (as indicated in my 1564, September 23, 11 p. m.⁶⁴) is whether Hitler should be permitted to occupy certain districts in the Sudeten area at once or should be required to wait. Bonnet said to me that he believed it would be folly to destroy the continent of Europe on the issue of whether Hitler took these districts on the 25th September or the 25th of October. The British Ambassador expressed exactly the same opinion. During the past 24 hours public opinion in France has strengthened greatly on the side of war in the event of attack on Czechoslovakia. If the decisions of the British Cabinet should be adverse to acceptance of Hitler's demand I believe that Daladier would summon the French Parliament at once. Parliament could probably meet within 12 hours of the summons.

It would be necessary to summon Parliament because the Prime Minister under the French Constitution has no authority to order an attack against foreign soil or to issue a declaration of war except in case France is invaded, without a vote of Parliament.

Chautemps⁶⁵ said to me last night that he had discussed this point with Daladier recently. Daladier had said to him that if the situation grew more critical he would use to the limit his powers to produce a partial mobilization but positively would not issue an order for general mobilization before he had a vote of Parliament authorizing him to declare war. He would not place himself in the ridiculous position of mobilizing the army and having it stand under arms pending a vote of the Chamber.

If the British Cabinet and the French should reject Hitler's demand and German troops should attack Czechoslovakia there probably would be a period of about 12 hours before the French Parliament could vote in favor of war.

I have no doubt that if Germany should attack Czechoslovakia the French Parliament would vote for war.

⁶⁴ Not printed.

⁶⁵ Vice President of the French Council of Ministers.

I asked Bonnet for an opinion as to the chances of preserving peace. He replied that he thought there was still a small faint chance.

I know that you and the President have considered what action, if any, the Government of the United States should take to attempt to preserve peace if Chamberlain's efforts should fail. Whatever may be momentary opinion in the United States I am certain that in the long run all Americans will feel that some effort by our Government is essential even though the effort may prove to be a failure.

I believe, therefore, that if you should receive definite word today that the British and French Governments have rejected Hitler's demand and are ready to make war if Czechoslovakia is attacked, the President should issue an appeal to the Chiefs of State of England, France, Germany, Italy and Poland requesting them to send representatives at once to The Hague to discuss ways and means to preserve European peace and to strengthen the foundations of peace. I believe we should offer to send a representative to such a conference.

I believe that such an appeal should contain a strong warning against armies crossing frontiers. I consider it essential to include Poland in such a conference and equally essential not to include the Soviet Russian Government.

I believe that the President should issue such an appeal even though German troops should have crossed the frontiers of Czechoslovakia; and in that case should propose an immediate armistice on the basis that troops should not go forward from such positions as they have occupied.

BULLITT

760F.62/1055 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 24, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received September 24—10 a. m.]

1011. I have just talked with Cadogan. They have just received Hitler's answers⁶⁶ and they are, he believes, preposterous. Hitler not only wants what everybody was willing to give him but it looks as if he wants a great deal more. Cadogan is convinced that when the letters are made public, public opinion will go completely and bitterly anti-Hitler, not that it is not that way today, but the cause of peace has many adherents. Cadogan feels that it will now be shown

⁶⁶ *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, docs. No. 1053, p. 485, and No. 1068, p. 495.

that their policy was the right one in that they have taken every possible opportunity to demonstrate they believed there was some sanity in Hitler and to save the world from the horrible results of war. Cadogan says, of course, he is waiting for the Prime Minister's reaction, but his own reaction is that Hitler's answers prove there is no sanity left in the man and the only decision to make now is what England proposes to do. That question of policy is waiting on the Prime Minister's return. Cadogan judges from the tone of these communications that it is probably only a question of a short time before Hitler will march regardless.

Halifax has gone to meet Chamberlain at the airport. On their return there will be a small conference with Cadogan, Halifax, Simon and Hoare and possibly one or two others and the Cabinet is being called at 5:30. Therefore I do not expect to have more authoritative information before 8:30 and then I will try and see sometime during the night Halifax and Chamberlain, if the latter is able to see anybody. Cadogan intimated that Chamberlain is very tired.

Oliver Stanley just told me that they are considering having the Prime Minister broadcast through England and possibly through the United States something to this effect: "I have gone as far as my conscience and reason would permit me to go and a great many people say farther than I should have gone. I tell you now that in spite of all efforts to preserve peace and sanity for the world, I do not believe this man intends to cooperate or help". Stanley is of the opinion, with other members of the Cabinet, that this would have a tremendous influence on public opinion. They believe that the die is cast and it is only a question now of hours.

I am trying to keep you posted on all angles of this. Is there any possible angle I am missing?

KENNEDY

760F.62/1080 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 24, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 24—4:40 p. m.]

232. I assume that London has informed you of the conversations at Godesberg of which the British Minister told me this morning. The memorandum⁶⁷ containing Hitler's annunciation that all Czech military police and other authorities be immediately withdrawn from the territory indicated on Hitler's map as Sudeten German and that

⁶⁷ *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, doc. No. 1068, p. 495.

territory be at once occupied by German troops is expected this afternoon. If proposal is rejected presumably war will follow.

From confidential sources I have learned that the letter⁶⁸ Hitler addressed to Chamberlain is entirely uncompromising even to the point of bluntness and shows determination by the procedure he outlines of remedying what he claims is the maltreatment of the Sudeten Germans by the Czechs. His statement and that of the German propaganda press of the nature of the so-called maltreatment is not supported by the results of the investigations of the British observers nor by the information which this Legation has had from impartial sources.

The evidence seems to me to be convincing that incident after incident has been deliberately provoked by the Sudeten Germans undoubtedly supported by German authorities; the facts in regard to those incidents have been deliberately perverted and often completely altered; the whole course of the so-called negotiations of the Czechoslovak Government with the Sudeten Germans has been attended on their part by procrastination, vagueness, and bad faith and, when the negotiations were on the point of attaining success under the Runčiman mission, incidents were deliberately created to furnish a plausible excuse for discontinuing negotiations until the Nuremberg speech which stirred the Sudeten elements to increased violence which has culminated in the existing critical situation. A survey of the record leaves no room for doubt that if a war occurs Germany must bear the responsibility for deliberately bringing it about. Without seeking to overlook definite shortcomings on the part of the Czechs in the past, I feel that it can truthfully be said that their self restraint and patience in the face of great provocation, their recognition of their responsibility for making every possible effort to preserve world peace have been superb.

I gathered from the British Minister today that if the Czechs should not agree to Hitler's memorandum and the German Army should attempt to occupy Sudeten territory with the conflict that would ensue France would be bound to come to Czechoslovakia's assistance and that in the circumstances Great Britain might also do so although he does not know as to the latter. Some apprehension was expressed lest Russia's pressure on Poland may drive her into the German camp whereas if the pressure should not have been exerted Poland might eventually have joined France and Great Britain.

CARR

⁶⁸ September 23; *ibid.*, doc. No. 1053, p. 485.

760F.62/1087: Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 24, 1938—8 p. m.
 [Received September 24—5: 19 p. m.]

490. The past week has been of course characterized by extreme nervousness and apprehension. Although the general impression in Germany after the Berchtesgaden conversations was that the danger of general war was past, that the Western Powers would under no considerations back up Czechoslovakia if it resisted German aggression, apprehension grew lest Hitler, dominated by this thought, should launch an attack in an attempt to settle the matter immediately by force of arms. This bellicose attitude was exemplified by a talk between Weizsaecker and the Czech Chargé d'Affaires reported in my 459, September 19, 4 p. m.,⁶⁹ where Weizsaecker warned the Czech that the calling to the colors of seven or eight classes might have vastly different results from those of last May.

In spite of the still obscure and perhaps unsatisfactory results of the Godesberg conversations there are certain indications of a lessening of the tension and perhaps even of a relaxation of insistence upon unilateral action by Hitler. The German press reports the final conversation with Chamberlain in an optimistic spirit. Reports from Praha show that the Czech Army was mobilized yesterday. Three or four days ago I should have expected such mobilization to be met either by a most violent denunciation or by military action on Hitler's part. Today the press denounces the mobilization but the signs of military activity in Germany are no more visible than they have been for the last week.

I can only speculate on the cause of this apparent change of temper. Possibly Chamberlain was [able?] to persuade Hitler that the danger of general conflagration was not past and that only decisions based upon international agreement including agreement with Czechoslovakia could preserve peace between Czechoslovakia and Germany and insure peace between Germany and the Great Powers.

Repeated to Paris, London, Praha, Warsaw.

WILSON

760F.62/1590

The Czechoslovak Legation to the Department of State

In view of the failure of the negotiations between Chamberlain and Hitler on the Sudeten question, and the continued concentration of

⁶⁹ Not printed.

German troops along our frontiers, as well as the increasing attacks and threats of Germany, the Czechoslovak Government, on September 23, approved the order of general mobilization which is now taking place. It is understood, at the same time, that in so doing Czechoslovakia has no aggressive intentions; this step was taken with the knowledge of the French and British Governments. It is not out of question that certain measures by Germany may follow.

We are prepared for any eventuality, and under no circumstances will Czechoslovakia do anything which might rightfully be interpreted as provocation. It is possible that it may have a preventive effect and forestall any plans of aggression which Germany may entertain inasmuch as France and Britain again warned Germany at the last moment that Czechoslovakia would not stand alone in the event of an attack.

[WASHINGTON,] September 24, 1938.

760F.62/1061: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 25, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received September 25—9:15 a. m.]

1577. I have just read in Bonnet's office the text of Hitler's final note to Chamberlain. Bonnet had also the appended official map showing the districts demanded by the Germans.⁷⁰ The gist of Hitler's note was the following:

1. The Czechs must withdraw all their armed forces from territory in which there is 50% or more German population by October 1. This territory will be occupied at once by the German Army and the German Government will agree to have a member of the Czech general staff attached to the German general staff during the occupation.
2. In districts in which the population is less than 50% German there must be plebiscites under control of an international commission.

Hitler refuses to guarantee the limits of the Czechoslovak State remaining, unless the guarantee is participated in by the Polish and Hungarian Governments.

Bonnet said that he and Daladier would go to London this afternoon for consultation with Chamberlain and Halifax and added that he felt certain the British would not have invited him and Daladier to London today if the British Government had decided to refuse these proposals. He believed that they were being summoned in order to prepare a counterproposal to Hitler. He said

⁷⁰ See *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, map I at end of volume.

that it was his conviction that the British Government would not go to war on behalf of Czechoslovakia and (since he personally desires to avoid war at all costs) he was much more cheerful than yesterday as he felt that his position would be supported by the British Government. He said that once again he had become somewhat optimistic and asked me if I shared his optimism.

I replied that I could add nothing to what I had said to him since the first moment when he informed me of the decisions taken in London jointly by the British Government, Daladier and himself last Sunday. I had pointed out at that time that by placing the entire affair on the basis of a cession of territory instead of the basis of plebiscites and by ignoring completely the Poles and Hungarians the British and French Governments were thrusting the Poles and Hungarians into Hitler's camp and were placing themselves in a foul position before the public opinion of the world. I pointed out that Hitler had taken full advantage of this gross diplomatic error and now was in a position to say to the Poles and the Hungarians that it was he and he alone who would procure their minorities for them.

I called Bonnet's attention to the fact that Hitler's statement that he would not enter into a guarantee of the Czechoslovak State to be signed after the detachment of the German minorities unless Poland and Hungary should enter into the guarantee meant nothing more nor less than a flat demand that the Polish and Hungarian minorities should be returned to those states at once since it is certain that neither Poland nor Hungary will guarantee the frontiers of what remains of Czechoslovakia until they have received their minorities.

Bonnet said that he felt that the matter should be handled by successive steps. First the Germans should receive their minorities and then the Poles and Hungarians should receive theirs. He said that the French Government had already urged the Czechoslovak Government to hand the Teschen District to Poland and that he had some hope that the Czechoslovak Government would do so. He added that the British Government had informed the Czechoslovak Government that it would not enter any guarantee unless the Polish and Hungarian Governments also should enter the guarantee.

I asked Bonnet if he thought that there was the slightest possibility that the Czechoslovak Government would give up its frontier defenses and all the Sudeten regions of Czechoslovakia if in return it should not even receive a German guarantee for what remained. Bonnet replied that the Czechoslovak Government would be obliged to refuse at the beginning; but he felt that as the date of October 1 approached and as it became evident that the concentration of German troops on the Czech frontier, now amounting to 26 divisions, plus the Polish and Hungarian concentrations was overwhelming, the Czechoslovaks

would accept at the last hour before October 1. He said that he was convinced that the Czechs would do this [because?] at the final hour the French and British Governments would inform the Czechs that they could expect no assistance.

I ventured to doubt the accuracy of this statement and pointed out to Bonnet that while there was no enthusiasm for war in France the entire country was ready to march to a man. He agreed to this; but said that he felt certain that Great Britain would not be ready to march and that when the British made it clear to the French Government that France would have to confront alone war with Germany and Italy the French Government also would refuse to assist Czechoslovakia. There is as I have pointed out a distinct difference between the points of view of Daladier and Bonnet; but I believe that if the British Government again should take the attitude that peace must be preserved at any price Daladier would not resist long. The ultimate decision will be made by the British Cabinet in London.

Osusky, Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, has just informed me that he has received by telephone from Praha from his Government the information that Hitler's demands transmitted by the Czechoslovak Government cannot possibly be accepted. He added that this rejection will be communicated to the British and French Governments before the meeting of Chamberlain and Daladier this afternoon in London.

BULLITT

760F.62/1063 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 25, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received September 25—11:35 a. m.]

1579. The British Ambassador gave me this morning the English translation of Hitler's note to Chamberlain but did not permit me to have it to cable as he said it had been received in a confidential code.

I was able to study it at leisure and at length. In addition to the terms that I telegraphed you this morning after reading the French text in Bonnet's office I noted especially the following:

There is no question of exchange of populations. Hitler demands a plebiscite for the large German island in the middle of Czechoslovakia and demands that if this large island should vote for union with Germany it should become a part of Germany in the middle of what will be left of Czechoslovakia.

The German note demands further that all German speaking persons should be released at once from the Czechoslovak Army and

permitted to leave at once for that portion of the Sudeten area to be placed under German control on October 1.

The German note demands the immediate release of all Germans now in Czech prisons.

It demands further that on October 1 when the Czechs evacuate the zones to be occupied by the German Army they should leave behind intact and in good condition all aviation fields with their equipment; all radio stations; all railroad rolling stock; all factory equipment; all military equipment including the fortifications in perfect order; all foodstuffs, all cattle, and all other movable objects now in the Sudeten areas.

I regret that I cannot transmit the note to you textually and trust that you have received it from our Embassy at London but I am certain that if you have read it you will agree with me that it is totally unacceptable. The terms asked by Hitler are virtually those imposed on a defeated German Army for evacuation of northern France.

I expressed this opinion to the British Ambassador that I could not see how any Government could conceivably accept such a proposal. The British Ambassador who like Bonnet is for peace at any price continues to hope that his Government and the French will abandon the Czechs completely in order to avoid general war. He said he feared that while Bonnet would be for peace Daladier would be for war. I gathered the impression that his latest information from London indicates that the British Government is inclining toward peace at any price.

BULLITT

760F.62/1082 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 25, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 25—10:20 a. m.]

234. Twelve noon. The President sent for me half an hour ago and told me that in order to maintain peace and save as much as possible of his country he had agreed to the Anglo-French proposals (see my telegrams numbers 208, 11 [211], 12 [212] and 16 [216]⁷¹ he did so only under intense pressure by the British and French and because drastic as those proposals were he nevertheless saw a possibility of such readjustments of population as might make possible the preservation of the state in circumscribed form. The new demands now made by Hitler in the Godesberg memorandum (my telegram

⁷¹ Telegrams No. 211, September 21, 11 a. m., No. 212, September 21, noon, and No. 216, September 21, 9 p. m., not printed.

No. 232, September 24, 5 p. m.) means in their application the "assassination of the state". He and his people prefer to die fighting rather than accept those terms and hence he believes war inevitable unless the British and French are willing to support this country in opposition to these demands. He says he has 1½ million soldiers now on the frontier. In this situation he asked me to transmit to President Roosevelt his personal appeal to urge the British and French Governments whose Cabinets are discussing this subject this afternoon not to desert this country and permit it to be destroyed and thus bring nearer a greater conflict vital to them as well as to the peace of the world. He said he could not ask the President to do more. The Hitler memorandum, summary of which follows, envisages large cessions of territory in the Sudeten areas containing principal industrial sections and most of the fortifications and also the holding of plebiscites in centers like Olomouc, Brno, Moravska, Ostrava and elsewhere which under Nazi methods would eventually go to Germany thus making the maintenance of the state politically and economically impossible. The memorandum includes no provision for guarantees of frontiers.

I told the President I would transmit the message but naturally could not foresee what action President Roosevelt would take upon it.

There are definite indications at the Palace of impending departure of the Government at an early date.

CARR

760F.62/1064 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 25, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received September 25—12:25 p. m.]

1580. The Polish Ambassador telephoned me at noon and said that he had a communication of the utmost importance to make to me at once and asked me to come to his Embassy as he had been working all night. I found him in his pajamas and a tense state of emotion.

Lukasiewicz said that he felt it necessary to see me at once because until the present moment he had stated to me consistently that it was his conviction and that of the Polish Government that there would not be general war in Europe. He now felt obliged to say to me that he and his Government were convinced that there would be general war.

He explained that it was now the conviction of the Polish Government that the question had become a larger one than that of Czechoslovakia. A war of religion between fascism and bolshevism was

about to begin. Beneš had acted as he had because he was an agent of Moscow.

If German troops should cross the frontier of Czechoslovakia Polish troops would cross at once and would seize not only the Teschen District but also the entire eastern end of Slovakia in order to establish a common frontier with the Hungarians.

He believed that this would mean an immediate Russian attack on Poland. Poland did not fear such an attack. The Polish Government was confident that conditions in Russia at the present time were such that within 3 months the Russian Armies would be in complete rout and Russia would no longer preserve even the semblance of a state but would be a hell of warring factions.

I pointed out to the Polish Ambassador that this would mean for Poland war against her ally, France. He said no, that it would mean that Poland was taking her side against Stalin and bolshevism and that France and England and, presumably later, the United States would be playing the game of Stalin in order finally to make Stalin triumphant on the Continent.

I said everything possible in opposition to this statement. The Polish Ambassador remained completely unconvinced and went on to say that 3 days ago he had had a conversation with Bonnet in which he had said to Bonnet that he had done his duty fully as responsible official in Paris. The conduct of France vis-à-vis her Polish ally had been disgraceful. He had nothing more to say to the French Government and could have no further contact with the French Government unless the French Government requested it.

He added that in his opinion at the present time there was no way to save the situation except by the intervention of the Government of the United States; that we must persuade the French and British to give Poland a common frontier with Hungary and rely on Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia to resist German advance in Eastern Europe.

The Polish Ambassador indicated that he desired me to repeat what he had just said to me at once to the French Foreign Office. I did so immediately after leaving him by a telephone call to Léger.

I asked the Polish Ambassador if it were true that the French Government had urged the Czechoslovak Government to cede the Teschen District to Poland. (Bonnet told me this morning that the French Government has urged the Czech Government to do this.) The Polish Ambassador replied that the French were saying that they had done this but that it was an absolute lie.

I pointed out to the Polish Ambassador the ultimate consequences to Poland of war against England and France. He said that whatever were the ultimate consequences it was essential for Poland to let

the world know that when the Polish Government announced a flat demand and a policy that demand and policy must be respected.

As indicated in my number 1579 of September 25, 1 p. m. I cannot see how the Czechs can accept Hitler's latest demands and I believe that unless the wounded pride and neglected interests of Poland receive at once some ointment Poland will attack Czechoslovakia immediately after Germany attacks.

BULLITT

760F.62/1073 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 25, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received September 25—3:10 p. m.]

1017. I hear indirectly from Oliver Stanley that the Cabinet meeting did not go well this morning and there are seven potential resignations, possibly before tonight: Stanley, Duff-Cooper, Winter-ton, De La Warr,⁷² probably Hore-Belisha, and possibly Morrison⁷³ and Elliot. At least this group are fighting Chamberlain on agreeing to the new Czech note and there may be some crack-up this afternoon. Mr. Chamberlain and Halifax are not seeing me because they have no policy outlined yet that they can get the Cabinet to agree to, and I have been frankly advised that they want to have their house in order before saying what they propose doing. There will be a Cabinet meeting after the meeting with the French Ministers. The dissenting members of the Cabinet have insisted that the French be told of the opposition in the Cabinet. The question is peace or war.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1074 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 25, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received September 25—4:30 p. m.]

1018. My 1003, September 23, 4 p. m.⁷⁴ The Polish Ambassador, Count Edward Raczynski, called on me this afternoon to outline to

⁷² The Earl of De La Warr, President of the Board of Education, and Leader of the House of Lords.

⁷³ W. S. Morrison, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

⁷⁴ Not printed.

me the present Polish situation and to find out from me, if he possibly could, just what England was contemplating doing; in my opinion the latter reason really caused him to come. The strategy depends to a great extent on what England intends doing and they want if possible to get as much information in advance as they can.

First of all he said that the Poles consider their claim to Silesia dates back much farther than the German claim to the Sudeten area and that the only reason that the Germans are getting prior consideration is because they are much stronger. They asked France last week what would be done with Silesia and were told that France was trying to keep peace in the world and for them to wait a little while and they would be taken care of. The same question was put up to the English. He said the English were more honest but gave them very little satisfaction, telling them to appeal under section 19 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The result of these two talks has forced them more or less to be a sort of "little cousin" of Hitler. Beck telephoned to the Ambassador from Warsaw that he had seen the Hitler message and that Hitler had very cunningly declined to guarantee the boundaries of the Czech State unless the Poles and Hungarians came along, by this method rather indicating that he intended they should get their piece of pie. They do not enjoy being put in this position but nevertheless if that is the way they are going to get what they want they are going to play. A further reason why they are anxious to find out what England is going to do is they say if it is to be peace their claim will be adjusted and they will get what they want; if it is to be war then they have to be very careful. I told him I could not help him at all.

He told me that in a conversation between the Rumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Litvinoff, Litvinoff had said that Russia did not want to go through Rumania in the event of trouble with Czechoslovakia but that later on Litvinoff expected that they would all be in it together on the same side and then the march through would be okay. The Rumanian added of course that they would not mind a few planes flying over their country so it looks as though that would not be very hard for Russia to work out. I asked him about the Hungarian situation. He said the British had sent for the Hungarian [*sic*] to ask about the calling up of their army. The Minister called Budapest and they told him they were gathering soldiers because of the terrific number of refugees that were coming in and the British accepted this. Raczynski said that on the whole the Hungarians would probably be afraid to do anything because they had a lot of hostile feeling around them and they wanted to be awfully sure before they took action. He also added casually that some high officials in the French Government told him that the way they viewed the problem

was that England would make the decision and the French would have to do the fighting. I do not know anything about Polish propaganda but it looks to me like this was an attempt to sell me this whole story for some reason. You will probably know what it is when you get it.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1090 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 25, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received September 25—7 p. m.]

493. Henderson returned from Godesberg last night. We had a talk this morning.

Henderson opened the conversation by stating that it is now 50-50 between a general war and peace. All depended in his opinion upon how the present memorandum is presented by the British and French Ministers at Praha to the Czech Government—in other words what the attitude of Great Britain and France is in this connection. If these two Governments make it clear to the Czechs that if this memorandum is rejected the Czechs cannot count upon British and French assistance the Czechs will probably accept. If, on the other hand, it is presented in any less definite way he fears that the Czechs will resist. Henderson stated emphatically that Hitler has not been seen bluffing. Henderson is convinced that Chamberlain's first visit to Berchtesgaden prevented a German attack at that time and that Chamberlain's second visit to Godesberg prevented an attack in retaliation for Czech mobilization.

Henderson was deeply perturbed at the growing opposition in Great Britain to Chamberlain. He feels that Churchill is ambitious to become Prime Minister and is seizing this occasion in an endeavor to throw out the present Cabinet and be summoned himself by the King. If Chamberlain falls Henderson says war is certain since a "war Cabinet" will follow, probably with Eden in the Foreign Office. The policy of such a Cabinet would be to serve notice at once on Hitler warning him not to act. This would be the signal, Henderson is convinced, for immediate action on Hitler's part. Hitler would do nothing to provoke England or France but would immediately assault Czechoslovakia. Henderson further believes that if this matter is not settled by October 1, Hitler will then march into Czechoslovakia regardless of threats or risk of general war. Hitler has at last put himself into a position from which he cannot now retire.

Henderson urged me strongly to do what I could to emphasize to you that the overthrow of Chamberlain means war and that any public expression of sympathy with his objectives in this hour of

uncertainty would greatly strengthen his hand in his struggle to keep peace in Europe.

Henderson says that in its essence the two plans are not profoundly different. The Czechs have accepted the first and it is incredible that having done so a war should break out over the method of application of a cession of territory already agreed upon in principle. The British plan had proposed outright cession of certain districts and plebiscites for more doubtful areas, this under international supervision. The Hitler plan proposed outright cession of certain areas and plebiscite for others and the entire area to be occupied by German forces as the Czechs retire.

Hitler proposed that plebiscites in the doubtful areas should be held not later than November 26 and that for this purpose German troops shall be withdrawn and the plebiscite held under international auspices or by a Czech-German commission. The plebiscite can be carried out in the same manner as the Saar plebiscites.⁷⁵ Henderson states that the areas in question do not materially differ in the British and Hitler plans.

Hitler was motivated in rejecting the British plan and urging his own by (a) his conviction that the Czechs accepted the first plan with the idea that they could profit by the delay to sabotage the concessions made and (b) his fear for the safety of the Sudeten Germans within this area. He claims the only way in which he can assure himself of their safety is by actual presence of German troops as the Czechs withdraw.

In the course of the conversation Hitler gave Chamberlain his word of honor that if this matter were liquidated Germany would be "a satisfied power". He said they would keep up their claim on Great Britain for colonies but that nobody could imagine a German mobilization for this purpose and that they would be "satisfied as far as the continent of Europe was concerned." After Hitler had refused Chamberlain's memorandum on the grounds above outlined he presented an alternative memorandum. Chamberlain pointed out that it read like an ultimatum and Hitler thereupon stated that Chamberlain could change the memorandum in any way he saw fit if he did not alter the fundamentals, namely, prompt occupation by German soldiers of the disputed area. Any changes could be made in tone, et cetera. A number of changes were made and a number of statements were rejected from Hitler's memorandum.

In the first conversation Hitler had been insistent in respect to the Polish and Hungarian claims in Czechoslovakia. Chamberlain had taken the position that they were there to discuss the Sudeten German question. In the subsequent conversation Hitler did not raise the

⁷⁵ January 13, 1935.

Polish and Hungarian questions. The matter was only raised inferentially when guarantees for Czechoslovakia were discussed. Hitler declared he was ready to give any kind of a guarantee desired "after the questions of minorities have been settled".

In closing our conversation Henderson returned again to the danger of war in a reversal of Chamberlain's policy and expressed the urgent hope that some means could be found whereby the American Government in the first instance and the French Government also could express confidence in Chamberlain and hopes for his success in averting catastrophe.

I am the more impressed by Henderson's conviction as to Hitler's determination to take matters into his own hands if this problem is not settled satisfactorily for him by the fact that in the past Henderson has been dubious of Hitler's intention to precipitate matters by launching attack. His present belief is undoubtedly aroused by the close contact he has had with Hitler in this recent series of discussions.

Repeated to Paris, London.

WILSON

760F.62/1066 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 25, 1938—11 p. m.

[Received September 25—9:30 p. m.]

1583. The French Cabinet met this afternoon before Daladier and Bonnet left for London. Wilson⁷⁶ has just seen La Chambre, Minister of Air, who gave in strictest confidence the following account of the meeting:

The Cabinet had before it Hitler's memorandum and attached maps. The Cabinet found Hitler's proposals unacceptable both as to procedure and as to certain of the substance.

As concerns procedure text of the communication recalled that Chamberlain had proposed to Hitler that the cession of the districts to be handed over to Germany be carried out under the supervision of an international commission. Hitler refused this and demanded that they be handed over by the Czech authorities directly to the German Army. The ceded districts contain most of the Czech fortifications and it is impossible to expect that the Czech Army can turn these over to the German Army and withdraw from the area without most serious incidents arising unless a cushion can be interposed between the two parties in the form of an international commission. On this point of procedure the French Government will try to give Hitler all possible assurances. If it is the possibility of delay that worries him as he asserts the French Government will propose fixed dates for

⁷⁶ Edwin C. Wilson, Counselor of Embassy in France.

the appointment of the commission and the conclusion of its task as well as agree to a "symbolic" occupation of certain areas to take place at once. But on the necessity of an international commission to carry out the cession the French Cabinet stands firm.

As concerns substance it was found that Hitler was demanding in addition to the outright cession of districts where the German population is in the majority that plebiscites be held in the valley of Moravia as far down as Sternberk in the north and as far up as Brno in the south. A glance at the map will show if as a result of Nazi intimidation these districts should vote for Germany then what is left of Czechoslovakia would be caught in the Nazi pincers and be completely at the mercy of Germany who could at any time in the future wipe out the Czechoslovak State by a sudden attack. The Cabinet was of the opinion that the demand for plebiscites in these areas as well as in certain "islands" in the center of Bohemia were unacceptable.

In brief if what Hitler wants is to be assured of speedy and effective cession of the predominantly German areas of Czechoslovakia the French Government will do everything possible for him on that point. If, however, Hitler wants to dismember and wipe out the Czech State the French Government will oppose him to the limit.

La Chambre added that the recent "divergencies of view" within the Cabinet had now been completely effaced. Daladier had put each proposed decision to each member of the Government in turn and had obtained unanimous and wholehearted approval on every point.

BULLITT

V. CONTINUATION OF NEGOTIATIONS TO THE AGREEMENT EFFECTED AT MUNICH, SEPTEMBER 28-30, BETWEEN FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND ACCEPTED BY CZECHOSLOVAKIA

760F.62/1147a : Telegram

*President Roosevelt to the German Chancellor (Hitler)*⁷⁷

WASHINGTON, September 26, 1938.⁷⁸

The fabric of peace on the continent of Europe, if not throughout the rest of the world, is in immediate danger. The consequences of its

⁷⁷ Sent simultaneously to the President of Czechoslovakia. By direction of President Roosevelt, the Secretary of State transmitted the signed text to the British Prime Minister and to the President of the French Council of Ministers, who was then in London (760F.62/1147b and 1147d, respectively). The text of the President's appeal was also sent to the Embassy in France as Department's telegram No. 691, September 26, 2 p. m., to be transmitted to the Embassy in Germany as Department's No. 164, and at the same time to the Embassies in Poland as No. 41, and Hungary as No. 60, for the information of the Polish and Hungarian Ministers for Foreign Affairs (760F.62/1147e, 1147g and 1147h, respectively).

⁷⁸ The file copies bear the Department date stamp of 1:13 a. m.

rupture are incalculable. Should hostilities break out the lives of millions of men, women and children in every country involved will most certainly be lost under circumstances of unspeakable horror.

The economic system of every country involved is certain to be shattered. The social structure of every country involved may well be completely wrecked.

The United States has no political entanglements. It is caught in no mesh of hatred. Elements of all Europe have formed its civilization.

The supreme desire of the American people is to live in peace. But in the event of a general war they face the fact that no nation can escape some measure of the consequences of such a world catastrophe.

The traditional policy of the United States has been the furtherance of the settlement of international disputes by pacific means. It is my conviction that all people under the threat of war today pray that peace may be made before, rather than after, war.

It is imperative that peoples everywhere recall that every civilized nation of the world voluntarily assumed the solemn obligations of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 to solve controversies only by pacific methods. In addition, most nations are parties to other binding treaties obligating them to preserve peace. Furthermore, all countries have today available for such peaceful solution of difficulties which may arise, treaties of arbitration and conciliation to which they are parties.

Whatever may be the differences in the controversies at issue and however difficult of pacific settlement they may be, I am persuaded that there is no problem so difficult or so pressing for solution that it cannot be justly solved by the resort to reason rather than by the resort to force.

During the present crisis the people of the United States and their Government have earnestly hoped that the negotiations for the adjustment of the controversy which has now arisen in Europe might reach a successful conclusion.

So long as these negotiations continue so long will there remain the hope that reason and the spirit of equity may prevail and that the world may thereby escape the madness of a new resort to war.

On behalf of the 130 millions of people of the United States of America and for the sake of humanity everywhere I most earnestly appeal to you not to break off negotiations looking to a peaceful, fair, and constructive settlement of the questions at issue.

I earnestly repeat that so long as negotiations continue differences may be reconciled. Once they are broken off reason is banished and force asserts itself.

And force produces no solution for the future good of humanity.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

760F.62/1078 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State*LONDON, September 26, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 26—8:30 a. m.]

1025. Have just heard from Cadogan. Message that Sir Horace Wilson is taking to Hitler ⁷⁹ is no agreement at all with Hitler's terms; it merely asks him to use reason and try to maintain negotiations.

The British and French have completely agreed to fight if Hitler makes any steps after he turns down this proposition.

They are very happy about the President's message and they believe that the story is now nearly finished and that they have made every effort to preserve peace. If war comes they know they are going to get hell but they are now reconciled.

I am expecting to see Halifax within the next few minutes.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1118 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State*PARIS, September 26, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received 2 p. m.]

1590. Massigli, who is at the head of the Foreign Office in the absence of Bonnet and Léger, said to Wilson this morning that he thought the President's peace message had been very helpful. He expressed the hope it might be possible to have Hugh Wilson transmit some personal message from the President direct to Hitler.

Massigli said that after the discussion in London last night he had been informed that the British might make a "suggestion" for consideration this morning presumably for a further approach to Hitler. He had no news whether such a "suggestion" had in fact been made by the British. (I learn subsequently that Chamberlain in fact sent another personal appeal to Hitler this morning.) Massigli added that General Gamelin had flown to London early this morning.

Referring to Hitler's speech to be made tonight Massigli said that he had little hope that it would be conciliatory. He felt that as concerns the political side of the question Hitler had taken his position and would find it more difficult to withdraw. On the military side there were certain indications which led him to believe that the German Army leaders might be wavering. For instance work had been suspended since 2 days on certain uncompleted fortifications and in

⁷⁹ *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, doc. No. 1097, p. 541.

some places it appeared that the German forces had fallen back from the Czech frontier. It has been known all along that the German High Command was doubtful of the wisdom of risking a general war. Whether they can now, however, influence Hitler to recede from his position seems a fairly forlorn hope.

Massigli said that the tragic part of it was that Hitler apparently did not yet believe the truth which was that France and England were prepared to fight. He had said to the German Chargé d'Affaires repeatedly of late that the latter should not listen to the French politicians or even certain members of the French Government who might tell him that the French would not fight. He should understand that the French people today are miles out in front of their Government and that they are determined after having made every reasonable effort for a peaceful solution not to yield any further. He felt that the German Chargé d'Affaires had remained unconvinced.

Massigli said that Hitler's second memorandum and map⁸⁰ had all the earmarks of having been prepared by the German Army. He believes that it was originally prepared by the army as a basis for an armistice with the Czechs following a few days of warfare and that it was hastily revamped for Hitler to hand to Chamberlain.

Massigli confirmed the report that the Czech Government had advised the Polish Government of its readiness to enter into negotiations concerning Polish claims in the Teschen District. The Czech Government had made no proposal to Hungary regarding the Hungarian claim.

BULLITT

760F.62/1117*

Memorandum of Trans-Atlantic Telephone Conversation Between the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) and the Under Secretary of State (Welles)

[WASHINGTON,] September 26, 1938—1:30 p. m.

MR. WELLES: I have been listening to your voice during the past twenty-four hours but have not had a chance to talk to you. I want to tell you two things. I left the President a few minutes ago. He was enormously pleased and deeply gratified with a message Chamberlain sent in reply. At his request I gave it immediately to the press so that it will get full publicity here. The second thing—In your talk with the Secretary this morning you indicated a possibility, with regard to Chamberlain broadcasting tomorrow night, that in

⁸⁰ Memorandum dated September 23, 1938, *German Documents*, ser. D, vol. II, doc. No. 584, p. 908; for map, see *ibid.*, appendix VI.

addition to his broadcast to the British public he might broadcast to the United States. The President wants to let you know that he does not want the latter done. Of course the speech to the British public will be rebroadcast here. Any reference in that address to the similarity of ideals, to the similarity of love of peace of the two peoples would be all to the good but a direct message to the American public might be misconstrued.

MR. KENNEDY: Supposing it isn't just a broadcast to America but that American companies pick up this broadcast to England?

MR. WELLES: That would be all to the good.

MR. KENNEDY: I'll fix that up—just broadcast to England and American companies pick it up.

MR. WELLES: A direct broadcast would be interpreted as an appeal to the United States and would be undesirable at this moment.

MR. KENNEDY: I will take care of it. I am waiting for an expression of opinion from Chamberlain and Halifax. Will send it along to you.

MR. WELLES: I can't tell you how admirably you have been keeping us informed. It couldn't be better.

760F.62/1147f: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr)

WASHINGTON, September 26, 1938—2 p. m.

72. Your 234, September 25, 1 p. m. The President early this morning sent identical messages to Mr. Beneš, Chancellor Hitler, and Prime Ministers Chamberlain and Daladier, which were immediately made available to the press. This should be construed as in the nature of a reply by the President to the message sent him through you Saturday [Sunday] last.

HULL

760F.62/1099: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 26, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received September 26—10:55 a. m.]

1029. The following message was telephoned to me under M. Bonnet's instructions with the request that I deliver it to the President in answer to his telegram this morning.

The French are releasing it in a very short time to the French press.

I asked what they wanted done in America and they said of course to suit yourself.

“Your moving appeal has reached me in London at the very moment when, in close cooperation with the British Government France makes a supreme attempt with a view to safeguarding all possibility of an amicable settlement of the conflict that is threatening peace, it is of special value to me that under your high moral authority the devotion of the entire American nation to the principles which have been recognized and publicly acknowledged by all the parties to the Kellogg Pact is now solemnly reaffirmed.

“Remaining faithful both to the spirit and the letter of the pledges, we continue with unflinching tenacity to look for any procedure or form of agreement which may be compatible with the dignity and the vital interests of the nations involved.

“We trust thus to serve to the last the ideal of justice and peace which has always been a link between our two nations. Daladier.”

KENNEDY

760F.62/1102 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 26, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received September 26—11:35 a. m.]

1030. I have just talked with Halifax. He gave me two items of great secrecy. The first is that Chamberlain definitely promised Daladier that if the French go to war the English will definitely go with them. This is the first definite assurance they have given the French. The second item is that they have sent a very vigorous note to Warsaw telling them not to try and get any more from the Czechs than Beneš has advised them he is willing to give them. If they ask for more the British say they will regard it as an unfriendly act.

Other items will not be granted: the Prime Minister intends to broadcast tomorrow night and is contemplating including America in the broadcast. As you know they are calling Parliament on Wednesday and then, if the worst has happened, they expect to pass rapid legislation to protect themselves. The Prime Minister will make his speech Wednesday afternoon. Hore-Belisha at lunch today said he was still willing to bet a hat that Hitler will back down. It is the only encouraging note there is.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1101 : Telegram

*The British Prime Minister (Chamberlain) to the
Secretary of State*⁸¹

LONDON, September 26, 1938.

[Received 12:25 p. m.]

Please convey following message to President:

His Majesty's Government hail with gratitude the weighty message that the President of the United States has addressed to them and to certain other Governments in this critical time. It is indeed essential to remember what is at stake and to weigh the issues with all gravity before embarking on a course from which there may be no retreat.

His Majesty's Government have done and are doing their very utmost to secure a peaceful solution of the present difficulties and they will relax no effort so long as there remains any prospect of achieving that object. The Prime Minister is even today making a further earnest appeal for settlement by negotiation in which His Majesty's Government would be ready to lend their good offices. The President's words can but encourage all those who sincerely desire to cooperate in this endeavor. His Majesty's Government, for their part, respond to the President's appeal in all sincerity and without reserve, and they most earnestly hope that the other Governments to which it is addressed will do likewise.

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

760F.62/1105 : Telegram

The President of Czechoslovakia (Beneš) to President Roosevelt

PRAHA, September 26, 1938.

[Received 1:35 p. m.]

MR. PRESIDENT: I am deeply moved by your cable message. It reached me at a moment when our country and our nation are feeling so intensely the menace of war. For 20 years our successive Governments have pursued a policy of peace. They have abided by the principle of settling all international disputes by peaceful means. They have concluded treaties of arbitration. They have supported the peace policy of the League of Nations and they have never offered [*offended?*] against all that line of conduct. Our Government also signed the Briand-Kellogg Pact and will in no case do anything that

⁸¹ Before the telegram was received, the text had been telephoned by Mr. Eastwood of the British Foreign Office to Mr. Moffat, Chief of the Division of European Affairs, and a copy taken to the President by the Under Secretary of State.

would violate it. Although Czechoslovakia has already made greatest sacrifices in the negotiations up to now, sacrifices which touch that country's vital interests, it does not break off negotiations, desirous of seeing the conflict solved by peaceful means by agreement. Czechoslovakia has also signed a treaty of arbitration with Germany, has already proposed to settle the present dispute under its terms and is ready to renew this offer. Czechoslovakia is grateful to you, Mr. President, for your message, a message which in these grave moments can contribute towards a just solution of the dispute. I believe that even today the dispute could be settled in a spirit of equity without resort to force and the whole Czechoslovak nation still hopes this will be the case. The Czechoslovak nation would defend itself were it attacked but it is profoundly convinced with you that in the end war solves no problem and that this is a case in which reason, a sense of humanity and the principle of justice should triumph.

DR. EDUARD BENEŠ

760C.60F/249 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 26, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received September 26—3:50 p. m.]

1595. I talked with the Polish Ambassador today at his invitation. He said to me that he confidentially [*confidently?*] expected Bonnet to return from London with the Teschen District on a platter to present to him as a gift to Poland. He said that this gift would not change in any [way?] the attitude of Poland. Poland did not need to have the Teschen District handed to her by France or anyone else. She could and would take the Teschen District when she wished. There were five divisions on the Polish frontier opposite the Teschen District for that purpose. Any gift of Teschen to Poland would mean something only if it were a gift, not to purchase Poland's neutrality in case of war; but a gift which would be a part of the reorganization of real peace in Eastern Europe.

I asked him what he meant by this. He said that it was clear that there could be no peace in Eastern Europe until Poland and Hungary had a common frontier, and Poland was encouraged by France and England to build up a bloc consisting of Poland, Hungary and Rumania to resist further German advance eastward.

The Polish Military Attaché had stated to the French General Staff 3 days ago that if German troops should attack Czechoslovakia Polish troops at once would seize the whole of Slovakia and would give it to Hungary reserving for Poland only the Polish District of Teschen.

The Polish Ambassador went on to say that unless Poland should seize Slovakia and give it to Hungary Germany would be able to

dominate Slovakia as well as Bohemia and Moravia since Czechoslovakia would be too feeble to make any resistance to German orders. It would bring intense danger to Poland to have Germany control this territory on her southern border. He could therefore see no solution of peace in Eastern Europe unless Czechoslovakia should be dismembered and the small remainder of Czechs remaining independent should be neutralized and forbidden to have any foreign policy of their own or any alliances.

I pointed out to the Polish Ambassador that this might in his opinion be the only solution for peace in Eastern Europe; but it was not a solution which would ever be accepted by France or England or the public opinion of the world. He nevertheless persisted in his statements that Poland would strive for this sort of a solution whether or not the Teschen District should be returned to Poland.

He was calmer than yesterday and assured me that Poland would not be the first nation to make war on Czechoslovakia. The Polish Ambassador added another disquieting statement. He said that the Czechs had been very foolish to close not only their frontier with Germany; but also their frontier with Poland and their frontier with Hungary. As a result Czechoslovakia was hermetically sealed since transportation facilities through the Czech-Rumanian frontier were so inadequate as to be worthless. It would not be necessary, therefore, for either Germany, Poland or Rumania [*Hungary?*] to cross the frontiers of Czechoslovakia. It would only be necessary for them to accept the closing of the frontiers which had been the act of the Czechs and keep those frontiers completely closed whether the Czechs wished to open them or not. He said that he was quite certain that neither Germany, Poland nor Hungary would consent to the opening of these frontiers until the Government of Czechoslovakia should have submitted absolutely to any demands which might be made upon it. He added that he did not think that the Czechoslovak State could continue to exist very long sealed in a bottle and stated that he was quite sure that neither France nor England could go to war with Germany, Poland or Hungary because those states refused to reopen frontiers which had been closed by the action of Czechoslovakia. He trusted and believed that Hitler would not precipitate war by marching across the Czech frontier. It was totally unnecessary. Czechoslovakia would die of asphyxiation and Germany, Poland and Hungary could do what they wished with the corpse.

Without referring to the Polish Ambassador's remarks I discussed this possibility later with the Czechoslovak Minister in Paris. He admitted that Czechoslovakia today was completely cut off from contact with the outer world except by telegraph and wireless. I asked him how long he thought his state could hold together under such conditions and he said that he did not know. The question was ob-

viously an intensely serious one. Nations had continued to exist for some time under complete blockade in war and I might be sure that Czechoslovakia would resist to the bitter end. I believe that this is so; but I am as yet unable to perceive the answer to this particular argument of the Polish Ambassador.

My conversation with the Hungarian Minister was much more satisfactory than my conversation with the Polish Ambassador. He assured me that his Government would not attack Czechoslovakia but pointed out that if his Government should be unable to obtain the Hungarian portion of Czechoslovakia while the Poles and Germans were receiving the portions inhabited by Germans and Poles no Government could live in Hungary. He intimated strongly that the present Government would be driven out by a Nazi movement which would attack Czechoslovakia at once and precipitate general war.

BULLITT

760F.62/1125: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 26, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received September 26—6:25 p. m.]

1601. I have just talked with Bonnet. He said that the conversations with the British had been most satisfactory. The French had taken the line that if German troops should cross the Czechoslovak border France would fulfill her obligations. The British had not attempted to combat this position and had indicated that they would support France immediately with their fleet and air force.

The British, however, had expressed a reluctance to introduce conscription even in case of a war in which they were involved. I expressed the opinion that there were depths to which even English gentlemen could not descend and that I did not believe the British could take the position for more than 24 hours that they would leave the French to die alone in the trenches.

Bonnet then said that the communication that I had made to Léger yesterday with regard to my conversation with the Polish Ambassador in Paris reported in my No. 1580, September 25, 2 p. m. had been most important and asked me if I had had any further conversations with the Polish Ambassador. I repeated to him the conversation which I had had today with the Polish Ambassador reported in my No. 1595, September 26, 6 p. m. To my amazement when I referred to the Polish Ambassador's statement that closing of the Czechoslovak frontiers had placed Czechoslovakia in a bottle in which she would be asphyxiated, since neither Germany, Poland, nor Hungary would open

the frontier until Czechoslovakia should agree to the demands of all the three countries, Bonnet replied "that would be perhaps the best solution. It would not entail war". We then discussed the position of Hungary with which Bonnet expressed sympathy.

I then asked Bonnet what actual business had been done in London. He said that aside from general discussions of the situation and discussion of military collaboration in case of war there had been little concrete result.

I asked if the French Ministers and the British Cabinet had agreed to make counterproposals to Hitler. Bonnet replied that a most peculiar thing had happened in this regard. Chamberlain had said to the French Ministers that he desired to send a personal communication to Hitler suggesting alterations in the demands contained in the note which Hitler had presented to him at Godesberg. He requested permission of the French Government to send this letter as a personal message to Hitler without revealing its contents to the French Ministers. Bonnet asserted that he and Daladier had agreed to this procedure. Three times I returned to this point and each time Bonnet insisted that he had no knowledge whatsoever of the actual contents of the personal letter which Chamberlain had sent by the hand of Horace Wilson today to Hitler. He said that Chamberlain had felt that he had established a personal relationship with Hitler and it would be better for all concerned if he should continue to handle the matter on the basis of personal and confidential communications and the French Government had accepted blindly Chamberlain's leadership.

In conclusion, Bonnet said to me that in spite of the firmness of feeling in the French population he had just received the visit of one hundred Deputies of the Center parties who had asserted that they did not wish France to go to war. I ventured to doubt the accuracy of this statement.

Bonnet in spite of the firm line which he has been compelled to take by Daladier is rodently [*ardently?*] for peace at any price.

BULLITT

760F.62/1124 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 26, 1938—10 p. m.

[Received September 26—9: 10 p. m.]

1602. Just after seeing Bonnet this evening I saw Daladier. If Bonnet was devious and weak Daladier was sure of himself and strong.

He said that he had been delighted by the President's message and hoped that the President had been pleased with his reply. Since I

had spoken with the Under Secretary over the telephone I was able to assure him that the President had been most pleased by his answer.

Daladier went on to say that shortly after his arrival in London Chamberlain had said to him that he wished to speak to him alone without Bonnet or anyone else. Chamberlain had then read to him a personal letter which he had prepared to send to Hitler. This letter suggested that there should be a series of modifications in the demands in the note which Hitler had handed to him at Godesberg and had contained the statement that Hitler's demands were totally impossible of acceptance by the British Government. It had also contained assurances to Hitler that there would be no delay in handing over the Sudeten regions to Hitler.

In addition to this communication Chamberlain had sent a handwritten letter to Hitler. At this point Daladier hesitated and finally said, "I will show you this as a personal friend, not as an Ambassador." He then drew from his wallet a handwritten copy of Chamberlain's second letter to Hitler.

In this letter Chamberlain stated that he had just been informed by Daladier that if German troops should cross the frontier of Czechoslovakia the French Army would attack Germany at once. He was certain that this was true. He desired to state to Hitler that in case this should occur Great Britain would enter the war at once on the side of France with all her forces.

Daladier asked that the existence of this note be kept as a complete secret and I trust that you will be careful to avoid any possible leakage.

Daladier commented that his impression of Chamberlain was that in spite of his being a cold and limited man when he shook hands with you and said he was with you you could count on him.

Daladier went on to say that he did not know what Hitler would say in his speech tonight. If Hitler should order general German mobilization he would order general French mobilization at 10 o'clock this evening. If Hitler should send one soldier across the Czechoslovak frontier he would attack Germany at once. Hitler's latest note to Chamberlain had been an attempt not simply to achieve the aims of Germany in Czechoslovakia but also to humiliate England and France. To fight and die was better than to submit to such a humiliation.

People had doubted the spirit of France for the past few years. The spirit of France during the past few days had shown itself to be the same old spirit which had meant so much to the world. The war would be long and terrible but whatever the cost in the end France would win.

We then referred to the general position and especially that of Poland. Daladier said that he considered that Poland was playing the part of a vulture. I referred to the demands of Poland for a

common undertaking with Hungary. Daladier said that so long as he was Prime Minister he would never assent to any such dismemberment of Czechoslovakia; and finally with a twinkle in his eye said that he hoped to live long enough to pay Poland for her cormorant attitude in the present crisis by proposing a new partition of Poland to Czechoslovakia.

In the course of the conversation a member of Daladier's Cabinet, whose voice I recognized as that of Patenotre, telephoned and referred to the activities of Malvy and others, attempting to prove that Daladier was trying to drive France into war. Daladier replied, "Please say to Malvy and the rest of his friends that I have only two sons who will go to the front at once when war breaks out. I am of course hoping to prevent the butchery of French youth. I am hoping that war will begin at once as that will give me the opportunity to place him and his associates in a concentration camp where they will have outlet for their venom in breaking rocks."

Daladier went on to say that he still hoped a moment might come soon when it might be possible to call a conference to organize genuine peace in Europe. He felt that such a call must come from President Roosevelt. It was obvious that European peace must be organized on a new basis but it was also obvious that France could not submit to the infliction of gross injustices on small countries because of a threat of war. France must and would remain worthy of herself.

In my opinion Daladier represents today the genuine reaction of France to the present crisis. It is perhaps because he is a baker's boy who spent a poverty stricken youth delivering bread. This country has never been more magnificent in spirit than today and I am glad that at least the President du Conseil represents it so well.

I was unable to determine whether Bonnet in asserting that he had no knowledge of the contents of Chamberlain's communications to Hitler (see my 1601 of September 26, 8 p. m.) was lying or whether Daladier admitted him to his confidence. I am inclined to believe that Daladier had informed him of the contents of Chamberlain's second and secret note to Hitler but under such pledge of secrecy that he did not dare tell me.

BULLITT

760F.62/1315: Telegram

The German Chancellor (Hitler) to President Roosevelt

[Translation]

BERLIN, [September 27 (?), 1938.]

[Received September 26—9:14 p. m.⁸²]

In your telegram received by me on September 26th, Your Excellency addressed to me an appeal in the name of the American people,

⁸² Cable office stamp on file copy.

in the interest of the maintenance of peace not to break off the negotiations regarding the dispute which has arisen in Europe and to strive for a peaceful, honorable and constructive settlement of this question. Be assured that I can fully appreciate the lofty intent on which your remarks are based, and that I share in every respect your opinion regarding the unforeseeable consequences of a European war. Precisely for this reason, however, I can and must refuse all responsibility of the German people and their leaders, if the further development, contrary to all my efforts up to the present should actually lead to the outbreak of hostilities. In order to arrive at a fair judgment regarding the Sudeten-German problem under discussion, it is indispensable to consider the incidents, in which, in the last analysis the origin of this problem and its dangers has its cause. In 1918, the German people laid down their arms, in the firm confidence that by the conclusion of peace with their enemies at that time the principles and ideals would be realized which had been solemnly announced by President Wilson and had been just as solemnly accepted as binding by all the belligerent powers. Never in history has the confidence of a people been more shamefully betrayed, than it was then. The peace conditions imposed on the conquered nations in the Paris suburbs treaties have fulfilled nothing of the promises given. Rather have they created a political regime in Europe which made of the conquered nations world pariahs without rights and which must be recognized in advance by every discerning person as untenable. One of the points, in which the character of the dictates of 1919 was the most openly revealed was the founding of the Czechoslovakian State, and the establishment of its boundaries without any consideration of history and nationality. The Sudeten land was also included therein, although this area had always been German, and although its inhabitants, after the destruction of the Hapsburg monarchy, had unanimously declared their desire for annexation to the German Reich. Thus the right of self determination, which had been proclaimed by President Wilson as the most important basis of national life, was simply denied to the Sudeten Germans. But that was not enough. In the treaties of 1919, certain obligations, with regard to the German people, which, according to the text were far reaching, were imposed on the Czechoslovakian state. These obligations also were disregarded from the first. The League of Nations has completely failed to guarantee the fulfillment of these obligations in connection with the task assigned to it. Since then the Sudeten land has been engaged in the severest struggle for the maintenance of its Germanism. It was a natural and inevitable development that after the recovery of strength by the German Reich and after the reunion of Austria with it, the urge of the German Sudetens for maintenance of their culture and

for closer union with Germany increased. Despite the loyal attitude of the Sudeten German party and its leaders, the difference with the Czechs became ever stronger. From day to day it became ever clearer that the Government in Prague was not disposed really to consider seriously the most elementary rights of the Sudeten Germans. Rather did it attempt with ever more violent methods the Czechization of the Sudeten land. It was inevitable that this procedure would lead to ever greater and more serious tensions. The German Government, at first did not intervene in any way in this development of things, and maintained its calm restraint, even when the Czechoslovakian Government, in May of this year, proceeded to a mobilization of its army, under the purely fictitious pretext of German troop concentrations. The renunciation of military counter measures at that time in Germany, however, only served, to strengthen the uncompromising attitude of the Government in Prague. This has been clearly shown by the course of the negotiations of the Sudeten German party with the Government, regarding a peaceful adjustment. These negotiations produced the conclusive proof that the Czechoslovakian Government was far from thoroughly grasping the problem of the Sudeten Germans and bringing about an equitable solution. Consequently conditions in the Czechoslovakian State, as is generally known, have in the last few weeks become utterly intolerable. Political persecution and economic oppression have plunged the Sudeten Germans into extreme misery. To characterize these circumstances it is enough to refer to the following. There are at present 214,000 Sudeten German refugees who had to leave their house and home in their ancestral country and flee across the German border, as they saw therein the last and only possibility to escape from the revolting Czechoslovakian regime of violence and bloodiest terror. Countless dead, thousands of injured, ten thousands of persons arrested and imprisoned, desolated villages are the accusing witnesses before world opinion of an outbreak of hostilities carried out for a long time by the Prague Government which you in your telegram rightly fear. Entirely aside from the German economic life in the Sudeten German territory for 20 years systematically destroyed by the Czech Government, which already shows all the signs of ruin, which you anticipated as the result of an outbreak of war these are the facts which compelled me in my Nuernberg speech of September 13th to state before the whole world that the deprivation of rights of the 3½ millions of Germans in Czechoslovakia must be stopped and that these people if they of themselves cannot find justice and help, must receive both from the German Reich. However, to make a last attempt, to reach the goal in a peaceful way, I made concrete proposals for the solution of the problem in a memorandum delivered on September 23rd to the British

Premier, which, in the meantime has been made public. Since the Czechoslovakian Government had previously declared itself already to be in agreement with the British and French Governments that the Sudeten German settlement area would be separated from the Czechoslovakian State and joined to the German Reich, the proposals of the German memorandum contemplate nothing else than to bring about a prompt and equitable fulfillment of that Czechoslovakian promise. It is my conviction that you, Mr. President, when you realize the whole development of the Sudeten German problem from its inception to the present day, will recognize that the German Government has truly not been lacking either in patience or a sincere desire for a peaceful understanding. It is not Germany who is to blame for the fact that there is any Sudeten German problem at all, and that the present unjustifiable circumstances have arisen from it. The terrible fate of the people affected by the problem no longer admits of a further postponement of its solution. The possibilities of arriving at a just settlement by agreement, are therefore exhausted with the proposals of the German memorandum. It does not rest with the German Government, but with the Czechoslovakian Government alone, to decide, whether it wants peace or war.

ADOLF HITLER

760F.62/1147k : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

LONDON, September 27, 1938—1 a. m.

564. The President would be interested to know if Chamberlain has received a reply from Hitler to the personal letter Chamberlain wrote him and which was delivered by Sir Horace Wilson.

HULL

760F.62/1315 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr)*⁸³

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938—3 a. m.

74. On the direction of the President I am sending you the text of a message which he has just received from the German Chancellor and which you may wish to give to the Czechoslovak Government. The text will not be released to the press here until noon Tuesday.

⁸³ Sent *mutatis mutandis*, omitting the second paragraph, to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom as No. 565, and to the Ambassador in France as No. 701.

The President and I would appreciate having your cable comment as soon as practicable particularly with regard to the statement in the message respecting "unnumbered dead, thousands of wounded, tens of thousands detained and imprisoned, desolated villages."

The message follows.

[Here follows the German text of the telegram from Chancellor Hitler, translation of which is printed on page 669.]

HULL

760F.62/1133 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 27, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received September 27—7:05 a. m.]

1040. Referring to your No. 564, September 27, 1 a. m. Talked with Halifax and also 10 Downing Street. They have had no reply yet except from Wilson regarding his interview of 50 minutes last night which was completely and definitely unsatisfactory. Hitler figuratively slammed the door in Wilson's face. He did agree to see him this morning but Wilson held out no hope. We have received a bulletin that Wilson has left by airplane but neither the Prime Minister nor Halifax have heard this. Halifax is almost positive that Hitler does not intend to help the situation. They will both advise me immediately on Wilson's arrival or as soon as they get news from him.

Will you tell the President that not only did last night's papers play up tremendously his message but again this morning with very praiseworthy editorials. As a matter of fact it helped offset a good deal of bitterness that had arisen as a result of the terrific blast from the American newspapers on the question of the betrayal of Czechoslovakia.

On my way to the office this morning saw antiaircraft guns being placed in Hyde Park and hundreds of men digging trenches.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1135 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 27, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received September 27—9:15 a. m.]

1604. The British Ambassador has just informed me in greatest confidence that Hitler's reply to the two notes from Chamberlain presented to him by Horace Wilson was the most violent outburst possible; that nothing could have been more unhelpful than Hitler's

response. He added very privately that nevertheless Horace Wilson expected to see Hitler again this morning.

BULLITT

760F.62/1150 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 27, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received September 27—noon.]

501. Editorial comment in the morning papers is devoted to adulatory reiteration of the various points of Hitler's speech.⁸⁴ Hitler is depicted as having broken through the network of intrigue and lies created by Beneš to make clear to the world that the decision between war and peace rests only with Beneš. It is emphasized that the Sudetenland is the last remaining territorial demand in Europe.

Prominence is given to the press reaction to the speech in other countries which in general is portrayed as favorable. The noon press, however, states that in Great Britain there still seems to be little understanding of Hitler's secret demand for the immediate execution of the cession of the Sudetenland already agreed upon by Praha. The inside pages of the papers are full of reports of continued acts of oppression and disorder in Czechoslovakia.

No mention is thus far made in the press of the President's message to European statesmen nor of Chamberlain's statement to the press last night.

WILSON

760F.62/1142 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 27, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received September 27—11:10 a. m.]

1607. Chautemps has just informed me that since the French Cabinet this morning had no knowledge of the nature of Hitler's reply to the messages from Chamberlain transmitted yesterday by Sir Horace Wilson it had been impossible to come to any definite conclusions as to what policy should be followed. Daladier and Bonnet had been instructed to maintain firmly the French point of view but to attempt to continue negotiations.

Members of the French Government are thinking about some sort of statement to Hitler giving further assurances as to the determina-

⁸⁴ Delivered on September 26, in the Sportpalast, Berlin.

tion of France and England to see to it that the Czechoslovak Government gives effect immediately to the promise it has made to turn over the Sudeten territory.

Chautemps said that every member of the French Cabinet had expressed gratitude to the President for his appeal of yesterday. They felt that the President's appeal coupled with Chamberlain's personal letter to Hitler and the flat statement by the British Government that in case of German attack on Czechoslovakia, France, England and Russia would march at once to the support of Czechoslovakia had produced the "comparatively moderate" tone of Hitler's speech.

BULLITT

760F.62/1117*

Memorandum of Trans-Atlantic Telephone Conversation Between the Ambassador in France (Bullitt) and the Under Secretary of State (Welles)

[WASHINGTON,] September 27, 1938—2:40 p. m.

MR. WELLES: The telegram⁸⁵ which you sent did not come in until after I had gone to the White House but it doesn't change matters. The Secretary and I both went to the President. I can simply say in general terms that while some of the specific details and some of the specific proposals you have in mind will not be agreed to, the President is considering something along that general line which you and I both believe in. He asked me to ask you to get in touch with Daladier personally immediately and ask him in the utmost confidence, with every effort to prevent any leak, what his reaction would be should the President tonight in a reply to the message, the one that we were talking about, suggest as a supplementary measure to the negotiations already continuing a conference of the powers directly interested, in a neutral capital, concluding by making a direct and personal plea to him and to no other head of state.

BULLITT: Who should make that appeal—the President?

WELLES: The President is considering making it tonight but before doing so he would like to have the personal reaction of Daladier as to the desirability of such a step on his part.

BULLITT: In making that appeal tonight and suggesting a meeting of what powers—the ones I was talking about or others?

WELLES: The ones you were talking about but he would not mention them specifically.

BULLITT: I see—to meet in what place?

WELLES: No place to be mentioned but it would be suggested a neutral capital.

⁸⁵ It is not certain to which telegram the Under Secretary referred.

BULLITT: Just to make an appeal in general terms addressed to one gentleman?

WELLES: The salient points would be these. 1. Once more to continue negotiations. 2. Supplementary to such negotiations a meeting in a neutral capital immediately of the interested nations. 3. A direct and personal appeal to him for the sake of humanity to agree to such solution inasmuch as the main agreement has already been reached.

BULLITT: I will get in touch with Daladier immediately and tell him about it.

WELLES: Will you call us back?

BULLITT: Yes.

WELLES: The President is particularly anxious that this be kept confidential.

BULLITT: Of course on the telephone one never knows what may happen.

WELLES: I understand.

760F.62/1364

*Memorandum by the Secretary of State of a Conversation With the
Czechoslovak Minister (Hurban)*

[WASHINGTON,] September 27, 1938.

The Minister of Czechoslovakia called and, having returned to this country from Praha on yesterday evening, was naturally very greatly distressed and at high tension. He stated that the outlook appeared extremely dark to him. He had very few things to say more than some general comment, in which I participated, in regard to general conditions and possible developments. In answer to questions, he thought that, in the event of war, Poland would remain neutral, Hungary would do likewise, and Rumania would give the Soviets some privileges regarding passage through her territory; that his country could hold out longer than might be expected in the event of German attack. He was very indignant at the charges of mistreatment of Sudeten persons made by Chancellor Hitler in his speech of yesterday and he proceeded to deny each of Hitler's charges. The Minister inquired what the course of this country would be in the event of a war to which England and France would become parties. I replied that a basic feature of our foreign policy is to use every practical means to avoid being drawn into a war between other countries; that that would be our policy in the event of an European war such as he described; and that, furthermore, we do not undertake to discuss theoretical questions such as the one he propounded.

The Minister expressed his great appreciation of the sympathy throughout this country for his country in its present great distress.

I replied that unquestionably the American people are very sympathetic with the extremely distressful situation of the people of Czechoslovakia.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

760F.62/1238g : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Italy (Phillips)

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938—3 p. m.

91. Please convey the following personal and confidential message to Signor Mussolini:

"In view of the tense situation which has arisen in the relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia, I addressed an earnest plea yesterday to the Head of the Government of each of those countries, as well as to the Prime Ministers of Great Britain and France, to continue their efforts to settle their difficulties by negotiation or other peaceable means rather than by resort to force, with its attendant risk of plunging Europe into a general war. Such a conflict would mean the destruction of millions of men, women, and children in Europe, and would threaten the social structure as we know it today.

"While this country has followed a determined policy of refraining from political entanglements, we have always endeavored to further the settlement of international disputes by pacific methods, and we have maintained that war cannot bring about solutions for the future of mankind. I feel sure that you will agree with me as to the destructive and tragic effects of a war in Europe, and I therefore ask whether you would not extend your help in the continuation of the efforts to arrive at an agreement of the questions at issue by negotiation or by other pacific means rather than by resort to force. Franklin D. Roosevelt."

HULL

760F.62/1333a : Circular telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Officers in Charge of American Diplomatic Missions*⁸⁶

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938—3 p. m.

Please call without delay on the Minister of Foreign Affairs or in his absence on the appropriate official, and express the opinion of this Government that the situation in Europe is today so critical, and the

⁸⁶ Marginal note on the original telegram: "OK. FDR."

This telegram was sent to all Missions except Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the United Kingdom and the British Dominions, such American Republics as had already taken the action requested herein, and Spain. Telegram No. 463, September 27, 5 p. m., to the Embassy in Spain (temporarily located at Barcelona) repeated this telegram and added: "Inasmuch as the Spanish Government might find it inappropriate for us to suggest that it make an appeal to Berlin, it will be sufficient for you to merely inform the Minister of State of what we have done." (760F.62/1238h)

consequences of war would be so disastrous, that no step should be overlooked or omitted that might possibly contribute to the maintenance of peace. The President of the United States has already sent an urgent appeal to the Chancellor of the German Reich, the President of Czechoslovakia, and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain and France urging the importance of keeping negotiations alive and seeking a just settlement of the dispute through peaceful means. If the Chief of State or the Government to which you are accredited were at once to send a comparable message to Germany and Czechoslovakia, emphasizing in his own words the supreme importance of foregoing the use of force in settling the dispute now at issue, we feel that the cumulative effect of such an expression of opinion might possibly even at this late date influence the course of events and contribute to the preservation of peace in Europe. Please make it clear that this suggestion on our part does not in any way imply any opinion as to the points of the dispute at issue.

If the Government to which you are accredited should already have taken such action please express appropriately and with real appreciation of the step taken, the belief of this Government in the cumulative value of this type of international appeal.

[Here follows text of President Roosevelt's appeal of September 26, printed on page 657, for inclusion only in telegrams to Missions that had not received the appeal.]

HULL

760F.62/1117⁸

Memorandum of Trans-Atlantic Telephone Conversation Between the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) and the Under Secretary of State (Welles)

[WASHINGTON,] September 27, 1938—3 p. m.

MR. WELLES: I am giving you a message from the President. He asks if you will see Mr. Chamberlain as quickly as possible and tell him that the President is considering making a reply to the message which he received from Berlin last night. In his reply he is considering doing two things. The first of them is to supplement the existing negotiations, should it be thought desirable, by the holding of a conference of the nations directly interested, immediately, in some neutral European capital.

MR. KENNEDY: What countries?

MR. WELLES: The countries directly interested. He will not specify which they are. The second point he has in mind is to make a direct appeal to the man who sent him the message last night and to limit the message to that man and no one else. He would like to know whether Mr. Chamberlain would consider that step helpful and any

other suggestions as to mechanics or methods which the President might refer to in his message tonight which might be helpful.

MR. KENNEDY: I will get in touch with him right now.

MR. WELLES: Will you call me back.

MR. KENNEDY: I'll call you right back. I imagine he has just gone out. Did you hear the speech? It was a very moving speech.

MR. WELLES: Please ask that this be kept entirely personal and confidential.

MR. KENNEDY: Yes.

760F.62/1162: Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 27, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received September 27—1:20 p. m.]

245. Officer in charge evacuation plans, reflecting views of Minister of Foreign Affairs, told me this morning that they do not consider that gates to solution of Czech-German problem are entirely closed. While complaining over unbelievable sacrifice demanded, he stated that as long as Hitler had not marched in last night, as had been feared, reliance is being placed upon restraining influence of France and England. While absolutely no optimism over the situation exists belief from source quoted is that catastrophe may yet be averted. Method of so doing, however, not yet in evidence. People are keeping up their nerve.

From Military Attaché.

Hitler's plan as presented on map at Godesberg would render Czechoslovakia practically defenseless from military point of view. Most east-west communications would be cut. All industrial areas taken or threatened. A bottleneck only 20 to 30 miles wide would be left between Bohemia and Moravia. Details are like demands of victorious nation over vanquished.

CARR

760F.62/1117⁷⁵

Memorandum of Trans-Atlantic Telephone Conversation Between the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) and the Under Secretary of State (Welles) ⁸⁷

[WASHINGTON,] September 27, 1938—5:45 p. m.

KENNEDY: Hello, Sumner, there was a cabinet meeting at nine and that is what kept me so long. . . . has gone upstairs to finish his

⁸⁷ The transcription of this conversation is badly garbled. Presumably this reports conversation between Ambassador Kennedy and Prime Minister Chamberlain following previous trans-Atlantic telephone conversation at 3 p. m. reported in memorandum on p. 678.

speech for tomorrow. . . . impression about the meeting today. It is his belief that the time for admonishment has gone by. He does not believe that any arguments now are of any particular value. He thinks there is only one possible suggestion that he might make. . . . some excerpt from Hitler's letter to the Prime Minister. He was not particularly encouraging. There is probably just a shred of encouragement. It is not anything you can really put your finger on. This is it: If the President wants to say anything, this is probably the only thing that might be of service. The President understands that Hitler has written the Prime Minister a letter today . . . there are still indications that in the very few days that are left everyone should do the best they can to try and solve this problem. That is about the gist of it. It is quite unsatisfactory. I asked, "Do you feel any better, having got the note?" He said, "Not much." He said, "There is a danger that he may march tomorrow." That is what he is afraid of tonight, that Hitler may march tomorrow and not wait until Saturday. He is in a completely bitter mood and is not open to argument or discussion. When it is all finished, there is still a very grave doubt in his mind that he may march tomorrow. That is all I can give you, but it is not a very satisfactory thing you are doing business with.

WELLES: I am going over to see the President now and I will give him your message and I think he will send his message tonight without fail.

KENNEDY: That is about all. Bearing in mind that he is convinced There seemed to be a good bit of resentment against everybody admonishing him. He thought that might be used by the President in formulating a plan. The only thing was to take Hitler's speech—the fact that he has written to the Prime Minister—and so out of that there is a chance still to do something and call upon everybody to do the best they can in the remaining few hours.

WELLES: I see. All right, Joe.

760F.62/1160 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 27, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received September 27—2:30 p. m.]

1617. I have just [finished] talking with Bonnet. He assured me that he and Daladier would get out this afternoon a statement on all fours with Chamberlain's statement of last night guaranteeing that the Czechs would carry out faithfully the obligations they had undertaken to turn over the Sudeten territories to Germany. He also said that they would attempt to have appointed the members of the International Commission within 24 hours.

Massigli telephoned to me this afternoon and asked if I thought the United States would be willing to select a member to serve on this International Commission and I replied that I thought it was most doubtful that we would wish to appoint a representative to the Commission.

I then asked Bonnet if there was anything new in the situation.

He astounded me by saying that there was one thing which he could tell me under the seal of absolute secrecy, positively not to be transmitted by telephone to America since it would be overheard. The French Foreign Office and the British Foreign Office today were engaged in working out a plan to give to Germany before October 1st full possession of the regions which Czechoslovakia had promised to turn over to Germany.

I expressed my surprise pointing out that that would mean a complete about face in the position Daladier and Chamberlain had taken. Bonnet said that frankly it was true and that he personally thought there was a great deal in the German argument that since they were to get these districts eventually, why not now.

I pointed out that the Czechs had agreed to give up these districts in return for an international guarantee and if the Czechs were to give up these districts without a guarantee they would be powerless and would subject themselves to immediate attacks by the Poles as well as the Hungarians. I added that I felt sure the Czechs would refuse and said that I could not see clearly the object of this latest move. Bonnet replied that the truth was that he could not see his way clearly any longer in the entire situation and he really did not know quite what to do.

My conviction is that, although Bonnet may be working on this line with some members of the British Foreign Office, Daladier positively will not assent to any such proposal.

BULLITT

760F.62/1168 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 27, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received September 27—3:25 p. m.]

248. From Military Attaché. Local reaction to Hitler's speech very bad but considerable encouragement at very apparent sweep of feeling for this country in England and France. G-2⁸⁸ confirms my last estimate of number of men under arms. Same source reports maximum some eight German divisions in general area Linaz, Vienna,

⁸⁸ Army Intelligence.

which together with smaller concentrations north and west previously reported may mean main effort contemplated northeast through south Moravian gate and secondary efforts south and east on Praha.

CARR

760F.62/1171 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 27, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received September 27—5:44 p. m.]

1619. Wilson had a long talk this afternoon with the German Chargé d'Affaires. The latter said that in his opinion the only way of saving peace was to get the Germans and the Czechs together in a conference on the basis of acceptance of Hitler's memorandum of September 23. He asserted that in the message from Chamberlain to Hitler, conveyed by Horace Wilson yesterday, Chamberlain had proposed negotiations between Germany and Czechoslovakia with the good offices of the British. Horace Wilson had seen Hitler before the latter's speech last evening and had later received a written reply from Hitler. He had seen Hitler again this morning presumably after receiving cabled instructions from London and was flying back to London today.

The Chargé d'Affaires reiterated that he saw no hope of a settlement except upon the basis of complete acceptance of Hitler's memorandum. He asserted that the Anglo-French plan accepted by Beneš, which Chamberlain presented to Hitler at Berchtesgaden, had withdrawn from the Sudeten areas to be ceded to Germany certain sections which include important Czech fortifications. He stated that Hitler was convinced that nothing could be expected from Beneš but trickery and bad faith, that Beneš was infinitely more clever than Chamberlain, Daladier or Bonnet and that despite the protection of guarantee of the British and French Governments that the areas of German majority population would be turned over to Germany, Beneš would find ways of defeating this purpose in important respects. This would mean that the basic cause of misunderstandings between Germany and Czechoslovakia would live on into the future. Czechoslovakia under Beneš was an ulcer which had to be lanced and cleaned up once and for all. Furthermore, if there is to be peace in Central Europe there will have to be a guarantee of the new frontiers of the Czech State and Germany will not participate in such a guarantee unless the minorities problem is satisfactorily settled.

Wilson stated that he personally thought there was a tragic misunderstanding going on in Berlin. It seemed to him that the belief

existed there that Great Britain and France were willing to concede everything without a fight and would stand by passively if Germany invades Czechoslovakia on October 1. He said that on the contrary he believed that France and Britain would immediately go to war if such invasion took place.

The Chargé d'Affaires remarked that if this was the case and France and Britain preferred to fight to support Beneš in Czechoslovakia rather than to recognize Germany's vital interests in Central Europe then it was better that the war should come now when Germany enjoyed marked military superiority. He said that the war would be a very short one and that the superior strength of the German aviation would force the other countries to sue for peace at an early date.

The Chargé d'Affaires gave impression that he still expects the French and British Governments to cave in and bring pressure to bear on the Czechoslovak Government to accept unconditionally Hitler's memorandum.

BULLITT

760F.62/1176 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 27, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received September 27—3:45 p. m.]

505. Just had a talk with Henderson. He believes that unless there is some startling change in the situation Hitler will order full mobilization and attack after Chamberlain's speech before the House of Commons. He said that Sir Horace Wilson had come to urge Hitler to be moderate in his speech. He can not see that the offer of a guarantee by England and France of Czech fulfillment of the British plan has made any impression on the Germans. Chamberlain, he says, is tired. He does not know what he will say in Commons tomorrow but he feels that a message to Chamberlain from President Roosevelt urging him to do his utmost to keep Great Britain from engaging in war and precipitating a general European conflagration over a question already agreed upon in principle might be of some avail.

Always before Hitler has left himself a way out and until very recent days I have felt that such a way was open. Very recently, however, he has so committed himself and so burnt his bridges that I cannot see any hope that he will retire materially from the position taken. Hence, I am driven to the belief that only a decided change in the attitude of Czechoslovakia as set forth in their answer to Hitler's memorandum will prevent a German attack within the near

future. From information available here there is every indication that France and Great Britain will declare war in that event. We are thus on the eve of a full sized European war unless some dramatic and unexpected event turns the tide.

Repeated to Paris and London.

WILSON

760F.62/1147a Supp. : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938—10 p. m.

168. Please report immediately whether the President's first appeal was carried in part or in whole by the press or radio in Berlin. Also report subsequently whether the message transmitted to Chancellor Hitler tonight⁸⁹ by the President is carried by the German press or radio.

HULL

760F.62/1238f : Telegram

*President Roosevelt to the German Chancellor (Hitler)*⁹⁰

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938—10:18 p. m.

I desire to acknowledge Your Excellency's reply to my telegram of September 26. I was confident that you would coincide in the opinion I expressed regarding the unforeseeable consequences and the incalculable disaster which would result to the entire world from the outbreak of a European war.

The question before the world today, Mr. Chancellor, is not the question of errors of judgment or of injustices committed in the past. It is the question of the fate of the world today and tomorrow. The world asks of us who at this moment are heads of nations the supreme capacity to achieve the destinies of nations without forcing upon them as a price, the mutilation and death of millions of citizens.

Resort to force in the Great War failed to bring tranquillity. Victory and defeat were alike sterile. That lesson the world should have learned. For that reason above all others I addressed on September 26

⁸⁹ *Infra.*

⁹⁰ Text of message was also transmitted in telegrams on September 27, to the Embassy in Germany as No. 167, and to the Missions in France as No. 706, the United Kingdom as No. 570, Czechoslovakia as No. 76, and Italy as No. 92; and on September 28, to the Missions in Poland as No. 42, and Hungary as No. 64, for the information of the respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

my appeal to Your Excellency and to the President of Czechoslovakia and to the Prime Ministers of Great Britain and of France.

The two points I sought to emphasize were, first, that all matters of difference between the German Government and the Czechoslovak Government could and should be settled by pacific methods; and, second, that the threatened alternative of the use of force on a scale likely to result in a general war is as unnecessary as it is unjustifiable. It is, therefore, supremely important that negotiations should continue without interruption until a fair and constructive solution is reached.

My conviction on these two points is deepened because responsible statesmen have officially stated that an agreement in principle has already been reached between the Government of the German Reich and the Government of Czechoslovakia, although the precise time, method and detail of carrying out that agreement remain at issue.

Whatever existing differences may be, and whatever their merits may be—and upon them I do not and need not undertake to pass—my appeal was solely that negotiations be continued until a peaceful settlement is found, and that thereby a resort to force be avoided.

Present negotiations still stand open. They can be continued if you will give the word. Should the need for supplementing them become evident, nothing stands in the way of widening their scope into a conference of all the nations directly interested in the present controversy. Such a meeting to be held immediately—in some neutral spot in Europe—would offer the opportunity for this and correlated questions to be solved in a spirit of justice, of fair dealing, and, in all human probability, with greater permanence.

In my considered judgment, and in the light of the experience of this century, continued negotiations remain the only way by which the immediate problem can be disposed of upon any lasting basis.

Should you agree to a solution in this peaceful manner I am convinced that hundreds of millions throughout the world would recognize your action as an outstanding historic service to all humanity.

Allow me to state my unqualified conviction that history, and the souls of every man, woman, and child whose lives will be lost in the threatened war will hold us and all of us accountable should we omit any appeal for its prevention.

The Government of the United States has no political involvements in Europe, and will assume no obligations in the conduct of the present negotiations. Yet in our own right we recognize our responsibilities as a part of a world of neighbors.

The conscience and the impelling desire of the people of my country demand that the voice of their government be raised again and yet again to avert and to avoid war.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

760F.62/1175 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 27, 1938—11 p. m.

[Received 11:50 p. m.]

1620. In accordance with the instructions by telephone of the Under Secretary I called on Daladier this evening, the delay in my seeing him being due to the fact that he was asleep in bed when I received my instructions.

Daladier expressed the greatest gratitude for the President's continued efforts to preserve peace. He said "The United States of all the countries in the world is the only one that has a deep and sincere interest in the peace of Europe and whatever may happen it will go down in history to the eternal credit of the President that he is continuing to strive for peace to the last moment".

Daladier was delighted by all the ideas I submitted to him. He said that he felt that although Hitler might not respond favorably to another appeal of the President's his very refusal would place him in a position which some day would weaken the support that he would have from the common people of Germany. If he should respond favorably to the appeal the President would have saved the peace of the world.

Daladier said that of course he would be glad to receive an appeal to continue negotiations and to attempt to work out the transfer of Czech territory to Germany in peace.

He said that some time ago Beneš had communicated to him that he would be ready to hand over at once to Germany those portions of the Sudeten regions lying outside the Czechoslovak Maginot Line. He had therefore suggested to Beneš this afternoon at 3 o'clock and the British had made the same suggestion at 6 or 7 o'clock that the Czechoslovak Army should be withdrawn as far as the vital line of the Czechoslovak fortifications and that the German Army should be permitted to enter that portion of the Sudeten regions which lie outside the Czech Maginot Line leaving a no-man's land between the two armies. He had not yet heard from Beneš; but he believed that Beneš would accept this proposal tomorrow morning.

Daladier said that he felt it would be most valuable to have a conference at once in a neutral capital of the states immediately interested in the problem of Czechoslovakia and that France would of course be glad to send a representative.

I asked him what states he thought should be included and he gave the list, France, England, Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. I asked him if he would object to the inclusion of Hungary. He said that he would object most emphatically because he had absolute information that the Poles, Germans, and Hungarians had agreed that

Poland and Hungary should divide the whole of Slovakia. He would never permit this and would prefer to go to war: rather than accept it. He did not believe therefore that it would be helpful to have Hungary at the conference although Hungary was obviously one of the states most interested and must receive reasonable satisfaction.

He went on to say that when Rydz-Smigly, the Polish dictator, had been in Paris last year he had told him (Daladier) that Poland positively never would attach [*attack*] Czechoslovakia. At that time he (Daladier) had said to Rydz-Smigly that he personally believed that the Teschen District should be returned to Poland. In accord with this belief, he had urged Beneš for some time to return the Teschen District to Poland and Beneš had now at last made this proposal. While we were talking on this subject he received a telegram from the French Military Attaché in Warsaw in which it was stated that the Polish reply to the Czechoslovak proposals would go forward this evening and that it would be conciliatory. Daladier said that he would not believe that the Poles would act in a conciliatory manner until they had done so as he felt they were determined to have a common frontier with Hungary by the division of Slovakia.

Daladier went on to say in explaining why he would be opposed to Hungary being admitted to the conference that the Rumanians would be terribly upset if Hungary should be included and Rumania should not. At the moment Rumania was taking a strong position friendly to France and he hoped emphatically the President would not include Hungary in a call for any such conference.

Daladier then said that he felt a conference composed of England, France, Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia might really work out the basis for peace in Eastern Europe. His basic thought, however, was that Hitler at the present time would accept nothing except the absolute humiliation of every nation on earth. He desired by such humiliation to make his wish law in Europe. In spite of every effort that he (Daladier) and the President might make he believed that the chance today of preserving peace in the world was not more than one in a thousand. He went on to say that Hitler's present attitude was perhaps the greatest example of folly in modern history. Germany would be defeated in the war. France would win; but the only gainers would be the Bolsheviks as there would be social revolutions in every country of Europe and Communist regimes. The prediction which Napoleon had made at St. Helena was about to come true: "Cossacks will rule Europe".

Before I left Daladier again expressed to me in very moving terms his gratitude to the President for his efforts. He said that he knew that the President was ahead of American public opinion and that it was difficult for him from the point of view of domestic politics to

play the great role as the champion of the interests of humanity which he was playing. He asked me to convey his profoundest thanks.

BULLITT

760F.62/1186 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 28, 1938—noon.

[Received September 28—7:23 a. m.]

1064. The Prime Minister just telephoned and said that early this morning he sent two wires, one to Hitler and one to Mussolini. To Hitler he said:

“After reading your letter that came last night I want you to know that I feel more strongly than ever that your demands can be satisfied within a comparatively short time—2 weeks it would seem to me—and I will come to Germany to discuss it with you at once and give you the assurances of France and ourselves regardless of what you think of Beneš or the Czechs’ promises, that they will be carried out. I suggested also that possibly you and ourselves and Italy and France get together in a meeting and work out this problem. We must not have a war that will end civilization.”⁹¹

His message to Mussolini notified him that he had wired Hitler to this effect and urged Mussolini to use his influence toward having the problem settled without war.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1358a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, September 28, 1938—1 p. m.

572. Personal for the Ambassador. Transmit urgently following message to Prime Minister Chamberlain:

“Good man. Signed Franklin D. Roosevelt.”

HULL

760F.62/1199 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 28, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received September 28—11:15 a. m.]

1626. I am informed by the Foreign Office that Mussolini has invited Hitler, Daladier and Chamberlain to meet him in Munich.

BULLITT

⁹¹ This appears to be the substance rather than the text of the Prime Minister’s message; for text, see *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, doc. No. 1158, p. 587.

760F.62/1225 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, September 28, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 28—1:51 p. m.]

268. Department's telegram No. 91, September 27, 3 p. m. Count Ciano accompanied me to the Duce this afternoon and I duly presented the President's letter. The Duce asked me to express his appreciation to the President and to say that he had every reason to hope now that a pacific solution would be reached. He then told me the following: 2 o'clock this afternoon had been the hour fixed for the commencement of hostilities between the German and Czech armies. At 10:30 this morning Lord Perth brought to him a message from Chamberlain which had so altered the situation in the Duce's mind that he had immediately called the Italian Ambassador in Berlin on the telephone and asked him to request the Fuehrer to permit further time for the consideration of the proposals before the opening of hostilities. The Fuehrer had responded and had given another 24 hours for consideration. The Duce emphasized that there had been only 2½ hours left to reach the Fuehrer and for the Fuehrer to give the necessary instructions to the army to delay the opening of hostilities at the appointed hour of 2.

In reply to my inquiry as to whether the period of 24 hours could be extended the Duce said that it could probably be prolonged. He added that an agreement had been reached to hold a new conference which would take place tomorrow at Munich but as he was at this moment giving his attention to matters connected with it he was not in a position to give me details. The Duce added that I was the first person to be advised of the foregoing.

Count Ciano told me later that the conference would be representative of the four powers and that it would be an exceedingly important one—indicating that it might have wider consequences than the settlement of the immediate problem. He seemed particularly happy at the outcome and the part which the Italian Government had played in preventing the opening hostilities today.

PHILLIPS

760F.62/1261 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 28, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received 7:25 p. m.]

250. Your telegram No. 74, September 27, 3 p. m. [a. m.] Hitler's telegram to President Roosevelt is a mixture of half truths and misstatements of fact. It wholly ignores two facts fundamental in the

present situation, namely; (1) the Sudeten problem would never have become a menace to world peace or even the cause of an internal conflict in this country except for the inflammatory activities of the German press and propaganda against us [*it?*] and; (2) a peaceful settlement with the Praha Government conceding substantially all Sudeten demands was in sight as a result of the efforts of the Runciman mission and could have been concluded had Germany shown a sincere desire to have such an agreement made and had contributed to it instead of encouraging the Sudeten radical leaders to resist and eventually to break off negotiations.

The "bloody terror" to which the Chancellor refers and in so far as it has existed at all was, according to most dependable information available, due not to the Czechs who have shown extraordinary restraint in the interest of avoiding acts which may be construed by Germany as provocative but to the Sudeten Germans themselves. Day after day when the German press and radio have alleged that a reign of terror existed in Czechoslovakia absolute quiet and order have in fact prevailed except at a few places on the border where, according to the most dependable information, disorder was created by the Sudeten Germans themselves by seizing customs houses, shooting Czech gendarmes and terrorizing the population. I have interviewed a neutral observer who relates frightful details and fully supported the conclusion that the conflicts in the Sudetenland have been conceived and directed by the Sudeten Germans and the participants have been equipped, organized and supported by the Reich Germans. That a situation exists here or has at any time existed which justifies intervention by force from the outside let alone a world war, is wholly untrue.

We do not know the number of Sudeten German refugees who fled from the Sudetenland to Germany. While Hitler claims 214,000 the Czech authorities estimate about 50,000. There is no reason whatever to believe that they fled through fear of the Czechs except those who fled to escape responsibility for illegal acts committed in this country. The decision of the others was probably influenced by Reich German propaganda. On the other hand thousands of Germans and their families left the Sudetenland and came to Praha and are receiving shelter and relief. The dead according to our best information, does not exceed 50 and the majority are Czechs. Much the same can be said of the injured though exact figures are not available.

As to the tens of thousands of persons detained in prison the report of the Minister of Justice of September 1st shows a total of 221 persons of German nationality detained on charges of violation of the National Defense Act and in addition some 229 Germans were serving terms in prison so that the total number of persons of German

nationality serving terms or facing charges was 450. It should be remembered in conjunction with the Chancellor's statement that total of 2,133 Czechoslovak citizens of German nationality profited by the political amnesty proclaimed by Beneš on April 18, 1938. In regard to desolated villages the statement can be set down as generally untrue. I have myself motored through the Sudeten region in many places. I have conferred with American members of the press and with representatives of other nations in Praha who have had opportunity to observe conditions in that region. None of us have seen desolated villages although there has of course been suffering due to the severe economic depression through which the area has been passing since 1929.

There has at no time during the past year since my arrival been any condition in this country that could not have been dealt with by peaceful means. Except for the interference of hostile propaganda and the encroachment given by the German Reich to the Sudeten Germans to resist the authorities of this country a solution of the Sudeten problem upon an equitable basis would have been achieved. If war now comes the responsibility for creating it as I have already reported may be placed directly upon Hitler and his advisers.

CARR

760F.62/1270 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 28, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received September 28—4:14 p. m.]

1636. I have just discussed with Bonnet Hitler's invitation to Mussolini, Daladier and Chamberlain to meet him at Munich at 2 o'clock tomorrow.

Bonnet said that the invitation was issued at 3:15 this afternoon. Daladier had of course accepted at once. He would fly tomorrow morning to Munich and on arrival there would be met by François-Poncet, French Ambassador in Berlin. He, Bonnet, had not been invited to go. Bonnet said that the source of this invitation of Hitler's was in his opinion manifold. Chamberlain had sent Hitler another message saying that the difference between the proposals brought back by Horace Wilson from Berlin and the proposals of the French and British was so small that it would not only be horrible but utterly ridiculous to have war. He, Chamberlain, therefore intended to go to Germany again tomorrow to talk with Hitler and clear up the difference.

Bonnet went on to say that after Hitler received this message from Chamberlain he received the President's second message which had affected him greatly.

François-Poncet called on Hitler shortly after his receipt of the President's message. He found a completely deflated gentleman who talked in the most reasonable manner for an hour and a half. Poncet had verified that Hitler had said "I don't want war in Europe and the only reason I want to walk into Czechoslovakia is because of this." He then pointed to a huge pile of letters on his desk and said that each one contained horrible stories from Sudeten Germans and added that the Czechs were using their last few days of rule to inflict every form of suffering possible on the Sudeten.

Poncet then proposed to Hitler that German troops should occupy the regions outside the Czechoslovak fortifications immediately and had stated that the French and British Governments were entirely ready to have French and British troops accompany the German troops and arrange the evacuation of the Czechoslovak Army. Hitler had been most impressed by this idea.

Bonnet said that an additional element in the situation was that Halifax had sent a message to Mussolini⁹² asking him to join in the efforts of France and England to preserve peace and that Mussolini had responded.

Bonnet was absolutely confident that this conference would bring a settlement of the question of Czechoslovakia without war.

I pointed out to Bonnet that the Poles would be furious because they had been omitted from Hitler's invitation and suggested to him that it was an excellent opportunity for him to renew relations with the Polish Ambassador in Paris who has refused to speak to him for about 10 days. He said that he would do so at once.

The feeling of relief in Paris tonight is comparable to the feeling of relief when the news came that the armistice had been signed.⁹³

BULLITT

760F.62/1248: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 28, 1938—6 p. m.

1073. Have just returned from the House of Parliament and by now you have the whole speech with the dramatic finish where Mussolini asked Hitler to postpone action and Hitler notified Chamberlain of the meeting tomorrow. Chamberlain of course is leaving

⁹² See telegram No. 271, September 28, 8 p. m., from the Ambassador in Italy, p. 693.

⁹³ November 11, 1918.

either tonight or tomorrow morning. The President can feel that God was on his side and that he was on God's side.

I was sitting in the gallery with Grandi;⁹⁴ on the other side of the division rope was the Duke of Kent, then Baldwin,⁹⁵ and then Halifax. While Chamberlain was making his speech a messenger delivered an envelope to Halifax; he opened it and showed it to Baldwin and immediately got up and went downstairs. Shortly after a messenger brought the papers in to Sir John Simon who was sitting on the front bench and he showed them to Sir Samuel Hoare. They held the papers until Chamberlain had practically finished his speech and then handed them to him. When the Prime Minister read out the replies of Hitler and Mussolini, the cheers in the House from both sides were terrific. Everybody feels tremendously relieved tonight. It may be that England will thank Chamberlain but certainly their second choice will be the President while the rest of the world will have real appreciation of this last hour drive of his. A number of Ambassadors and Ministers spoke to me at the meeting of the President's wonderful appeal.

The only discordant note was that Masaryk riding back with me from Parliament said "I hope this does not mean they are going to cut us up and sell us out."

I have just talked with Sir Alexander Cadogan. I told him I never expected to go to a theatre again and be entertained, after having been here when Chamberlain made his first flight to Hitler and now having been present at the finish of this dramatic speech in Parliament. Cadogan told me that unquestionably the President's appeal had done the trick; that the pressure on Hitler today must have been very great; that to his knowledge it is the first time Hitler has interrupted his time schedule for doing things by 5 minutes and that as this definitely delays his program Cadogan is very hopeful. Cadogan finished by saying that foreign affairs move so quickly now that the old fashioned diplomat feels quite out of place and cannot keep up with things.

Well, as they say on the radio, "signing off" and will try to get 6 hours sleep which I have not had for 7 days.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1257 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, September 28, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received September 28—4:35 p. m.]

271. The British Ambassador gave me this afternoon in strict confidence the following information. Two days ago Halifax had sent

⁹⁴ Dino Grandi, Italian Ambassador in the United Kingdom.

⁹⁵ Stanley Baldwin, former British Prime Minister.

for Grandi and had asked him to convey to the Duce an appeal on behalf of the British Government to use his efforts to restrain Hitler and at the same time the British Government had offered to guarantee the execution of the proposed terms of settlement. There had been no response from the Italian Government to Halifax's action and this had caused concern. For some unaccountable reason which Perth cannot fathom it would seem that the Halifax communication to Grandi had never reached the Duce and the latter was perhaps "sulky" in not having been asked by the British Government to use his good offices in this emergency. Yesterday Perth conceived the idea of making the same appeal through Ciano and this morning he received instructions to act accordingly. Perth told me that he disliked to make official calls at the Foreign Office in the morning and had always avoided doing so. This morning he had the same reluctance believing that there was no great urgency inasmuch as there were apparently 3 days before the expiration of the Hitler ultimatum. However, something prompted him to call on Ciano this morning and he did so at 10:30. Ciano then revealed that the German Army was prepared to move today at 2 p. m. and would occupy the entire Sudeten territory. Perth reminded him that the French would without doubt move also and that the action of the British Government would probably be guided by that of the French. He then made his appeal on behalf of the British Government and gave the British guarantee. Ciano seemed suddenly in a great hurry. He asked Perth to wait in the Foreign Office until he (Ciano) had seen the Duce. In a short time he returned with the news that the Duce would act in accordance with the British Government's request and would ask the Fuehrer for 24-hours delay in order to give further consideration to the whole situation.

Perth then returned to the Embassy where he found a second instruction asking him to call at once upon Ciano and propose a meeting of the four powers without delay. Again Ciano asked Perth to wait while he hastened to consult the Duce. On his return Ciano said that the Duce accepted the idea and had at once transmitted it with his recommendation to the Fuehrer.

Perth is convinced, therefore, that the Duce has exercised the necessary influence with the Fuehrer to stave off the crisis.

Perth gave this information to me in the strictest confidence and I assured him that it would be so regarded.

Mussolini and Ciano left for Munich this evening.

PHILLIPS

760F.62/1286 : Telegram

The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State

Moscow, September 28, 1938—11 p. m.

[Received 11:10 p. m.]

322. My 321 September 28, 6 p. m.⁹⁶ The Acting Commissar for Foreign Affairs has just handed me a statement of which the following is a translation and which he asked me to transmit to my Government.

"The Government of the U. S. S. R. in its foreign policy [is motivated?] by an aspiration for general peace. Renouncing the use of force for the settlement of international conflicts the U. S. S. R. at the time supported the initiative of the Government of the United States which proposed in the Kellogg Pact the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. Furthermore on the proposal of the Government of the U. S. S. R. in Moscow on February 9, 1929 there was concluded between the U. S. S. R. and a number of countries a treaty⁹⁷ concerning the prior entry into force of this pact.

At the present time in Central Europe events are developing which threaten to grow into a new world war. At the grave moment the Government of the U. S. S. R. cannot but value the declaration of the President of the United States appealing for the pacific settlement of the conflict which has arisen. The Government of the U. S. S. R. accepts systematically the proposal made to it by the Government of the United States to assist in the prevention of war and in the pacific settlement of the present international crisis.

Noting the presence of obstacles in the way of Anglo-French mediation between the Czech Republic and Germany despite the declared willingness of Czechoslovakia to sacrifice its vital interests for the sake of general peace the Government of the U. S. S. R. sees in the immediate convocation of an international conference the most effective means of preventing further aggression and averting a new world war. As early as the 17th of March of this year after the forcible seizure of Austria⁹⁸ which created a threat to the peace of Europe the Government of the U. S. S. R. proposed⁹⁹ for the prevention of further and more dangerous international complications the urgent calling of such a conference which could explore practical measures for checking aggression and the preservation of peace by collective efforts. Faithful to its aspiration for peace the Government of the U. S. S. R. is prepared at the present moment as well to

⁹⁶ Not printed.

⁹⁷ Protocol between Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Rumania and the Soviet Union for the immediate entry into force of the Treaty of Paris, August 27, 1928 . . . , League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. LXXXIX, p. 369.

⁹⁸ See pp. 384 ff.

⁹⁹ Statement by Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, March 17, 1938, *Documents on International Affairs*, 1938, vol. I, p. 314.

support the proposal put forward by the Government of the United States of America for the calling of an international conference and to take an active part therein."

When the Acting Commissar delivered to me the Russian text of the foregoing, an official of the Commissariat read what purported to be a summary or translation of the statement in English and I thereupon pointed out to the Commissar that (1) the communication which I had read to him this morning related to a suggestion that the Chief of State or the Government of the Soviet Union send a message to Germany and Czechoslovakia along the lines of the appeal of the President of the United States the text of which as contained in the Department's circular of September 27 I had communicated to him at the same time and that I failed to find in his statement any indication as to the intention of the Soviet Government in that regard and that (2) I was at a loss to understand the reference in his statement to the convocation of an international conference as no mention thereof appeared in the President's appeal in question.

As to the first point, the Acting Commissar stated in reply that his Government had decided to deal with the matter by means of a statement of its views directed to the Government of the United States and that an explanation of the choice of this procedure might be found in the allusion in the statement to the obstacles which Anglo-French mediation had encountered in the present conflict. As regards the second point, the Acting Commissar stated that his Government had taken cognizance of a second appeal which had been made by the President to the German Chancellor in which the convocation of an international conference had been mentioned and that his Government preferring to base its views on larger aspects of the problem than those specified in my communication to him of this morning, had accordingly emphasized the matter of an international conference which had been a favored instrumentality in Soviet foreign policy. In reply I stated that I regretted that his Government had not seen its way clear to following the suggestion of my Government as communicated to him and that I was in no position to make any comment on the reference to the convocation of an international conference as contained in the statement which he was delivering to me other than to repeat that this matter was not raised in the suggestion which I had conveyed to him this morning and to state that I had only heard a report by radio of the transmission of a second message from the President to the German Chancellor but had not been apprised of its contents. I stated, however, that I would not fail to transmit to my Government the document which he had handed me.

In conclusion the Acting Commissar stated that the Soviet press tomorrow would carry the text of the statement of the Soviet Government together with the substance of my representations of this morning. I informed the Commissar that I was not in a position to apprise him of the intention or wishes of my Government as to any publicity to be given to the suggestion contained in the Department's circular.

KIRK

760F.62/1358

The British Embassy to the Department of State

His Majesty's Government deeply appreciate the action taken by the President in regard to the international crisis.

The two messages enclosed herein,¹ from the Prime Minister to Herr Hitler and to Signor Mussolini will show that the action of His Majesty's Government is much on the same lines.

[WASHINGTON,] September 28, 1938.

760F.62/1311 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

WARSAW, September 29, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 1:40 p. m.]

216. For the President and Secretary.

1. Supplementing my telegram No. 212, September 28th, 9 a. m.² Beck is grateful for your having sent him copy of your last message to Hitler.³ At 8:30 a. m. yesterday he had felt that your reported suggestion to Hitler for a conference of all nations directly interested in the present controversy might conceivably prove the last minute formula which would permit all parties gracefully to resume negotiations. Now (10:30 a. m.) he definitely feels your timely constructive suggestion proved the factor that gave rise to subsequent international efforts which turned the tide of grave events. Indeed the scope of conference you suggested manifested a clearer long range perspective on your part, in relation to potential settlement of Czechoslovak problem than that so far evidenced by Western European

¹ Dated September 28, 1938; see *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, docs. No. 1158 and No. 1159, p. 587.

² Not printed.

³ Copy transmitted to the Ambassador in Poland September 28, as telegram No. 42; see footnote 90, p. 684.

diplomats who apparently tried to apply separate and priority treatment to Sudeten problem. Beck feels only an integral settlement would prove solution of Czechoslovak minorities problem.

2. I discern that while Beck greets news of Munich Conference as emergency measure of preventing war he is disappointed Poland is not included. However, I gained impression he had received encouraging assurances either from Paris, London or both that scope of Munich Conference would later be extended to include Poland.

BIDDLE

760F.62/1283 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 29, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received September 29—9:40 a. m.]

518. Supplementing my 512, September 28, 5 p. m.⁴ The following background on the Munich meeting today was learned at the French Embassy last night: When François-Poncet talked to Hitler yesterday morning as a result of his urgent instructions he found the latter continued to be most violent in his tirades against the Czechs which Hitler described as "Mongols and not Slavs". Hitler told Poncet that if he had been dealing with the French on such a question no such situation would have developed as now existed in the Sudeten area and cited the Saar plebiscite as an example of how such questions could be arranged. Poncet replied that if matters had been arranged today as in the Saar question they would not be faced with the present acute crisis. In the Saar, combined international forces had been sent in first to keep order and assure a fair vote while in this case Hitler wanted German military occupation first and a plebiscite later. It was this threat of military action that was setting all the world against Germany which would find that military action against Czechoslovakia would bring in England and France against her within a few days and that in Poncet's opinion would eventually bring American countries into a war against Germany. Here Ribbentrop interposed to say that Germany was strong enough to face any combination of powers. Poncet went on to suggest that if Hitler was so concerned over the disorders in the Sudeten area why would it not be possible to send French troops in to keep order until a plan could be worked out. The conversation was broken off at this point as Hitler was summoned to the telephone to talk with Mussolini. When he came back he promised not to take any action until he made a written reply to the French note which Poncet had presented (of which we are not informed respecting the precise contents). He said that he would have an important message for Poncet shortly.

⁴Not printed.

Poncet returned to the Embassy and early yesterday afternoon was called urgently to the Foreign Office to see Ribbentrop who said that Hitler and Mussolini were meeting in Munich today and that Hitler would like at the same time to confer with Daladier and Chamberlain. Poncet got in touch at once with Paris and had an acceptance of the invitation by Daladier within an hour. Poncet left last night for Munich.

The French are of the opinion that the original suggestion for the meeting came from Chamberlain but that it was actually proposed by Mussolini in his telephone conversation with Hitler yesterday morning.

WILSON

760F.62/1309 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, September 29, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received September 29—1:20 p. m.]

274. My telegram No. 268, September 28, 5 p. m. Although I was not afforded an opportunity to present the President's message to the Duce until nearly 4 p. m. yesterday it may nevertheless be of interest to point out that the Foreign Office and very probably the Duce himself knew before 10 a. m. that such a message had arrived, whereas Lord Perth did not make his first call on Ciano until 10:30.

PHILLIPS

760F.62/1306 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 29, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received September 29—2:10 p. m.]

1647. Bonnet has just informed me the luncheon at Munich passed off in a spirit of general gaiety and conciliation. There is as yet no news about the meeting at 4 o'clock.

BULLITT

760F.62/1317 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 29, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received September 29—4:38 p. m.]

1091. I saw Grandi and had a short talk with him. He feels hopeful about the Munich Conference. He said that yesterday they were

four men of war; they may not have wanted to be men of war, but nevertheless, they were all preparing; today they are sitting around a table as men of peace and if they fail they will lose standing in their own countries. He admitted this to be true of Mussolini in Italy. He said that I knew his feelings about Hitler which are not particularly friendly so that his opinion which I am going to give you must be considered in that light. He feels that Hitler has really lost his first battle in the delay in marching his troops since Chamberlain's first visit to Germany. He compared it to an airplane which crashes when it loses its momentum and he therefore thinks that Hitler will stick for quick action so that complete momentum will not be lost. In spite of all this he is optimistic.

Halifax is not quite so optimistic. He believes that settlement must be made also on the Polish and Hungarian question. For the latter, I am sure he has more feeling in the righteousness of their cause than for Poland or Germany. He believes that Chamberlain must not postpone action but must face the inevitable at once. He talked about the danger of having to come out with some kind of a settlement that would still look impossible to the Czechs and be subject to the criticism that Czechoslovakia was betrayed for world peace. He thinks that the pressure on Chamberlain will be worse than it has been at either of the other meetings, and that for Chamberlain to come out with war averted, he may have to make concessions that the world will not approve of. He told me that when Chamberlain left this morning he looked very tired and he added "with reason".

Both Halifax and Cadogan, whom I saw later, spoke very feelingly of the President's messages and if I may be permitted, I would like to express my own opinion with theirs that the second message is the finest the President has written for a long, long time. Halifax said it is one of the finest things he has ever read.

Cadogan thought they might have something tonight, depending on how early they got together. Hitler wanted to have the meeting at 12 o'clock and even permitted the airplanes to fly over the restricted areas in order to save an hour. If anything comes in tonight they will let me know.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1436

*The Czechoslovak Minister (Hurban) to the Secretary of State*⁵

The Czechoslovak Minister presents his compliments to His Excellency, the Honorable Secretary of State, and upon instructions from his Government has the honor to convey the following communication.

⁵ Marginal notation: "The Sec'y in his Press Conf. Sept. 30 said that events had so changed that a reply was no longer necessary."

"Prior to the Munich conference of the four powers, the Czechoslovak Government agreed to further concessions. Czechoslovakia agreed to cede to Germany the territory inhabited by more than 50% German population and Czechoslovakia demanded for itself only such borderline as would enable the new Czechoslovak State to exist and defend itself. It cannot, however, in addition agree to a plebiscite in the regions with a Czech majority or populated entirely by Czechs as Hitler demanded for purely military reasons.

The Czechoslovak Government agrees to observe the period indicated for a final settlement; all aspects are to be settled by December 15, but a solution is possible even by October 31st. It agrees to the control of an international commission of the British legion and the gradual occupation by British troops before cession to Germany. It abides by the decision demanding demobilization, the recall of troops, the revision of its treaty system, but in the interests of its own defense and the protection of the Czech and German democratic population and the Jews in the territory that is ceded, it cannot evacuate, demobilize, or abandon fortifications before the borderline is determined, and there is guaranteed the exchange of populations and the assurance of a new system of international guarantees. It wishes, however, to expedite the negotiations, and under no circumstances does it wish to delay the final solution to which it resolved, upon the emphatic advice of England and France and the many telegraphic appeals of chiefs of States headed by Mr. Roosevelt. Elevating the interests of the civilized world and peace and harmony above the tragic feelings of its own people, it has decided to make this sacrifice which, never before in history was required under such concentrated pressure of an undefeated State without war. It has, therefore, the right to demand that the opposing side likewise show the same understanding for peace and harmony in Europe and the world. If, even at this advanced stage of the negotiations insurmountable difficulties should arise, the Czechoslovak Government suggests that the entire dispute be settled by an international conference or be submitted to Mr. Roosevelt for arbitration to which Czechoslovakia pledges its adherence in advance."

WASHINGTON, September 29, 1938.

760F.62/1309 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Italy (Phillips)

WASHINGTON, September 30, 1938—11 a. m.

94. Your 274, September 29, 5 p. m. For the Department's information please telegraph replies to the following inquiries:

1. At what time was the telegram conveying the President's message to the Duce received by the Embassy?

2. In your reference to the fact that the Foreign Office, and probably the Duce himself, knew before 10 a. m. on the following day that such a message had arrived, do you mean that the contents of the message were communicated by the Embassy to the Foreign Office

before the message was actually delivered by yourself, or was the Foreign Minister merely informed of the gist of the message?

The Department desires this information in order to make certain exactly when Mussolini was informed of the President's appeal to him.

HULL

760F.62/1340 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 30, 1938—noon.
[Received September 30—6:55 a. m.]

1098. I just talked with Masaryk. He said that the British Minister appeared at 10 a. m. in Praha and told them that an answer to the proposal must be received from the Czech Government by 12 o'clock. Masaryk thinks that the proposal will probably be accepted but with the feeling that they have been sold down the river. He told me that a great many of the financial responsibilities of Czechoslovakia such as money spent on fortifications were assumed at the suggestion of the British and French. He also told me that 10 days ago at the suggestion of the British and French they ordered mobilization which is costing them \$10,000,000 a day and for all these expenses which the British and French had them incur they are offered nothing.

He says the plan is a little better than the Hitler offer.

KENNEDY

760F.62/1342 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, September 30, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received September 30—11:10 a. m.]

262. Text of Munich Agreement⁶ delivered to Minister of Foreign Affairs by German Chargé d'Affaires at 6 o'clock this morning. The Government is now in session considering course to be taken.⁷ The agreement provides for progressive evacuation and occupation by Germany of Sudeten area predominantly German without disturbance

⁶ Signed September 29 between Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy; *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, doc. No. 1224, p. 627, or *German Documents*, ser. D, vol. II, doc. No. 675, p. 1014.

⁷ The Department was informed 2 hours later in telegram No. 264, September 30, 3 p. m., from the Minister in Czechoslovakia, that the agreement had been accepted (760F.62/1367).

of fortifications beginning tomorrow and finishing October 10. The procedure of evacuation and the areas in which plebiscites are to be held to be determined by an international commission consisting of the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the British, French, and Italian Ambassadors at Berlin and a member appointed by Czechoslovak Government. Latter with military expert is invited to meeting in Berlin at 5 this afternoon. Plebiscitary areas are to be occupied by international formations until conclusion of plebiscites. A protocol provides for British-French guarantee of new frontiers against unprovoked attack and German and Italian guarantee when Polish and Hungarian question shall have been settled. Full text follows as soon as translation and coding can be completed.⁸

CARR

760F.62/1521

Statement Issued by the Department of State, September 30, 1938

In response to inquiries at his press conference today, the Secretary of State spoke as follows:

"As to immediate peace results, it is unnecessary to say that they afford a universal sense of relief.

"I am not undertaking to pass upon the merits of the differences to which the Four-Power Pact signed at Munich on yesterday related.

"It is hoped that in any event the forces which stand for the principles governing peaceful and orderly international relations and their proper application should not relax, but redouble, their efforts to maintain these principles of order under law, resting on a sound economic foundation."

760F.62/1376 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, October 1, 1938—noon.

[Received October 1—8:45 a. m.]

277. Department's telegram No. 94, September 30, 11 a. m.

1. Telegram conveying the President's message was delivered at the Embassy after 1 a. m. September 28. As it bore no indication of urgency the night watchman in accordance with his standing instructions did not notify the code clerk of its receipt until 7 a. m. Telegram was decoded at 8:30 a. m.

2. As soon as Foreign Office opened the Counselor put in a call for Grazzi, Chief of the Transoceanic Division. Grazzi responded at

⁸ Telegram No. 263, from the Minister in Czechoslovakia, September 30, 2 p. m., not printed.

9:45 and was requested to arrange audience for me with the Duce in order that I might present confidential and personal message from the President. Contents of the message were not communicated to Grazzi but an unmistakable intimation of its purport was conveyed to him when the audience was requested. Ciano has told me that he was of course aware of the President's message at that time.

PHILLIPS

760F.62/1193½

*Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Roosevelt*¹⁰

WASHINGTON, October 1, 1938.

The attached confidential memorandum, handed to me by Mr. Messersmith on September 29th, while prepared previous to the Munich meeting, contains some comment and views in which you might be interested.

HULL

[Annex]

The Assistant Secretary of State (Messersmith) to the Secretary of State

[WASHINGTON,] September 29, 1938.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: Needless to say I shared yesterday the general relief which was felt by, I am sure, all of us when the news came over the ticker that an immediate outbreak of hostilities was to be avoided by the four-power meeting at Munich today. I believe, however, that thoughtful, well-informed persons must have this optimism and relief seriously tempered by fears that the greatest mistakes made in handling the European and German problem may be made now. If, in the desire to avoid the war with which Hitler is threatening Europe and the world, too far-reaching concessions are made, we will find that instead of arranging for peace a war has been made inevitable.

The fear of war has grown into a hysteria and there is grave danger that in the face of the tension and psychology prevailing in Europe today and elsewhere preliminary arrangements and promises may be made at Munich in the next few days which, if carried through, will either make Germany the master of Europe and of a good part of the world eventually—with all that that involves for others and ourselves, or a war will be made inevitable. If arrangements are made at Munich now or in a general conference elsewhere later which are a

¹⁰ Photostatic copy obtained from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N. Y.

cynical sellout of principle—just to avoid a war, and if Hitler will get promises of economic help, which he is certain to ask for, it will mean that the present Government in Germany will be solidified in power, given permanence and means to exist and fatten, and then through the avoidance of war now we should only have put Germany in a position to carry through successfully the war which she intends to fight and which she is not in a position to wage successfully now.

It is I believe clear that it cannot be hoped that this four-power meeting at Munich will do more than to arrive at some preliminary arrangements which will ward off immediate hostilities. No four powers can sit down and settle in a few days the general problems which are disturbing the world. Further discussions and a more general conference would have to be called to settle these problems and it will be a long drawn out process at the best. If promises are made of economic adjustments now of a far-reaching character, which promises cannot be met later, the maintenance of peace may not have been advanced but further prejudiced. In spite of some of the reports which we get, I am convinced that the weight of evidence is that the economic position of Germany and Italy and Japan is much weaker. I am convinced, out of my direct experience and observation, that there can be no peace in the world and no real progress towards the reestablishment of law and order as long as there is not a return to law and order and an observance of international practice in the present totalitarian states. These states are weak and can not much longer continue in their present practices unless they are given real aid of an economic nature. This is what they are after. While the economic readjustments must be made just as much as the political, they cannot be made at this time if it is done in a way which will merely strengthen these totalitarian states and put them in a position to dominate the rest of the world. This is their unquestioned aim. If there had been any doubts as to the issues at stake, the last few weeks should have dispelled them to any person who can think realistically.

If the powers meeting at Munich, or which will meet later at some other place, will be only dominated by this fear of war and the desire to avert it at any price, then arrangements will be made, whether we sit in or not, which will have the most far-reaching consequences for us not only in our political relations with other states but in our economic relationships and the repercussions on our internal situation, political and economic, will be far-reaching. Our trade agreements program will go by the board—we shall have to take the crumbs which are left to us. Our relationships with practically every state outside of this hemisphere will become more difficult. Our problems in a good part of this hemisphere, which are already difficult, will become

acute. We shall ourselves eventually be faced by war which will become just as imminent a threat as that which has faced Europe in the last days.

I do not wish to assume and am not assuming a defeatist attitude. I have continuously from the beginning of the totalitarian regimes endeavored to maintain a constructive but at the same time a realistic attitude. To face the real situation is not taking a defeatist attitude but a realistic one. The Germany with which certain arrangements could have been made under Stresemann¹¹ and Brüning¹² is a different Germany from the one we have to deal with under Hitler today in many ways. And arrangements which were then possible, and which would have been constructive, are today impossible until there is a regime of law and order in Germany. Certain economic arrangements will eventually have to be made and should be made as soon as possible but they can only be made with safety with a Government in Germany which has definite respect for the rights of others—large and small—and which is not aimed at world domination.

I put forward that it is not realistic to assume that with the gaining of its now proclaimed objectives in Czechoslovakia, Germany will be satisfied so far as her territorial objectives are concerned. Only a year ago the German Government said just as definitely that it had no objective in Austria affecting the sovereignty of Austria. Until less than six months ago the present Government in Germany said that it had no objectives in Czechoslovakia affecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity but only wished to assure decent treatment of minorities. I will not go over the long record, but I think we must view the last Hitler pronouncement realistically and in the light of the known facts and with the realization that with Germany made stronger now, it is inevitable that the progress towards territorial expansion will continue.

Nerves are giving way under the strain in more than one part of the world. We cannot and will not let that happen here. The Monroe Doctrine is just as much of an irritant to the present Government in Germany as the maintenance of the Czechoslovakian State. We have in the end the most to lose if arrangements are made now which endanger our interests and, as I see it, there is a grave danger of that, which must be realized by anyone who takes a long-range view and a realistic attitude. A wise man asked me yesterday what the difference was between Hitler taking something which didn't belong to him and had never belonged to his country and between Chamberlain and Daladier giving away something which wasn't theirs and had

¹¹ Gustav Stresemann, German Chancellor, August–November 22, 1923; German Minister for Foreign Affairs, August 1923 until his death, October 3, 1929.

¹² Heinrich Brüning, German Chancellor, March 29, 1930–May 30, 1932.

never been theirs. I am fearful that in the arrangements about to be made, and which may be made in the near future growing out of the Munich meeting, someone other than ourselves is going to give away something precious that belongs to us.

It is necessary for us, as I feel all of us in this country will, to keep our heads and to maintain the long-range view. There are grave dangers in the situation even in this country. A few months after the present Government came into power, Goebbels¹³ was telling me what the Party was going to do in order to regiment the German population in every way and to make it an instrument of the state. I remarked that the methods which had been employed in Russia and which he was planning to employ in Germany would probably not be successful as the German population was much more intelligent and informed. Goebbels, who is the most profound cynic in the world today, said in German the equivalent of the following, "There is nothing so untrue which if repeated often enough all the people will not end in believing". As a fundamental practice of National Socialist Government this requires no elucidation. How dangerously true it is is reflected in the growing opinion in this country that the Czechoslovakian Government has really oppressed and ravaged the Sudeten area. The world has apparently ended in believing that what was in reality a certain unequal treatment of the Sudeten was in effect a regime of barbarity and oppression. There is food for thought in this.

G. S. MESSERSMITH

VI. AFTERMATH OF THE MUNICH AGREEMENT (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)

760F.62/1530

*Memorandum by the Chief of the Office of Arms and Munitions
Control (Green)*

[WASHINGTON,] September 30, 1938.

The French Ambassador called at my Office this morning to discuss a number of matters. In the course of our conversation, he spoke at some length of recent events in Europe. He said that the results of the Munich meeting had caused him as much anxiety as relief; that he could not reconcile himself to the idea that four statesmen representing four of the great powers of Europe should take it upon themselves to dismember a smaller power; that such procedure was a step backward and that, although it might possibly be justified as necessary in this case to preserve Europe from a general war, he hoped that it

¹³ Joseph Goebbels, German Minister for National Enlightenment and Propaganda.

would not create a precedent for dealing with European problems. All in all, he felt much more distressed at the manner in which peace had been preserved than pleased at the fact of its preservation.

JOSEPH C. GREEN

760F.62/1346 : Telegram

The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State

Moscow, September 30, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received September 30—11:20 a. m.]

328. I have just seen the Czechoslovak Minister here and there was no restraint in the bitterness of his denunciation of what he called the betrayal of his country by Great Britain and France. He said that the terms agreed upon in Munich constitute the destruction of the independence of Czechoslovakia and that an acceptance thereof by the Praha Government would arouse such a storm of resentment in Czechoslovakia that the gravest internal disturbances would ensue and would offer Germany the occasion to complete the occupation of the country. On the other hand he professed to have no illusions as to the consequences of a rejection of the proposals followed by armed resistance, although he mentioned the possibility of an appeal to the President or to the League. He expressed pessimism as to the efficacy of the aid which Czechoslovakia might expect from abroad in such an eventuality. He questioned even the practical benefits of Soviet aid in the present circumstances and did not repeat the conviction which he had expressed on previous occasions that the Soviet Union would fulfill its treaty obligations to the best of its ability. The Minister added that in view of the dilemma with which his Government was confronted he was making no recommendations to Praha and professed ignorance as to its probable course.

KIRK

760C.60F/271 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

WARSAW, September 30, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 30—4:40 p. m.]

223. For the President.

1. I share the opinion of the British, Rumanian and French Ambassadors as expressed by the last named that Polish-Czech situation is becoming steadily worse and may rapidly develop into critical situation. Beck has invited aforementioned Ambassadors and myself to confer separately with him this evening for the purpose of giving us an urgent message for our respective Chiefs of State.

2. As I am aware of Beck's profound appreciation of the timely constructive suggestion you made for an international conference to include all states directly interested in the Czechoslovak problem, would you consider suggesting a conference of those powers still interested in Czech problem but not included in Munich Conference, namely, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary as last resort in the event all other means to prevent a clash appears to be failing?

3. I cannot too strongly urge your favorable consideration of this suggestion in that even within the next few hours situation might conceivably reach breaking point whereat, as I see it from here, such a suggestion from you might offer the only means of permitting the interested parties to continue negotiations gracefully. All signs here point to this being a question of hours and not days.

BIDDLE

760C.60F/271 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Poland (Biddle)

WASHINGTON, September 30, 1938—7 p. m.

44. Your 223, September 30, 5 p. m. It is the understanding of this Government that the matter of the Polish-Czech controversy was within the scope of and was specifically mentioned in the Four-Power Conference in Munich yesterday. There is consequently no reason to give consideration to the suggestion you have advanced.

Should the Polish Foreign Minister indicate that he intended to ask you to transmit to the President any proposal that the President suggest a conference to deal with this matter, you should do everything necessary to discourage him from making this request. If the Minister has already made this request, you should immediately tell him that for the reason above set forth your Government would be unable to give favorable consideration to such a suggestion.

The President desires you to add as a personal and friendly message from him to Beck that he trusts that the Polish Government will contribute to peace in Europe at this time by avoiding an armed clash and by solving the existing difficulty through pacific negotiation.

HULL

760C.60F/267 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

WARSAW, September 30, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received September 30—7:20 p. m.]

224. For the President and the Secretary. While the Polish Government maintains secrecy regarding its intentions vis-à-vis Teschen District I am informed by a usually competent and informed source

that Poland sent Praha what virtually amounts to ultimatum in response to this afternoon's receipt of what Poland considers unsatisfactory reply from Praha. Informant adds if favorable reply to Poland's terms is not received by midnight tonight the Government will make a "very important decision". Situation is steadily growing from bad to worse.

BIDDLE

760C.60F/287

The Czechoslovak Minister (Hurban) to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, October 1, 1938.

EXCELLENCY: I was instructed by my Government in a message received October first at 12:30 a. m. to communicate immediately to the Government of the United States the contents of Poland's ultimatum which was handed to the Czechoslovak Government shortly before midnight September thirtieth. My efforts to transmit the message during the night were unsuccessful.

Inasmuch as the Czechoslovak Government, according to later information,¹⁴ was forced to yield to the Polish demands, I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that the Czechoslovak Government considers the act of the Polish Government as a violation not only of the Briand-Kellogg Pact to which both States are signatories, but also of Paragraph 2 of the addenda to the agreement of the Four Powers reached at Munich on September 29th.

Accept [etc.]

V. I. HURBAN

760C.60F/287

The Secretary of State to the Czechoslovak Minister (Hurban)

WASHINGTON, October 1, 1938.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of October 1st informing me that the Czechoslovak Government considered the act of the Polish Government in presenting demands last night to the Czechoslovak Government as a violation of the Briand-Kellogg Pact and of paragraph two of the Addenda to the agreement of the Four Powers reached at Munich on September 29th.

I note that you endeavored to transmit a message to this Government shortly after half-past twelve this morning and regret that through no fault of your Legation or the Department of State you were unsuccessful in your efforts.

Accept [etc.]

CORDELL HULL

¹⁴ Communiqué issued by the Czechoslovak Government, October 1.

760F.62/1429 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

[Extracts]

PARIS, October 3, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received October 3—4:53 p. m.]

1678. Daladier lunched with me today. He described in some detail the conversations in Munich saying that Hitler had commenced the meeting by a tremendous discourse: that he, Daladier, had then stated that after all the question before them was extremely simple: all four countries represented were prepared to make war at once; the question was whether Czechoslovakia was to be attacked and invaded and destroyed or whether there was to be a reasonable settlement. He suggested that they address themselves to that at once.

Daladier said that after this statement of his Hitler calmed down and that the discussion proceeded in an extremely orderly manner until he, Daladier, announced that certain terms of the German ultimatum were entirely unacceptable to him and that he was prepared to make war rather than accept them. I gathered that these terms concerned the demand that the Czechs should leave in the Sudeten regions all foodstuffs, cattle, et cetera, et cetera. He said that Hitler began to explode at this point and that he, Daladier, left the room and walked up and down in an anteroom smoking cigarettes until about an hour later when Hitler appeared and said to him "what you ask is entirely unjust and unfair; nevertheless in the interests of peace in Europe I shall concede it."

Daladier said that after this the conversations were relatively amicable and that Goering especially had devoted a great deal of attention and personal flattery to him saying that he had given France her old warlike spirit. Goering had invited him to spend an extra 2 days in Munich to visit the "sausage sociology" which amused him intensely. Goering had embarrassed him by saying that he would like to make an immediate trip to Paris which he had never visited. Daladier said that this had been the only moment of embarrassment that he had had during the negotiations and that he had replied that he hoped to invite Goering later.

He said that Mussolini throughout had been most amicable with everyone and had tried to persuade him, Daladier, that Hitler would have no further territorial ambitions after the annexation of the Sudeten, arguing that Hitler's entire interest now would be concentrated on the rebuilding of Germany.

Daladier said that he did not believe a word of this. He thought that within 6 months France and England would be face to face with new German demands probably in the colonial field and that there

might also be most serious Italian demands supported by Germany for Tunis and Syria. Daladier said that in his opinion the single thing which counted today was not diplomatic negotiations but strengthening of the military forces of France especially in the field of air armament. He felt that if France could do something to strengthen her position in the field of aviation the discussions which inevitably would come during the next 12 months might be carried on in an atmosphere of give and take. Otherwise France would be confronted with ultimatums.

We then discussed for an hour and a half the aviation position and ways and means of remedying it. I believe that it is more discreet for me to report this portion of our discussion by word of mouth when I reach Washington at the end of this week rather than by cable.

In a final comment on the conversations in Munich Daladier said that he felt that Chamberlain had been taken in a bit by Hitler who had persuaded him to remain after the others had left and had convinced Chamberlain that Germany was ready for peace. He said that he felt that Chamberlain was an admirable old gentleman, like a high minded Quaker who had fallen among bandits, and he did not think that Chamberlain's last conversations with Hitler had been helpful.

Daladier sees the situation entirely, clearly, realizes fully that the meeting in Munich was an immense diplomatic defeat for France and England and recognizes that unless France can recover a united national spirit to confront the future a fatal situation will arise within the next year.

Inasmuch as it appears to be likely that there will be no general war in Europe in the immediate future I request your permission to leave France on Wednesday October 5 by the steamship *Normandie* for home leave.

BULLITT

760F.62/1430 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, October 3, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received October 4—3 a. m.]

272. The Minister for Foreign Affairs has just sent me a personal note in which, after expressing appreciation of the President's intercession with the Reichs Chancellor in behalf of Czechoslovakia, he inquires whether the United States would be willing through the channel of the American Ambassador at Berlin to support by means of a *démarche* with the German Government on the one hand and on the other with the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France and Italy who are members of the Delimitation Commission in Berlin some

highly justified claims of Czechoslovakia. He specifies only one, namely, that Germany should accept such a delimitation of the new frontier in the areas of Boehmisch Truebau and Zwittau which would secure for Czechoslovakia the main railway communications of Bohemia with Moravia and Slovakia. The Department will observe that the main railway line which connects Praha with Moravia and Slovakia passes through Pardubice to Brno and Olomütz by way of Boehmisch Truebau and Zwittau; these two towns are in the edge of the region which is understood to have a majority German population and the inquiry appears to be inspired by Czechoslovakia's anxiety lest the Delimitation Commission should so mark the new frontier that this main railway connecting Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia would have to pass through territory to be ceded to Germany.

I assume that inasmuch as the German Government and the Commission are acting under an agreement between the four powers which Czechoslovakia has accepted although under protest the United States is not in a position to intervene in the manner indicated however much it may sympathize with the object sought. However I submit report on inquiry and would appreciate your instructions as early as possible.

CARR

760F.62/1430 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Minister in Czechoslovakia
(Carr)*

WASHINGTON, October 4, 1938—2 p. m.

82. Please explain to the Minister of Foreign Affairs either orally or in a personal note that inasmuch as this Government has taken the position that it could not pass on the merits of the European controversy, and inasmuch as it took no part in drawing up the Munich Agreement under which the Delimitation Commission is acting it could not appropriately intervene with the Commission as requested despite a desire on its part to give favorable consideration to any request received from the Czechoslovak Government.

WELLES

760F.62/1495 : Telegram (part air)

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extracts]

BERLIN, October 5, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received October 6—8:55 a. m.]

529. 1. In a conversation which I had with Weizsaecker and in the conversations of the Counselor of this Embassy with the French

and British Counselors as reported in the Embassy's 528, October 5, 1 p. m.,¹⁵ certain problems associated with the Munich settlement were discussed.

In the course of these conversations it was manifest that the French and British Embassies fully recognized that the jubilation of the public in Great Britain and France and also largely in Germany and Italy was at present almost solely based on escape from a dreaded war and that every effort must now be made by Paris and London and in fact to a degree by every capital to follow the present situation through to the establishment of conditions in all directions which would make for a durable peace.

The British Counselor speculated on a certain opposition to Chamberlain in Great Britain but did not believe that there was any immediate threat to his position. Regarding Daladier the French Counselor felt confident that the majority in France would continue to accord him support and although he learned from Paris that Moscow would make every effort to stir up French communist opposition he did not believe that such opposition would prevail to any serious extent.

In respect of the possible future attitude of Hitler regarding various phases of the European situation the British Counselor expressed himself as hopeful of a display of a conciliatory and reasonably understanding spirit provided Germany is accorded a position which he undoubtedly sincerely feels is its right. In this he spoke of Hitler's relying on Neurath¹⁶ and Goering in a moment of crisis with all that that implied. He was in particular inclined to emphasize the perception which he believes Hitler now has and which he believes will progressively come to him of the widespread opposition throughout Germany to being led into a war or even to be subjected to apprehensions of a war which under conceivable circumstances might seriously threaten his popularity (this point seems to me of capital importance). In respect of this he mentioned contrasting incidents which took place during the crisis which he asserts deeply impressed the Chancellor, for example while the mechanized divisions were passing Hitler's residence the populace crowding the sidewalks watched in grim silence and the only time spontaneous popular applause occurred was while the Chancellor was en route to the station to take the train to Munich.

He said that among the questions which it is felt certain Hitler will raise will be that of colonies. A phase of the Hitler-Chamberlain con-

¹⁵ Not printed.

¹⁶ Baron Constantin von Neurath, President of the German Secret Cabinet Council.

versations points to this. The circumstance that when Hitler stated colonies would be a matter for negotiation and Chamberlain made no denial may, he felt, be construed to mean that London has in effect agreed to negotiate the question.

He also speculated as to what effect the changed position of Russia in Europe might have on Germany's Far Eastern policy.

2. I may say that here as probably in many other quarters two schools of thought are expressed regarding the future with particular reference to the attitude of Germany and Italy. There are many who feel that their "victory" in the game of great power politics will be a precursor of violent demands in all directions on the part of Berlin and Rome under the guise of proceeding by "negotiations". On the other hand there are those claiming to be close to high German quarters who believe although Germany unquestionably will proceed to an intensive economic penetration or even economic domination to the south-east that Hitler feeling that he has righted Versailles injustices although at a pistol point is nevertheless under the "spell" of a, for him, new international experience at Munich and that he will endeavor to continue in a spirit of adjustments by conciliation. There are those who even go so far as to assert that they have definite knowledge that certain moves may be expected on the part of the Chancellor in these respects and that his immediate intention is speedily to adjust certain differences with Poland in a manner which it is very probable Warsaw will accept if it has not done so already and that he even contemplates making general *démarches* in the field of disarmament and perhaps in that of international trade.

There is one danger point in all this which I feel may well be watched. Weizsaecker told me that in the now famous telephone conversation between Hitler and Mussolini on September 28 Mussolini's first words were "I want you, before I say anything else, fully to understand that whatever happens I am with you to the hilt". The outstanding characteristic of Hitler in standing by his friends is well known. A disturbing thought thus arises as to what Rome might now demand of Berlin.

In all however there is one characteristic of the situation in Berlin which I have discussed before but which I feel cannot be too much emphasized. It is the inadequacy which all of us have experienced here of any and all estimates of Hitler's character, in particular when venturing into the realm of what he may be expected to do. He is a man apart whom it seems almost impossible to judge by customary standards. Until further indications are manifest I do not feel that I can usefully undertake forecasts respecting the future.

760F.62/1838

*Report by the Military Attaché in Germany (Smith)*¹⁷

No. 16,169

OCTOBER 5, 1938.

Any attempt at this moment to assay the import of the events which for three weeks have been succeeding one another with telegraphic rapidity, is scarcely now in place. When a world is engulfed in a Niagara, it is too much to expect it to see the smooth estuary water beyond. Such vital changes have occurred in the past few weeks in the relative importance of the various European powers, and so unquestioned has been the recognition overnight of the prestige and power of Germany, that American opinion is only too likely to follow the ever ignorant and uneducated expressions of opinion of our press representatives, and assume that Germany is about to swallow Rumania, Hungary, the Corridor, and God knows what.

In the past few days not less than a half dozen American press representatives have asked the Attaché how soon he expected the march into the Ukraine to begin. Each and all of these correspondents were visibly shaken and many of them enraged by the events of Munich. Each and every one of them were secretly hoping for a new German push which would permit Democratic world opinion to rally against Hitler. All correspondents were so deeply impressed by the "defeat" of the Democracies at Munich, that every vestige of reason had left them. They could see nothing but marching gray-clad armies and a succession of German conquests in Eastern Europe. In the future they are painting for America, of Hitler looking around for new nations to devour, they are far from the mark. This, time will show.

Hitler's wish for the immediate future is fairly clear. He wants peace. He wants a peace to permit him to consolidate his gains, and to provide a psychological rest for his overtense people. He wants also improved relations with France and England and, above all, he wants *colonies*.

He emerges from the Czechish crisis with the Sudeten lands in his pocket, but also with a heavy personal and national obligation to Mussolini.

Hitler's desire for colonies and his obligation to Mussolini are not entirely in accord.

Colonies can not be regained by Germany by force. East Africa, Kameroun and Togo can only be secured by Hitler as a part of a general settlement with France and England.

¹⁷ Copy transmitted to the Department by the War Department, October 19.

Hitler's loyalty to Mussolini is unquestionable and, incidentally, the friendship of the two men appears to have become deeply personal.

However, Italy is to-day contesting control of the Mediterranean with France and England. In Spain, Italy and France are "on opposite sides of the barricades."

Hitler's hope and wish is to retain Italy's friendship while winning France and England's. This double aim will be difficult under any circumstances to fulfill. Germany's interests to-day call for an understanding with England at all costs. Hitler's inner sense of loyalty to all who have done him a good turn and his personal liking for Mussolini, undoubtedly are urging him to stick by Mussolini. Thus, there is to-day a mental conflict between Hitler's wishes and Germany's national interest.

This conflict is apparent on October 5th, not only in the Mediterranean, but more particularly and immediately in the Hungarian-Czechish question. This latter question is on the surface one thing and under the surface quite another. If the surface aspect were the true one, the Hungarian problem would be settled to-morrow and the areas of Czechoslovakia which contain a Hungarian majority would be handed over to Hungary immediately. Actually the issue at stake is not the Hungarian districts of Slovakia, but Slovakia as a whole. The Hungarian government wants the whole of Slovakia and Czechish Ruthenia, but never says so openly. Hungary's secret demand for Slovakia is championed by Mussolini and backed silently by Poland.

England and France want Slovakia to remain with Prague, largely out of a sense of shame for their desertion of her cause in the Sudeten issue. What the Slovaks want is not clear, so confused is the strength grouping and platforms of the various political parties in Slovakia. Probably the majority of Slovaks would like to remain with Prague, but with a much larger degree of autonomy than has been theirs up to the present. Nevertheless there are potent elements in Slovakia who want an autonomous Slovakia within a Hungarian framework.

What does Hitler want? This is the present mystery of the German foreign policy. It is noticeable that Hitler's support of the Hungarians has been much less vociferous and much more reserved than Mussolini's, though if the issue were purely the Hungarian minority area passing to Hungary, Hitler would undoubtedly be in the first line fighting alongside Mussolini. Why isn't he doing so? Why does there appear to be a real difference of viewpoint between Hitler and Mussolini on the Hungarian question? The answer is believed to be Slovakia. Hitler must wish that Slovakia remain with Prague for military-political reasons, if for no other. Also to hand

over Pressburg and the rest of Slovakia to Budapest would violate National Socialist tenets, "Men of the same race belong in the same state."

It is a military, political and economic disadvantage for Germany to have Slovakia pass to Hungary and for the following reasons:

Poland and Hungary obtain thereby common frontiers. Italy's position in Central Europe becomes thereby also immensely strong, for Hungary's acquisition of Slovakia brings into being automatically, the grouping Italy-Yugoslavia-Hungary-Poland. This grouping is a far more serious military barrier to Germany's Danubian expansion than Czechoslovakia ever was.

If on the other hand Slovakia remains with Prague, Berlin can dominate both and incidentally keep a protective shield of her own between Warsaw and Budapest.

That Hitler would prefer to keep Czechs and Slovaks together appears certain. On the other hand, it seems doubtful if he can do so, for, for him to oppose openly Rome, Warsaw, and Budapest together at the present juncture, is out of the question.

It is a curious fact that five days after the meeting of Munich, Hitler finds himself in accord with France and England on the liveliest European issue and opposed to his allies, Poland, Hungary, and Italy. This is not to say that Hitler will not yield to Mussolini, if he has to. Only that he will seek to conceal his opposition behind France and possibly urge Prague to grant at once autonomy to Slovakia as a means of warding off a worse fate.

Hitler's diplomatic position at the moment is not an enviable one. He will require all of his diplomatic skill to avoid the many pitfalls which to-day confront him and hold to Italy while winning England and France.

There are two further sidelights of the European crisis which deserve the closest attention to-day and to-morrow.

1st. Poland has enormously strengthened its political-military position in Central Europe by the acquisition of the Olsa-Teschen area. This area looks small on the map and to the uninformed, the Teschen dispute seems to have been thought to be a minor matter of minorities. Actually Teschen is to Central Europe what the Panama Canal is to the Americas.

Teschen has rich coal and an important steel industry. These by themselves make Teschen a rich prize. Still more important, however, is it that Teschen is the communications center of all Eastern Europe. Through the town and over the Jablunka Pass to the south runs the great north-south artery of Central Europe from Budapest to Prague and Breslau. Through it also run the lines from Vienna to Warsaw and the line from Prague to Slovakia and Ruthenia.

Poland now sits squarely across the main east-west line of inner communication of Czechoslovakia. Only minor unimportant routes over Pressburg and the mountains connecting Prague with her eastern provinces remain in her possession. Poland is now in a position where she can speak aggressively on Danubian matters and influence definitely the fate of Slovakia.

2nd. The second sidelight of the crisis worthy of close attention is the inner political struggle in progress behind the scenes in Hungary, the portent and probable outcome of which is not clearly apparent in Berlin at this time.

It is believed that the Hungarian National Socialists are seeking to secure power, that large elements of the Army support them, and that the feeling is strong in Hungary that Horthy¹⁸ and Imredy¹⁹ have been too weak and unaggressive in the crisis of the past weeks; and that now through weakness, Hungary runs the risk of losing the Hungarian districts of Czechoslovakia. It is furthermore understood in Berlin that the Hungarian Nazis, unlike the Horthy-Imredy regime, do not want Slovakia. This viewpoint of the Hungarian Nazis suggests that Hitler would welcome a Hungarian revolution. Such an outcome would undoubtedly obviate a clash with Mussolini.

The following preliminary thoughts as to the changes in Europe since September 1st seem called for:

Germany has won a prestige victory in acquiring the Sudetens and in coming for the first time since 1919 to a peaceful understanding with France and Great Britain over a matter of first rate importance to her.

She has also won a moderate gain in strength, in population resources and industry, but nowhere near as important a one as in March she made through the acquisition of Austria.

Germany has at this moment a fairly serious, though not necessarily a dangerous conflict of interest with the block Poland-Hungary-Italy with regard to the future of Slovakia.

Germany is bound to Mussolini to an extent which is somewhat dangerous, so long as Italy and England are opposed to each other. Until the present opposition is resolved into a peaceful cooperation, Germany sees little chance of regaining her colonies.

Germany wants a period of peace,—not a few months, but several years at least, and probably a decade.

Germany is even more pleased over peace with France and England than she is over the acquisition of the Sudetens.

¹⁸ Admiral Nicolas Horthy, Regent of Hungary.

¹⁹ Bela de Imredy, Hungarian Prime Minister.

Lastly, watch the fate of Slovakia. This is to-day the most important live issue in Europe, and Spain has been considered in making this estimate.

TRUMAN SMITH

760F.62/1505 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, October 6, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received October 6—2:10 p. m.]

1705. The Counselor of the Czechoslovak Legation informs me that the proceedings of the International Commission at Berlin were broken off yesterday during several hours. The German representative demanded the occupation by German troops before October 10 of further territories which with the territories already occupied, would comprise practically the entire area shaded in red on the map²⁰ attached to Hitler's Godesberg memorandum.

Poland had protested against this and had received "feeble" support from the British and French Ambassadors. Whereupon the German representative had declared that if his demand was not granted the German Army would march in and "take" the territories in question. The proceedings were interrupted to allow the British and French Ambassadors to consult their Governments. When the Commission resumed its session in the late afternoon the British and French Ambassadors announced that they had received instructions to accept the German demand.

The Counselor stated that in the Czech fortifications abandoned to the German Army were heavy guns and machine guns to the value of 2 billion Czech crowns. Furthermore, the Czech fortifications had been constructed by French military engineers following the plans of the French Maginot Line and in abandoning these fortifications to Germany plans and complete information regarding the Maginot Line were thereby revealed to the German Army. The French Government as the Counselor put it "is making some valuable gifts to Germany."

The Counselor said that the French Government had offered financial and economic assistance to Czechoslovakia. The Czech Government had requested a loan in the same amount as they had requested of the British Government. The British Government had at once granted a loan of 10 million pounds. The French Government had not even replied as yet.

WILSON

²⁰ See *British Documents*, 3d ser., vol. II, map I at end of volume.

760F.62/1667

The Leader of the Democratic Sudeten Germans and Member of the Czechoslovak Parliament (Wenzel Jaksch) to the American Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) ²¹

LONDON, October 7, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: May I, as leader of the democratic Germans in the Sudeten areas, ask you to submit to President Roosevelt the following appeal?

In the Sudeten areas there ½ million people stood until the last moment by the ideals of democracy (Socialists, Catholics, Jews). Point 8 of the Munich agreement provides for only a onesided amnesty for Nazi prisoners on Czechoslovak territory. Many thousands of democratic Sudeten Germans having exposed themselves to great risks for their democratic ideals, are now threatened by the revenge of the Henlein people. Their only fault is that they have defended democracy within a democratic state. We appeal to President Roosevelt to raise his voice for a humanitarian treatment of the democratic Sudeten Germans, for the release of the prisoners and for stopping persecution in the Sudeten areas.

We further beg most urgently for the granting of a special quota for qualified democratic emigrants from the Sudeten areas, who can not find new homes on the remaining Czechoslovak territory.

Finally we emphasize that President Roosevelt would render a great service to the ideals of humanity if he could persuade the people of USA to initiate a campaign in favour of the refugees from the Sudeten areas.

Your obedient servant

JAKSCH

760F.62/1564 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, October 7, 1938—11 p. m.
[Received October 8—10:35 a. m.]

286. The Government released through the press this morning a fairly detailed description of the fifth zone of German occupation to which it is stated the Czech representatives had been forced to agree at the categorical insistence of the four powers.

²¹ Copy transmitted to the Department by the Ambassador in his despatch No. 1302, October 8; received October 17.

The new border, a description of which follows in section 2 of this message,²² obviously deprives Czechoslovakia of most of its strategic defenses and many of its industries. Every one of the larger cities now will lie in immediate proximity of the German frontier. As the Foreign Minister anticipated all main railway lines will be cut. Traffic from Praha to Bratislava on the main line will pass three times through German territory. It is estimated that 800,000 Czechs reside in the territories to be taken over by Germany.

Careful comparison fails to reveal any important differences between this border and that which was demanded by Hitler in the Godesberg memorandum. The few minor points of difference appear to be mostly to the disadvantage of Czechoslovakia. A considerable district west of Moravska Ostrava, for example, which was marked out at Godesberg as a plebiscite area is now to be included in the Reich.

While Czechoslovakia rejected these terms when included in the Godesberg memorandum, its strategic position is now such that military resistance is almost out of the question and the Government thus had no choice but to yield. Two classes of reservists are already being demobilized. And there is yet no confirmation of the reports that the Czechs would be allowed to keep war materials now in the occupied areas.

The Czech people had never heretofore been officially informed even of the exact limits of the first four zones of occupation. They are shocked and bewildered by the realization of the full import of the agreement arrived at by the powers and forced upon their Government, the actual effect of which they had no means of knowing until this morning. Now they realize that the agreement as interpreted is in all essential respects that which their Government refused to accept and against which it was ready to fight.

While the Government continues to put up a bold front in an endeavor to preserve morale and order there are few men in public affairs who have much confidence in the future of the state. It is widely recognized that despite Hitler's statements to the contrary, the new frontiers dictated by him at Berlin indicate no intention on his part to permit what remains of Czechoslovakia to continue to prosper as an independent state.

These people as I have repeatedly reported are remarkable for their self-control but they are now being tried to the utmost. They have the feeling that they have been deserted by their friends and they are facing a readjustment and relief problem of very large proportions for what will be a small state deprived of many of its principal resources.

CARR

²² Section 2 of message not printed.

760F.62/1625 : Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, October 12, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received October 12—11 a. m.]

293. Last night the new Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that Czechoslovakia deeply appreciates and will never forget the sympathetic attitude of President Roosevelt and the press and people of the United States during the critical period through which it has been passing. He said that it is now urgent that frontiers be defined and if possible the delay and agitation incident to holding plebiscites be avoided so that a President may be elected and a condition established permitting permanent plans to be made. For this reason he has asked to be received in Berlin. The response has been favorable but a date for his visit has not yet been fixed. He hopes by direct negotiations to speed up decisions and impress von Ribbentrop with the conviction of Czechoslovakia that its policies must henceforth not be inconsistent with those of Germany.

Replying to my inquiry he said confidentially that the idea of a German-Czechoslovak customs union was proposed to Beneš 10 years ago by Dr. Ritter who is now again in the Berlin Foreign Office and renewing the proposal. It is being advocated by some local financial institutions with large investments in the Sudeten area but the Czechoslovak Government is opposed. The Minister stated that the establishment of a customs union with Czechoslovakia would be only the first step in the German ambition to bring all Central and Southeast Europe into such a union. One of my colleagues told me that Ashton-Gwatkin is also advocating exemption from duty of products of Sudeten land imported into Czechoslovakia as essential to the economic welfare of Sudeten.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that the Polish Minister is demanding cession of the entire region south of a line running just north of Bratislava, Nitra, Kosice, Uzhorod, and Kralova to the Rumanian boundary and a plebiscite in the remainder of Slovakia and Ruthenia on the basis of the Austro-Hungarian census of 1910. The Czechoslovak delegation, all of whom are Slovaks, have resisted on the ground that the Slovaks and Ruthenians are opposed to a plebiscite outside the Hungarian inhabited areas. Hungary is now to submit a new proposal. The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that the Poles and Hungarians seem to have no agreement between them about Slovakia and Ruthenia. He said also that neither Germany nor Italy want Hungarian and Polish ambitions in this region realized but are not disposed to oppose them.

CARR

760F.62/1663 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, October 15, 1938—noon.
 [Received October 15—9:25 a. m.]

550. Henderson tells me that he believes the work of the Ambassadors' committee regarding Czechoslovakia is over for a long time. He said that about a week ago there were indications that Ribbentrop was urging Hitler to demand the cession of further zones beyond the present line. Henderson told Ribbentrop and Weizsaecker that if such demands were made he would sever connection with the committee and ask instructions from his Government. He also urged his Government to instruct British Minister at Praha to urge Czech new Foreign Minister to visit Germany as an indication that the policy of his Government would not be directed against this country.

He says that Weizsaecker has been most helpful as indeed has Attolico the Italian Ambassador. Their principal danger was always Weizsaecker but he hopes now that the matter is liquidated.

WILSON

760F.62/1697a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, October 18, 1938—noon.

181. From the Under Secretary. The President is interested in obtaining accurate and detailed information with regard to every phase of the recent crisis. For that purpose please telegraph as fully as may be possible replies to the following questions:

1. At what time was the President's second appeal read by Hitler on September 28?
2. At what time or times did Hitler receive the appeals for peace from the other nations of the world which took action in accordance with the President's request?
3. What are the real facts as you have obtained them with regard to Mussolini's intervention? The President is informed that Mussolini never telephoned directly to Hitler, and that the Italian move for peace originated with the Italian Ambassador in Berlin and was made through the Ambassador after the latter had communicated with Mussolini. At what time on September 28 was the Italian approach made to Hitler?

Any other pertinent information bearing upon the details of the events which took place leading up to the holding of the conference would likewise be helpful. [Welles.]

HULL

760F.62/1724 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State*BERLIN, October 20, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received October 20—11:25 a. m.]558. Personal for the Under Secretary: Your 181, October 18, noon.
In an informal talk with Weizsaecker:

1. He is not aware himself when the President's second appeal was read by Hitler but he thinks he may be able to find out and let me know.

2. Weizsaecker feels that the confusion of those days was such that it would be impossible to ascertain the answer to this question. No one person was constantly in the Fuehrer's company nor did all papers go through any one person's hands.

Can you give me a list of those countries which took action in accordance with the President's request? I may be able to learn something about this from other sources.

3. I reminded Weizsaecker that he had told me that Mussolini had telephoned Hitler direct. Weizsaecker replied that either he had made a mistake or I had misunderstood him. Mussolini had not telephoned direct to Hitler so far as Weizsaecker knows but he had telephoned direct to the Italian Ambassador here two or three times in the course of the 27th and 28th of September.

Italian Ambassador is ill today but I am seeing him tomorrow and will supplement this information.

Ask Moffat to show you a confidential letter from me dated October 3.²³

WILSON

760F.62/1737 : Telegram (part air)

*The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State*BERLIN, October 20, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received October 21—11:48 a. m.]

560. The Counselor of the French Embassy, Montbas, just called. He stated that François-Poncet had returned from his talk with Hitler at Berchtesgaden rather encouraged by Hitler's attitude.

Hitler had said that a false impression had gotten abroad that he regarded the Munich meeting as an isolated episode. This was not the fact. Hitler insisted that he felt that the accord at Munich should be followed by a definite betterment of relationships among the great

²³ Not found in Department files.

powers of the West and that real benefits for the future should flow from this understanding. Hitler had instructed Ribbentrop to put into precise form certain arrangements that might be concluded in the spirit of the Munich Agreement but was not yet ready to speak in detail.

Hitler added that he did not anticipate any difficulty with the French, that the French would tell him "yes" or "no" and that this would decide the matter. With the English, however, it is different. You give them a paper. There is a storm of discussion, billions for armament and no precise satisfaction comes. In fact Hitler declared that he might have to denounce the naval agreement.²⁴ He was not yet ready to do so because he had not built up to the 35% in heavy units but when he was so built up he would judge by the state of mind in England whether to denounce the agreement or not.

Hitler said that he desired to have real understanding with England but that what he could not tolerate was a partial understanding while Great Britain armed at a furious rate. In other words he would not accept a piece of sugar to keep him quiet until the British armament program was completed.

Cipher text accompaniment to London.

WILSON

760F.62/1724 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, October 21, 1938—3 p. m.

185. Your 558, October 20, 2 p. m. The following countries took action in accordance with the President's request:²⁵ Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iraq, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Switzerland, Venezuela. In addition, Sweden informed us that the King had, even before the receipt of the President's request, sent a message to Hitler.

HULL

²⁴ Signed June 18, 1935; see *Foreign Relations*, 1935, vol. I, pp. 162 ff.

²⁵ In addition, the Presidents of all the American Republics except Chile, Guatemala, Panama, and Mexico addressed messages of congratulation directly to President Roosevelt with reference to the telegrams he had sent on September 26 to the German Chancellor and the President of Czechoslovakia (760F.62/1734). For the exchanges of messages with President Roosevelt, see Department of State, *Press Releases*, October 1, 1938, pp. 225-230.

760F.62/1747: Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, October 21, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received 4:20 p. m.]

565-566. For the Under Secretary. Supplementing my 558, October 20, 2 p. m., and in further reply to your 181, October 18, noon.

Report on your point No. 1. Weizsaecker telephones he cannot verify the hour at which Hitler received the President's second message. Papers are not given a time stamp in the Chancery and he is unable to find anyone who saw the paper delivered.

Wiedemann²⁶ states that he saw the telegram between 10 and 11 o'clock the morning of Wednesday the 28th, that it was already translated at that time and that he "supposed that it had already been brought to the Chancellor".

Reference to your point 3. I had a long talk this morning with Attolico who begged me to keep strictly confidential anything he told me about September 28. His story follows:

He did not participate in events on the 27th instant other than to follow as well as he could what was going on.

On the morning of the 28th at 11 o'clock he told the Belgian Minister, who was calling on him, that he fully expected war to break out that day.

A few minutes later Mussolini called on the telephone in person to inform Attolico that a message from Chamberlain had just been received through Lord Perth. Mussolini instructed Attolico at once to apprise Hitler that whatever happened Mussolini was with him to the finish. He knew that Hitler was planning to issue orders for final mobilization and the march of troops at 2 p. m., that he had just received a message from Chamberlain that looked interesting but he wanted time to consider it. Hence he begged Hitler to delay everything 24 hours. He closed with a further assurance of his solidarity whatever happened.

Attolico went at once to the Chancery and was informed by the adjutant that François-Poncet was with Hitler. He persuaded the adjutant to carry in a note saying that Attolico was there with a message from Mussolini. Hitler read the note and told François-Poncet that he was called to the telephone, went out of the room leaving François-Poncet with Ribbentrop. He then heard the message from Mussolini hesitated some 20 seconds and said that since Mussolini requested it he would delay affairs 24 hours. Attolico then said that

²⁶ Capt. Fr. Wiedemann, retired, personal aide-de-camp to the German Chancellor in his capacity as Fuehrer.

Mussolini was calling him at noon sharp to have Hitler's answer and that he must hurry back to the Embassy to take the call. Attolico says that Hitler returned to François-Poncet and told the latter that he had just had a message from Mussolini thus giving François-Poncet the impression that Mussolini himself had called on the telephone.

Mussolini called Attolico promptly at 12, instructed him to return to Hitler to thank him for his consideration, to state that Chamberlain proposed that the whole situation be liquidated in 1 week, and that he undertook his guaranty in respect to carrying out the solution not only vis-à-vis Germany but vis-à-vis Italy as well. Attolico was further to state that acceptance of the plan in Mussolini's opinion meant for Hitler such a "grandiose victory", that there was no point in precipitating hostilities. Attolico was to return to Hitler at once and in the meantime Chamberlain's proposal was to be read over the telephone to the Italian Embassy.

Attolico proceeded again to the Chancery where he encountered Goering and Neurath in the anteroom. He immediately acquainted these two with the state of affairs and received Goering's assurances that he would push for the acceptance of Chamberlain's proposal. Hitler then entered the room and Attolico delivered his message briefly. Hitler appeared puzzled and said that nobody had yet spoken to him about the problem being solved in 1 week and he thought there was some confusion. Attolico immediately volunteered to return to his Embassy, get the copy of Chamberlain's communication (not yet delivered by the British Embassy) and return at once with it. He desired thus to give Goering a chance to urge Hitler to accept the proposal. Attolico returned to the Embassy, picked up Chamberlain's communication, found a further message from Mussolini instructing him to say that if Hitler so desired Italy would be present at any conference if Chamberlain chose to come over again and Hitler received him.

Attolico returned to the Chancellery. This time Hitler was summoned from a conference with Henderson carrying in his hand Chamberlain's communication which Attolico also presented. Hitler said that he could not see much purpose in an announcement in Rome that dealings at Godesberg had given him²⁷ the impression that he was in agreement with Hitler's suggested line. Chamberlain had then returned to England, encountered a wave of hostile opinion and had slipped back. He would only talk to Chamberlain again provided not only that Italy was represented but that Italy was represented by Mussolini in person.

²⁷ i. e., Chamberlain.

Attolico rushed again to his Embassy, telephoned Mussolini, rushed back to the Chancellery arriving there about 2:40 for the fourth time since 11 o'clock. Hitler came from the lunch table still eating. Attolico who speaks no German spoke this time four words in that language "morgenefuhr Mussolini . . ." ²⁸ Hitler laughed for the first time during the day and Attolico went back to lunch.

Attolico added one further detail emphasizing again its strictly confidential nature. In the course of the third visit Hitler dictated a brief outline of his minimum and irreducible demands and told Attolico to communicate them to Mussolini. Attolico did so but warned that other influences here might cause Hitler to stiffen those demands before the meeting. Mussolini replied that he thought he could take care of that. At the first meeting of the four Heads of Government Mussolini at once spoke and proposed as his own suggestion the irreducible demands which Attolico had telephoned. Attolico states that he has since learned that in fact the demands had been stiffened subsequently but that Hitler was unable to disclaim Mussolini's suggestion in view of the fact that it had originated with himself.

WILSON

760F.62/1858

*Memorandum by the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)*²⁹

[Extract]

Dr. Mastný ³⁰ called on me on the morning of October 31 and stated that he had received an instruction from his Government to do a thing which he was most happy personally to do, namely, to assure me of the deep gratitude with which his country regarded the United States both for its willingness to accept the protection of Czechoslovak interests in the event of hostilities and for its sympathy with Czechoslovakia during its struggle.

Dr. Mastný said that he was now engaged in negotiating with the Germans regarding rectifications of the line; for instance, there were points at which the present line crossed the main road of supply for Pilsen and points at which the German frontier crossed into indispensable railroad lines connecting important points. He hoped they would be able to wash these things out. In the event that they were unable to do so the Czechs might have to apply to the Committee of the Four Powers. They were in hopes, however, that they could do

²⁸ Quotation apparently garbled.

²⁹ Transmitted to the Department by the Ambassador in his despatch No. 402, November 4; received November 21.

³⁰ Vojtech Mastný, Czechoslovak Minister in Germany.

the thing in a friendly way with Germany alone as they realized that they were completely at Germany's mercy.

He felt that Czechoslovakia would become a three-state entity,—Bohemia, Slovakia and Ruthenia. There was little sympathy here for the Polish claims to a common frontier with Hungary, and he thought that in the near future these matters would be finally liquidated in the sense he had described.

He then continued, in the most confidential way, to tell me of his own experience during the past few months. He said that he had repeatedly urged upon his Government the necessity for autonomy for the Sudetenland. He had warned again and again that half measures would not satisfy this country and that only the most far-reaching autonomy would save the state intact. He had even had a serious quarrel with Beneš, his old-time friend, over this matter. Beneš had felt convinced that from a democratic standpoint he could not allow any section of the country to become Nazi. He was bound both by the Left elements, anti-Nazi in principle, and the Extreme Right, deeply nationalistic, and was unable, he thought, to make the necessary concessions.

Beneš had called him early on the morning of the 29th of September and had told him to fly immediately to Munich. Mastný refused, on the grounds that he could not represent Beneš as his views differed from the President's. Beneš had replied that he wanted him to go "only as an observer", and on this basis Mastný took the plane for Munich. He found all the principals in conference and was able to talk only with Ashton-Gwatkin. At 1:15 a. m. he was finally summoned to Chamberlain's room, where the latter handed him his memorandum of the decisions reached. Mastný stated that he would return at once to Prague and the President would answer. Chamberlain replied that no reply was expected. They simply wanted Mastný to sit on the Committee to meet in Berlin. Mastný said that, nevertheless, he must go to Prague, which he did. Beneš thereupon instructed him to return to Berlin and sit on the Committee.

H[UGH] R. W[ILSON]

BERLIN, October 31, 1938.

760F.62/1884

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

WARSAW, November 5, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: As of possible interest and for your information, I am forwarding you, hereto attached, a memorandum, summarizing my observations, from the Warsaw angle, on the far-

reaching repercussions of this Munich Conference and its immediate sequel.

This memorandum is a copy of the substance of a letter I have sent the President—and pressure of work in this office prevents my making a separate and “clean” copy for you at this moment. I therefore do hope that you will forgive me, under the circumstances.

With every good wish and renewed congratulations on the wonderful work you are doing I am,

Yours faithfully,

ANTHONY BIDDLE, JR.

[Enclosure]

Memorandum by the Ambassador in Poland (Biddle)

Many signs point to the Munich Conference and its immediate sequel's having already had far reaching repercussions throughout the whole extent of the European continent. As in effect pointed out in my previous letter, in view of the apparent check suffered by the western powers, the smaller countries, such as those of the Oslo group, which had already decided upon neutrality and upon repudiation of the compulsory sanctions clauses of the League Covenant, are already congratulating themselves on their foresight and wisdom. Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, and the Scandinavians are more than ever determined not to be drawn into any conflict between the major powers.

States east and southeast of Berlin, though rapidly falling in line with Berlin's orientation in an economic sense, are in many cases, still groping for some “out” (*a*) from eventual German political hegemony, and (*b*) from becoming the potential victims of “peaceful settlements” between the major powers. Poland is in this category.

The Chanceries of eastern and central Europe are now apparently practicing a “balancing policy”, characterized by a search for the orientation whereby they may be the safest (at least temporarily so) and wherefrom they may acquire the most benefits.

Having interpreted recent events to mean Britain's and France's “evacuation” of eastern and central Europe, certain states, such as Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary, have recently been evidencing an inclination to look to Rome in their pursuance of a post-Munich course of “balance diplomacy” between Berlin and Rome. Due to Italy's politico-economic position in central Europe, these smaller states looked for Italy to adopt measures towards preventing German penetration and domination in a region which Italy had hitherto regarded as her natural and legitimate sphere of interest. Moreover, the smaller states felt Italy might be tempted by the prospect of acquiring for herself in these parts, the leadership which France had apparently abandoned.

For the second time however, since the *Anschluss*, and in this instance, at the recent Italo-German arbitration conference in Vienna, Mussolini succumbed to Hitler, and this blasted the hopes of statesmen of the smaller countries to Berlin's east for Italian support.

Though Italy may desire to resist the German drive down the Danube valley by diplomatic and economic means, and by domestic intrigues, she would not at this date, in my opinion, dare to challenge Germany by force of arms. Indeed, I find it difficult to believe either in the will or ability of Italy (unbacked by the western powers) to stand up to Germany.

I find it equally difficult at this writing to foresee any development which in final resort will not imply a variable degree of German hegemony over the various individual states east and southeast of Berlin—a hegemony which certain economic and political arrangements between these states may mitigate, but not prevent. Moreover, as Germany's trade offensive effectively advances, the states in its path can hardly afford to quarrel with their best customer, from a trade standpoint.

As regards Germany's post-Munich position, it is interesting to note that as Germany emerges from the "have not" to the "have" category, Nazi inner circles are manifesting concern over the renewed vigor with which the western powers are arming.

Signs at the moment point to Germany's planning on the one hand, a period of territorial reconsolidation and digestion, and continuance of her eastward trade offensive, on the other. Funk's recent southeastern tour brought to light Germany's new form of approach to the various trade goals envisaged in Berlin's program. In brief, these bilateral negotiations may be characterized as an approach to meet the special circumstances prevailing in each country with which Berlin aims to do business. In cases where states are under-industrialized and thus unable to participate in the exchange of items of the character suitable to German requirements, Germany proposes to take in hand the organizing of an industrial structure within such states, providing them with technicians and materials—receiving in return food commodities and other products.

In connection with this eastward drive, Berlin's present mood was characterized in effect, by the following statement recently imparted to me by an experienced observer who enjoys close contact with inner Nazi circles: Germany was not building a ramshackle road, such as that which Napoleon built. The road which present-day Germany was constructing would not tumble. While Napoleon was a great General, he had lacked the opportunity to learn many things present-day Germany had learned, and which only the modern world understood—such as, economics and the regularized expansion of population. I in-

terpret this to mean that an almost "power drunk" and superconfident Germany intends to have no unsympathetic or undigested portions along the way towards its eastward goal.

My informant furthermore stated that inner Nazi circles were now looking to Mr. Chamberlain to see what he would propose. Accordingly, they expect great efforts to bring about European appeasement and understandings to characterize the next three to six months. Moreover, these circles did not anticipate at the moment a Four-Power Pact, rather they looked for conferences of several or more powers directly interested in any particular settlement.

As for Poland's current position in light of Germany's eastward politico-economic ascendancy, I am aware that while Poland has already given evidence of "playing ball" with Germany economically, as a temporary expedient, she realizes it is a risky game at the best, and is seriously apprehensive in terms of the long-range political outlook. Indeed, Warsaw deeply regrets increasing evidences of Britain's and France's eastern and central European evacuation—for, although Warsaw has for long ceased to expect British and French military intervention in affairs of this section of Europe, nevertheless, Warsaw regarded evidences of their active interest in the light of a healthy balance.

As regards near future policies of the present British and French Governments, current signs indicate that France, like Britain, will exert efforts towards making peace with the dictators, and that France will try to secure from Hitler a statement of peaceful intentions somewhat along the lines of that which he made to Mr. Chamberlain.

Just how far the demands of Hitler and his Nazi "colony-mongers" will impede understandings of durable character between Germany, Britain and France respectively, remains to be seen.

With every good wish [etc.]

BIDDLE

760F.62151/8: Telegram

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

PRAHA, November 7, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received November 7—2: 50 p. m.]

326. Department's telegram No. 99, November 3, 7 p. m.³¹ As far as I can ascertain the situation with respect to the cession of territory is as follows: During the month of September negotiations between Czechoslovakia and certain other countries resulted in an agreement in principle on the part of the Czechoslovak Government to cede to Germany certain portions of its territory. At the Munich Conference

³¹ Not printed.

four foreign governments reached an agreement among themselves concerning the terms and conditions governing such cession. While a copy of this agreement was handed to the Czech Government the latter's assent to its provisions was never formally requested. The Czechoslovak Government decided after due deliberation to accept the terms of the Munich Agreement. It communicated this decision orally to the British, French and Italian Ministers and through them to the German Government pointing out at this time that the agreement had been arrived at "without us and against us". It then made its decision known to the world at large through an official communiqué.³² Finally it proceeded to give effect to this decision by evacuating portions of its territory as the Munich Agreement had provided.

While the International Commission³³ has not completed the final delimitation of the new boundary it is understood that the remaining questions to be settled involve differences so small that they are of a technical rather than a political nature. Thus the new frontier as shown on the maps submitted to the Department with my despatch No. 273 of October 19, 1938,³⁴ may be accepted as substantially the final boundary between the two countries. The Foreign Office itself is not aware at this date whether the completion of the labors of the International Commission will be followed by any formal act which would give legal finality to the transfer of territory which has already taken place in the physical sense. Should no such formal act ensue I am inclined to feel that the Government's communiqué of October 1 announcing its decision to accept the Munich Agreement must be regarded as the nearest thing to an act of cession and that transfer must be regarded as having taken place progressively with the occupation of the territory by German troops which was substantially completed on October 10. Certainly in any circumstances this date could be taken for all practical purposes as the date when the actual transfer of territory became complete. It is of interest to note that the Czechoslovak Government has decreed that persons domiciled on September 29 in the territory now occupied by Germany are not to be considered as Czechoslovak citizens.

I am not aware that either the Czech or the German Government has taken any formal position with respect to the date on which the territory may be considered to have been juridically transferred. I have reason to believe that the Czechoslovak Government if it were to be forced to take a position would hold that the transfer of territory would not become final until the other provisions of the Munich Agreement—those concerning guarantees and financial assistance—should become effective. I doubt, however, whether this view would

³² September 30, 1938, *Documents on International Affairs*, 1938, vol. II, p. 326.

³³ Established September 29, 1938; see British Cmd. 5848, pp. 5-6.

³⁴ Not printed.

be shared by the German Government which I understand has already turned the areas in question over to the German civil administrative authorities and is treating them in most respects as integral portions of the German Reich.

Since there appears to be no authoritative expression of opinion and probably not even any agreement on this point between the parties concerned I can only suggest that the Department draw its own conclusions on the basis of the facts reported above.

CARR

762.00/219

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] December 22, 1938.

Major Percy Black, U. S. A., Assistant Military Attaché in Berlin, called. He reported that he had every reason to believe that Germany would start moving again in the early Spring. He knew as a fact that certain key reserve officers and certain transport bodies had received orders to hold themselves in readiness as of January 20. (Curiously enough this date coincided closely with the time Ambassador Kennedy had told me the British regarded as the end of the safe era.) He thought that the move would be eastward this time though he was indefinite in his opinions as to just where it would strike. He felt that Danzig would be absorbed without difficulty and likewise Memel. He thought that ultimately the Polish Corridor would be solved—not by granting Germany an *autobahn* across the Polish Corridor but by granting Poland an *autobahn* to Gdynia across German recovered territory. He did not believe that this eastward movement would result in general war: (a) partly because France and England could not close in the gap between Germany and themselves, and (b) partly because nobody would fight for Poland. On the other hand, he thought the Poles themselves would fight, rather than follow the surrender technique of the Czechs. During the crisis of last September the Germans had denuded East Prussia of troops and had made no efforts to cover their left flank in Silesia. This could only indicate close cooperation between Polish and German General Staffs. I asked Major Black how long he thought it would have taken the German Army to overcome Czech resistance. He replied, "Not more than two weeks and probably less". The Czech defenses such as they were were excellent, but there were serious gaps in them which the Germans knew about. More important, however, was the fact that the Czech plan of defense was to protect the frontiers with approximately equal strength everywhere rather than mass a preponderant

strength at some key positions. Thus if the Germans broke through at any one point the collapse of the line followed. The German military had told him after taking over the Czech Maginot-Line that the war would have lasted even less than they had anticipated.

Major Black went on to say that Germany was definitely planning a customs union and a monetary union with the smaller states to the southeast; that she was going very slowly for the moment in Czechoslovakia as it was a laboratory test being watched by her neighbors. As to German psychology he said that instead of regarding the acquisition of Czechoslovakia as a vast victory for Hitler achieved by his having stronger nerves than his opponents, the man in the street had reacted somewhat as follows: He never believed that there was going to be any fighting until some time in September. He viewed the prospect with horror. Then Chamberlain came over to Germany and war was averted. Ergo, Chamberlain was the man of peace and a public hero in Germany. As the acquisition of the Sudeten area had been assumed from the beginning it was not considered an undue triumph. The German authorities did not like having Chamberlain or the British so popular in Germany; as a result the Goebbels propaganda against England was intensified and has been going full blast ever since. The Germans did not take too seriously the Italian demands for expansion in the Mediterranean; they were merely useful in keeping French and British attention concentrated elsewhere than on themselves.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

740.00/555

The Minister in Czechoslovakia (Carr) to the Secretary of State

[Extracts]

No. 307

PRAGUE, December 29, 1938.
[Received January 27, 1939.]

SIR: I have the honor to inform the Department that I called today upon Dr. Chvalkovsky⁵⁵ in order to announce my departure on a brief holiday and had a long conversation with him concerning the current problems of his Government.

In discussing the Munich conference the Minister said that the fact that France and Great Britain did not support Czechoslovakia did not surprise him for he had long been convinced that they would not fight and neither would Russia. As for the latter, he had been certain it could not be counted upon for assistance and had often said so to Ambassador Phillips in Rome. In the first place Russia had no

⁵⁵ F. Chvalkovsky, Czechoslovak Minister for Foreign Affairs.

way of giving effective military aid because of lack of transportation facilities and a common frontier. The Czechoslovaks had been convinced that Russia would afford assistance with its air force and had come to believe that such aid would be effective in opposing Germany. I remarked that it had not been my observation that the Government was certain of effective aid from Russia, particularly toward the end of the summer. He said that was true of the Government, but that the rank and file of the people had supreme confidence in effective aid from Russia, whereas the fact was that Russia would not go outside her borders to help anyone. As for Great Britain and France, they could not be blamed in some ways for the course they took at Munich for the fact was that they could not fight and Germany knew it. They were not prepared. They were seriously to blame, however, for not frankly informing Czechoslovakia months before the Munich conference or even several weeks before it (for they must have known their fighting strength then) that they could not be depended upon to aid Czechoslovakia militarily if it should suffer an unprovoked attack. Had they done so it would have been possible for Czechoslovakia to have come to an agreement with Germany of a much more favorable character than that which finally resulted. In proof of this he said that Field Marshal Goering only recently remarked to a Czechoslovak representative when the latter was in Berlin as a member of a Czechoslovak Commission, "Why did your Government not take the (Sudeten) Germans into the Government last summer? Had they done so your boundaries would today have remained intact." Not only did Great Britain and France fail to reveal their real position until the last moment when it was impossible for President Beneš to make a satisfactory arrangement with Hitler, but after the Munich Agreement had been signed they gave Czechoslovakia definitely to understand that if it refused to accept the agreement and chose to fight it would not only have to fight alone but that Great Britain and France would share with Germany and Italy the responsibility of maintaining the Munich Agreement which he regarded as equivalent to saying that they would in effect join those Governments in opposing Czechoslovakia. Consequently Czechoslovakia had to choose between fighting and thus committing suicide and losing her independence entirely or surrendering the Sudetenland and accepting the terms imposed upon her, in the hope of retaining her independence as a State for a further period.

Dr. Chvalkovsky mentioned in this relation that President Beneš could probably have averted the catastrophe by changing his policy to one friendly to Germany. In December, 1937, Count Ciano had told Dr. Chvalkovsky that it was of the utmost importance that Czechoslovakia readjust its relations with Germany and with the Sudeten

Germans. Again after the Austrian *Anschluss*³⁶ Ciano cautioned Chvalkovsky of the necessity for a change of policy and indicated that almost the last opportunity for such a change was at hand. These warnings were communicated to President Beneš but without result. On July 4, 1938, during the Sokol festival in Prague, Dr. Chvalkovsky discussed the subject fully with President Beneš who finally said that it was impossible for him to make the change of policy essential to meet the requirements of Hitler. (It is important to bear in mind in this relation the changed condition here and the fact that Dr. Chvalkovsky was a member of the Agrarian Party which always was opposed to Dr. Beneš and now makes up the backbone of the National Union Party which controls the present regime.)

According to the Minister the events which he cited had imposed upon the Government the necessity of bringing its policies sufficiently into conformity with the wishes of the German Reich to be satisfactory to it. He said that he had been drafted for service in his present position and that he had entered upon his task reluctantly and with no illusions as to the difficulties ahead. He would undoubtedly be compelled to do many things which he would find distasteful and which he would regret; but he was obliged to keep before him at all times the problem of how to preserve the independence of the State and his policies would be formulated solely with that end in view. He said that he is certain that at present, and he emphasized "at present", he is confident that Hitler does not wish to absorb Czechoslovakia or destroy its limited independence; but he said that when he went to Berlin in the autumn Hitler had said to him that he was free to proceed in the development of his foreign policy but that if it did not conform to the requirements of the Reich he would hear from him (Hitler). So he said, "What am I to do? If I do not conform to what is wanted, not only I but perhaps my country must pay the penalty."

I inquired whether he felt apprehensive of further trouble for this country in the event that Germany should move eastward on Poland or the Ukraine. He said not necessarily for the independence of the country. He did not think Germany would undertake to force this country to fight with it against Poland, for example; but it was quite likely that Germany would demand the privilege of sending her troops through Czechoslovakia against Poland. If Czechoslovakia should refuse permission Germany would force the issue and send them through just the same. Consequently the lesser evil would be to accord the permission. That on the other hand would give Poland an opportunity to say that Czechoslovakia was unneutral and Poland would likely attack this country which would be forced to defend itself.

³⁶ See pp. 384 ff.

Consequently it would likely find itself in the war fighting on the side of Germany through force of circumstances.

He then went on to express considerable apprehension in regard to the future. He does not think that the agitation in Italy in regard to Tunis and Northern Africa is merely for the purpose of diverting attention from other designs which Hitler and Mussolini have in the East. He thinks that Mussolini must gain more territory and that the time is ripe for another achievement. Likewise he says Hitler must make a further move next year (1939) and this time it must be on a larger scale than Czechoslovakia. Where that move will be made is not clear. The Ukraine as already stated is not yet fully prepared. He was frank in saying, however, that Hitler will not give up his anti-Jewish campaign; and in that in his opinion lies a great danger for the future for it may prove to be the means of bringing Germany and Russia together. If the situation should so develop in Russia that an anti-Semitic policy could be adopted or even the semblance of one, Germany might speedily find a plausible reason for abandoning its anti-Communist slogan and join Russia on the anti-Jewish issue. One of the dangers that lies in the advancement of Germany into the Ukraine is the possibility of bringing the two Governments into cooperation. Their political philosophy is sufficiently close to make this possible. The Jewish issue might afford a plausible basis for shaping a common policy in which case not only all of Europe but Asia as well would be at their mercy.

Respectfully yours,

WILBUR J. CARR

MEETING AT EVIAN, FRANCE, TO FORM AN INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR ASSISTANCE OF POLITICAL REFUGEES FROM GERMANY INCLUDING AUSTRIA¹

840.48 Refugees/a : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)*²

WASHINGTON, March 23, 1938—1 p. m.

1. Please call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs and inquire whether the British Government (on its own behalf or on behalf of the self-governing Dominions) would be willing to cooperate with the Government of the United States in setting up a special committee composed of representatives of a number of governments for the purpose of facilitating the emigration from Austria³ and presumably from Germany of political refugees.

2. Our idea is that whereas such representatives would be designated by the governments concerned, any financing of the emergency emigration referred to would be undertaken by private organizations within the respective countries. Furthermore, it should be understood that no country would be expected or asked to receive a greater number of emigrants than is permitted by its existing legislation.

3. As soon as enough replies have been received to warrant going ahead, the President contemplates appointing a representative, who would proceed abroad without delay, to meet with the rest of the committee. It is suggested, purely as a matter of convenience, that the first meeting be held in some Swiss city as being centrally located.

4. Please make it perfectly clear that in making this proposal the Government of the United States in no sense intends to discourage or interfere with such work as is already being done on the refugee problem by the Migration Bureau of the International Labor Office, or by any other existing agencies. It has been prompted to make the present proposal because of the urgency of the problem with which the

¹ The official papers of the meeting are published in *Proceedings of the Intergovernmental Committee, Evian, July 6th to 15th, 1938: Verbatim Record of the Plenary Meetings of the Committee and Reports* (July, 1938).

² Sent, *mutatis mutandis*, to the American Diplomatic Missions listed in paragraph 5.

³ The incorporation of Austria into the German Reich was effected on March 13; see pp. 384 ff.

world is faced and the necessity of speedy, cooperative effort, under governmental supervision, if widespread human suffering is to be averted.

5. Similar approaches are being made to the governments of France, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and Italy and the governments of all the other American Republics.

6. Please telegraph reply as soon as received.

HULL

[Favorable replies to the Department's telegram of March 23 were received from the 20 other American Republics and from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom; and from Australia and New Zealand through the British Foreign Office. Replies received from 29 countries were published in whole or in part in Department of State, *Press Releases*, April 2, 1938, pages 426-432; *ibid.*, April 9, pages 475-476; and *ibid.*, April 16, pages 480-482.]

840.48 Refugees/5 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, March 24, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received March 24—3:30 p. m.]

72. In compliance with the Department's circular instruction of March 23, 1 p. m., I called today upon Count Ciano⁴ to ascertain the attitude of the Italian Government towards the proposed establishment of a committee to facilitate emigration of political refugees from Austria and Germany. While promising to take the matter up with Mussolini, Ciano nevertheless expressed the opinion very definitely that Italy could not be represented on any such body and pointed out that in view of the similarity of the two regimes political refugees from Germany would be hostile to the Fascist state as well.

Although he recognized the humanitarian character of the proposal he said that it presented political considerations to Italy, that Italy could not participate in any move to care for the enemies of Fascism or Nazism and that Italy must therefore refuse both on account of its close association with Germany and in view of its own position and form of government.

PHILLIPS

⁴ Galeazzo Ciano, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

840.48 Refugees/44

*Memorandum by the Secretary of State of a Conversation With the
Ambassador of the Soviet Union (Trojanovsky)*

[WASHINGTON,] March 26, 1938.

During my conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, he said that he was much disturbed about a report that the President was proposing to open up the United States as an asylum for minority refugees from Russia; that he could not understand that; of course, that if it meant White Russian, including Trotsky, that was another matter, but he could not understand this and it would make his Government feel badly to learn that such was the purpose. I sought to reassure him entirely by calling his attention to the fact that the program for relief of refugees announced by this Government on yesterday, as was expressly shown in the invitations to other Governments, is confined to Protestants, Catholics, or other religious refugees from Austria and Germany, and likewise to Jews and other racial minorities,—suffering persecution in Germany and Austria; that I was entirely satisfied that the press had exaggerated the situation and that the President, who has shown his interest in Russia in so many ways from the time he extended recognition, could not have had in mind the idea of refugees from Russia in connection with this program, for the reason at least that it is expressly confined to refugees from Germany and Austria. The Ambassador seemed content.

C[ORDELL] H[ULL]

840.48 Refugees/154 : Telegram (part air)

The Minister in Rumania (Gunther) to the Secretary of State

BUCHAREST, April 13, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received April 16—7:40 a. m.]

52. Minister for Foreign Affairs today expressed his wholehearted admiration for the President's initiative in making a general appeal for the admission into other countries of political refugees from Germany and Austria and expressed the hope that this might be extended to Rumania. The Minister suggested as the next step the establishment somewhere in Switzerland of bureaus for Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Germany to deal with Jewish or political refugee problems in those countries.

Due to the conclusion of citizenship tests in this country this month the problem of what to do with those who emerge therefrom without nationality will become active. The Minister intimated that Rumania would like to dispose annually of a number corresponding to the Jew-

ish birth rate. He seemed to think that in any case there would be no pressure to send away the old and the young under 20 or over 40 years of age.

GUNTHER

840.48 Refugees/165 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Minister in Rumania (Gunther)

WASHINGTON, April 21, 1938—1 p. m.

28. Your 52, April 13, 5 p. m., and 54, April 16, 6 p. m.⁵ The recent initiative of the President with regard to refugees was prompted by an emergency situation in Germany and Austria. The Committee will be set up primarily to endeavor to meet the problems growing out of this situation. Whether later on the Committee itself might decide to extend its work is something that cannot be foreseen at the present time, but it would be unfortunate if its mere existence should anywhere be construed as an encouragement of legislation or acts that would create a new refugee problem as this might well result in a diminished willingness in this and presumably in other countries to consider ways and means of receiving and settling the victims of such legislation and acts.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/219a : Circular telegram

*The Secretary of State to Certain American Diplomatic Representatives*⁶

WASHINGTON, May 7, 1938—2 p. m.

Please inform the Government to which you are accredited that as over 30 Governments have now agreed to cooperate in setting up the special intergovernmental committee to facilitate the emigration from Austria and from Germany of political refugees, the President has appointed Mr. Myron C. Taylor with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary as the American representative on this committee. In addition, the President has appointed a national

⁵ Latter not printed.

⁶ The Missions in the 20 other American Republics and in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland; the text transmitted to the British Government (Department's telegram No. 201), included Australia and New Zealand. A telegram, No. 33, May 1, 1 p. m., embodying the substance of the first two paragraphs was sent to the Consulate at Geneva for the information of the Secretariat of the League of Nations and the International Labor Office.

committee to coordinate in this country the work of private organizations in behalf of refugees.⁷

In order that the intergovernmental committee may meet with as little delay as possible, this Government suggests that it would be desirable that its first meeting be held on Wednesday July 6th at Evian, France. The French Government has already welcomed this suggestion.

Mr. Taylor will be accompanied by one or more technical assistants.

Please telegraph as soon as the Government to which you are accredited approves the suggested time and place of meeting, as well as the name and rank of the representative.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/227 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

ROME, May 11, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received May 11—2:25 p. m.]

105. Myron Taylor⁸ asks me to say that he awaits further information and instructions.

PHILLIPS

840.48 Refugees/227 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Italy (Phillips)

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1938—noon.

42. Your 105, May 11, 6 p. m. Please inform Mr. Taylor that this Government has suggested to the other governments which have agreed to be represented on the International Committee for refugees that the first meeting of the International Committee be held at Evian on July 6th next. So far, only a few replies have been received.

The Department has considered it preferable to postpone sending Mr. Taylor preliminary information and instructions until after the first meeting of the National Committee for refugees which will be held early next week. At that time it is hoped that a definite program may be agreed upon by the National Committee, and the instructions to be sent to Mr. Taylor will necessarily be contingent in part upon the nature of such program.

The Department has designated Mr. Robert Pell, Divisional Assistant in the Department of State, as assistant to Mr. Taylor. It is

⁷ American National Committee on Refugees; see Department of State, *Press Releases*, May 21, 1938, p. 586.

⁸ Mr. Taylor had sailed for Europe on April 30.

believed that Mr. Pell's special qualifications and particularly his experience in international conferences will make him particularly useful to Mr. Taylor. Mr. George Brandt, Foreign Service Officer, Class III, has also been designated to assist Mr. Taylor because of Mr. Brandt's special familiarity with immigration questions.

Mr. Pell will attend the meetings next week of the National Committee and soon thereafter will sail for Europe to confer with Mr. Taylor. He will take with him at such time the final instructions to be given to Mr. Taylor together with detailed information as to the work of the National Committee and as to the views of the Department with regard to the work to be undertaken by the International Committee.

When he called at the Department before sailing, Mr. Taylor indicated his desire that he be permitted to select one of his assistants from outside the Foreign Service. Please inquire of Mr. Taylor whether he has reached any conclusions as to his recommendations in this regard and inform the Department of his reply.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/315 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 1, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received June 1—3:15 p. m.]

472. My 433, May 31 [21], 2 p. m.⁹ The Foreign Office states that it would appreciate being informed if possible (1) what steps, if any, have been taken regarding organization of the proposed conference at Evian; (2) what definite proposals the United States may have formulated regarding procedure, scope of the work and eventual solution of the problem? Does the United States contemplate the outcome of the conference as a resolution or declaration or recommendations to governments?

The Foreign Office says that it would be most grateful if information along the foregoing lines might be communicated as background for its own preparation for the meeting. The desire was also expressed that it might be furnished with the names of those countries who have signified their intention to send representatives to Evian. It was also stated that it will be helpful to know at what building or location in Evian the conference will take place. This last request it was stated has a bearing on the location of accommodations for delegates and staff.

KENNEDY

⁹ Not printed.

840.48 Refugees/315 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, June 2, 1938—7 p. m.

249. Your 472, June 1, 7 p. m. You may inform the Foreign Office that the French Government has agreed to make the necessary arrangements for the organization of the meeting including the retention of the requisite personnel for the secretariat.¹⁰ The French representative acting for the host country will preside at the opening session. We have not yet been informed at what building in Evian the meeting will be held, but the Foreign Office can doubtless obtain that information from Paris.

We hope to communicate in the near future to the participating governments the proposed agenda which will indicate the scope of the work and the contemplated procedure.

Up to the present the following governments have indicated that they will send representatives to Evian: Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Great Britain, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay and Venezuela. No definite decision has been received as yet from Australia, Canada, Denmark and New Zealand.¹¹ In this latter connection we should appreciate a reply as soon as possible to our 234, May 24, 7 p. m.¹²

HULL

840.48 Refugees/355 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State*ROME, June 13, 1938—10 a. m.
[Received June 13—7:46 a. m.]

141. Following from Taylor.

“Anticipating meeting in Paris would like information your conclusions whether you have or contemplate before conference advising German authorities through your channels; first, of purpose of conference; second, propriety and wisdom of extending Germany an invitation to be present and/or available through an observer; third, advising League authority of conference and general purpose. Upon

¹⁰ Telegram No. 857, June 1, 1 p. m., from the Ambassador in France; not printed.

¹¹ Affirmative replies from Australia and New Zealand, with respect to the information requested in the last paragraph of the Department's circular telegram of May 7, p. 743, were subsequently conveyed to the Department through the British Foreign Office, which also transmitted the information that the Union of South Africa would send an observer.

¹² Not printed.

study of reports of McDonald group activities,¹³ juridical surveys, League reports including Nansen and British Palestine Commission reports and others it might appear exodus of possible numbers involved could not be properly handled unless German cooperation effected to systematize over a period of years and to aid financially such as are now qualified to move and have no resources. To gain information relative past activities and to acquire knowledge of present conditions have had here for last week end Norman Bentwich of London refugee group formerly with McDonald Committee enroute from Vienna to London. In view of Pell, Brandt postponed sailing will leave here for Paris Ritz Hotel Monday 20th, assume attending governments have been advised of the number and quality of staffs appointed by the United States of America to attend as aid to their own selection."

PHILLIPS

840.48 Refugees/355 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Italy (Phillips)

WASHINGTON, June 14, 1938—6 p. m.

57. For Taylor. Your 141, June 13, 10 a. m.

1. It is our feeling that it would be inadvisable at this time to approach the German Government or to invite Germany to send a representative or observer to the meeting. We are inclined to believe that if it appears desirable to take up with the German Government the matters to which you refer the channel for approach can best be worked out through consultation among the various government representatives at Evian.

2. As soon as the agenda of the meeting has been finally approved we expect to furnish a copy to the League authorities and to inform them that you are being requested at the opening session of the Intergovernmental Committee to propose that an invitation be extended to Sir Neill Malcolm, League High Commissioner for Refugees, to attend the Committee's sessions. It seems unnecessary to propose that a similar invitation be extended to the president of the Nansen office inasmuch as Judge Hansson, the head of that office, will attend the Intergovernmental Meeting in the capacity of representative of Norway. We hope to have the agenda approved within the next day or two and copies thereof will be communicated immediately to all participating governments.

3. Participating governments were informed on May 24th of your appointment and that you would be assisted by necessary technical experts.

¹³ James McDonald was chairman of the American National Committee on Refugees.

4. Upon your arrival at Paris we suggest that you get in touch with the Embassy, which will place at your disposal such information as it has regarding the meeting.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/374a : Circular telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)*¹⁴

WASHINGTON, June 14, 1938—6 p. m.

Department's circular, May 7, 2 p. m. Please inform the Government to which you are accredited that we propose the following agenda for the meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees which is to convene at Evian on July 6th.

"1. To consider what steps can be taken to facilitate the settlement in other countries of political refugees from Germany (including Austria). The term 'political refugees' for the purposes of the present meeting, is intended to include persons who desire to leave Germany as well as those who have already done so. The conference would of course take due account of the work now being done by other agencies in this field and would seek means of supplementing the work done by them.

2. To consider what immediate steps can be taken, within the existing immigration laws and regulations of the receiving countries, to assist the most urgent cases. It is anticipated that this would involve each participating government furnishing, in so far as may be practicable, for the strictly confidential information of the Committee, a statement of its immigration laws and practices and its present policy regarding the reception of immigrants. It would be helpful for the committee to have a general statement from each participating government of the number and type of immigrants it is now prepared to receive or that it might consider receiving.

3. To consider a system of documentation, acceptable to the participating states, for those refugees who are unable to obtain requisite documents from other sources.

4. To consider the establishment of a continuing body of governmental representatives, to be set up in some European capital, to formulate and to carry out, in cooperation with existing agencies, a long range program looking toward the solution or alleviation of the problem in the larger sense.

5. To prepare a Resolution making recommendations to the participating governments with regard to the subjects enumerated above and with regard to such other subjects as may be brought for consideration before the intergovernmental meeting."

Please add that it is the earnest hope of the American Government that the Government to which you are accredited will find it possible

¹⁴ Missions in countries to which the same instruction was sent are listed at the end of the telegram.

to give its representative at Evian full instructions on the points covered in the agenda in order that the meeting may reach decisions with a minimum of delay.

You may also state that the American representative at the inter-governmental meeting is being instructed to propose at the opening session that the meeting convey an invitation to Sir Neill Malcolm, League High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany, to attend its sessions. It has not been considered necessary to propose that a similar invitation be conveyed to the President of the International Office for Refugees inasmuch as Judge Hansson, the head of that office, will attend the meeting as the representative of Norway.

Please notify Sir Neill Malcolm informally of the proposal to invite him to attend the meeting at Evian.

Same telegram (omitting final paragraph) is to be sent to the following countries: Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/384c : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Switzerland (Harrison)

WASHINGTON, June 14, 1938—6 p. m.

26. Your despatch no. 371, May 23.¹⁵ Please transmit to the Secretary General of the League of Nations a note reading textually as follows:

"I have the honor to acknowledge on behalf of the Secretary of State of the United States of America, your note of May 21, 1938,¹⁵ with which you were good enough to transmit copies of two reports dealing with international assistance to refugees which were adopted by the Council of the League of Nations on May 14, 1938.¹⁶

I am instructed to express my Government's appreciation for the information contained in your Note under reference and, at the same time, to inform you officially of the proposal which the President of the United States has made for convening an Intergovernmental Committee at Evian, France, on July 6, 1938 to consider certain aspects of the problem of political refugees from Germany including Austria. Up to the present time 27 governments have agreed to send representatives to this meeting.

¹⁵ Not printed.

¹⁶ League of Nations documents Nos. C.188.1938.XII and C.189.1938.XII, both dated May 13, 1938.

My Government has suggested the following as the agenda for the meeting:

[Here follows text of the five numbered paragraphs quoted in Department's circular telegram, *supra*.]

The American representative at the meeting is being instructed to propose at the opening session that Sir Neill Malcolm, High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany, be invited by the Inter-governmental Committee to attend its sessions. It has not been considered necessary to propose that a similar invitation be extended to the President of the International Office for Refugees, inasmuch as Judge Hansson, the head of that Office, will be present at the meeting as the representative of Norway."

HULL

840.48 Refugees/409 : Telegram

The Chargé in Luxembourg (Waller) to the Secretary of State

LUXEMBURG, June 27, 1938—noon.

[Received June 27—9 a. m.]

16. I have strongest reason to believe that the Grand Ducal Government, having a refugee problem of its own and lying on German frontier, desirous of cooperating in refugee questions, would welcome an invitation to be represented at meeting at Evian on July 6. Please instruct.

WALLER

840.48 Refugees/413 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, June 27, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received June 27—4:34 p. m.]

1011. Personal for the Secretary and Under Secretary from Myron Taylor. I had a first conversation this morning with Senator Berenger who will head the French delegation to the meeting at Evian and reviewed with him the present position as follows:

1. Stress should be laid on the fact that Evian will be a confidential meeting of representatives of governments and not a public conference where all sorts of ideas will be aired to the press and to the general public. In consequence there should be only one public session at the outset where general statements may be made. Thereafter the meeting should go into executive session and a formal declaration should be given out for publication.

2. In view of the fact that most of the delegates to the Evian meeting must be in Paris by July 19 when the King of England will make his state visit it will be advisable to adjourn the conference at Evian on July 17 with the understanding that it will resume in Paris if necessary after the King's visit.

3. There will be every advantage in covering as much ground as possible in advance of the meeting in order that rapid progress may be made at Evian between July 6 and July 17. A British representative will come to Paris in the strictest confidence on Thursday and it may be possible to have three party meetings between the British, the French, and ourselves on Friday or Saturday on the understanding that of course there will be absolutely no publicity.

4. Senator Berenger assured me that the French Government wished to do everything possible to contribute to the success of the undertaking and was prepared to go along with the American position as far as practicable. In any event the French Government was determined that there should be no difference between the viewpoints of the American and French delegations when they reached Evian.

5. Senator Berenger said that his Government was thoroughly in accord with the agenda and promised to take under immediate consideration the subject matter of my opening speech a copy of which I handed to him.

6. It was agreed that we should hold further informal and strictly confidential meetings during the course of the present week and that by the close of the week the possibility should be considered of multi-lateral conversations here between representatives of certain of the governments taking part in the Evian meeting.¹⁷ [Taylor.]

BULLITT

840.48 Refugees/409: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Luxembourg (Waller)

WASHINGTON, June 28, 1938—7 p. m.

2. Your 16, June 27, noon. Invitations to attend the Evian meeting were extended only to those countries which offered some reasonable possibility of accepting a substantial number of immigrants. Inasmuch as Luxembourg can not be considered in that category we consider it impracticable to extend an invitation, at least at the present stage of proceedings.

HULL

¹⁷ Mr. Taylor was informed, in telegram No. 419, June 29, 5 p. m., to the Ambassador in France, that his proposed course of action was fully approved.

867N.01/1106

*The Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (Murray) to the
Consul General at Jerusalem (Wadsworth)*

WASHINGTON, July 2, 1938.

DEAR GEORGE: In the comment on page two of your despatch No. 634 of June 11, 1938¹⁸ you raised the question of the attitude which the American delegation at the Intergovernmental Meeting on Political Refugees would take on the matter of Jewish immigration into Palestine. For your strictly confidential and personal information I am quoting below an extract from a confidential memorandum¹⁸ furnished for the guidance of the American delegation at the meeting.

"It is highly probable that various groups will endeavor to induce the representatives of the governments participating in the meeting to take up the question of immigration into Palestine. It is felt that the Committee should reject any attempts to interject into its considerations such political issues as are involved in the Palestine, the Zionist and the anti-Zionist questions. These questions would stir up bitter passions and might even lead to a disruption of the Committee's labors."

With best wishes [etc.]

WALLACE MURRAY

840.48 Refugees/436: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, July 2, 1938—noon.

434. For Myron Taylor. The Government of Ireland recently expressed to our Minister at Dublin disappointment at having failed to receive an invitation to the Evian meeting. In reply we instructed the Minister to explain that invitations had been sent only to those countries which offered a possibility for substantial immigration. The Government of Ireland now states that despite the fact that it cannot receive a substantial number of refugees it is nevertheless desirous of receiving an invitation (a) since no immigration barriers exist between Great Britain and Ireland, (b) it considers the refugee question a world problem of importance to all countries and (c) Denmark and other Scandinavian countries with which Ireland usually associates itself have been invited.

In view of the foregoing, the American Minister at Dublin has been instructed to extend an invitation to the Government of Ireland to attend the Evian meeting.

HULL

¹⁸ Not printed.

840.48 Refugees/445 : Telegram (part air)

The Minister in Denmark (Owsley) to the Secretary of State

COPENHAGEN, July 2, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received July 4—6:28 a. m.]

24. My telegram No. 14, April 5, noon.¹⁹ Government of Iceland regrets that it cannot participate in the conference regarding political refugees.

Embassy at Paris informed.

OWSLEY

840.48 Refugees/447 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chairman of the American Delegation (Taylor)

WASHINGTON, July 6, 1938—5 p. m.

2. Canadian Government in a note dated June 28,¹⁹ copy of which is being sent to you by mail, expresses some doubt as to feasibility of setting up continuing body "at a time when the League of Nations is endeavoring to coordinate and centralize existing refugee organizations and to break down the differentiations between the various classes or groups of refugees." Canadian Government also states that points (2) and (3) of agenda raise difficult problems under Canadian immigration laws.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/494a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, July 9, 1938—3 p. m.

111. As you may know, one of the proposals before the Evian refugee meeting is the establishment of a continuing body of governmental representatives, probably in Paris, to deal with the refugee problem on a broad basis. Probably this body would be directed by a Secretary General, possibly of American nationality.

We should appreciate receiving your opinion whether the German Government would be willing to deal with the head of such an organization on such questions as the orderly migration of refugees, the export from Germany of at least a part of their capital and other questions of a similar nature. We assume that it would be undesir-

¹⁹ Not printed.

able, at least for the present, for you to approach the German authorities in this matter.

Please repeat this telegram and your reply to Amdelgat, Evian.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/495 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, July 10, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received July 10—7:21 p. m.]

343. Your 111, July 9, 3 p. m. Without consulting the German authorities I can of course only give impressions.

It is my recollection that at the beginning at least the German Government was willing to consult with McDonald in his work. Also they appear to have permitted, so I read in the papers, a Jewish representative to leave Germany to cooperate with the Committee in Evian. In my conversations the Germans have shown deep interest in the work of the Evian Committee.

Hence I am inclined to think that the German Government would cooperate as suggested in your telegram. This decision would be to their own interest and would be dependent I think upon complete objectivity and factual work on the part of the Committee.

Repeated to Amdelgat Evian with your 111.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/513 : Telegram

The Chairman of the American Delegation (Taylor) to the Secretary of State

EVIAN, July 14, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 7:15 p. m.]

21. We have been negotiating individually and in groups with the delegations with a view to reaching agreement on the text of a resolution which would be acceptable to all. After making changes in order to meet the views of various governments, we considered the resolution in a meeting of chiefs of delegations this morning, and reached agreement on the text.

The main objectors have been many of the Latin Americans who have told us in great frankness that the pressure brought upon them by Germany through compensation agreements and other commercial arrangements was such that they did not dare join in any action which might seem to be even in the smallest respect critical. Notable in putting forward this view were the delegations of Colombia, Venezuela, the Central American countries, Uruguay and Chile. They

told me frankly after the meeting this morning that unless I could find some formula which would seem to release them from any obligation in this matter they would have to vote against the resolution. I should like to say in this general connection that the delegate of Brazil, Lobo, has been most extraordinarily helpful in bringing his Latin American colleagues to a reasonable point of view and that Ambassador Le Breton of the Argentine has given me the full benefit of his wise support.

Herewith is the text of the resolution as approved in final form by the meeting this morning;

“(1) Considering that the question of involuntary emigration has assumed major proportions and that the fate of the unfortunate people affected has become a problem for intergovernmental deliberation;

(2) Aware that the involuntary emigration of large numbers of people of different creeds, economic conditions, professions and trades, from the country or countries where they have been established is disturbing to the general economy, since these persons are obliged to seek refuge, either temporarily or permanently, in other countries at a time when there is serious unemployment; that in consequence countries of refuge and settlement are faced with problems not only of an economic and social nature but also of public order, and that there is a severe strain on the administrative facilities and absorptive capacities of the receiving countries;

(3) Aware, moreover, that the involuntary emigration of peoples in large numbers has become so great that it renders racial and religious problems more acute; increases international unrest; and may hinder seriously the processes of appeasement in international relations;

(4) Believing that it is essential that a long range program should be envisaged, whereby assistance to involuntary emigrants, actual and potential, may be coordinated within the framework of existing migration laws and practices of governments;

(5) Considering that if countries of refuge or settlement are to cooperate in finding an orderly solution of the problem before the Committee they should have the collaboration of the country of origin and are therefore persuaded that it will make its contribution by enabling involuntary emigrants to take with them their property and possessions and emigrate in an orderly manner;

(6) Welcoming heartily the initiative taken by the President of the United States of America in calling the intergovernmental meeting at Evian for the primary purpose of facilitating involuntary emigration from Germany including Austria, and expressing profound appreciation to the French Government for its courtesy in receiving the intergovernmental meeting at Evian;

(7) Bearing in mind the resolution adopted by the Council of the League of Nations on May 14, 1938 concerning international assistance to refugees;

Recommends:

(8) (a) That the persons coming within the scope of the activity of the Intergovernmental Committee shall be (1) persons who have not already left their country of origin (Germany including Aus-

tria), but who must emigrate on account of their political opinions, religious beliefs, or racial origin and (2) persons as defined in (1) who have already left their country of origin and who have not yet established themselves permanently elsewhere;

(b) That the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee shall continue to furnish the Committee, for its strictly confidential information, with (1) details regarding such immigrants which each government is prepared to receive under its existing laws and practices and (2) details of these laws and practices;

(c) That in view of the fact that the countries of refuge and settlement are entitled to take into account the economic and social adaptability of immigrants, these should in many cases be required to accept at least for a time changed conditions of living in the countries of settlement;

(d) That the governments of the countries of refuge and settlement should not assume any obligations for the financing of involuntary emigration;

(e) That, with regard to the documents required by the countries of refuge and settlement, the governments represented on the Intergovernmental Committee should consider the adoption of the following provision:

In those individual immigration cases in which the usually required documents emanating from foreign official sources are found not to be available, there should be accepted such other documents serving the purpose of the requirements of law, as may be available to the immigrant.

And that, as regards the document which may be issued to an involuntary emigrant by the country of his foreign residence to serve the purpose of a passport, note be taken of the several international agreements providing for the issue of a travel document serving the purpose of a passport, and of the advantage of their wide application.

(f) That there should meet at London an intergovernmental committee consisting of such representatives as the governments participating in the Evian meeting may desire to designate.

This committee shall continue and develop the work of the intergovernmental meeting at Evian and shall be constituted and shall function in the following manner:

There shall be a chairman of this committee and four vice-chairmen.

There shall be a director of authority, appointed by the intergovernmental committee, who shall be guided by it in his actions. He shall undertake negotiations to improve the present conditions of exodus and to replace them with conditions of orderly emigration. He shall approach the governments of the countries of refuge with a view to developing opportunities for permanent settlement.

The intergovernmental committee, recognizing the value of the work of the existing refugee services of the League of Nations and of the studies of migration made by the International Labor Office, shall cooperate fully with these services, and the intergovernmental committee at London shall consider the means by which the cooperation of the committee and the director with these services shall be established.

The intergovernmental committee at its forthcoming meeting at London will consider the scale on which its expenses shall be apportioned among the participating governments.

(9) That the intergovernmental committee in its continued form shall hold a first meeting at London on August 3, 1938.["]

TAYLOR

840.48 Refugees/537a : Circular telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Argentina (Weddell)

WASHINGTON, July 19, 1938—5 p. m.

Department's circular, June 14, 6 p. m. Following is the text of the resolution adopted on July 14 by the Intergovernmental Meeting on Political Refugees.

[Here follows text of the resolution as transmitted in telegram No. 21, July 14, 5 p. m., *supra*.]

In bringing this resolution to the attention of the Argentine Government please express our appreciation for the assistance which it has already given and our sincere hope that it will continue this fruitful cooperation by appointing a representative to attend the meetings of the continuing body at London, the first of which will be held on August 3. You may also state that it would add to the success of the first meeting and help to expedite a solution of this serious question if the Argentina Government could see its way clear to giving appropriate instructions to any representative who may be appointed to attend the London meetings.

Same telegram is to be repeated *mutatis mutandis* to the following countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.

HULL

ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL REFUGEES FROM GERMANY; EFFORTS TO AID RESETTLEMENT AND TO SECURE COOPERATION OF GERMANY TO MITIGATE DESTITUTION OF THE REFUGEES

840.48 Refugees/603 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 3, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received August 3—9:30 a. m.]

714. From Myron Taylor.¹

1. The Intergovernmental Committee held its first meeting at London this morning and elected Lord Winterton as Chairman;² the representatives respectively of the United States, France, Brazil, and the Netherlands as Vice Chairmen and Mr. George Rublee as Director. I made my report and Lord Winterton and Senator Berenger spoke briefly.

2. Please convey to Mr. Rublee from me a message of congratulation upon his election to the important and honorable position of Director. I am deeply gratified that he has accepted this responsibility and I wish him to know that he can count upon my cooperation to the fullest extent. [Taylor.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/611b : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Brazil (Scotten)

WASHINGTON, August 3, 1938—5 p. m.

93. From the Under Secretary. The International Committee on Refugees meeting in London has elected as chairman Lord Winterton and as vice chairmen Senator Berenger of France, Myron Taylor for the United States and has further determined that the third vice chairman should be a designate of the Government of Brazil. It was the particular hope of the American delegate that because of the inval-

¹ American representative on the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees.

² The Committee held its second session on the morning of August 4, and adjourned subject to call by the Chairman.

able assistance rendered by Helio Lobo, the Brazilian delegate at the Evian conference, the latter might be designated by his Government. The Brazilian Government has informed Mr. Taylor through the Brazilian Ambassador in Paris that Lobo could not be sent to London and later it was ascertained that the Brazilian Government desired to name the Brazilian Commercial Attaché in London as its delegate. In view of the rank of the chairman and the other vice chairmen the Brazilian Commercial Attaché in London was not considered a satisfactory appointee by the British and French delegates and when this fact was communicated to the Brazilian Ambassador in Paris he later agreed, by instruction of his Government, that Brazil would accept the vice chairmanship with no specific person designated.

In view of the deep interest of this Government in the success of the conference and in view of the particularly helpful cooperation which the Brazilian Government has afforded, it would seem to be highly desirable that the Brazilian Government designate a suitable vice chairman whose position would be commensurate with the office which he will hold. I wish you would take this matter up informally with Aranha ³ and say that I shall greatly appreciate it should it be possible for his Government to designate as its delegate and vice chairman a high ranking official of the Brazilian Government who can cooperate as ably with the American delegate and the other delegates as did Helio Lobo at Evian. Please telegraph me his views. [Welles.] ⁴

HULL

840.48 Refugees/621 : Telegram

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the
Secretary of State*

LONDON, August 5, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 1 : 24 p. m.]

722. For the Secretary and Under Secretary from Myron Taylor.

1. Berenger and I met with Winterton at the Home Office privately on the afternoon of August 4 to discuss the approach to Germany. Makins,⁵ Coulon⁶ and Pell⁷ were also present.

³ Oswaldo Aranha, Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

⁴ Although the Chargé in Brazil was informed that Helio Lobo would be designated as vice chairman (telegram No. 187, August 4, noon, 840.48 Refugees/612), the Brazilian Government subsequently declined to assume a vice chairmanship of the Intergovernmental Committee; Brazil was represented, however, at meetings of the Committee in London by the Brazilian Ambassador and later by Mr. Lobo.

⁵ R. M. Makins, Assistant Adviser on League of Nations Affairs, British Foreign Office.

⁶ Georges Coulon, member of the French delegation to the intergovernmental meeting at Evian.

⁷ Robert Pell, member of the American delegation to the intergovernmental meeting at Evian.

2. Certain basic facts emerged in the conversation upon which we were agreed: in the first place the consensus was that the approach to Germany should take place at Berlin and not through the German Ambassador at London. Second, it should take the form in the first instance of an inquiry through the German Foreign Office whether the German Government would be prepared to receive the Director appointed by the Intergovernmental Committee. Third, the original inquiry should be made by the American Ambassador at Berlin but after consultation with the British and French Ambassadors who should support him by notifying the interest of their respective governments in the success of this negotiation. Fourth, every appearance of a group descent upon Germany should be avoided. Fifth, the Director should go to Berlin only upon an indication from the German Government that it would receive him. Sixth, he should proceed in exploratory conversations first of all with the Foreign Office, then with appropriate party leaders aiming at Hitler, who, all were agreed would have to make the final decision. Winterton said that he must say frankly that his information indicated that the German Government was not greatly disposed to discuss this question. Berenger confirmed this view and warned that we must be careful lest the Germans seize upon the proposed negotiation to dump not only human beings but their goods in lieu of capital which the involuntary emigrants might wish to take with them abroad. He added that he had information to the effect that this was the view of our Department of State and in consequence he was sure that we would support him in opposition to any suggestion on the part of the Germans that they would furnish machinery, tools or other manufactured products as their contribution to the resettlement of persons obliged to leave the Reich. Both Winterton and Berenger cautioned that it was essential, if the negotiations with Germany were to succeed, that absolute secrecy should be preserved and that no word should go to the press except through the Chairman.

3. It was agreed that while the negotiation with Germany was one portion of an essential part of the duties of the Director there was another and equally important part, namely the negotiations with the governments of the countries of settlement, notably the governments of Latin America. The consensus was that the Latin American governments almost without exception were holding back awaiting to see what they would be required to do in the solution of this problem. In fact it was felt that many of these governments were tightening up their immigration requirements in the belief that they could make a better trade when they were approached by the Director with a view to the reception of immigrants. The belief was that the Director would have to negotiate separately with each of these governments in

order to arrive at something concrete. As a beginning, it was proposed that Makins and Pell should prepare a statement of the attitude of each of these countries as far as it was known so that the Director would have the information upon which to proceed immediately after his arrival.

4. As regards procedure, it was agreed that the Chairman and the four Vice Chairmen should meet with the Director at the Foreign Office on the afternoon of August 23rd. [Taylor.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/657: Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 12, 1938—noon.

[Received 1 p. m.]

749. Personal for the Secretary and Under Secretary from Myron Taylor. In order that you may have full information upon which to base instructions when we enter upon a further active phase with the arrival of the Director next week, I wish to review briefly the present position of the work of the Intergovernmental Committee.

1. With regard to procedure, I shall introduce Rublee to Winterton and other members of the British delegation at a small dinner on August 16. On August 17 Johnson of the Embassy will give a luncheon for Rublee at which he will have various important officials of the Foreign and Home Offices. On August 23 the Chairman and four Vice Chairmen will meet with the Director on which occasion such matters as the approach to Germany, the negotiations with the countries of settlement, the relationship to the League Commission, and the budget of the Director's office will be discussed. I shall stand by to assist the Director probably until August 26 when I shall leave for Paris. My plan is to remain in Paris for the time being where I would be in close touch with Rublee. Meanwhile Rublee will probably undertake the approach to Germany, and we can then determine upon the need for further meetings at an early date of the officers and Director or of the Intergovernmental Committee as a whole to consider the results of Rublee's mission and the action taken at the League.

2. The most important matter now before us is the approach to Germany, since the crux of the situation appears to be the necessity to work out with the German Government the orderly departure of involuntary emigrants. I had a most valuable exchange of views with Geist^o and he has returned to Berlin. It was agreed with him that

^o Raymond H. Geist, First Secretary of Embassy and Consul at Berlin.

until I had an opportunity to review the situation with the Director, our Ambassador at Berlin together with his British and possibly his French associates would merely make use of whatever occasion offered to prepare the atmosphere for the approach to the German Government but would refrain from making a formal move until he had received further word from us. This word will probably be sent immediately after the meeting on the 23rd. I shall of course notify you at once of the decision reached on that occasion. As matters now stand, it will probably take the form of a recommendation that the American Ambassador be requested to inquire of the German Government whether it would be willing to receive the Director, this request to be supported by the British and French Ambassadors at Berlin.

3. You of course realize that it will be of little avail for the Director to approach the German Government unless he has a concrete proposal for settling involuntary emigrants. I am afraid moreover that unless we are prepared to show the way by indicating the extent to which we, as the inviting government, are ready to commit ourselves to take a portion of an annual quota, during a 5-year period, of around 60,000 persons, there will be little possibility of obtaining statements from the governments of the other countries of settlement. You will recall that in my technical statement to the London meeting I estimated the number of potential involuntary emigrants from Germany including Austria on a basis of information which we received [at] Evian at around 600,000. By reducing the age spread, say, to a minimum limit of 15 years and a maximum limit of 45 years, and by making allowances for those who are not suited because of illness or other disabilities for emigration, I should be inclined to place the total for the purposes of our problem at around 300,000 persons who must be evacuated in a relatively short space of time. It is on the basis of this figure that each participating government in the Intergovernmental Committee, including our Government, will be invited to state its position in concrete terms.

4. Brandt¹⁰ advises me that under our present immigration law, we cannot agree to accept a specific number of involuntary emigrants annually from Germany because of the preference provisions, the legal necessity of taking these applicants in turn as they appear and of apportioning quotas according to the demand. He says that it would be necessary to have a change in the 1924 Act¹¹ approved by Congress in order to authorize a preference status for involuntary emigrants in the number agreed upon. He suggests that the only statement which we might properly make would be one to the effect that we in fact are receiving more involuntary emigrants than any

¹⁰ George Brandt, member of the American delegation to the intergovernmental meeting at Evian.

¹¹ Approved May 26, 1924; 43 Stat. 153.

other country; that according to late information, the four American consular offices in Germany, including Vienna, are issuing visas at a rate of over 20,000 per annum to persons chargeable to the quotas established for Germany, including Austria, who are in fact involuntary emigrants; that in addition they are issuing a smaller number of immigration visas to such persons who are exempted under the laws from the numerical or quota restrictions; that there is no reason to believe, conditions remaining the same, that this acceptance by the United States of involuntary emigrants, appearing and qualifying for admission into American territory, under the immigration laws, will be discontinued during the next 5 years.

5. I fully recognize that in actual fact the United States is doing more than any other country to alleviate the condition of involuntary emigration. In spite of this however unless we are able to give some concrete indication of the part we will do in the next 5 years, the period in which as a minimum, a negotiation looking to an agreement with Germany would run, other countries of settlement will claim that they are not obligated to commit themselves and we shall have no plan to present to the German Government. I should appreciate it therefore if you would canvass the situation carefully and determine for my use our maximum position within our present practices and laws.

6. In the meantime, Pell and Makins have completed a preliminary digest of the positions in respect of involuntary immigration of the various countries of refuge and settlement, with the exception of that part dealing with settlement in the British Empire which is being "carefully considered." This information will be immediately available to the Director and will form the basis of his discussions with the representatives of the settlement countries.

7. I have no doubt that [at] the meeting on August 23 the question will be raised once more of the relationship of the Director to the League offices. The British have made it plain to us time and time again that they attach great importance to the maintenance of the League Commission and its renewal in September, strengthened and with its prestige intact. They have said that they would agree to no course which would impair that prestige and are willing to go along with our Committee only because it will deal with an approach to the German Government which is a duty that the League Commissioner for obvious reasons can not perform. They are insistent, however, that the League Commissioner shall have a part, because that is his function, in all negotiations with countries of settlement and with private organizations. It is my understanding that the British together with the refugee section of the League have formulated a detailed plan for presentation to the League Assembly on September 13. Sir Neill Malcolm has said that he may be able to furnish us with a copy of that plan, and I have requested our Consul at Geneva informally to do

what he can to obtain this information, since in charting the future of our Committee we must constantly bear in mind its relationship to the League offices. In looking ahead, I believe that you should consider carefully what ultimately this relationship will be. As you know, the original idea of the British, which we scotched at Evian, was to reduce the Intergovernmental Committee to the role of advisory body to League Commission. Should the negotiations with Germany not succeed, I am convinced that the British will return to their original position, and we shall then have to decide whether to go along with them in this idea or to withdraw from the work altogether.

8. In general, I am satisfied that we have made very considerable progress since the opening of the first meeting at Evian. Although from the outset our initiative, prompted by the humanitarian motives of the President and Secretary Hull, met with respect, there was little conviction that anything substantial would be achieved. As we progressed, interest mounted and there is now a general consensus that we have set up a practicable machinery for negotiation with Germany with its small central group of Chairman, four Vice Chairmen and the Director, which will be a useful instrument for intergovernmental discussion of the problems with which we are concerned, particularly so since it is so loosely tied together that it cannot become the subject of criticism, either within or without the Intergovernmental Committee, and at the same time, through meetings held at intervals, can be very helpful to the Chairman and the Director and very useful to the Governments as a vehicle for exchanging views. The main fact is that, despite the original lukewarm reception, the Intergovernmental Committee is now set up and, no matter what the League of Nations may do, it may be maintained as a continuing body for purposes of study, consultation or advice on the questions involved.

9. Upon arrival here I called at once on Ambassador Kennedy and reviewed the events at Paris and Evian, inviting him to accompany us to the first meeting at London. Unfortunately he was leaving for France on the day of our meeting and could not attend. He promised every assistance in our work. [Taylor.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/655 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 12, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received August 12—1:10 p. m.]

753. From Myron Taylor. The Dominican Government today made an offer in strict confidence to the Chairman of the Intergovern-

mental Committee to take immediately 50 to 100,000 involuntary emigrants and to provide facilities for their settlement. The British have instructed their diplomatic representative to make a report forthwith indicating whether the Dominican Government is in a position to implement its offer. It would be appreciated if our diplomatic representative at Ciudad Trujillo could do the same. [Taylor.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/659 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 15, 1938—noon.

[Received 3:06 p. m.]

763. From Myron Taylor. As I have previously indicated, one of the most important questions which will arise in connection with the negotiations with Germany will be that of the transfer or use of emigrants' capital. Most countries are willing to receive some involuntary emigrants with capital but are unwilling to receive persons who may become a burden on the community.

This aspect of the problem will doubtless present difficulties. It is my understanding that since June of this year the German Government has prohibited the acquisition of emigrants' sperrmark, that is, credit accounts in reichsmark left behind by emigrants in the German Central Bank. As matters now stand there is virtually a total prohibition against dealing in sperrmark, except for the fact that occasionally the German gold—diskont—bank may buy small quantities of emigrants' sperrmark in Germany at a rate of 8% which involves a loss of 92% for the emigrant. In any event the sperrmark transactions have been employed only in rare cases of individual emigration.

In cases of emigration in numbers an attempt was made in 1936 and 1937 to organize a system of capital transfer known as the Altreu transfer system. The foreign currency required for this system was procured through a clearing arrangement with the relief remittances of Jewish organizations abroad and through the acquisition of the so-called *rueckwanderer—devisen* allowed to Germans living abroad, who wish to return to Germany. The foreign currency thus acquired was ceded to the Altreu, the gold diskont bank charging 100% on the official rate which covered the 50% premium to be paid to the returning German emigrant at a 50% profit in reichs. In actual fact, due to the heavy rush of prospective emigrants who wished to avail themselves of this transfer opportunity, the Altreu was closed down after a short time.

There remains only the Haavara transfer system for the transfer of capital from Germany to Palestine. Approximately 130,000,000

reichsmark of Jewish property has been transferred to Palestine at a loss of 5% originally which has gradually increased so that now the transfer loss is 50%. The system is designed to permit the purchase of German goods by Jewish consumers in Palestine on the basis of a sort of emigration and transfer contract between the German Government and the Jewish agency for Palestine. Unfortunately, beginning in February of this year, restrictions have been progressively imposed by the German Government so that at the present time the transfer concession of the Haavara is limited to a small number of goods of secondary importance. Negotiations are now under way between the Jewish agency and the German Government for the extension of the Haavara's concession, but it is too soon to determine what the outcome will be.

It would seem therefore to be urgently necessary for the Intergovernmental Committee through its director, in the approach to the German Government on the whole refugee question to consider the organization of the liquidation of the property of potential involuntary emigrants in Germany including Austria, to persuade the German Government to make an initial contribution of foreign exchange which will facilitate the beginning of emigration and to make a permanent contribution of foreign exchange as a basis for the organized transfer of refugee capital on a reasonable footing. This is made all the more pressing because the Aryanization of Jewish businesses is being accelerated, which means that non-Aryan property is being taken over wholesale in exchange for so-called Goering bonds of uncertain value.

It may be necessary, in consequence, to establish or make use of a transfer office for the purpose of dealing with the claims of non-Aryan owners and insuring at the same time the financing and settlement abroad of involuntary emigrants. A sliding scale might be devised, small owners to receive cash and large owners part cash and part German Government bonds, upon the liquidation of their property. The part of the owner's assets paid to the transfer office in German Treasury bonds might when the owner emigrates be converted into non-interest bearing German dollar funding bonds, say for 50% of the nominal value of the Treasury bonds, these bonds to be amortized by Germany in regular yearly installments over a period of 10 or 20 years.

In this connection I should like to suggest that instead of setting up a separate transfer agency it might be considered whether the Intergovernmental Committee might not avail itself of the Bank of International Settlements.

I am forwarding a detailed memorandum ¹² on the whole subject of transfer in tomorrow's pouch. [Taylor.]

JOHNSON

¹² Enclosure No. 4 to despatch dated August 13, not printed.

840.48 Refugees/663 : Telegram

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State*LONDON, August 16, 1938—11 a. m.
[Received August 16—9:45 a. m.]

772. From Myron Taylor.

1. Rublee has arrived and we have reviewed thoroughly the situation.

2. The British will invite Portugal to adhere to the Intergovernmental Committee. They hope that we as the original inviting power will take occasion to support them at Lisbon in urging the Portuguese Government to accept.

3. Masaryk the Czechoslovak Minister at London has addressed a note to Winterton indicating that his Government would wish to adhere to the Intergovernmental Committee in the same status as the other countries bordering Germany. The British are replying that the problem now concerns more especially the country of origin of involuntary emigration and the countries of final settlement, that in consequence the Intergovernmental Committee cannot at this stage extend an invitation to a country of temporary refuge. Confidentially the British believe that it will be most unwise to invite Czechoslovakia to adhere on the eve of the opening of negotiations with Germany.

4. The Brazilian Government has failed so far to notify Winterton who will be the Vice Chairman representing Brazil. This is causing embarrassment since the British are not able to issue invitations for the meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee on August 23. They expressed the hope that we will make further inquiries of the Brazilian Government as to what it intends to do.

In order that there may be no misunderstanding we assume that Miss Duffley¹³ will be paid directly by the Department, since the British have reserved the right to appoint the clerical personnel of the Intergovernmental Committee from the lists of the Foreign Office.
[Taylor.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/669a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Portugal (Fernald)

WASHINGTON, August 16, 1938—6 p. m.

21. The Portuguese Government has on more than one occasion given evidence of interest in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees, which is now being set up as a continuing organization in London. The British Government, through its Am-

¹³ Margaret S. Duffley, clerk in the Division of International Conferences, on temporary assignment with the Intergovernmental Committee.

bassador in Lisbon, is extending to the Portuguese Government an invitation to participate in the work of the Committee. You are requested to call at the Foreign Office and express the hope that the Portuguese Government will see fit to participate in this work. Your call at the Foreign Office should be coordinated with that of the British Ambassador.

For background see Radio Bulletins of July 6 and 15.¹⁴

HULL

840.48 Refugees/657 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, August 16, 1938—8 p. m.

456. For Myron Taylor. Your 749, August 12, noon.

1. Since much of the impetus which has been given to the Committee's work is due to your personal efforts we trust that after your departure for Paris you will be in a position to return to London when necessary for meetings and that you will continue to serve as Vice Chairman as long as possible.

2. Referring to your paragraphs nos. 3, 4, and 5: Although it cannot of course definitely be stated what view Congress will take towards a suggestion for a change in the Immigration Act of 1924, there has been an indication of restrictionist attitude pointing to opposition to any proposal to liberalize the immigration laws in the direction of increasing the "immigration quotas". For this reason and in view of the policy indicated in the President's proposal that the solution for the refugee problem should be sought within the framework of our present immigration laws, it is believed that you should follow Brandt's suggestion regarding the statement to be made, emphasizing the fact that the United States, under its immigration laws, has been accepting for permanent immigration immigrants chargeable to the quota for Germany including former Austria who are for the most part involuntary immigrants, at a rate up to the annual quota of 27,370 per annum, and that there is no reason to believe that the United States will not continue to accept qualified immigrants chargeable to the German quota at the same rate. Such a statement will give a definite indication of the part the United States will be able to take in finding permanent homes for involuntary immigrants from Germany and Austria. At the rate indicated, excepting a change in the basic quota law, the United States will accept during the next 5 years over 100,000 immigrants constituting, at your estimate, one-third of the total number who must be evacuated.

¹⁴ Nos. 156 and 164, not printed.

3. We appreciate the British position, which is undoubtedly shared by a number of other States Members of the League, concerning the League's new refugee organization. We continue to believe that there is room for both organizations in this field and that their functions can be satisfactorily co-ordinated. You will recall, however, that one important reason for this Government's initiative was the failure of the League to deal adequately with this problem prior to the *Anschluss* and the complete lack of evidence that it would be able adequately to deal with it under present and anticipated conditions. Elements in the League's failure in this field were: (1) its inability to deal with the German Government, (2) its unwillingness to consider the problem as a semipermanent one, and (3) personal factors. Of these elements, the first is permanent and the continuance of the other two will depend upon the nature of the League's new organization and the qualifications of the person appointed as its head.

Our primary interest is the accomplishment of concrete results and, even should the negotiations with the German Government fail, we would not feel justified in allowing the Committee to become merely an advisory body to the High Commissioner. We consider that the Committee should undertake all negotiations with the German Government through its Director with the assistance of the principal diplomatic representatives in Berlin and, at the other end, with the countries of refuge, possibly through diplomatic representatives accredited to the Governments concerned. The High Commissioner should, we believe, be occupied primarily (in addition to the performance of the functions which he will inherit from the Nansen Office) with such matters as long range planning and documentation of involuntary emigrants.

In addition to the demarcation of functions, there will be the problem of establishing the closest possible collaboration in a form which will not jeopardize the relations between the Committee and the German Government.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/685 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 23, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received August 23—1:35 p. m.]

807. From Myron Taylor and Rublee.

1. The meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee which was scheduled for today has been put off due (a), to the failure of Brazil to name its Vice Chairman; ¹⁵ (b), to the inability of Senator Berenger or any other French representative to be present.

¹⁵ See telegram No. 93, August 3, to the Chargé in Brazil, p. 758.

2. We have had no explanation of the decision of the French at the last minute not to attend this meeting. We have had, however, an intimation that the French have become concerned lest our activity which has to do with the emigration of persons still in Germany may thrust into the background the problem of the emigration of persons who have left Germany but who have not reached a place of final settlement. The latter category of persons is the special responsibility of the League Commission and it is more particularly the group which presents a problem to the French Government. We have had no formal confirmation that the French inability to attend today's meeting may be explained in this fashion, but that this is the case has been indicated to us by Duncannon of the League Commission who of course is very close to the British Foreign Office.

3. This matter was discussed last night with Makins who without wishing to appear to speak officially indicated that it would be very useful if the Director and the League Commissioner could reach an agreement immediately that places of final settlement should be available *pari passu* to involuntary emigrants from Germany and Germans who have left Germany and are in a refugee status.

4. Makins added that he was sure that his Government would appreciate assurances of this nature from the Director to the High Commissioner, since it would facilitate the task of the British delegation at the Assembly meeting in September in arranging for the coordination of the League Commission and the Intergovernmental Committee. He said that the final plan for the reorganized League Commission had not so far reached the Foreign Office from the Secretary General of the League. The general outlines are known however and it may be said that (*a*), it will follow the recommendations made to the Council in May; (*b*), that there will be included in its terms of reference a provision to the effect that the new League Commissioner shall cooperate with the Director appointed by the Intergovernmental Committee; (*c*), that the League Commissioner shall negotiate in behalf of persons outside of Germany with countries of settlement and with private organizations; (*d*), that the new Commissioner shall be an Englishman (probably not Sir Neill Malcolm) and that the Commissioner's office shall be situated in London. Makins concluded that he did not believe that the proposal for the reorganized League Commission would encounter any serious obstacles.

5. I might add that 10 days ago we suggested a postponement of the meeting of the officers until we had had an opportunity to meet Wilson.¹⁶ The British did not agree with this course until yesterday. [Taylor and Rublee.]

JOHNSON

¹⁶ Hugh Wilson, Ambassador in Germany.

840.48 Refugees/685 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, August 24, 1938—6 p. m.

472. For Taylor and Rublee. Your 807, August 23, 5 p. m. Your paragraph 3. Our purpose is to alleviate the lot of these unfortunate people whether or not at any given moment they have already left Germany, and paragraph 8 (a)¹⁷ of the Evian resolution makes it clear that the Committee's scope includes both. While the assurances mentioned by Makins accordingly appear superfluous no objection is seen to Rublee giving them.

Your paragraph 4. We have no comment to make except concerning point (c). The Committee's function of negotiating with the countries of refuge is equal in importance to its function of negotiating with Germany. It will become more important if the negotiations with Germany do not achieve the desired result. The distinction between persons who have not already left Germany and those who have appears invidious, not only because we feel that this humanitarian effort should make no distinction between the two but because all involuntary emigrants will of course pass from the former to the latter stage in the process. It is nevertheless realized that the scope of the High Commissioner and of the new League organization as outlined by the May Council resolution¹⁸ is limited to the latter category and that the functions of the new organization must be specifically defined. It would therefore be desirable if a definite agreement could be reached that the Commissioner's negotiations in respect of this category should be carried on through the Committee. (In other words, the negotiations would probably be carried on by the Director with the representatives on the Committee of countries of refuge, backed up by American, and possibly British and French, diplomatic assistance at the capitals concerned). While it may not be possible to secure inclusion in the League resolution of an explicit statement to this effect, we hope that its language will at least contain such an implication.

Makins' desire for assurances regarding equal opportunity for the two categories appears in itself to imply a belief that the principal negotiating will be done by the Committee. You may be able to use the assurance authorized above as a trading point.

HULL

¹⁷ *Ante*, p. 755.

¹⁸ League of Nations, *Official Journal*, May-June 1938, p. 365.

840.48 Refugees/694 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, August 25, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received August 25—3 p. m.]

819. From Rublee. Your 472, August 24, 6 p. m. Before we proceed further I believe that it would be useful to recapitulate the division of work of the League Commissioner and this office as it stands at present. Malcolm and his associates have been for some years and are day by day in negotiations with all the countries of refuge and with nearly all the countries of final settlement, including those in Latin America. Each week he is able to place batches of around 50 to 100 refugees, and he has the full support in this work of all the governments of the countries surrounding Germany which have a refugee problem on their hands, notably of the British Government. These governments profess to be fully satisfied with the League Commission's work and they have made it plain to us that they will continue to support the Commission and strengthen it at the Assembly meeting in September by giving it further powers and by appointing a more active commissioner with an efficient staff. It has been made very clear to us that the countries concerned will not agree to any interruption of the League Commission's work.

This office is looked upon in first instance as a medium for negotiation with Germany which is, for obvious political reasons, a task which the League Commissioner is unable to perform. Although negotiations with Germany are bound to be very difficult, we and the other governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee are assumed to be predicating our policy on the ultimate success of these negotiations. In other words, we are looking forward to a time when involuntary emigrants from Germany will move directly from the country of origin to the place of final settlement and not through countries of refuge as your telegram suggests. The French, Belgians, Dutch and others have made it plain that they will not permit the emigration from Germany which will we hope result from our negotiations, to pass across their territory. The French have been particularly emphatic in stating that this emigration must go from German ports directly to the country which have offered places of settlement.

In the meantime the countries of refuge hope that there will be no interruption of the work of the League Commissioner in evacuating refugees now on their territory to places of final settlement. The two streams in future must move simultaneously, and, in a reasonable ratio between persons directly from Germany and persons in temporary refuge.

It seems clear to us from this that the French, Belgians and others attach first importance to the evacuation of persons already within their territorial limits, and in consequence they are inclined to throw their full support behind the League Commissioner. They are not directly concerned with the fate of those persons who are still in Germany but since this office has been set up to assume the task of directing their removal they will give us some support because ultimately that will relieve the pressure which is causing persons to cross their frontiers irregularly. They are willing to support us, however, on the condition which has been made plain to us in the last week, namely, that we will give assurances in advance that we, in evacuating involuntary emigrants from Germany, will not force into the background the work of the League Commissioner in removing personnel in temporary refuge. If we fail to give these assurances, I fear that the support to the Intergovernmental Committee of countries of refuge will be reluctantly forthcoming.

I am convinced that Malcolm does not intend to raise objections to negotiation by the Director with the countries of final settlement for the purpose of determining the total number of involuntary emigrants to be received by each of these countries. He and the governments which are supporting him wish, however, to be assured that there will be an equitable distribution between the emigrants coming directly from Germany and those who are outside Germany and have not found a place of final settlement. If we through diplomatic means are able to open up places of settlement which the League Commissioner has been unable to do our position will be tremendously strengthened. Much, as you will see, depends upon the type of support which we are given in negotiations with the countries of Latin America and it is for this reason that I feel that a great deal more than the immediate issue is at stake in our negotiation with the Brazilian Government with regard to the vice chairmanship. In this connection it is now arranged that the meeting of the officers shall take place on Thursday next. It is important that every effort shall be made to have a Brazilian representative present.

[Rublee.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/655 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, August 25, 1938—7 p. m.

476. For Taylor and Rublee. Your 753, August 12, 4 p. m. A preliminary report from Norweb¹⁹ states that, while the Dominican Gov-

¹⁹ Despatch No. 416, August 20, from the Minister in the Dominican Republic, not printed.

ernment is keenly anxious to secure "easily assimilable neo-white" agricultural colonists from Porto Rico or other nearby areas, the type of refugees for whom relief is sought, who come principally from urban centers, is the type least desired by the Dominican Government. He feels that the Dominican offer is simply a gesture and that it should not be taken at its face value. A copy of his report is being forwarded by mail.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/694 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, August 26, 1938—2 p. m.

480. For Rublee. Your 819, August 25, 7 p. m.

1. We fully appreciate the position of the countries of temporary refuge and certainly have no desire to discriminate against those emigrants coming within the scope of the committee who are now in their territory. Our position is rather that we wish the full weight of the Committee's influence to be used to assist both categories. We are fully prepared to cooperate with the High Commissioner on this broad basis provided that he is willing to cooperate in a similar spirit with the Committee and provided his terms of reference will permit him to do so.

2. We are by no means predicating our policy solely on the success of negotiations with Germany, in which success must at best be only relative, and hope that you will be able to discourage that impression.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/659 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt)

WASHINGTON, August 27, 1938—11 a. m.

592. For Taylor and Rublee. Your telegram 763 of August 15, noon, and the memorandum enclosed with your despatch of August 13²⁰ have been carefully studied. There is no need to emphasize to you the extreme difficulties which will be involved in the negotiations with the German Government and that any plans yet devised to bring about the transfer of Jewish property from Germany are subject to serious objections. I therefore lay before you now certain considerations for such guidance as is possible concerning broad lines of approach. It is hoped to avoid a situation in which the German Government makes proposals which cannot be accepted.

²⁰ Despatch and its enclosure not printed.

1. In the last analysis, the funds in question can be transferred from Germany only through increased German exports. That is not in itself undesirable, provided that such increased trade is not based on inequitable commercial practices tending to divert the course of trade into artificial bilateral channels. Unfortunately the systems heretofore used, particularly the Haavara system, result not only in increased German exports but in giving them a very great competitive advantage. Transactions of this character, insofar as the transfer of Jewish funds is concerned, have hitherto been of minor importance but if they were to be used for the transfer of even a small percentage of the funds of several hundred thousand refugees the result would have a very considerable effect on the course of international trade.

You are familiar with the fact that the broad trade policies of this Government are fundamental in our entire program. We cannot permit the German Government to use our Government's interest in the distress of German refugees as a lever to break up this policy or create additional spheres of bilateral trade influence through the medium of specially constructed currency or credit arrangements. In consequence, any bilateral currency or credit proposals cannot even be considered and this should be understood by the Germans at the outset.

2. The German Government is of course aware of the competitive advantage which systems such as the Haavara give its exports and we may assume that this will be a not inconsiderable factor in whatever willingness the Germans may show to enter into negotiations. In this connection an officer of the German Embassy here recently referred in an informal conversation to the Haavara system as "the only practicable method of dealing with the problem". Incidentally, he apparently took it for granted not only that Rublee would shortly go to Berlin to discuss the problem but that the German authorities would be willing to discuss it with him. We cannot consider the extension of that system to this country or look with favor on its extension to other countries and must be on guard against a German proposal along these lines.

3. The German foreign exchange position appears particularly acute at this time and we seriously doubt that that Government would be willing to permit withdrawals by refugees in free foreign exchange now or at any time in the comparatively near future.

4. Preferably, of course, involuntary emigrants should be permitted to take free foreign exchange out of the country. If, as seems likely, this is an impossibility, conceivably the German Government might assent to permitting such emigrants the use of marks convertible in some degree into free foreign exchange along the lines of the sperrmark, and not limited to a medium for purchases of German products.

As a last resort, the German Government might grant such emigrants currency or obligations, not for immediate use, which could be deposited in the Bank for International Settlements, which, in turn, might issue to such emigrants an appropriate receipt. In that case, the currency or credits so deposited would have to lie dormant until circumstances offered possibility of its ultimate conversion into free foreign exchange. In substance, this is merely suggesting that the refugees take what the German Government offers, leaving this with the Bank to act as holding agent in the hope that something may be eventually realized. Conceivably, receipts for these deposits might be used by the emigrants as basis for resettlement loans made by relief organizations or similar bodies, thereby giving such organizations at least a chance of ultimately recouping part of their expenditures. Naturally, this third suggestion is highly unsatisfactory and should be resorted to only if all other means fail.

In giving effect to such a proposal, thought would need to be given to the effect of the Johnson Act,²¹ which makes it unlawful for any person in the United States to buy or sell obligations of governments in default. In any event the obligations in question could be marketed in foreign centers such as London.

5. The transfer problem, or in other words the working out in agreement with the German Government of a practicable arrangement whereby some percentage of an emigrant's funds may be made available for his settlement and use elsewhere, is of course the crux of the whole financial problem. If it can be satisfactorily solved we believe that an attempt could be made, with some chance of success, to have the special taxes upon emigrants reduced or abolished. In particular, an attempt might be made to have the flight tax abolished or at least materially reduced and the personal property tax abolished.

6. It should be borne in mind throughout the negotiations that Rublee is negotiating on behalf of the Committee rather than on behalf of this Government, but I need hardly assure you both of our full and entire support.

HULL.

840.48 Refugees/699 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, August 29, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received August 29—2:30 p. m.]

1362. From Taylor and Rublee.

1. We met last night with Ambassadors Bullitt, Kennedy and Wilson, and reviewed in detail the German aspect of our problem. We agreed upon the following procedure:

²¹ Approved April 13, 1934; 48 Stat. 574.

2. It was agreed that the meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee which is now to take place in London on Wednesday and Thursday ²² of this week should request their respective governments to instruct Ambassadors Wilson and Henderson at Berlin to inquire of the German Foreign Office at a time which appears auspicious to them whether the German Government would be willing to receive the Director and to survey with him the possibilities of regularizing the emigration from Germany of involuntary emigrants to places of final settlement. Possibly the French Ambassador and the Dutch Chargé representing the two European Vice Chairmen might be instructed to associate themselves with this inquiry. In the event of an affirmative reply Rublee would go to Berlin at a propitious moment in order to explore the field with the German authorities and not in the first instance to offer or receive a concrete plan. The grounds for this decision are that Wilson feels that in the final analysis nothing tangible can be gained from the German Government without a specific offer as to the number of involuntary emigrants that can be resettled. On the other hand the preparation of such a plan involves such long negotiation with various governments that we feel the whole matter would bog down if we awaited the preparation of a final offer. We also feel that our information in respect to the numbers actually to be dealt with and the general attitude of the German Government toward a release of a part of their assets is incomplete and will be incomplete without the assistance of the German Government. Hence it seems advisable to make this exploratory trip.

3. It would be made plain to the press before Rublee left for Berlin that the Director's visit was preliminary in character and that he would not in the first stage exchange proposals with the German Government. This should be done in order that there would not be an outcry in the press should Rublee leave Berlin empty handed.

4. In any event in the interim Rublee with the assistance of Ambassadors Bullitt and Kennedy will negotiate with the British Empire and France in the first place a plan of settlement in order that he might have (first) an indication for the German Government of what he might be able to do should it consent to discuss with him the ordering of egress of involuntary emigrants and (second) in order that the existing emigration may go forward at an accelerated pace. It might be suggested to the British and French Governments and later to the other participating governments that since we in fact under our present laws will take one-quarter of the refugees in each year of the 5-year period in which our plan will run that they should each make a practical contribution by indicating a specific number of persons whom they would take annually during this period thus con-

²² August 31 and September 1.

tinuing with us in the leadership of the humanitarian movement which the President has initiated. [Taylor and Rublee.]

BULLITT

840.48 Refugees/707 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Poland (Biddle) to the Secretary of State

WARSAW, August 30, 1938—noon.

[Received August 31—12:50 a. m.]

160. The following is substance of Minister Beck's confidential remarks during our discussion of various aspects of Jewish problem.

1. He was profoundly sensible of the constructive service the President and the Secretary had rendered the cause of humanity by initiating the Evian Conference. To his mind this Conference had served to give notable stimulus towards bringing the question as a whole into the category of international consideration and had proved an excellent beginning for further study and search for a solution of the Jewish problem as a whole and not limited merely to the refugee aspect.

2. Indeed recent reports of Turkey's and Brazil's willingness to receive large numbers of Jewish refugees under certain conditions was a symptom of international disposition to appreciate gravity of problem but even these potential outlets did not mean a definite solution of the problem as a whole.

3. His own observations and his current reports through confidential channels had convinced him that if the Permanent Refugee Committee confined itself to the treatment of refugees, such in his opinion would only serve to provoke acute anti-Semitism amongst the ranks of radical anti-Semites not only in Poland but also in Rumania, Hungary and other countries where the Jewish problem was steadily becoming a more acute social-economic-political issue. In other words he had already detected in radical quarters here distinct evidences of recalcitrant reaction which might conceivably give rise to a malicious movement to turn the local Jewish issue into a refugee problem in the event the Permanent Committee did not treat the question in its broader aspects.

4. Having long "lived with" all phases of the problem and having maintained daily personal touch with trend of reactions amongst divergent Jewish factions, Beck had recently sensed and concluded that before an effort to solve question as a whole could become effective the Palestine question had first to be settled definitely, no matter what the basis might be in terms of territorial dimensions, before the Jewish groups might be expected to collaborate wholeheartedly in a search for other remedies for the problem. In connection therewith the following reasons had contributed to Minister Beck's aforementioned

conclusion and had led him to postpone his own hitherto vigorous search for alternative emigration outlets:

(a) The Jews felt that as long as they concentrated their efforts on Palestine they might acquire some part thereof (even though limited in area) as a nucleus for a Jewish state. This they wanted for sentimental reasons as well as to establish a principle, namely the "right to be taken care of";

(b) Jewish fears of Britain's using offers of alternative outlets as a pretext to push them out of Palestine. Moreover, the Jewish leaders fully realized that acquisition even of the maximum area of Palestine envisaged in their greatest hopes would be insufficient to accommodate future expansion. Thus Jewish leaders insisted on concentratedly pressing for a Palestine settlement.

5. Moreover to Beck's mind the following, among other reasons, were contributing to delay of a Palestine settlement:

(a) Complexity of local difficulties confronting Britain;

(b) Attitude of Arabs who in jockeying for position continued to play Britain and Italy against each other.

(c) Inclination of Jewish leaders to take advantage of any and all openings to retard settlement in hopes of bettering their position.

6. In Beck's opinion, therefore, little could be accomplished in solving the Jewish problem in terms of the global aspect until the Palestine problem was definitely settled. Meanwhile he felt no time should be lost in making surveys covering all possible international outlets, potential financial accommodations to cover emigration, distribution of emigres according to economic-climatic and other local conditions prevailing in the case of each potential outlet, with a view to discussions thereof with Jewish leaders immediately subsequent to a potential Palestine settlement. Indeed to his mind, once realizing that the Palestine area might not meet their needs for future expansion, the Jews would become panicky. It was therefore necessary to prepare various proposals to submit to the leaders on the heels of a Palestine settlement. Even though at first no concrete results might thus have been attained nevertheless evidence of such effort might serve to instill the Jews with hope and thus replace the potentially dangerous effect of currently increasing despondency over their dismal outlook.

7. In conclusion Beck heartily concurred in my conviction that a solution of the Jewish problem in a global sense was a matter for our generation to settle for the signs of the times held little promise of the oncoming generations' dealing with the problem with the same degree of tolerance, objectivity and liberalism as our own.

8. To my mind an objective survey of conditions prevailing amongst Jewish communities of Poland and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe would result in the conclusion (a) their social economic position was becoming steadily less tenable, (b) the outlook for current and oncoming generations was grim, and (c) that their dismal

outlook warranted the Committee's eventually including them in a consideration of the Jewish problem on a global basis.

9. While aware that concern over Poland's own Jewish problem (hitherto outside the refugee category) importantly contributes towards Minister Beck's zeal as above described, I feel he is objective and sincere in his approach to the problem. In view therefore of his lengthy exhaustive study and his clear grasp of all phases of international questions as well as his sympathetic concern over the black outlook for the Jews particularly of this section of Europe, I strongly recommend that an officer of the Refugee Committee discuss various aspects of the problem with Minister Beck in Geneva during forthcoming meeting of League Assembly for I earnestly feel an exchange of ideas would prove mutually interesting and constructive. In response to my discreet question on this point he assured me he would welcome the opportunity to meet informally with any official of the Committee who might care to talk with him at Geneva.

BIDDLE

840.48 Refugees/699 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, August 30, 1938—2 p. m.

483. For Taylor and Rublee. Your 1362, August 29, 4 p. m. from Paris.

1. We heartily approve your suggestion that Rublee's trip should be purely exploratory.

2. We are prepared at any time to authorize Ambassador Wilson to make the suggested inquiry at the German Foreign Office and infer from your telegram that he does not consider it necessary to take further informal soundings.

3. Ambassadors Bullitt and Kennedy will undoubtedly render full support in negotiations with the French and British Governments. If you desire any other diplomatic support do not hesitate to request it.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/711 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the
Secretary of State*

LONDON, September 1, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received September 1—1:48 p. m.]

851. From Myron Taylor and Rublee.

1. The meeting of the officers with the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee took place last night. Afterwards the press was

informed of the meeting and it was said that the problem had been reviewed in detail.

2. The Brazilian representative declined at the last minute to attend the meeting which took the form of a dinner followed by an informal discussion. The Brazilian Embassy in a formal note explained that Brazil was unable to assume any part of responsibility in this matter. In view of this attitude on Brazil's part and in view of the failure of American and British diplomatic representatives at Rio to dissuade the Brazilian Government from adopting a course which is causing the Committee embarrassment, it was decided that Winterton as Chairman should approach the Brazilian Ambassador at London with a request that the Brazilian Government clarify its attitude and decide whether or not it intended to continue in the leadership of this work. It is becoming increasingly difficult for us to persuade the British and French to refrain from action which would bring the matter to a head in some public manner. For instance, the British suggested in advance of the meeting that a formal note should be sent to the Brazilian Embassy in behalf of the Committee referring to Brazil's acceptance of the vice chairmanship and requesting to know whether, in view of the fact the Brazilian Government had now evidently decided not to assume the vice chairmanship, it would withdraw in order that another vice chairman might be elected. The French at the same time said that they had reason to believe that Calderon, the Peruvian Minister at Paris, would be willing to serve as vice chairman. We persuaded the British not to hurry the matter unduly and to arrange for a meeting between Winterton and the Brazilian Ambassador as a first step. We are afraid, however, that if this meeting is not successful, the British supported by the French will be disposed to take some action which will oblige Brazil to retire from the vice chairmanship.

3. The first business which was taken up last night was the matter of the statement from the participating governments indicating in concrete terms what each would be prepared to contribute towards a general solution of involuntary emigration. So far only two communications have reached the Chairman. The first is ours, which Brandt drafted. The second is the offer of the Dominican Government to receive a substantial number of involuntary immigrants. Winterton proposed that these two communications should be circulated to the other participating governments, with the request that they communicate to the Chairman immediately detailed statements of their respective positions. We took the ground that this would not produce the desired results, that if there was to be a circulation of further statements at least the British and French should each make a contribution and that in the last analysis it would be wiser at this point for the Director to enter upon informal contact

with the individual government than for the Chairman to circulate further documentary material. After some discussion this course was approved.

4. The next point on the agenda was the question of an invitation to the Portuguese Government to adhere to the Committee. Winterton suggested that instructions be sent to the British Ambassador at Lisbon to sound out the Portuguese Government and if the reaction was favorable to issue an invitation in behalf of the Committee. It was hoped that the American representative at Lisbon would give the British Ambassador the necessary support.

5. The budget of the Director's office was next discussed. It was agreed that a recommendation should be made to the participating governments that they should deposit their annual contribution on \$50,000 basis the expenses would be budgeted on an annual basis totalling \$40,000 with in addition a \$10,000 surplus which might be used at the discretion of the Chairman.

6. We then made a report on our conversations with Ambassador Wilson with regard to the approach to Germany. Winterton, who had talked with Henderson²³ on the previous day, confirmed our impression that this was not an auspicious moment for Rublee to proceed to Berlin. It was agreed, however, that the meeting should recommend to the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and France, the Netherlands, that they should instruct their diplomatic representatives at Berlin to collaborate in reaching a decision as to when was the right moment for formal inquiry to be addressed to the German Government as to whether it would receive the Director and explore the situation of involuntary emigration with him. Winterton then gave us assurances that when this moment arrived Henderson would join with Wilson in the approach to the German Government.

7. Berenger then raised the financial question. He stressed the fact that this was the heart of the matter and that there should be an immediate clarification of the positions of the participating governments, notably of our Government, the British, the French and the Dutch, as to what was possible in a discussion of the financing of involuntary emigration from Germany, and what was not. He had previous to the meeting indicated to Pell that the French Government had definite ideas on the score, and it seemed desirable that the Director should, in the interim, before he proceeds to Berlin, contact the principal participating governments with regard to their attitude in respect of the financial position. Information has reached the French, which is confirmed by others, that Germany will make a proposal to Rublee which will have for its object an increase of German trade. The French are unwilling to contemplate a proposal of this kind but

²³ Sir Nevile Henderson, British Ambassador in Germany.

realize that the Committee would be placed in an awkward situation if it were obliged to turn down flatly a proposal from the German Government. Accordingly it is probable that the Director will have informal discussions with representatives of some of the principal participating governments with regard to the financial aspect of the problem, of course constantly bearing in mind our Government's attitude. [Taylor and Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/707 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Poland (Biddle)

WASHINGTON, September 1, 1938—7 p. m.

32. Your 160, August 30, noon. Please repeat your telegram and any future ones on this subject to Embassy, London, for Rublee.

We are fully alive to the desire of Poland to encourage substantial emigration and Polish representatives at Geneva and here have long emphasized the desire of their Government that international action in this field shall not be limited to refugees from Germany.

One of the principal preoccupations of this Government in connection with its proposal for international assistance for refugees, a preoccupation which is also felt acutely by the British and French Governments, is that our efforts on behalf of German refugees must not, if it can possibly be avoided, encourage persecution by other Governments aimed at forcing out unwanted sections of their populations and the dumping of these people onto the hands of international charity. Please bear this carefully in mind in all conversations you may have on the subject.

You may advise Beck along the following lines:

We do not look at the problem of unwanted populations and involuntary emigrants in any narrow light and we of course realize that the problem is not confined to any one area. On the other hand, the problem and the numbers of people involved are vast, and the interests of the countries of potential settlement must be given fully as much consideration as those of the countries of origin. This Government's initiative in calling the Evian meeting was prompted primarily by the necessity of speedy action to meet the particular acute situation created by the *Anschluss*. Some progress is being made in dealing with that situation, but progress must inevitably be very slow and a number of years will be required to reach anything like a solution of the Austro-German problem. The reception which has so far met our efforts to meet the German problem and the limited opportunities for settlement which it has so far been possible to find give no encouragement whatever to any hope that a "global" solution of the problem might be possible.

We seriously doubt that it will be possible for any of the American representatives on the Intergovernmental Committee to be in Geneva during the forthcoming meeting of the Assembly. We should nevertheless be very happy to have transmitted to them any ideas on the subject which Beck may care to communicate to you.

We are repeating this message to London.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/713 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, September 2, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received September 2—12:10 p. m.]

856. From Rublee. The Argentine Government has decreed new immigration laws which come into force on October 1st. Meanwhile the Argentine Consul at Berlin has granted visas to persons totalling about 600 who have disposed of their goods. Now they are told that unless they arrive in Argentina before October 1st, which is impossible unless a special boat is chartered, they will not be admitted.

I have been asked to bring this matter to the attention of the Argentine authorities and to urge upon them a special dispensation for those persons who were granted visas before September 1st and who have made the great sacrifice required by the German authorities for emigration.

It seems to me that this is an opportunity to achieve something tangible for the Committee, and I should like you to instruct the Embassy at London to introduce me to the Argentine Chargé and to give me whatever support may be necessary at Buenos Aires.

I suggested to the British that as Winterton is Chairman of the Committee they should arrange for me to meet the Argentine Chargé but they have sidestepped my request with the suggestion that the introduction should come through the American Embassy. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/711 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, September 2, 1938—7 p. m.

495. For Taylor and Rublee. Your 851, September 1, 3 p. m. We approve the positions you have taken and appreciate the efforts you are making to keep the Committee's course along the lines we have outlined.

1. The situation created by the Brazilian position is most unfortunate. We are nevertheless seriously perturbed lest any attempt to have Brazil relinquish its vice-chairmanship have even more unfortunate consequences in the creation of active Brazilian ill-will. Please urge upon Winterton and Berenger the need for proceeding in this matter with the greatest caution and tact.

2. It would be most helpful if the British and French could be induced to make specific statements as to the concrete contribution they are prepared to make in the reception of refugees.

3. We have repeated to Berlin your paragraph 6, authorizing Wilson to follow the course suggested.

4. We will be interested to learn what the French have in mind concerning the financing of involuntary emigration, but have nothing to add at this time to our previously expressed views.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/715 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, September 3, 1938—noon.
[Received September 3—9: 15 a. m.]

414. Your 146, September 2, 7 p. m.²⁵ I have discussed with British Ambassador situation arising from our talk in Paris with Taylor and Rublee. He is in entire accord with procedure suggested, but states emphatically that he believes that the present is not the time to make the proposed *démarche* to Ribbentrop. He feels strongly that while the Czechoslovak matter²⁶ is in its present acute phase it would be a mistaken policy to bring up another big question, however important and urgent.

Inasmuch as this point of view coincides with my own impression we will take no immediate action. We will, of course, watch situation and in frequent discussion examine possibility between ourselves as well as with French and Dutch representatives.

Repeated to Taylor at London.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/713 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Argentina (Weddell)

WASHINGTON, September 3, 1938—1 p. m.

131. Department's circular of March 23, 1 p. m. The Director of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees cables as follows:

²⁵ Not printed; see paragraph 3 of telegram printed *supra*.

²⁶ See pp. 483 ff.

[Here follows the first two paragraphs of telegram No. 856, September 2, 4 p. m., from the Ambassador in the United Kingdom, printed on page 784.]

The Argentine representative at Evian was of great assistance to Mr. Taylor and we sincerely appreciate the cooperation of the Argentine Government there and at London. Please call upon the Foreign Minister and express the hope that it will be possible to arrange for the admission of the 600 refugees to whom visas have been issued by the Argentine Consul at Berlin. Their exclusion due to new immigration restrictions at this time would create a most unfortunate impression in this hemisphere and in Europe.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/720 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Argentina (Weddell) to the Secretary of State

BUENOS AIRES, September 5, 1938—9 p. m.

[Received September 5—6 : 52 a. m.]

252. Contents of Department's 131, September 3, 1 p. m., communicated today to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Minister said that the law entering into force on October 1 was not directed at any race or creed but was designed to limit immigration to this country according to its material and spiritual needs. As regards Jews, he declared that Argentina already had a larger percentage in its population than any country in the world.

He then inquired why the United States had not doubled the quota of immigrants which it was prepared to receive from Austria and Germany, in reply to which I emphasized that from the very beginning, as had been made clear to his Government, we neither contemplated nor asked for change in existing laws and regulations. To this he countered by remarking that prior to the recent law immigration into this country had been practically unlimited.

I then returned to the specific case of the 600 refugees, emphasizing their cruel dilemma and he said that the case of each one of these would be carefully studied with a view to his qualifications as an immigrant, adding that large numbers of artists and musicians were seeking syndicates [*sic*] here when the type desired was the farmer.

The Minister emphasized his desire that the Secretary exactly comprehend the policy of the Argentine Government, which he reiterated was not racial but based on a desire to obtain elements which would contribute to the common wealth.

WEDDELL

840.48 Refugees/713 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, September 6, 1938—10 p. m.

502. For Rublee. Your 856, September 2, 4 p. m. Weddell telegraphs:

[Here follows paraphrase of telegram No. 252, September 5, 9 p. m., *supra.*]

Before instructing him to press the matter further we would appreciate any comment you may wish to make.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/739 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary
of State*

LONDON, September 13, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received September 13—5:10 p. m.]

915. From Rublee. The Committee received yesterday a communication from the Chilean Consul General in London, who represents Chile on the Committee, in reply to a request by the Committee to the participating governments to pay their shares of the sum provided in the recently adopted budget for the expenses of the Director's office. He informs the Committee that his Government has only directed the payment of its share of the expenses of the Evian meeting. He further informs the Committee that the Chilean Government has instructed him that it does not consider itself bound by the resolutions adopted at Evian and London which were merely recommendations to the participating governments and because it always has opposed the establishment of a new organism and has instead desired to have the High Commissioner of the League invested with the necessary powers to maintain inter-governments collaboration, it is unable to accept these resolutions.

2. It is unfortunate that an important South American country with definite settlement possibilities should withdraw from the Committee before waiting to see what concrete results might be accomplished by the Director. In view of the restrained optimism of the report from our Consul in Chile which we have just received from you, I assume this move was not expected. The British Foreign Office state that they had no information that Chile would withdraw. In view of the unfortunate reaction in Latin America generally to the Evian Conference and the difficult situation in Brazil, you will appreciate that it would be very serious if the fact that Chile has withdrawn should gain widespread publicity in South America and

constitute a precedent for withdrawal of other important countries in that part of the world.

3. With the above in mind I suggest for your consideration the advisability of instructing our representative in Chile to inquire as to the reasons for Chile's withdrawal and if possible secure reconsideration of this step. It might be explained that the widespread misapprehension in Latin America that the United States and European countries expect to dump penniless refugees in South America is without foundation and that it is realized that extensive retraining of these people as qualified agriculturists is essential before we expect these countries to open their doors. We have asked the Foreign Office here to instruct their representative in Chile to consult with our representative in this matter. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/739 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Chile (Armour)

WASHINGTON, September 14, 1938—8 p. m.

54. The following telegram has been received from Rublee at London:

[Here follows the text of telegram No. 915, *supra*.]

The Department believes that any action by Chile at this juncture which could be interpreted as a withdrawal from the Committee would be most unfortunate since the effectiveness of the Committee might be seriously if not irreparably impaired by the precedent established. Accordingly you are requested to discuss this matter immediately with the appropriate authorities and if Chile contemplates withdrawing, endeavor to obtain a reconsideration of such action. You may wish to point out that the resolutions in question become binding upon Chile only upon ratification by it.²⁷

HULL

840.48 Refugees/759a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, September 19, 1938—2 p. m.

540. For Mr. Rublee from Messersmith.²⁸ The questions discussed by the Committee and the Department in your cable No. 763 of August

²⁷ The Ambassador in Chile informed the Department, in telegram No. 108, September 17, noon, that the Chilean Government was instructing its representatives on the Intergovernmental Committee to cooperate with the latter for the admission of such refugees, principally agriculturists, as were within Chile's capacity and needs (840.48 Refugees/746).

²⁸ George S. Messersmith, Assistant Secretary of State.

15 and the Department's reply No. 592 of August 27 have been given continued and more comprehensive consideration by the Department, and consequently I transmit to you a somewhat more extended and clarifying presentation of our thoughts.

The Department realizes that the success of the Intergovernmental Committee may well be vitally affected by the manner and extent to which it may be possible to arrange for these emigrants to secure in some part the proceeds of wealth possessed by them within Germany. It likewise realizes that the transfer of wealth required must largely take place through the movement of German goods, if at all.

On the other hand, it wished to place before you some preoccupations against which it is believed the Intergovernmental Committee will want to be on guard: First, it is possible that the German authorities, in view of the fact that American official initiative established the Intergovernmental Committee, may put forward proposals in which they will seek as a *quid pro quo* for permitting transfer of the capital of refugees, trade or other concessions from the American Government. It is unnecessary, I know, to inform you that the Department could not consider any proposals of this character. Second, arrangements may be suggested which in their continued operation would seriously displace current American trade with the outside world and perhaps even in some instances impair the value of commercial agreements which this Government has negotiated in recent years. Any such outcome would of course be regrettable and should be guarded against.

I am sure that the Intergovernmental Committee would want to bear these possibilities in mind in considering arrangements that might be worked out with the German Government.

I would not wish to have the preceding cautionary considerations construed as indicating any necessary active opposition on our part to any or all arrangements that might be worked out for facilitating such movement of German goods as would result in putting funds at the disposal of emigrants solely because they might involve bilateral export procedures. Rather, I am suggesting that, from the Department's point of view, it is highly desirable that each specific arrangement be carefully appraised in the light of its possible effect upon ordinary and normal American trade operations, and the value of American commercial accords. This same consideration would obviously arise in connection with the attitude of other exporting countries to particular projects.

I should think that arrangements which were more or less fully worked out through goods movements for the direct use of the emigrants themselves rather than for general diffusion in ordinary commercial markets would not only be the simplest to execute but least susceptible of creating any difficulties of the preceding character.

For one thing, it will be clear to everyone that trade of this character is taking place only because the immigration movement took place. No question therefore of actual displacement could arise. Further, I should think there might be possibilities of transfer in the field of proceeds arising out of the sale of services by Germany—particularly proceeds of tourist travel. As you no doubt know, this has been the chief means of facilitating payment and transfer under the Standstill Agreements.

I would conclude by again assuring that of course the Department is in every way eager that suitable practical methods be devised to enable the Intergovernmental Committee to carry out its task successfully. It is in that underlying thought that we should approach, of course, all specific suggestions which the Committee may formulate, and not with too rigid views or fears.

Of course it is not clear that projects for facilitating transfer by special arrangements with particular countries willing to enter into such arrangements would necessarily come before this Government in circumstances requiring it to take any position thereon. The Department is not arrogating to itself the authority to take decisions which are incumbent on others. However, questions in this field may come before the Intergovernmental Committee for consideration and it has seemed desirable to give you, in response to your inquiry, an indication of the point of view entertained by the Department in this field. [Messersmith.]

HULL

840.48 Refugees/756 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, September 20, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 21—7 p. m.]

1523. From Taylor. I have made the following suggestions by telephone to Mr. Rublee for communication by him to Lord Winterton:

“Before leaving for America, I would like to make a suggestion in regard to the refugee matter. In the event of a settlement of the grave questions before the world today there will come a moment when your Prime Minister can bring to the personal attention of Herr Hitler the refugee matter and suggest our proposals—(first) that an orderly exodus over a considerable period of years be arranged; and (second) that justice be done the refugees on the question of their property. The former should be easy of recognition; that all testimony would not be too long if a humanitarian attitude and the interests of the countries of reception were fairly considered. In respect to the former instruction, a group of German, French, British, Dutch and American Government financial experts including representatives of the Bank of International Settlements should be selected to act as advisers to the Chairman and the Director of the Inter-

governmental Committee in the preparation of a plan for the release and transfer of such assets of the refugees as are to be restored to them. I make this suggestion that you may take action at the appropriate moment. I am sure this approach will be the most effective and expeditious. I realize it could be done only if agreement on the other and greater questions has been reached but the direct approach through the Prime Minister is so important to those suffering ones whom we are trying to help he might find a way to accomplish it if the moment arrives."

[Taylor]
BULLITT

840.48 Refugees/720 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Argentina (Weddell)

WASHINGTON, September 24, 1938—3 p. m.

139. Your 252, September 5, 9 p. m. Rublee has been informed that the Argentine authorities have now modified their regulations in order to permit all persons in Germany who have valid visas and who leave Germany before October 1 to enter the Argentine.²⁹

In discussing with the Minister of Foreign Affairs the subject outlined in the Department's 138, September 22, 8 p. m.,³⁰ please take occasion to express to him this Government's gratification at this manifestation of the humanitarian attitude of the Argentine Government.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/756 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, October 5, 1938—noon.

600. See telegrams Nos. 1523, September 20, 5 p. m. and 1529, September 21, 1 p. m.,³¹ from Paris, of which Rublee presumably has copies.

Please call urgently upon the Prime Minister and convey to him orally the following personal message from the President:³²

"I fully share your hope and belief that there exists today the greatest opportunity in years for the establishment of a new order based on justice and on law. Now that you have established personal contact with Chancellor Hitler I know that you will be taking up with

²⁹ This information had been received by the Department in Rublee's telegram No. 1013, September 24, 3 p. m., from the Ambassador in the United Kingdom, not printed.

³⁰ Not printed.

³¹ Latter not printed.

³² In accordance with subsequent instructions, a written text of the President's message was delivered to the Prime Minister on the morning of October 6, and was discussed orally with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that afternoon.

him from time to time many of the problems which must be resolved in order to bring about that new and better order. Among these is the present German policy of racial persecution, which has perhaps done more harm than any other to the estimate of Germany held by public opinion in America regardless of class, race or creed.

The Intergovernmental Committee has scrupulously avoided any emotional or critical approach to the problem and is on the contrary seeking a solution along strictly practical lines. While it may be too much to expect an early change in the basic racial policy of the German Government, nevertheless it would seem reasonable to anticipate that the German Government will assist the other Governments upon which this problem has been forced by relaxing the pressure upon these people sufficiently to permit the arrangement of orderly emigration and by permitting them to take with them a reasonable percentage of their property. The German Government, in forcing these persons to leave its territory without funds and without property, cannot be unmindful of the fact that it is thereby imposing great burdens on her friendly neighbors and on other nations throughout the world who, for humanitarian considerations, are doing what they can to alleviate the lot of these people. All other countries represented in the Intergovernmental Committee are thereby given new and serious problems to solve.

As time may be of the essence, I am sending you this message without further delay in the hope that you will be able to find an appropriate opportunity to lay these considerations before the Reich Chancellor. His acceptance in principle of these considerations would permit the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee to enter into useful conversations with the appropriate German authorities concerning details."

Please inform Rublee.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/790 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 5, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received 5:20 p. m.]

1126. For the Secretary and Under Secretary from Rublee. I conferred with Winterton this morning, at his request. He said that it was his view and the view of the British Foreign Office that Pell should proceed to Berlin immediately for the purpose of feeling out the situation with regard to involuntary emigrants with the officials directly concerned of the German Government. He pointed out that the visit of Pell would not require a formal request to the German Government that he be received since he would go to Berlin merely to place himself at the disposal of the American and British Embassies to answer questions which German officials might wish to raise with regard to

the aims of the Intergovernmental Committee. At an appropriate moment later a formal inquiry would be made of the German Government as to whether it was willing to receive the Director and if the answer was in the affirmative, I would proceed to Berlin and actually negotiate.

I agreed with Winterton that the present moment which seemed auspicious for negotiation should not be missed and that a move should be made without further delay. I was inclined to believe, however, that I should go to Berlin without further preparation, at least for exploratory conversations with the German officials and that our Government and the British Government should be requested to instruct the American and British Ambassadors at Berlin to inquire of the German Government whether it was prepared to receive me.

I took occasion to emphasize to Winterton moreover the importance of including a solution of the problem of involuntary emigration in a general settlement and urged him to bring this matter directly to the attention of the Prime Minister at the earliest occasion. Winterton replied that general conversations would not take place for 2 or 3 months. The Prime Minister was leaving almost immediately for a much needed vacation. Then there would be the opening of Parliament so that discussions between Foreign Ministers or others would probably not occur until December at the earliest. Winterton said that he had discussed the importance of a settlement of the refugee problem with Lord Halifax, who was the proper Minister to raise the question with the Prime Minister, and Lord Halifax had promised to keep the refugee situation in view.

At the conclusion of his conversation, Winterton suggested that Pell should see the official of the Foreign Office who now has this matter in charge in the absence of Makins who is with the British delegation at Berlin. Pell later saw this official who said that very confidential information had reached them that the German Government would be unwilling to receive me unless I could present a plan worked out in detail for placing involuntary emigrants in countries of settlement together with complete suggestions as to what arrangements of a financial and economic nature the countries outside Germany would be willing to make if the German Government were to agree to release a portion of their property to involuntary emigrants. The official observed that quite obviously the plan, in spite of some progress, had not been worked out in sufficient detail to enable me to approach the German Government and that as a consequence if a formal inquiry were to be addressed to the German Government at this time with regard to my reception, the answer would probably be in the negative and this would close the door to further negotiation. It was felt that Pell, without committing the Committee in any way, could outline

the general purpose of it to the appropriate officials in Germany and hear any views which they might wish to express while I at London pressed negotiations for a plan of settlement with the commissioners of the Dominions and the diplomatic representatives of the participating governments. He said that the Foreign Office could not advise another procedure and hoped that our Government would at least give it favorable consideration.

Please inform Taylor of the contents of this telegram. [Rublee.]
KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/798½

The British Ambassador (Lindsay) to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, October 7, 1938.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY OF STATE: I beg to enclose herewith a message to the President from Mr. Neville Chamberlain, on the subject of Refugees from Germany and I shall be grateful if you will forward it to its destination.

Very sincerely yours,

R. C. LINDSAY

[Enclosure]

The British Prime Minister (Chamberlain) to President Roosevelt

I fully share your conviction of the importance both moral and practical of the refugee problem and your anxiety that an early appeal should be made to Herr Hitler concerning it. The German Government's treatment of emigrants is undoubtedly a serious obstacle in the way of a better understanding between the German people and those of our own countries, which is essential if we are to profit from this opportunity to create a new and better order. Therefore it is our duty not only to do what we can to alleviate the lot of the refugees but still more to endeavour to bring about a realisation of the extent of the damage caused to friendly international relations by the harsh treatment of German emigrants. I hope as you do that it will prove possible to persuade the German Government to make a practical contribution to the solution of the problem and I warmly welcome your suggestion that the first suitable opportunity should be taken of urging them to do so.

The Chairman of the Inter-Governmental Committee is now considering, in consultation with the director, the possibility of a visit by the latter to Berlin and we propose to consult our Ambassador in Berlin on this point forthwith.

Meanwhile I suggest that our respective Ambassadors should be instructed to take the first opportunity of speaking to the German Government on the lines of your message on this question.

OCTOBER 7, 1938.

840.48 Refugees/814

*The Under Secretary of State (Welles) to President Roosevelt*³³

WASHINGTON, October 10, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: You will remember that last week you sent through Ambassador Kennedy a personal message to Mr. Chamberlain with regard to the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees. You expressed the hope that the British Prime Minister would seize the opportunity of urging the German Chancellor to take a more lenient attitude with regard to refugees leaving Germany.

The British Ambassador on Saturday communicated to me Mr. Chamberlain's reply³⁴ to your message of which I enclose the text herewith.

In view of the suggestions made by Mr. Chamberlain, I believe the time has come when the American Ambassador in Berlin should be instructed to sound out the German Government in order to find out whether the German authorities would be willing to discuss the refugee question with Mr. Rublee at this time. Simultaneous approaches would of course be made by the British and French Ambassadors in Berlin.

Believe me [etc.]

SUMNER WELLES

840.48 Refugees/805½

*Memorandum of Trans-Atlantic Telephone Conversation*³⁵

86

MR. RUBLEE: I have seen it here through the Embassy.³⁷

MR. WELLES: The main point is that no step should be taken either by yourself or anybody in your organization until the Ambassadors in Berlin have an opportunity to sound out the situation.

MR. RUBLEE: I agree with that but I think they ought to do it immediately.

³³ Marginal note: "S. W. OK F. D. R."

³⁴ *Supra.*

³⁵ Between Mr. Rublee in London and Under Secretary of State Welles in Washington, October 10, 1938, 10:20 a. m.

³⁶ Omission indicated in the original.

³⁷ Presumably a reference to the exchange of correspondence between President Roosevelt and the British Prime Minister.

MR. WELLES: I quite agree. That is our own point of view here. You can be positive that steps in that sense will be taken immediately.

MR. RUBLEE: I submitted a basic report. I am sending you a copy through the pouch. It is very important at this phase that the British Empire should make a real contribution. They have shown me in confidence a statement which they propose to submit. They must be persuaded to take the matter more seriously. This can only be done through Ambassador Kennedy. I mean, I cannot do much with them. The President's message was very useful. Unfortunately it came just as the Prime Minister was leaving London and was communicated to him in the form of a note. The Prime Minister called the Ambassador and spoke casually about it but it evidently had not made a very big impression. I want to say this very confidentially. I have the impression, in the first place, that the British Foreign Office is definitely against it. Lord Halifax thinks that the . . .⁸⁸ would like to smother it. We have that to counteract. My impression is that Ambassador Kennedy is not disposed to take a strong line. He feels that our undertaking is hopeless. He does not want to go out on it because he has other matters he considers more important. I don't think it is hopeless, but it is very difficult.

MR. WELLES: I am entirely in accord with you. I think undoubtedly we can do something helpful by speaking emphatically to the British Ambassador here.

MR. RUBLEE: Ambassador Kennedy is personally sympathetic but he feels he cannot do anything.

MR. WELLES: We will have to do something at this end along this line. We will take the necessary steps to start work at Berlin, and with regard to the other matter I will see the British Ambassador and speak to him.

840.48 Refugees/811 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 12, 1938—noon.

[Received 1:40 p. m.]

1162. For the Secretary and Under Secretary. From Rublee. Embassy's telegram No. 1126 of October 5, 5 p. m. reported the views of the British with regard to the procedure which should be adopted by the Intergovernmental Committee in its contact with the German Government at this time. My information which comes from a most authoritative source is that the President's message has not caused them

⁸⁸ Apparently a break in telephone connection at this point.

to modify their views. They are still of the opinion that the work of the Intergovernmental Committee should be subordinated to high policy and they are therefore not really anxious that I should go to Berlin where my conversations with the German authorities even though of a preliminary character might have some repercussion on other developments to which they attach importance.

Since the work of the Intergovernmental Committee is in consequence at a dramatical stage I believe that I should in all frankness give you my views. I do not believe that we should agree to half measures. I believe that the suggestion that Pell should go Berlin to be available to the American and British Embassies for consultation is a half measure which provides a useful method for avoiding the necessity of a formal request to the German Government that I be received. Pell could lose much time in answering the questions of the German authorities but this would not advance the formal negotiations with the German Government. Either the German authorities will receive me or they will not. This is the fundamental question of some doubt which the Germans alone can answer. The sooner the question is put to them the sooner we shall know where we stand. Until we know where we stand it will be difficult if not impossible to formulate definite recommendations as to the course which the Committee should take.

Meanwhile I am not in a position to make effective progress in negotiations with British representative of refuge and final settlement. I have explored the situation with the representatives of these countries sufficiently to realize that they are not disposed to write a blank check. They will not commit themselves to receive even a small number of involuntary emigrants unless they are assured that these persons will not be refugees in the full sense of the word, that is destitute persons who will become burdens on the communities which receive them. Only when they are assured that the German Government will cooperate to the extent of permitting envoy of [*involuntary?*] emigrants to take with them immediately a reasonable minimum of their property will the countries of settlement open their doors. Similar objections are raised by countries of refuge. Until they are assured that the Germans will substitute orderly emigration for the existing disorderly exodus, which has become so acute that they have been forced to close their frontiers, they will not commit themselves to make a substantial contribution in the way of re-training. I had been hopeful that before I went to Berlin I could, with the support of our Ambassadors in London and Paris, persuade the British and French to come forward with definite statement as to the numbers which they would be willing to receive. I have some information that the French have been holding back awaiting a British lead. The

British for their part have prepared a statement, which they have shown me in confidence. It is wholly unsatisfactory in that it indicates no real effort to open up their colonies or to use their influence with their Dominions to take involuntary emigrants and I am hopeful that my report to Winterton will convince him of the necessity of making a greater contribution but I do not anticipate that I will have a satisfactory commitment from them in the immediate future.

Under the circumstances, the negotiation with Germany is the key to the situation. If the Germans are willing to talk I can make progress with the countries of refuge and settlement. If the Germans are unwilling to talk the problem becomes one of organization and relief with which this office is not equipped to deal. I am not as yet convinced that the Germans will refuse to talk. In fact, I have received communications through various intermediaries indicating that some German authorities at least have been giving serious consideration to the problem and have gone so far as to formulate concrete proposals which they are said to be prepared to discuss.

To put the situation bluntly, I have no indication that the Germans are reluctant to talk. It is apparent to me, however, that the British are reluctant to have me talk with the Germans. They have not concealed their view that they would prefer to have me spend my time in general conversations with the representative of the countries of settlement in London. There is a limit, however, to the time which I can spend in this way. I am very much afraid that unless some move is made in the immediate future to approach the German Government the criticism of the Intergovernmental Committee, and in particular of our Government as sponsor of the Committee, which is mounting in circles in close touch with the refugee situation, will become outspoken. It will be said, indeed it is being said already, that the Intergovernmental Committee has been in existence for several months and has accomplished virtually nothing, that, in fact, it has provided an incentive to the Governments of refuge and settlement to increase their restrictions and hamper the effects of the private organizations and the League Commissioner on the ground that they can do nothing pending the outcome of my negotiation with the German Government.

These, among other considerations, lead me to the conclusion that without further delay the request should be addressed formally to the German Government to receive me. If the answer is in the affirmative I shall be prepared to go immediately to Berlin. If the answer is in the negative the problem will become one of organizing the relief of the refugees who have already left Germany which will require a wholly new and different approach. [Ruble.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/818 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, October 15, 1938—11 a. m.
 [Received October 15—8:50 a. m.]

549. Respecting Rublee's visit. During the last few days I have been making soundings respecting proper moment for Rublee's visit. Only very recently I learned through the British Ambassador of the message sent by the President of the United States to the British Prime Minister and the latter's reply.

Both Henderson and I now feel that the time is as advantageous as it will be presumably for a long time and that therefore we should at once bring up the matter with the German officials. Henderson is going on leave to England Wednesday morning, hence desires urgently to make his visit to the Foreign Office early next week.

We both plan to leave memoranda giving the history of Intergovernmental Committee, et cetera, the memoranda to be similar but not identical. We will also make separate visits.

Unless you see reason to the contrary therefore I plan to make this visit to the Foreign Office early next week to Ribbentrop if he is in town; if not, to Von Weizsaecker.³⁹ I am also trying to build up this matter from other directions.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/828a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, October 15, 1938—3 p. m.

179. We feel that the time has come for you to make an informal approach to the German Government on the refugee problem with a view to paving the way for an eventual visit of Rublee to Berlin. Henderson and François-Poncet⁴⁰ are being similarly instructed. We leave to you the decision as to the most opportune moment and the most effective manner of presentation, except that we would not favor anything resembling a joint *démarche*. Your approach should be along the following general lines.

"The present racial policy of the German Government, insofar as it is forcing great numbers of people from Germany into other countries, presents a problem in which this and other Governments have a direct interest. The German Government in forcing these persons to precipitate empty-handed flight, cannot be unmindful of the great burdens which it is thereby imposing on its neighbors and on other more distant

³⁹ Ernst von Weizsaecker, State Secretary in the German Foreign Office.

⁴⁰ André François-Poncet, French Ambassador in Germany.

nations which, from humanitarian considerations, are doing what they can to meet this problem.

"Although the German racial policy has perhaps done as much harm as any other to the estimate of Germany held by public opinion in this country regardless of class, race or creed, the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees has scrupulously avoided any emotional or critical approach to the refugee problem and is on the contrary seeking a strictly practical solution. It would seem only reasonable to anticipate that the German Government should assist the other Governments upon which this problem has been forced by relaxing the pressure upon these people sufficiently to permit the arrangement of orderly emigration and by permitting them to take with them a reasonable percentage of their property.

"Thus direct contact between Mr. Rublee and the German authorities should prove of mutual value. Mr. Rublee should be in a position to give the German Government authoritative information as to the number of refugees who might be admitted for settlement by various governments; conversely he might well be able to persuade many of these countries to accept greater numbers if he had a clearer idea of the extent to which the German Government was prepared to cooperate.

"It is the sincere desire of the Governments represented on the Committee to assist the German Government where they can, in a manner consistent with their laws and interests, in finding a method of ending a situation which has given rise to so much international rancor and to so much suffering."

HULL

840.48 Refugees/829: Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, October 18, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received October 18—2:06 p. m.]

555. My 549, October 15, 11 a. m. Ribbentrop as usual is out of town having been almost continuously absent from Berlin since July 1st; I therefore called on Weizsaecker and presented the matter of Rublee's visit orally along the lines suggested in your 179. As stated in my 549, I left a memorandum.

Henderson also called this morning separately also leaving memorandum. I have not been able to check with François-Poncet as he is in Berchtesgaden taking leave of the Chancellor.

In presenting the matter to Weizsaecker I emphasized particularly the fact that the German Government's action has created a problem which affects the outside states as well, that the Germans cannot consider this a purely internal matter. I also emphasized the advantages to the Germans in making a regular plan of emigration and facilitating the export of Jewish capital both because of their desire to hasten emigration and because their present attitude toward the

Jews was one of the chief factors in the maintenance of the hostile sentiments against Germany abroad.

Weizsaecker replied that he could not give me an official answer in this matter, that he personally had been of a frame of mind some time ago to discourage the visit, that they had followed the developments in the Committee and had not been able to see that any particular headway had been made for the absorption of Jewish emigrants. (Here I interrupted to point out to him that the capacity of absorption depended on the amount of securities Jews could take with them.) He then said he feared that if Mr. Rublee came and nothing was worked out he would return and report to the Committee that because of German obstinacy nothing could be accomplished. I replied that this might well be the case unless the party members could realize both that they had created a world problem of concern to many states besides Germany and that it was to their own distinct advantage to work this matter out with Rublee.

I then said that the specific question to which we wished an answer was whether, in the event of Mr. Rublee's arrival, the various German officials who would have the decision on the question will be ready to receive him and discuss the matter on the question of finding an arrangement. Weizsaecker replied that he would lay this matter before the proper authorities and let me know.

I intend, of course, to push this matter at every opportunity pending a reply from the Foreign Office. I believe that pending such reply whatever hope of success now exists will be jeopardized if publicity is given to the fact that the various Ambassadors are discussing this matter with the German Foreign Office.

Henderson's memorandum and mine forwarded by mail.⁴¹ Telegram repeated to London for Rublee.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/834 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 19, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received October 19—1:55 p. m.]

1209. From Rublee. Pell was requested to discuss the question of the approach to the German Government, in the light of Wilson's and Henderson's conversations with Weizsaecker, at the Foreign Office this afternoon. The official concerned said that Henderson's report was discouraging and it looked as though the German reply to the

⁴¹ Despatch No. 378, October 18, not printed.

request that I be received would be in the negative. The immediate question, therefore, was to decide whether some further move should be made at Berlin before the German Government makes its formal reply which would be final. It might be pointed out to Weizsaecker where, in the event of a negative reply from the German Government, the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee will be obliged to call a meeting of the Committee in order that a report may be made to the participating governments of the decision of the German Government. And the publicity which would undoubtedly result from a meeting for this purpose would obviously be most unfortunate but could not be avoided.

The British are not fully convinced that it would be useful or wise to approach the German Government in this manner but they wish me to submit the suggestion to you in strict confidence and would appreciate an immediate expression of your views. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/834 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, October 19, 1938—7 p. m.

636. For Rublee. Your 1209, October 19, 5 p. m. We have no reason for sharing the pessimism expressed by the Foreign Office and we do not consider the procedure outlined in your telegram under reference advisable. We are instructing Wilson⁴² to make clear to the German Government that no sensational developments are anticipated from your visit, which is intended merely to ascertain whether or not the possibility exists for a mutually satisfactory arrangement to be sought in subsequent conversations.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/839 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 20, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received October 20—3:20 p. m.]

1218. From Rublee. Pell reported the substance of your 836 [636], October 19, 7 p. m., at the Foreign Office this afternoon. Meanwhile they had conferred with Henderson and are inclined to believe that it would be unwise to threaten the Germans, even indirectly, at this

⁴² Telegram No. 183 to the Ambassador in Germany, October 19, 7 p. m., not printed.

stage. They share our view, however, that the preliminary nature of my first visit should be emphasized to Weizsaecker together with the fact that the Committee is concerned with refugees in general, not alone Jews, and that it is everyone's desire to avoid publicity. They do not believe that it would be wise to touch upon the economic aspect. They are prepared to instruct the British Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin to speak to Weizsaecker in the above sense but wish to be assured that Wilson will be instructed to take a similar line. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/847 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 25, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received October 25—5:30 p. m.]

1244. From Rublee. Information has come to me in the last week that the British Government, independently of the Intergovernmental Committee, was seeking to give, in the Dominions and colonies, special preference to victims of the transfer of the Sudeten areas from Czechoslovakia to Germany.⁴³ Accordingly when Winterton came to my office to discuss various questions with me late last week, I pointed out this situation to him and observed that it would have an unfortunate effect on the work of the Intergovernmental Committee if these persons from Sudetenland were given special treatment.

Winterton agreed. He said that he had raised the question with the Prime Minister and in the Cabinet and he hoped that his objections would be heeded.

Pell was requested to go this afternoon to the Foreign Office where he was handed the text of a communication which Winterton, as Chairman, proposes to circulate to the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee "after consultation with the Director". Pell was asked to show me this document and to report any observations which I might wish to make before tomorrow afternoon since the matter was urgent.

This memorandum refers to the persons coming within the scope of the activity of the Intergovernmental Committee as defined in paragraph 8 of the Evian resolution.⁴⁴

It continues as follows:

"The transfer of the Sudeten areas from Czechoslovakia in Germany has led to an extension of the problem of involuntary emigration from Germany. A number of persons are likely to wish to leave the trans-

⁴³ See pp. 483 ff.

⁴⁴ See telegram No. 21, July 14, 5 p. m., from the chairman of the American delegation, p. 754.

ferred areas by reason of the treatment to which they are subjected on political, religious or racial grounds, while others have already taken temporary refuge in Czechoslovakia for a similar reason. Of these involuntary emigrants, those who are of German or Jewish origin are in precisely the same position as involuntary emigrants from Germany and Austria.

It is desirable on grounds of equity that no individuals or groups should be placed either in a more or a less favourable position than other individuals or groups who desire to emigrate as a result of the action of the same government. It is therefore proposed that the involuntary emigrants of German or Jewish origin from the areas formerly included in the Czechoslovak State and now transferred to Germany should be assimilated to other involuntary emigrants from Germany or Austria and should be regarded as coming within the scope of the activity of the Intergovernmental Committee.

The Director will circulate to the members of the Committee such particulars as he is able to obtain of the number and type of involuntary emigrants who have been or may be created by the transfer of the Sudeten areas to Germany, as well as of the conditions in which these persons are able to emigrate. The Director will also be glad to receive any information on these points with which members of the Committee may be in a position to furnish him."

In reading over the document I note first off that it differentiates between Germans and Jews, a practice which has been consistently avoided throughout the work of the Intergovernmental Committee. In this connection the official at the Foreign Office explained that there was a possibility of placing non-Jewish emigrants in certain British Dominions where it would not be possible to send any more Jews. They therefore attached considerable importance to this point. Obviously if this tendency were to be encouraged my task would be made virtually impossible since other governments of countries of settlement, notably those in Latin America, would immediately express preference to receive non-Jewish immigrants and no place would be left open for Jews who constitute the major portion of involuntary emigrants.

My second observation is that under the terms of this memorandum I, as Director, am required to make a special investigation of the situation of Sudeten refugees. In this connection the official said that an investigator would be sent to the spot who would report to Winter-ton not only in his capacity as a member of the British Government but as Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee as well. In other words the Committee will assume responsibility for the Sudeten refugees, a task which the League Commissioner is legally prevented from undertaking because the League so far has not recognized the cession of the Sudetenland by Czechoslovakia to Germany.

There are two possible explanations of the memorandum. The first is that the British Government is attempting to shove off its responsibilities for these victims of the Sudeten transfer upon the Intergovernmental Committee with the intention of doing little for them. The second is that the British intend to make a real effort to help these people and to use their influence with the Dominions to that end and have been persuaded by Winterton to make this effort through the Intergovernmental Committee. Even if the latter explanation is correct we fear that the result will be discrimination as between the Jew and the non-Jew within the class of the Sudeten refugees and discrimination in favor of the Sudeten refugees as against the general category of German and Austrian refugees.

In any case, I shall study the document further and request more time before I make my observations in reply to the British. I should appreciate your immediate comments. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/849 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 26, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received October 26—1:10 p. m.]

1245. From Rublee. My 1244 of October 25, 8 p. m. I learned this morning that it was proposed to circulate the memorandum to the governments this afternoon and to give it to the press at the same time.

I therefore sent the following letter to Winterton :

"I have examined the communication which you, as Chairman, propose to circulate to the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee and, since you have so very kindly requested them, I give you my immediate reactions.

In the first place, I fully agree with the spirit of the proposed communication, that is to say, that the potential emigrants from the Sudetenland, some of whom are still within the enlarged German frontier, and some of whom are in Czechoslovakia, should be assimilated with the persons coming within the scope of the Intergovernmental Committee as defined in paragraph 8 (a) of the Evian resolution. It would be most unfortunate, and might have a baneful effect indeed upon the Committee's negotiations with the German Government if special preference were to be given to one group of persons of this category at the expense of other groups. The fate of the victims of the transfer of Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia to Germany is no worse and no better than is the fate of the victims of the absorption of Austria by Germany, or the fate of persons who have been designated as undesirables within the old Reich. To give more favorable treat-

ment to the Sudetenland group is to work an injustice to the emigrants as a whole, and must convince the German Government that a general solution of the problem is superfluous if it can be solved piecemeal.

Coming to the detail of the memorandum which you propose to circulate, I note that for the first time in a document emanating from the Intergovernmental Committee, a differentiation is established between Jews and non-Jews in this instance, Germans. I believe that we must recognize that the overwhelming majority of the persons with whom the Committee is obligated to deal are Jews or non-Aryans. If we were to begin to differentiate, even to the extent of indicating in a formal document that there are different categories based on religious and racial origins, encouragement would be given to the deplorable and growing tendency in many countries to discriminate against persons of the Jewish faith with the result that my problem of finding places of settlement for the great mass of involuntary emigrants would become insoluble, and I should not be in a position to convince the German Government that if it would make concessions with regard to the transfer of Jewish property, I could persuade the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee to receive involuntary emigrants in greater numbers than are received by them at the present time.

My second observation refers to the last paragraph of the proposed memorandum, where it is stated: 'the Director will circulate to the members of the Committee such particulars as he is able to obtain of the number and type of involuntary emigrants who have been or may be created by the transfer of the Sudeten areas to Germany, as well as conditions in which these persons are able to emigrate. The Director will also be glad to receive any information on these points which members of the Committee may be in a position to furnish him.'

This provision would seem to go directly counter to the spirit of the earlier paragraph of this same document where it is stated that: 'it is desirable on grounds of equity that no individuals or groups should be placed either in a more or less favorable position than other individuals or groups who desire to emigrate as a result of the action of the same government', that is German Government. Clearly, the effects of this provision would be to focus attention upon the problems of the involuntary emigrants from Sudetenland and to invite the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee to communicate suggestions for a solution of that particular problem which is only one small part of the problem as a whole.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that the circulation of this document to the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee and its publication may be deferred at least until the governments represented by officers of the Committee have been consulted. It would not be conducive to the success of my negotiation with the German Government were there to be an appearance of a difference of opinion among the governments having the leadership in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on the eve of my visit to Berlin. ["]]

[Rublee]
KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/847 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, October 26, 1938—5 p. m.

654. For Rublee. Your 1244, October 25, 8 p. m. We are reluctant to have the already extremely difficult task of the Committee further complicated. We nevertheless feel that the situation of the Sudeten refugees is such that they come fully within the spirit of this Government's initiative and therefore that the scope of activity of the Committee should be extended to cover them.

Inclusion of these people within the Committee's province naturally should not lead to any discrimination in their favor and this Government cannot countenance any such discrimination. This should be made clear to the British and assurance that they sincerely share our feelings on this point is essential before we can agree to the proposed extension of the Committee's activity. We would consider the Sudeten refugees to be fully assimilated to those involuntary emigrants now coming within the competence of the Committee and expect its full weight, including the active influence of Great Britain, to be used on behalf of the combined categories.

It is possible that the Sudeten refugees may contain a higher percentage of agriculturists or other types more easily assimilable into new economic and social structures than is the case in Austria and the old Reich, but we cannot countenance any discrimination between involuntary emigrants upon racial or religious grounds. We accordingly propose the following language for the suggested communication, beginning with the last sentence of the first paragraph.

"These involuntary emigrants are in precisely the same position as involuntary emigrants from Germany and the old Reich. It is desirable on the grounds of equity and humanity that no individuals or groups should be placed in either a more or less favorable position than other individuals or groups who are forced by the same causes to emigrate. It is therefore proposed that involuntary emigrants from the areas formerly included in the Czechoslovak State which have been transferred to Germany should be assimilated to other involuntary emigrants from Germany, including Austria, and should be regarded as coming within the scope of activity of the Intergovernmental Committee."

We consider the suggested words "action of the same Government" undesirable in view of the impending negotiations with that Government. The last paragraph of the suggested communication would remain the same.

We see no objection to a British official going to Czechoslovakia to investigate conditions there but we do not wish you or Pell to go.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/849: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, October 26, 1938—7 p. m.

655. [For Rublee.] Your 1245, October 26, 4 p. m. Your letter is approved. With respect to your second observation, we suggest that the procedure in ascertaining the numbers and types of Sudetens who must emigrate and in ascertaining possible opportunities for settlement be coordinated as closely as possible with that followed concerning the involuntary emigrants already coming within the Committee's competence.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/872

*Memorandum by the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee
(Winterton)*⁴⁵

Paragraph 8 of the Resolution adopted by the Evian meeting on July 14th defined the persons coming within the scope of the activity of the Inter-Governmental Committee as:—

(1) Persons who have not already left their country of origin (Germany including Austria), but who must emigrate on account of their political opinions, religious beliefs or racial origin, and

(2) Persons as defined in (1), who have already left their country of origin, but who have not yet established themselves permanently elsewhere.

The transfer of the Sudeten areas from Czechoslovakia to Germany has led to an extension of the problem of involuntary emigration from Germany. A number of persons are likely to wish to leave the transferred areas by reason of the treatment to which they are subjected on political, religious or racial grounds, while others have already taken temporary refuge in Czechoslovakia for a similar reason. Of these involuntary emigrants, those who are of German origin are in precisely the same position as involuntary emigrants from Germany and Austria.

It is desirable on grounds of equity that no individuals or groups should be placed either in a more or a less favourable position than

⁴⁵ Transmitted to the Department by the Assistant Director of the Intergovernmental Committee in his despatch of October 28 (received November 4), with statement that the memorandum was "circulated by the Secretary of the Intergovernmental Committee on October 26, 1938".

other individuals or groups who are forced by the same causes to emigrate.

It is therefore proposed that the involuntary emigrants of German origin from the areas formerly included in the Czechoslovak State and now transferred to Germany, should be assimilated to other involuntary emigrants from Germany or Austria and should be regarded as coming within the scope of the activity of the Inter-Governmental Committee.

The Director will circulate to the members of the Committee such particulars as he is able to obtain of the number and type of involuntary emigrants who have been or may be created by the transfer of the Sudeten areas to Germany, as well as of the conditions in which these persons are able to emigrate.

840.48 Refugees/853 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, October 27, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received October 27—5:50 p. m.]

1253. From Rublee. Your 643, October 20, 7 p. m.⁴⁶

1. I have worked out a plan to effect transfer from Germany of property of involuntary emigrants, the broad outlines of which are set forth below. I propose to discuss this plan as soon as possible with British Treasury officials who are independently engaged in a study of the problem with a view to preparation of a plan of their own. Accordingly, and in view of the fact that I may go to Berlin in the near future should the reply from the German Government be favorable, I would appreciate your views as to the plan. You will note that the plan assumes that its adoption will strongly tend to remove the existing boycott of German goods and resistance to their purchase by the public.

2. The central idea of the plan is that Germany and the involuntary emigrant should share the proceeds derived from an increase in German exports consequent upon the reversal of the boycott and political appeasement resulting from the settlement of the non-Aryan question in Germany. The emigrant's share will be used, first, to meet his immediate cash needs for emigration, and, secondly, to secure the service of dollar bonds of the German exchange issued to him in exchange for his wealth in Germany.

3. Specifically it is proposed that there be made available for involuntary emigration one-half of the proceeds derived from all German

⁴⁶ Not printed.

exports in excess of a "base figure" representing the current level of German exports now prevailing. Provision will have to be made in the definition of the "base figure" to take into account seasonal factors of German export trade on the basis of past experience, to offset fluctuations in the price level and also possibly to take into account fluctuations in the volume of world international trade. Likewise in the case where the increase in German exports yields not foreign exchange but offsetting merchandise imports, arrangements will have to be made for realizing the emigrant's share in foreign exchange by sale of such merchandise in world markets.

[4] (a) Preferably the Aryanization of non-Aryan property of potential emigrants would cease. Businesses and other property would be Aryanized only coincidentally with the individual holder's emigration. It is recognized, however, that German authorities may not agree to such procedure, and in that case it is suggested that the German Government issue its bonds against transfer of all non-Aryan property other than personal belongings. To the extent that bonds are owned by individuals within the Reich interest charges will be met in marks. They will be a direct obligation of the German Government and will be exchangeable for dollar bonds upon emigration of the owner. All bonds issued will be deposited with the Bank of International Settlements or other suitable international trustee.

5 (b) An initial contribution by Germany to the extent of 50 million pounds out of its present holdings of foreign exchange would be requested to facilitate the rapid emigration of 50,000 people. At the time of emigration the emigrant would receive compensation for his property in German Government bonds payable in dollars. At the same time an amount of bonds sufficient to meet the immediate requirements of emigration (limited to \$1000 per individual or \$5000 per family) would be retired by the German Government. While the German Government would receive an average of 5 reichsmarks for each dollar of bonds issued or exchanged for reichsmark bonds, the number of reichsmarks paid by an individual emigrant would vary depending upon his wealth, to the end that the less favorable rate obtained by the wealthy would provide funds to make possible the emigration of the poor. The German Government would thus realize a profit of 100% at an average conversion rate of 20 cents per reichsmark. However, it would be required at the same time to commit itself not to use such profit for the purpose of subsidizing exports.

6 (c) The dollar bonds will be a direct obligation of the German Government maturing in ten equal annual installments from the date of issue. Foreign exchange derived from 50% of the exports in excess of the "base figure" will be deposited with the trustee and used first, to provide the minimum requirement necessary (as indicated

above) to facilitate emigration, and, secondly, to secure the obligation of the German Government on its dollar bonds. An additional advantage to the German Government will lie in the provision that the bonds shall be non-negotiable. However, should an emigrant desire to realize upon his holdings he will be obligated to offer them first to the German Government, and only if unable to make an agreement for sale to them would he be permitted to sell his bonds to a buyer of his own selection.

7 (*d*) It would be desirable to form a consortium of bankers to discount short term paper secured by bonds payable out of foreign exchange derived from exports for the immediate requirements of emigration in order to enable emigration to flow evenly despite seasonal fluctuations in export business.

8. Consideration might be given, should Germany refuse to cooperate, to enforcing a plan by unified action on the part of (*a*) standstill creditors, by insisting that the 25% of foreign exchange derived from sale of tourist marks and only recently released to Germany again be withheld for emigration purposes, and (*b*) those countries which have an unfavorable trade balance with Germany by affording the emigrant the same protection as they have given their national and resident holders of German securities; i. e. insistence that a portion of the foreign exchange realized by the sale of German merchandise in their countries be held back to provide funds necessary for emigration.

First. You will note that the plan is based upon the premise that substantial amounts of emigrant wealth can only be transferred from Germany by an increase in its exports, the proceeds of which are to be shared by Germany and the emigrant.

Second. It is fundamental, if the plan is to have sufficient scope, that the "additional exports," the proceeds of which are to be shared, should include all exports in excess of a base figure defined with reference to the current volume of German exports. Other suggested methods for making the proceeds of additional exports available to emigrants, by permitting importers of German merchandise to pay partly in foreign exchange and partly in bonds purchased by the emigrant with his blocked marks and sold to the importer, could not produce sufficiently substantial results. Moreover additional exports of this sort would probably involve a special export sufficient to element [*sic*] which is objectionable. You will note that under the plan the German Government will be asked to agree not to use any of the mark profit which it realizes by the sale of bonds to the emigrant to subsidize exports.

Third. I feel that the increase in German exports upon which the plan is predicated will be a normal increase as stated in paragraph

1 of your No. 592 of August 27th to Paris. The plan contemplates an increase in exports within the framework of and without substantial modification of existing clearing and other agreements which now govern Germany's trade relations with other countries. It seems to me that such an increase will not in itself tend to divert the course of trade into artificial bilateral channels and in fact, might tend in the opposite direction. The increase in German exports to be anticipated, if a satisfactory solution of the problem of involuntary emigration can be reached, would be in trade with countries which formerly absorbed Germany's traditional exports specialties in large volume and might lead in the end to a resumption of more normal trade relations with such countries.

Fourth. I wish to emphasize moreover, that I do not contemplate, and that no one whom I have consulted in the preparation of the transfer plan which I am submitting to you contemplates, the extension of the Haavara principle to Germany's trade relations with other countries in connection with the transfer of emigrant wealth. Any such idea would be not only undesirable but impracticable.

Fifth. As you point out in your cables No. 592 of August 27 to Paris and No. 540 of September 19 it is to be anticipated that Germany will attempt to secure trade concessions from various countries participating in the work of the Evian Committee in connection with any arrangements made for transferring the wealth of involuntary emigrants from Germany via an increase in German exports. My position with respect to demands for such concessions will, in the first instance, be that the plan proposed by me will substantially benefit Germany as well as the involuntary emigrant and that I am not authorized to negotiate on a basis which would involve such concessions without further consultation with the various governments concerned. You have made it quite clear to me that any such concessions are completely out of the question in the case of the United States. It is, however, possible that other countries may be prepared to grant trade concessions to Germany in order to contribute to the success of a transfer plan for the benefit of involuntary emigrants which, in a measure, would tend to perpetuate and intensify the bilateral export character of the trade relations between Germany and such countries. In that event you may be assured that I will bear in mind the possible effect of such arrangements on the American trade agreement programme and will naturally keep you completely informed as to any developments in this connection.

Sixth. I note reports in the press that Germany is making an intensive drive for increased foreign trade and that Brinkmann⁴⁷ is

⁴⁷ Rudolf Brinkmann, State Secretary in the German Ministry of National Economy.

shortly to proceed to the United States to discuss trade relations between Germany and the United States. If there is any truth in these reports I should appreciate confirmation and your views as to what the scope of the discussions might be. I have been advised that Brinkmann would be sympathetic to negotiations with respect to involuntary emigration and through his knowledge of the subject and his relations to Goering would be specially helpful to us.

Seventh. It is of importance to me to have some general understanding of the nature and volume of Germany's export and import relations with the various countries with whom such relations are of importance to Germany and of the substance of the agreements under which such trade takes place. Through the courtesy of the Embassy here I have sufficient information as to Anglo-German trade relations and agreements. I should appreciate such material and advice as you can send me in this connection. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/853 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, October 29, 1938—3 p. m.

667. For Rublee. Your 1253, October 27, 7 p. m. The Department has given continuous thought to the question of the possible utilization of refugee property in Germany as an element in the Committee's problem of arranging migration, and a general joint conference with Treasury was held yesterday with particular regard to the plan transmitted in your 1253. A number of serious technical difficulties are evident. We are giving further consideration to all aspects of the matter and will send you within a few days a comprehensive discussion of the whole problem and certain new suggestions.

With reference to point 6 of your second section, while we have heard unofficially that Brinkmann is contemplating an early visit to this country, we understand that it would be for exploratory purposes, and in any event we are not prepared to enter into commercial negotiations with the German Government at this time.

With reference to point 7 of your second section, the Commercial Attaché at Berlin is in the best position to furnish comprehensive up-to-date information and we are instructing the Embassy there to furnish you such data as it can.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/866 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, November 2, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received November 2—2: 54 p. m.]

586. During the course of a talk with Von Weizsaecker I again raised the question of Rublee's visit and urged prompt and satisfactory answer. Von Weizsaecker said that he could not tell me when the German Government could answer. He was still waiting examination of the question by the Department of Finance and the Department of Economics. He had talked at length over the telephone with Ribbentrop in Munich and had explained in detail my presentation of the case. Ribbentrop was inclined to think "as Weizsaecker had thought at first" that there were disadvantages in connection with the visit but a decision could not be reached until the wishes of the interested departments had been ascertained.

The delay in this matter is another example of the difficulty of doing business with an absent government. The continuous and prolonged absence of the Chief of State and the Minister for Foreign Affairs means most dilatory action on all matters to which they are not giving their immediate attention.

I have notified British and French Embassies and repeated to London for Rublee.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/865 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State*⁴⁸

BERLIN, November 2, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received November 2—2: 14 p. m.]

587. Further reference to Rublee's visit. I lunched today with one of leading bankers of Berlin. He informed me in the strictest confidence and begged me to see that no leak occurred, that both Funk⁴⁹ and Goering⁵⁰ are convinced that Rublee's visit must be encouraged and that some kind of plan must be worked out with him. They see the great advantages to Germany of doing away with or mitigating this cause of international hatred. Goering, who is now in South Germany, intends to speak to Hitler on the subject. Their apprehension is Ribbentrop's attitude which they fear will be exercised against the plan.

⁴⁸ Substance transmitted to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom for Rublee in Department's telegram No. 676, November 3, 6 p. m.

⁴⁹ Walther Funk, German Minister of National Economy.

⁵⁰ Hermann Goering, German Minister for Aviation.

At the same luncheon Secretary of State Brinkmann told me that he was in hopes they could give me a favorable answer on this matter next week.

In view of extremely confidential nature of foregoing and the use of this code I am not repeating to London.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/868 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, November 3, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received November 3—11:46 a. m.]

1279. From Rublee.

1. The Foreign Office has been informed by the British Embassy at Berlin that economic and financial experts of the German Government have been put to work on a memorandum of a possible basis of discussion with me. This memorandum will be submitted to Goering, who will discuss it with Von Ribbentrop when a decision will be taken whether I will be received.

2. We have heard from a responsible German source here that Goering has the matter in hand, and that his final decision will be determined by the possibility of Germany obtaining economic and financial advantages in negotiation with the Intergovernmental Committee.

3. In the event that the German Government agrees to receive me, I should welcome an opportunity to confer with Geist⁶¹ in strictest confidence here before I go to Berlin. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/883 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, November 8, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received November 8—3:52 p. m.]

601. In the course of a call yesterday on Weizsaecker the British Chargé d'Affaires inquired about Rublee's visit and was told that ample time must be given the German Government to decide the matter. Weizsaecker stated that they did not want Rublee to go away without something but that it had not yet been possible to solve the financial problem which was the main difficulty. He said that it was utterly impossible at the present time to allow Jewish emigrants to convert

⁶¹ Raymond H. Geist, First Secretary of Embassy and Consul at Berlin.

their assets into foreign exchange and that the solution of letting them take their money out in the form of goods presented problems both to Germany and to the receiving countries.

Weizsaecker went on to say to the British Chargé that it did not appear that the Committee for Political Refugees was making any progress in inducing foreign countries to accept these emigrants and remarked (apparently with intention) that the Evian Conference smacked too much of Geneva.

I am somewhat apprehensive lest the present Polish-German negotiations regarding Polish Jews in Germany which are apparently not progressing well and the incident of the assault on the German Secretary in Paris by a Polish Jew⁵² may affect or delay the German Government's consideration of the matter of Rublee's visit.

Cipher text to London for Rublee.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/853 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, November 9, 1938—noon.

688. For Rublee. Your 1253, October 27, 7 p. m., and Department's 667, October 29, 3 p. m.

Section 1.

Before putting before you certain suggestions of a constructive character, the Department wishes first to make certain general observations connected with the plan outlined in your 1253 and other more or less similar suggestions.

1. The problem of getting the assets of involuntary emigrants out of Germany is, as we see it, secondary to the problem of getting the involuntary emigrants out and established elsewhere. In other words it is more important to make arrangements for the emigration and settlement of the largest possible number of refugees than it is to arrange for the transfer from Germany of large amounts of individual capital.

Nevertheless, the number of refugees certain countries will take apparently depends on the financial resources available to such refugees. It should be possible to find out from such countries the amount and form of financial resources required for or guaranteed by affidavit to each refugee, and, assuming such resources are made

⁵² Ernst vom Rath, Third Secretary of the German Embassy in France, was shot on November 7, 1938, by the minor son of a Polish Jewish family expelled from Germany. Vom Rath died November 9.

available, how many refugees will then be taken. In such case there will be known the amount of money needed in respect of each such group of refugees. Naturally it is hoped that the German Government will provide these resources, and this is what we understand the Committee is endeavoring to put through. Whatever the German Government may be willing to do to put at the disposal of the refugees funds arising from their possessions in Germany will of course assist in meeting this requirement. It is also true that the emigration and settlement of large numbers of refugees can be arranged through the system either of financial assistance from sources outside of Germany or of guaranteed support. This has been particularly true in regard to immigration into the United States, and it is believed that a similar system might be developed for immigration to other countries.

2. Responsibility for making available to the refugees sufficient funds or financial help to facilitate emigration should properly be met by three groups: (a) by the German Government, (b) by private individuals and private sympathetic groups outside of Germany, and (c) by the Governments of other countries if they are willing to give financial assistance as a matter of humanity or ultimate national interest. The two latter approaches might contemplate an obligation by refugees to repay financial assistance extended to them.

The Department believes that in any plan that is worked out it will be necessary to draw upon the responsibilities of all of these three groups to the greatest practical extent. The plans hitherto suggested, however, would appear—except to the extent that Germany made some immediate cash contribution in free exchange—to impose the whole obligation on the world's commercial markets. Funds would become available only as extra German exports were sold, and the responsibility for facilitating such extra exports would appear to be primarily placed either upon foreign merchants who might secure a profit therefrom or upon the refugees who might receive payment therefrom. This would mean in many markets newly created competition of German products and thus producers in other countries of the products sold competitively by Germany would be called upon to bear the brunt of the financial facilitation of refugee movements. Only in some places and to a limited extent could this be avoided.

3. Such plans in operation might well augment anti-Semitic feeling in other countries. Enlargement of the market for German products as an instrument providing funds for facilitating refugee emigration might well create the impression—even though not based on fair reasoning or controlled feeling—that Jews were responsible for bringing into existence new and unfair competition. These effects are all the more possible because of the likelihood that Germany would limit the utilization of the refugee marks to promote the sale of products that did not have an easy sale by ordinary methods.

4. The Treasury Department believes that the contraction by any government of obligations in a foreign currency is likely to give rise to serious difficulties in meeting service on the obligation. It is, therefore, desired to avoid, if possible, the issuance by the German Government of dollar obligations.

5. If a plan of this type on a large scale is made the primary instrument whereby the Intergovernmental Committee is enabled successfully to carry out its task it would improve the ability of the German Government to insist upon the acceptance of its general trading arrangements. Foreign governments might find it difficult to create effective protection against German trade based on such arrangements when unconnected with the refugee situation; for example, other groups, such as holders of German bonds or of blocked funds, might press for payment by means of so-called extra exports from Germany.

6. The Department does not understand that your suggestion is intended to involve the promotion of the additional exports, from which payments would be made, by means of special low-priced marks. Your statement that "under the plan the German Government will be asked to agree not to use any of the mark profit which it realizes by the sale of bonds to the emigrant to subsidize exports" would not, however, preclude this possibility. Previous to June 1936, for example, German exports to the United States were subsidized both by profits derived from bond and scrip procedures and by the use of special marks which sold at rates substantially below the rate for the reichsmark. Underpriced marks as a means of facilitating additional exports would contravene American legislation.

Section 2.

Fully realizing the difficulties, and after the most careful consideration of the whole problem, we suggest the following approach:

(1) The countries of settlement should be asked to state the number of immigrants they are prepared to accept, on assumed bases of financial resources or guaranteed support, as, for instance, how many families each having \$1,000, et cetera, they will accept. (The figure is illustrative only).

(2) Arrangements should be sought with the German Government whereby each emigrant will be permitted to take with him a guaranteed minimum amount of his property in foreign exchange. That minimum will inevitably be small but should be set as high as possible.

(3) Arrangements should be sought with the German Government, under which, with the consent of the emigrant, his remaining assets in Germany would be converted into marks or some sort of mark obligations for deposit with the Bank of International Settlements or other suitable long-term repository, and under which the German Government would undertake to permit the conversion of these marks into foreign currencies over a period of time through a mechanism announced in advance which might involve the use of registered marks or such other devices as may be developed.

(4) Taking into account whatever amount the German Government may permit individual emigrants to take with them, private charitable and financial organizations, and perhaps outside governments, would then be asked through appropriate channels to furnish sufficient funds to meet the requirements of the countries of settlement for the largest possible number of involuntary emigrants. Such financing might include: (a) outright donations; (b) settlement loans to individuals or groups; (c) purchase of mark deposits, and, (d) loans upon the mark deposits.

The Department has been impressed with the extent to which the use of registered and travel marks has enabled the German Government to make payments on debts and for other purposes. It is believed now that owing to the reduction of the Standstill credits and other obligations this type of mark might afford a very substantial amount that could be used for facilitating emigration without most of the attendant difficulties that have been dwelt on above.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/883 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany (Wilson)

WASHINGTON, November 11, 1938—noon.

200. Your 601, November 8, 6 p. m. You may wish to take a suitable occasion informally to advise Weizsaecker that it will be exceedingly difficult for the Committee to make progress in arranging for the settlement elsewhere of substantial numbers of refugees until such time as arrangements can be made for each emigrant to take with him a minimum amount of capital sufficient at least to cover his establishment in the country of settlement and his integration into a new economy.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/890 : Telegram (part air)

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, November 11, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received November 12—8:20 a. m.]

611. I talked yesterday with a high official who told me that it is impossible to predict the outcome of the present "wave of Jew hatred". He said it might result in a decision to accelerate the "export" of Jews and a willingness to meet the views of the Intergovernmental Committee for Political Refugees as a practical method of facilitating emigration. On the other hand the temper and decision might be to proceed with new anti-Jewish measures on a purely internal basis rejecting any consultation with other countries regardless of how it

might affect emigration. He doubted that any answer would be made with regard to Rublee's visit or that the High Party Command would commit itself to a decision or final plans on the Jewish question for several weeks yet.

In conversations yesterday Woermann, Undersecretary of State at the Foreign Office, told Heath⁵³ that the matter of Rublee's trip was still under study but that he was inclined to think that the German Government did not wish to discuss the Jewish problem with anyone at this time.

In all conversations on this subject, and they have been numerous, I have emphasized invariably the advantages to Germany itself of discussing these matters with Rublee before taking any decision but have noticed a growing tendency among German officials to consider that Germany should make its own decision and plan without conference with any outside person. Woermann said further that the Foreign Office had no information of a rumored police order expelling all foreign Jews from Germany and did not believe that such an order would be issued. The United Press Bureau here states however that it hears on "good authority" that such a decree is being given some consideration in Munich.

Cipher text to London for Rublee.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/896 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, November 14, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received November 14—5:30 p. m.]

1311. From Rublee.

(1) The attack on the Jewish community in Germany on the one hand and the indifference of the participating governments to the fate of the victims on the other has brought the affairs of the Intergovernmental Committee to a critical stage where, in our opinion, immediate action is required if the President's initiative is to lead to a positive result.

(2) I believe that, as a first step, the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee should meet before the end of this week with me and my assistants and that an announcement of the fact that this meeting will take place should be made forthwith to the press. This meeting will be an indication to the German Government that its present activity is not a matter of complete indifference to the govern-

⁵³ Donald R. Heath, First Secretary of Embassy in Germany.

ments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee. It will, at the same time, furnish me with an opportunity to report and formulate recommendations regarding (a) the contributions of the countries of refuge and settlement; (b) the negotiation with Germany; (c) the problem of the transfer of the property of involuntary emigrants, and (d) the future of the Committee.

(3) With regard to the countries of refuge, that is, the countries surrounding Germany, I shall report that the illegal crossing of frontiers by refugees has such proportions that the local authorities of these countries can no longer cope effectively with the situation. The consequence is that they have been obliged to ship refugees back to Germany indiscriminately and with a disregard of the probable consequences to the unfortunate people, many of whom have been immediately thrust into prison camps. I shall report that the Belgian and Dutch authorities, at my request, abated this practice of *refoulement* somewhat on the understanding that I was about to go to Berlin, but that, if my visit to Germany fails to materialize, they will be obliged to resume *refoulement* and throw back into Germany many of the people whom they are now holding in special camps.

(4) As regards the countries of final settlement, I shall report that, with the exception of the United States, which has maintained its quota, and the British Isles, which are admitting immigrants at a current months rate equal to the rate immigrants are being admitted to the United States, doors have been systematically closed everywhere to involuntary emigrants since the meeting at Evian. I shall report that I have discussed the possibilities of immigration with representatives of the Latin American Republics, with the commissioners representing the British Dominions, with spokesmen for the colonial empires, and have met with a negative response. New laws and decrees are going into effect each week which render the position of the involuntary emigrant more difficult. The process of infiltration is wholly arrested in many places where it was active previously. New places of settlement have not been opened up, with certain exceptions so limited as not to be worthy of being taken into consideration. As an example, I might cite the fact that after negotiation the British Colonial Secretary last week agreed that the Empire could take 25 settlers, in Kenya, and that possibly the families of these people might be permitted to follow at a later date.

(5) I shall report that the only constructive indication I have received is that some of the governments of the countries of settlement might be willing to reconsider the situation should I be successful in persuading the German Government to permit the involuntary emigrants to leave with substantial amount of property. In other

words, these governments might be willing to consider the case of propertied settlers where they will not even discuss the case of indigent refugees.

(6) I shall then outline the approach which has been made to the German Government and report the latest information which seems to be that my chances of being received are receding although the door has by no means been finally shut.

(7) I shall emphasize once again that the crux of the negotiation with the highest consideration is the question of transfer and report the efforts which I have made to formulate and discuss with leading governments a plan which might be acceptable both to the German Government and to the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee.

(8) I shall impress on the officers of the Committee the importance of pressing the German Government for a definite "yes" or "no" to the request that I be received, since, if weeks are permitted to go by without a definite answer from the German Government, the work of the Committee will stagnate.

(9) I shall point out that if the answer of the German Government is finally in the negative, a method will have to be found to continue the Intergovernmental Committee in some form which is complementary to, and not a duplication of, the League High Commission, possibly in line with the British suggestion that the Intergovernmental Committee be constituted into an advisory body to the Commission. It must be obvious that if there is no negotiation with Germany, continuance of this office cannot be justified. The problem then will be one of maintaining the process of infiltration wherever small streams are permitted to trickle, and this function can best be performed by the private organizations in conjunction with the League Commission which is organized and equipped for the purpose.

(10) In conclusion, I shall reiterate my conviction that there can be no real appeasement as long as large numbers of people are kept in fear of their lives and uncertainty as to their fates, and urge upon the Governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee, in the interest of peace, a greater degree of cooperation in the solution of our problem.

For your information, the public reaction in Great Britain to the recent attack on the Jews in Germany is deep and widespread. For the first time since my arrival in London, I feel that recognition is finding its way in high political quarters that the mistreatment by Germany of a half million oppressed people is a definite obstacle to general appeasement in Europe. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/899 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, November 15, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received November 15—3 p. m.]

1316. From Rublee. Pell was asked to discuss the present situation of the Intergovernmental Committee at the Foreign Office today. It was felt that while the possibility of my going to Germany was not absolutely precluded the chances that I would be received in Berlin were receding and the outlook for a successful negotiation with the German Government was, to say the least, less encouraging. The British Government would, of course, spare no effort to persuade the German Government to receive me, but the possibility would have to be definitely envisaged from this moment that there would be no negotiation with Germany, and that, as a consequence, some decision would have to be taken fairly promptly with regard to the future of the Intergovernmental Committee and the Director's office.

It was made plain that the British would leave the initiative as to the future of the Committee to the United States. It was explained that the Committee was set up at the request of President Roosevelt, that the Director's office was organized as a result of the American effort at Evian, and that therefore the British would not presume to offer suggestions as to what the future of the Committee would be. For instance, although the British would welcome the constitution of the Intergovernmental Committee as an advisory body to the League Commission, they would not propose this solution in any formal manner and would await suggestions from the United States.

It was believed that whatever was done should be done gradually. For instance, if it became clear that the German Government would not receive me and that as a consequence a negotiation with Germany was precluded, I might go home on personal business and the work of the Director's office might gradually be transferred to the Secretary of the Committee who is an official of the Foreign Office. On the other hand, if our Government should wish to continue the Director's office, the British would be most agreeable to maintaining the present collaboration and assisting in negotiations with the countries of settlement, notably the Governments of Latin America. There was a field of activity there, although clearly little could be done through the representatives of these countries in London, and negotiations would have to be engaged in on the spot.

Pell said he had no authority to propose a meeting of the officers of the Committee but wondered whether a meeting might not be a reminder to the German Government that the Committee was still

in existence and might not furnish an opportunity for an airing of the present situation of the Committee. Pell had the impression that this idea was agreeable to the British and was told that it would be carefully considered and possibly an answer would be given to me at a meeting which has been arranged with Winterton tonight. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/900 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Germany (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, November 15, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received November 15—5:22 p. m.]

620. I had requested an interview with Ribbentrop in order to talk to him about the Rublee matter before my intended leave. Being in town today and hearing of my more immediate departure he fixed an appointment this afternoon.

I told him that I had presented this matter as had the French and British Embassies some weeks ago to which no definite reply had been given. Ribbentrop said that he was not thoroughly familiar with the affair and asked me to state it. I did so with detail and emphasis.

Ribbentrop then said that the German Government "obviously" could not treat with an unofficial person the representative of a Committee which they had not recognized on matters affecting German internal affairs, any more than the German Government could treat with any other government on the internal Jewish problem. He said, however, that from Germany's point of view there were advantages in the expedition of emigration, that this question had interest to both sides and the idea occurred to him that unofficial persons might explore this matter with Rublee perhaps in Holland and go into the question from the ground up. He wanted to reflect on this and will take the matter under advisement when he returns from Vom Rath's funeral in Dusseldorf at the end of the week.

He then asked me whether Rublee was a Jew. I replied certainly not, his ancestors were French Huguenots. He then inquired about Rublee's standing and I described him as a prominent lawyer of Washington who had undertaken a task at the request of the Committee, that he thought was useful.

In closing the interview Ribbentrop deplored the amount of hatred in the world and the type of things that were sent by newspapermen. I replied that as far as the American correspondents here were concerned they had sent only what they had seen. He shook hands and terminated the interview.

Throughout the discussion his attitude while polite was extremely reserved and he avoided any mention of the general situation and the relations between our two countries.

Repeated to London for Rublee.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/896 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, November 16, 1938—noon.

705. For Rublee. Your 1311, November 14, 6 p. m. After consultation with Mr. Myron Taylor we feel that to call a meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee at this juncture would be unwise. As you know, we have ordered Hugh Wilson back to this country for report and consultation, and feel that a delay on your part of a week or 10 days would be amply justified in order that we have the benefit of his report here.

In general, the nature of your report is approved with the exception of point 9, which we feel strongly should not be touched upon. We realize that the British are constantly pressing to have the Committee made an auxiliary of the League High Commission and that they are no doubt saying that this will be necessary if the negotiations with Germany fail. Our opposition to such a development has not lessened. Furthermore, we feel it would be bad tactics to discuss what should transpire in the event of a German refusal to receive you, unless and until such refusal has in fact been received.

In general we envisage procedure along the following lines:

1. Continuing pressure upon the Germans for an early "yes or no" reply concerning your visit.

2. Concurrent and intensified pressure upon the countries of settlement for specific commitments on a contingent basis (Department's 688, Section 2, point (1)). The problem of financing this settlement and providing each settler with a reasonable minimum of capital is, we are convinced, simpler than finding opportunities for settlement. If the opportunities can be found we have reason to believe that funds can be found with comparative ease. The reaction in Great Britain to the latest developments in Germany should be of assistance in inducing the British to bring pressure on the Dominions and colonies and perhaps other Governments. Parenthetically, Mr. Taylor has had a fairly hopeful talk with Prime Minister MacKenzie King.⁵⁴ We are prepared to bring diplomatic pressure upon the Governments of this hemisphere.

3. If the German reply is a refusal to receive you or if the negotiations in Berlin are not fruitful, and we are not optimistic concerning

⁵⁴ Mr. Taylor's interview with the Canadian Prime Minister took place on November 6, in New York.

them, the problem will clearly become one of settlement through private financing. At this point the work of the Committee may well become more rather than less important in that it will be an essential focal point both for pressure upon the countries of settlement and for a fund-raising campaign.

It is suggested that in the meantime you give immediate consideration to a specific public appeal to the countries of settlement which the British and ourselves, in our respective spheres, can reinforce diplomatically.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/904 : Telegram

The Chargé in the Netherlands (Benton) to the Secretary of State

THE HAGUE, November 16, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received November 16—3:50 p. m.]

145. In the course of conversation this afternoon the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me that a few days ago the Netherlands Government had approached the Governments of Great Britain, Belgium, France, Switzerland and Denmark in order to ascertain their views with regard to possible collective relief for Jewish refugees from Germany. He said Belgium and Denmark had already replied regretting their inability to admit further refugees of that category and a reply from Switzerland in a similar sense was expected; the remaining countries have not yet answered.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs also said that during the past few days the Dutch frontier authorities had upon instructions been especially lenient in their treatment of Jewish refugees from Germany, primarily from the border regions, and that as a result quite a number had been admitted into the Netherlands. At the same time he made it clear that the Jewish problem in this country was becoming a serious one and that unless some system of collective relief insuring that the Netherlands would not be permanently saddled with Jewish refugees could be agreed upon, his Government would have no alternative but to consider closing its doors entirely to Jewish refugees from Germany.

BENTON

840.48 Refugees/908a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, November 16, 1938—7 p. m.

707. For Rublee. Department's 705, November 16, noon, and your 1320 November 16, 4 p. m.⁵⁵ In view of the announcement to the press,

⁵⁵ Latter not printed.

we suggest that the meeting be called for November 28 or 29. We also suggest that both the Brazilian and the Argentine be invited to attend.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/911 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, November 17, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received November 17—12:35 p. m.]

1325. From Rublee. I had a long conversation with Winterton this morning and am to have a further meeting with Winterton and MacDonald ⁵⁶ this afternoon.

1. Winterton said that events had been moving very rapidly in the last few days with respect to an Anglo-American plan for settling and financing the settlement of involuntary emigrants. He seemed to assume that I was conversant with the details of the plan and I let him assume this although in fact I only know what I have read in the newspapers. In any event he said that the details would be formally communicated to me at the meeting this evening, although he was able to say at this point that great progress had been made. Specifically he mentioned the fact that British Guiana would probably be opened to settlement though of course much would depend upon the financing of the immigrants who would be sent to that undeveloped country. He hoped that our Government would be in a position to make a substantial contribution and announce this contribution very shortly.

2. He was agreeable to holding the meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee on November 28 and 29. In anticipation of the meeting he would invite the Argentine and Brazilian Ambassadors to meet with him and to serve as vice chairmen. This meeting will be carefully prepared by the Foreign Office and it was hoped that the difficulty with regard to the Latin American vice chairmanship would in this way be finally overcome.

3. Winterton felt that the agenda of the meeting should be carefully prepared and said that he would welcome any suggestions in this respect which we might wish to make.

4. With regard to the negotiations with Germany, the indications were that a meeting of experts might now be arranged in some neutral place where the question of transfer might be discussed and the Germans given some indication of the facilities at the command of the Committee for the settlement of refugees. Winterton said that the

⁵⁶Malcolm MacDonald, British Secretary of State for the Colonies.

British Government would be willing to assign to me for the period of the technical discussions an expert from the British Treasury in the same capacity as Pell, this would preserve the international character of the Committee and give me the necessary technical assistance. In general it was the British view that we should attempt to elicit proposals from the Germans rather than make proposals to the Germans. I said I thoroughly agreed with this procedure and that I had put forward certain ideas merely in order to discover what the pitfalls were, from the standpoint of the British and American Governments, which I should avoid.

5. Winterton said that he felt that when the British Government had announced its contribution in conjunction with the contribution that the United States would make, a special effort should be directed by both Governments towards breaking the log jam with the Latin American Governments. He thought that it might be necessary for the diplomatic missions of both Governments to support any effort which we might make here and that the first step might be taken at the meeting of officers of the Committee.

6. I reported the fact to Winterton that Mr. Taylor had had a conversation with MacKenzie King. He said that he had been talking to Massey⁵⁷ about this matter, and in order that wires might not be crossed he would appreciate being informed in confidence of the nature of Mr. Taylor's conversation.

7. With respect to a public statement or appeal to the countries of settlement mentioned in the last paragraph of your 705, November 16, noon, Winterton mentioned the fact that he had been invited to make a broadcast to the United States in the near future. He would make this in the form of a statement and appeal which could be released to the press and sent to Latin America. It seemed to him that this might serve the purpose which you have in mind.

8. I shall telegraph immediately the results of the conversation with Winterton and MacDonald this afternoon. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/913 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, November 17, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received November 17—2 p. m.]

1326. From Rublee. The meeting was held this evening with MacDonald, Winterton, Sir John Schuckburgh and other officials of the Colonial Office.

⁵⁷ Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom.

MacDonald said that a circular had been addressed to various Colonial governors inquiring as to the territory and the living conditions in each respective territory where involuntary emigrants from Germany might be settled. The governors have been asked to report before Tuesday⁵⁸ when the Prime Minister is expected to make a statement in the House of Commons. The British Government, he said, appreciated the seriousness of the situation and would do everything in its power to facilitate the task of the Intergovernmental Committee.

There was then some discussion of the financing of the emigration and it was considered that while some money would have to come from private Jewish sources the main financing would have to be done through the transfer of the property of involuntary emigrants from Germany.

I thanked MacDonald for the evidence his Department was giving of leadership in this matter and said that I was hopeful that if the British Empire would make a contribution others could be persuaded to follow. MacDonald and Winterton agreed and expressed hope that our Government would do everything in its power now to persuade the Latin American countries to adopt a less negative attitude and make some real contribution. [Ruble.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/911½

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State
(Welles)*

[WASHINGTON,] November 17, 1938.

The British Ambassador called to see me this morning. Sir Ronald Lindsay stated that he came with a formal communication from his Government in connection with the refugee question. He said that the British Government desired the Government of the United States to know that it would be willing to relinquish a portion of the immigration quota to which Great Britain was entitled under existing United States legislation in order that the remainder of its quota might be utilized for the purpose of permitting German refugees to enter the United States. The Ambassador said very frankly that he did not believe that this instruction had been considered by the British Cabinet or was other than a *démarche* on the part of the British Foreign Office alone and that it seemed to him in the nature of an offer by his own Government of something which the British Government did not control.

I told the Ambassador that of course this proposal would have to be laid before the President and that consequently I could only make

⁵⁸ November 22.

a tentative and entirely personal reply. I said that the quotas granted by the Congress under our existing law were not the free property of the nations to whom they were granted, nor could the terms of the law be modified because of some other government's willingness to modify or to relinquish the quotas which might be granted to its nationals by this law. I said that consequently it seemed to me that there were insuperable obstacles from the strictly legal aspect and I further thought that the Ambassador would understand that there were likewise objections from the standpoint of policy. I reminded the Ambassador that the President had officially stated once more only two days ago⁵⁹ that there was no intention on the part of this Government to increase the quota already established for German nationals. I added that it was my very strong impression that the responsible leaders among American Jews would be the first to urge that no change in the present quota for German Jews be made.

The Ambassador seemed very much preoccupied with the message which he was instructed to communicate to this Government and asked if I really thought it necessary to bring this to the President's attention. I said that I did not see that the Secretary or I could avoid laying this matter before the President. The Ambassador said that in any event he would see to it that no publicity was given to the suggestion made.

The Ambassador then went on to say that he had been very much disturbed by newspaper reports during the past two days of plans which it was alleged Ambassador Kennedy had presented to the British Government for the solution of the refugee question. He said that he had been informed by his Foreign Office that Mr. Kennedy had had several conversations with the British authorities during recent days with regard to the refugee matter and that Mr. Kennedy had stated that Anglo-American relations would be bound to be prejudiced by this flare-up in the refugee question because of the fact that the feeling which was created in the United States against the treatment accorded Jews and Catholics in Germany would be so intense as to provoke even more vehement and widespread criticism in America against the policy of appeasement pursued by Mr. Chamberlain. The Ambassador said that he himself feared that such widespread publicity of the alleged plan presented by Mr. Kennedy would give the general impression in the United States that some rabbit was going to be produced out of a hat and that when it was subsequently found that there was no immediate and all-embracing solution found for this problem, resentment would be provoked against the British Government.

⁵⁹ Press conference, November 15.

I told the Ambassador that if Mr. Kennedy had any plan he had not reported it to us and that as a matter of fact, the only telegram we had received from Mr. Kennedy on this subject was a very brief message received this morning⁶⁰ reporting that the British Minister of Colonies had stated that the British Government on November 21 or 22 would make some public statement as to what it was able to do with regard to the placing of refugees in territory under the sovereignty of the British Empire after consultation with the heads of the overseas dominions. I said further than that, this Government had not sent any instructions to Mr. Kennedy in the matter, nor had it instructed him to present any plan. I reminded the Ambassador that the machinery which had been set up in London as the outgrowth of the Evian Conference, namely, the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees, on which this Government as well as the British Government and many other governments were represented, was believed by the United States to be the proper agency for the working out of plans of this character. I told the Ambassador that only yesterday the President had requested Mr. Myron Taylor, our representative on the Committee, to return as soon as possible to London in order to try and expedite the formulation of concrete and specific plans. I told the Ambassador that one of the greatest difficulties, if not the chief obstacle, in the formulation of such a plan had been the failure of the British Government so far to announce what portions of its dominions or colonies would be available for the settlement of refugees and that if such announcement or decision could only soon be made, if it proved to be of a satisfactory nature, it would undoubtedly do more than anything else to facilitate a speedy start towards the ultimate solution of the major problems.

The Ambassador said that he was quite familiar with this fact but that, of course, his Government had had just as much difficulty in convincing the British colonies and dominions of the need to agree to such plans as we ourselves would be faced with if we had to convince the authorities of the States of Nevada or Montana of the desirability of permitting part of their territory to be occupied by refugees. He stated, however, that his Government was now prepared to make a practical contribution, and he discussed with me at some length the territories which might be considered. He mentioned Northern Rhodesia, Kenya Colony, and British Guiana. I mentioned that I knew that Mr. Taylor had had a satisfactory conversation with Mr. MacKenzie King a little while ago but that I was not yet advised of the details of that conversation.

⁶⁰ The reference is apparently to telegram No. 1326, *supra*.

840.48 Refugees/917 : Telegram

The Minister in Honduras (Erwin) to the Secretary of State

TEGUCIGALPA, November 18, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received 2:52 p. m.]

30. The Honduran Government has received direct inquiry from its Consul at Praha as to its policy on Jewish immigration question, whether they will receive immediately Jewish families now being evicted from European countries and how many. Honduras wishes to make its policy conform to that of the United States and other Central American countries. I am making inquiry of American Legations in other Central American countries. The Honduran Government will appreciate immediate information as to United States policy.

ERWIN

840.48 Refugees/929a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, November 18, 1938.

710. For Rublee. The Secretary today made the following announcement at his press conference:

"The President has asked Mr. Myron Taylor to go again to London as the representative of the Government of the United States to meet with his colleagues of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees in the near future. Mr. Taylor plans to sail on November 26.

The developments of the last few days in Germany have redoubled the urgency of finding new homes for hundreds of thousands of persons. This Government is already granting admission to these unfortunates to the full extent permitted by law. I am confident that these latest developments have brought home to those in authority in many other governments a vivid realization of the need for finding a solution of this problem, which can only be solved by all governments actively participating in the search for its solution.

The Director of the Intergovernmental Committee, Mr. George Rublee, has for some time been prepared to go to Berlin in an attempt to work out with the competent authorities of the German Government practical measures for the solution of the problems involved. Although the German Government was advised some weeks ago by the diplomatic representatives in Berlin of several of the members of the Intergovernmental Committee that Mr. Rublee was prepared to discuss these questions at the convenience of the German Government, no definite reply has yet been received."

HULL

840.48 Refugees/921a : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, November 18, 1938—7 p. m.

713. For Rublee. Department's 710, November 18. In view of the urgent need for action to meet the situation created by last week's developments in Germany, we feel strongly that a full meeting of the Committee rather than a meeting of its officers should be called. The President has accordingly asked Mr. Taylor to go to London for such a meeting. Mr. Taylor's departure on November 26 will enable him to receive the benefit of Ambassador Wilson's views before he sails. He will reach London December 1, and we suggest that the meeting be called for December 6, 7 or 8.

In the meanwhile we will address a strong appeal to all of the American Governments represented on the Committee, requesting them to be prepared to make specific statements at the meeting of the numbers of involuntary emigrants they are prepared to accept. In this connection we understand that all the American Republics except Paraguay, El Salvador and Costa Rica are members. Is this correct? We would appreciate being advised at the earliest possible moment of the nature of the commitment which the British, and if possible the French, are prepared to make.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/919 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary
of State*

LONDON, November 19, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received November 19—10:15 a. m.]

1334. From Rublee. Your rush number 710, November 18. Pell handed a copy of your announcement with regard to Mr. Taylor's visit to London to the Foreign Office last night, and discussed the substance of your 713, November 18, 7 p. m., this morning.

1. The Foreign Office wishes to do whatever will be agreeable to us, but it pointed out that the invitations for the meeting of officers on November 28 have already been communicated to the French and Dutch Governments. Furthermore, the press has been told that the meeting will take place in the next fortnight and a statement to that effect has been made in Parliament. Winterton has engagements out of London throughout the first week in December so that a postponement would mean that the meeting of the officers could

not be held until the second week in December, which would be an inordinately long delay.

The suggestion is made that the meeting of the officers take place as scheduled on November 28 for the purpose of considering whether it would be advisable at this time to hold a full meeting of the Committee. If it was agreed that a full meeting should be held, it would take place during the second week in December, after Mr. Taylor's arrival.

Some hesitation was expressed with regard to the proposal to hold a full meeting of the Committee. It was felt that unless assurances could be obtained in advance that the representatives of the countries of settlement would do more at the meeting than repeat the statements which they made at Evian, or maintain a discreet silence as they did at the London meeting in August, it would have an unfortunate effect. Moreover, certain delegates might be tempted to make statements critical of Germany which would end all possibility of negotiations with the German Government. In any event, the whole situation will be canvassed and a more definite reply will be given early next week.

2. With regard to a British commitment in respect to numbers which the British Empire will be willing to receive, it was said that the replies from the various colonial governors will probably be received by Monday and that the Prime Minister would indicate in his statement to the House of Commons what the nature of the British commitment may be.

3. Since the meeting of the officers of the Committee in August the French Government has not even acknowledged communications from this office or from the Secretary of the Committee. The British have made inquiries at the French Foreign Office which says that it has not heard from Berenger since the meeting in August and has no knowledge on this Committee or its work, with the exception of the request which was made through American Embassy at Paris that the French Ambassador at Berlin should join in the *démarche* to the German Government. The French Government has not made its financial contribution to the Committee and, according to indications which the British have received, has taken no steps to prepare to make its contribution.

4. Regarding the Latin American Republics, the Secretary of the Committee is uncertain as to the present status of Haiti and Nicaragua in addition to the three republics mentioned by you. These governments had no representatives at the London meeting and have not replied to any communications addressed to them by the Secretary. [Ruble.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/917: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Honduras (Erwin)

WASHINGTON, November 19, 1938—3 p. m.

26. Your 30, November 18, 11 a. m. Please advise the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the interest of his Government in the refugee problem and his desire that Honduran policy shall conform to that of the United States is greatly appreciated. You should continue along the following lines:

The United States is now admitting from Germany approximately 27,000 persons per annum, without regard to race or religious belief, the maximum number permitted by law. It is at the same time considering what other possible contribution it can make to the solution of this problem, which the latest wave of persecution in Germany has made urgent in the extreme. It is hoped that the Government of Honduras will actively consider on broad humanitarian lines what contribution it can make to a solution.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/952

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs (Moffat)

[WASHINGTON,] November 19, 1938.

The Polish Ambassador called this morning by reference from Mr. Messersmith. He said that he had received definite instructions to approach the American Government and asked them to advocate the inclusion of Poland in the Intergovernmental Committee in London. He repeated many times and in many ways that Poland believed that the Committee, by limiting its activities to refugees from Germany, was in fact putting a premium on the mistreatment of the Jews. He feared that unless some gesture were made to Poland to show that its problems were being dealt with on a parity with Germany there might be many anti-Semitic outbursts in Poland. I explained to the Ambassador that the inclusion of Poland in the Intergovernmental Committee would change its status completely in that the members at present were all potentially receiving countries whereas Poland was a sending country. I would naturally refer his request to Mr. Hull and Mr. Welles but I had seen no disposition at present to favor a change of the fundamental nature which he advocated.

The Ambassador then said that he was going to get in touch with Mr. Taylor before he sailed. I told him that as it happened Mr. Taylor had telephoned me about an hour before the Ambassador came in. Mr. Taylor had seen the Polish Consul General in New York.

Mr. Taylor's point of view was that it would be a great mistake for Poland at this time to raise the questions mentioned; if she did so she might seriously complicate the work of the Committee and make more difficult an extension of its functions.

The Ambassador again reiterated that it was a frightfully urgent matter and that we really should do something to meet Poland's point of view. I told him that we were faced with an acute situation and that the acute situation must be dealt with before we came to discussing a more chronic situation.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

840.48 Refugees/940 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, November 22, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received November 22—6:40 a. m.]

1344. From Rublee. The British have now accepted the principle of a full meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee. They propose Monday December 12 and Tuesday December 13 as the dates for the meeting but hope that the dates may be kept confidential in view of the fact that Berenger and Andreae⁶¹ and the Latin American Vice Chairmen still must accept the plan. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/955a : Circular telegram

*The Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions in the American Republics*⁶²

WASHINGTON, November 22, 1938—noon.

Department's circular, July 19, 5 p. m. You will please obtain an early interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and leave with him a memorandum concerning the present situation with respect to political refugees in Europe. You should state that you would appreciate having the comment of the Government to which you are accredited at the earliest convenient moment in order that you may inform your Government thereof. Please report by telegram

⁶¹ W. C. Beucker Andreae, head of the legal section of the Netherland Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

⁶² i. e., Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The text was sent to Mr. Rublee for his information in Department's telegram No. 720, November 23, 6 p. m.

upon the results of your interview and telegraph any subsequent reply received from the Foreign Minister. The text of the memorandum which you are to present follows:

“1. Owing to the urgency arising from the latest developments affecting political refugees in Europe, the President of the United States has asked Mr. Myron Taylor, the representative of the United States on the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees, to go again to London to attend a full meeting of that Committee which is expected to be called in mid-December. The Government of the United States expresses the earnest hope that your Excellency's Government will find it possible to be represented at the December meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee and will be prepared to take an effective part in that meeting.

2. It is hoped that at the time of the December meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees the British and a number of other governments will be in a position to make public statements concerning the places which those governments will make available for the settlement of involuntary emigrants and the number of such emigrants that they are prepared to take.

3. One of the principal points to be considered at the meeting of the Committee will be measures to insure that these unfortunate and involuntary emigrants will not be a financial burden on the domestic economies of the countries of settlement. The Government of the United States is of the opinion that there are few if any countries which could not advantageously accept substantial numbers of these people. It is rather to be anticipated that absorption of the special skills, intellect and energy of these people, especially if they bring with them a reasonable, if limited amount of new capital, would be of definite benefit to the receiving country through the development of new fields of activity.

4. The Government of the United States is prepared to make a specific statement as to the number of involuntary emigrants which it can accept, and it sincerely hopes that the governments of the other American republics will find it possible to make similar statements. It is, of course, understood that no country will be asked or expected to accept a larger number of emigrants than is permitted by its existing laws and regulations. However, it is hoped that, with this limitation, all of the governments of the American continent will be in a position to make a specific and generous statement which will reflect the warm human sympathy which all of our peoples must feel for the tragic situation of their fellow men and women.

5. In connection with the possible public statements referred to in paragraph 4 of this memorandum, the Government of the United States considers it pertinent to point out that this appeal is made on broad humanitarian grounds and that those who are affected, regardless of race or religious belief, have not been free to think their own thoughts, to express their own feelings or to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. The republics of this hemisphere, which were founded in defense of essential human liberties, surely cannot but view with sympathy the opportunity to take constructive action to meet the present situation.”

Many countries may be prepared to accept larger numbers of involuntary emigrants than they are willing publicly to admit. It is desired that the Governments represented on the Committee make specific public statements of the numbers they will accept, which will be of value not only in providing actual opportunities for settlement but also as an example to other governments. It is nevertheless desired to leave open the possibility for any government which wishes to do so to make an additional strictly confidential statement of what it is prepared to do. You are requested to convey the substance of this paragraph orally to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/651 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Minister in Costa Rica (Hornibrook)*⁶³

WASHINGTON, November 22, 1938—4 p. m.

46. Your despatch 360, August 6, 1938.⁶⁴ Please obtain an early interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and leave with him a communication concerning the present situation with respect to political refugees in Europe. You should state that you would appreciate having the comment of his Government at the earliest convenient moment in order that you may advise your Government. Please report by telegram upon the results of your interview and telegraph any subsequent reply received from the Foreign Minister. The text of the communication you are to present follows:

"I have the honor to refer to Your Excellency's note of July 30, 1938,⁶⁵ in which you kindly stated that, while your Government was unable to be represented on the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees owing to the fact that it had no diplomatic representative at London, your Government continued warmly sympathetic toward the purposes of the Committee.

[Here follow quoted paragraphs numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4 in Department's circular telegram of November 22, noon, printed *supra*.]

The Government of the United States considers it pertinent to point out that this appeal is made on broad humanitarian grounds and that those who are affected, regardless of race or religious belief, have not been free to think their own thoughts, to express their own feelings or to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. The republics of this hemisphere, which were founded in defense of essential human liberties, cannot but view with sympathy the opportunity to take constructive action to meet the present situation.

The Government of the United States expresses the urgent hope that Your Excellency's Government may find it possible to be repre-

⁶³ A similar telegram, omitting the second paragraph, was sent to the Minister in Paraguay as the Department's No. 9, November 23, 7 p. m.

⁶⁴ Not printed.

⁶⁵ Enclosure to despatch No. 360, not printed.

sented at the December meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee and to take an active part in that meeting. Should your Government not find it convenient to be represented, the representative of the United States would be most happy to convey to the Committee any statement which your Government may wish to make."

Many countries may be prepared to accept larger numbers of involuntary emigrants than they are willing publicly to admit. It is desired that the Governments represented on the Committee make specific public statements of the numbers they will accept, which will be of value not only in providing actual opportunities for settlement but also as an example to other Governments. It is nevertheless desired to leave open the possibility for any Government which wishes to do so to make an additional strictly confidential statement of what it is prepared to do. You are requested to convey the substance of this paragraph orally to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

You should also advise the Minister for Foreign Affairs that similar communications are being delivered to the Governments of all American Republics represented on the Committee.

HULL

840.48 Refugees/946 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, November 22, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received November 22—2:40 p. m.]

647. The British Chargé d'Affaires called on me this morning and read me a telegraphic instruction from his Government which touched on two points:

(a) About 2 months ago an "unofficial" Englishman had a conversation in Berlin with Schacht⁶⁶ in which Schacht suggested that it might be arranged that he and Brinkmann meet Rublee or some representative of the London Refugee Committee at some point outside of Germany for the purpose of "conversations" regarding the emigration of Jews from Germany. Although Schacht and Brinkmann are officials the general idea seemed to be that these conversations would be exploratory and "unofficial"—in effect they would constitute an attempt to see what might best be done and what could be done. The Englishman in question had recently told the British Foreign Office that despite the lapse of time and the intervening incidents since his conversation with Schacht he nevertheless felt that this idea could still be regarded as alive and that it was worth while pursuing it.

(b) London had taken note of the pertinent portions of Ribbentrop's conversation with Ambassador Wilson on November 15 as reported in Embassy's No. 620, November 15, 6 p. m. (which the Ambassador

⁶⁶ Hjalmar Schacht, German Minister without Portfolio, and President of the Reichsbank.

had imparted to the British Chargé d'Affaires who had in turn transmitted it in substance to London) in which Ribbentrop without committing himself indicated that he had given consideration to an unofficial meeting somewhat of the character described above.

The Chargé said that although he did not know whether there was any direct connection between the statements of Schacht and Ribbentrop they could at least be linked together as representing a common thought.

The tone of the instruction which the Chargé read to me appeared to indicate that London was anxious to proceed with some such plan if it could be consummated. The Chargé asked me if I felt I could follow up the Ambassador's conversation with Ribbentrop by taking up this question with him again at this time. I told him that while I would acquaint my Government with the information he had imparted and what he had had to say to me I would take no action vis-à-vis the German Government without instructions.

He told me that he was intending immediately to see Schacht and to find out all that was possible from that angle which had as explained above a British background and that he would let me know the results. I told him that while I was fully inclined to credit Schacht with good intentions in such a matter that both because of the obvious change in circumstances here since the Schacht conversation and because of Schacht's own position in the German Government I was not inclined to feel that much of value would emanate from that quarter I should, nevertheless, be most glad to learn of what he was able to ascertain.

The Chargé d'Affaires added as perhaps further indicative of the serious consideration London is giving to this matter, that his Government felt that in any such conversations it would be useful for Rublee to be accompanied by a financial expert. In reply to my inquiry the Chargé stated that he was specifically instructed to see me but that he was not taking the matter up with the French.

I would appreciate instructions giving me at least for background purposes the Department's attitude toward any such procedure as has been described.

Repeated to London for Rublee.

GILBERT

840.48 Refugees/946 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Germany (Gilbert)

WASHINGTON, November 23, 1938—8 p. m.

211. Your 647, November 22, 5 p. m. We still attach great importance to Mr. Rublee visiting Berlin in his capacity as Director if this can be arranged. Should this not be possible and should the German authorities favor a meeting on neutral territory, the op-

portunity should of course not be missed. Please keep the importance of some action before the appropriate authorities.⁶⁷

HULL

840.48 Refugees/991a : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, November 26, 1938—4 p. m.

727. For Rublee. Department's 720, November 23, 6 p. m.⁶⁸ The substance of the replies so far received is as follows:

Argentina. Le Breton can attend the meeting. The Foreign Minister cites serious difficulties, principally economic, admits need for agricultural development but finds refugees congregate in cities.

Brazil. Lobo will take effective part in the meeting and will make a public statement along the lines suggested. He will be sent detailed instructions and may be authorized to make an additional confidential statement. Brazil has recently created a Council of Immigration and Colonization and the Embassy at Rio believes that its present policy is considerably more liberal concerning the admission of certain categories of Jewish refugees than has been the case in the past.

Colombia. Cano will be sent from Geneva to the meeting. The Foreign Minister states that in the last year 5,000 Jews have entered Colombia legally and from 3 to 5 thousand more illegally, that they are almost all merchants, that the trade of Colombia merchants has been seriously disturbed, and that more have already been admitted than is compatible with the best interests of the country. The President states that Colombia cannot possibly agree to accept any more.

Haiti. Will be represented and will accept as many immigrants as it can possibly take care of.

Mexico. Will be represented by Consul General at London and will cooperate to the extent of its ability in receiving refugees. The Foreign Minister does not wish Mexico to make any commitment until the meeting "has acted."

Dominican Republic. The Foreign Minister states that his Government is in full agreement with our policy and will do its utmost to cooperate. Offer to take 50 to 100,000 still stands subject to reservation that immigrants must comply with Dominican regulations. The Legation is still dubious concerning this offer.

Peru. Will be represented by its Minister in London. The Government approves and will support our efforts. It is prepared to ac-

⁶⁷ Mr. Rublee was informed of the substance of this instruction in Department's telegram No. 722 to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom, November 23, 8 p. m.

⁶⁸ Not printed; see footnote 62, p. 836.

cept a limited number of refugees of three classes: agriculturists, certain specialists, and industrialists possessing capital. The Foreign Minister states that 176 visas have been granted to Jewish refugees in the last 4 months, that most of them had settled in Lima, and that it would be necessary to evolve a more comprehensive plan before the present quotas could be enlarged. Ambassador Steinhardt believes that Peru's capacity of absorption is limited but that the Government is disposed to cooperate, that it will agree to accept a considerably larger number of Jewish refugees than the country could otherwise be expected to take if a substantial number are agriculturists and the others provided with capital to establish many non-existing industries which Peru really needs.

Uruguay. Will carefully consider our appeal. The Foreign Minister doubts that his Government can make a specific commitment but believes that refugees could be accepted by categories or occupations, particularly agriculturists.

Venezuela. Will be represented, will be prepared to make public statement of number it will accept and confidential statement of what it is prepared to do.

Ecuador. Will probably be represented.

Bolivia. Will be represented.

Cuba. The matter is being considered. Cuba has been admitting temporarily refugees in a precarious situation but the Ambassador believes that existing laws and regulations will be a controlling factor.

Costa Rica. The matter is under consideration but the reaction of the Foreign Minister was anything but favorable.

Honduras. Will be represented by the Consul General at London. The Minister is informed that the Government has approved a definite plan for the admission of not to exceed 1,000 refugees from Germany provided that they are adopted and prepared to engage exclusively in agriculture and have adequate assurance of support, probably \$1,000 each.

All of these Governments will submit further information shortly.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/999: Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, November 28, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received November 28—2:45 p. m.]

664. My 656, November 25, 5 p. m., second paragraph.⁶⁹ Ribbentrop's office asked me this morning if in view of the Foreign Minister's

⁶⁹ Not printed; the pertinent passage reads: "I have asked for an appointment with Ribbentrop but at the moment no time has yet been set." (840.48 Refugees/984)

occupation with his Paris visit I would see Woermann instead. As I must naturally comply with such a request I saw Woermann at noon today.

He remarked at the outset that he was fully conversant with what Ribbentrop had said to the Ambassador concerning Rublee's possible relations with the German Government. In line with instructions I thereupon raised the question of Rublee's visit. He responded by reasserting that the German Government still did not find it possible to receive Rublee confidentially. He then said that the proposal that Rublee meet certain "unofficial Germans" was under "serious consideration". He went on to say, however, that it would probably be impossible for Rublee to be present at such a meeting without attendant publicity and that it thus seemed desirable that reasonable assurance for a successful outcome of such a meeting be attained before the occurrence of publicity. He said that they were considering proposing that it might be advisable that some competent person other than Rublee have a preliminary conversation with the Germans in question prior to arranging a meeting between them and Rublee. He added that they had Pell in mind who had the title of Assistant Director and who it was felt could come to the Continent without the purpose of his visit being known.

I told Woermann that I had wanted to see the Foreign Minister himself not only because it was he who had last discussed this matter with the Ambassador but also because I felt strongly that the greatest and indeed gravest importance attached to the matter. I said that Rublee's waiting so long in London in a matter obviously of such importance not only created a very bad impression but could justifiably be regarded as unsatisfactory in every respect. I said that the present thought of the German Government to reduce in effect the importance of a meeting, a procedure which also would involve further delays, was much to be regretted. I added that I did not know, however, what the answer would be to such a suggestion should it be made inasmuch as that was something solely for the Committee to decide but I hoped that the German Government would recognize the importance of expediting matters by Rublee himself attending any meeting which might be held.

I then urgently pressed that he tell me when he could have a definite answer. He eventually replied that he would let me know "within a week".

I wish to make clear that in my talk with Woermann I carefully refrained from any discussion of the Jewish emigration problem per se and in particular in respect of the question of the funds which emigrants might take with them. I felt it wise to abstain from any

such discussion in order not to prejudice such position as the Committee might at any time see fit to take and also not to afford the German Government an opportunity to base a refusal to meet with the Committee on anything I might say.

Woermann stressed the merits of private exchanges between the Committee and the German Government taking place in such a manner as he outlined it being sound diplomatic procedure to agree informally on a tentative agenda and to take soundings respecting a possible agreement in advance of a more public and formal meeting. He added that inasmuch as the Committee appeared to be autonomous the means suggested were the only one that had occurred to them to achieve this end. I gained indeed the impression that the German Government at present at least intends shortly to make a proposal along the lines of what Woermann had to say provided they can feel reasonably certain that in this first move publicity can be avoided.

Inasmuch as Woermann may give me an answer at any time I would appreciate the Department's early instruction as to what response I should make if for example a proposal be made respecting Pell as outlined above and I would also appreciate being afforded for background purposes any more general position I should take in regard to this entire matter as it has developed.

Repeated to London for Rublee.

GILBERT

840.48 Refugees/999: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Germany
(Wilson)*

WASHINGTON, November 29, 1938—4 p. m.

214. Your 664, November 28, 5 p. m. Rublee reported on November 25⁷⁰ that he had been advised by an "unofficial" British source, presumably the one mentioned in your 647, that arrangements were being made, with Hitler's consent, for Schacht to visit London within 2 weeks to confer with Rublee. Rublee was last night advised by the Foreign Office that Ogilvie-Forbes⁷¹ had been officially assured by the Reich Government that a high ranking emissary would proceed to London to confer with him in the immediate future.

Please check at once with the British Chargé.

WELLES

⁷⁰ Telegram No. 1354, not printed.

⁷¹ Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, British Chargé in Germany.

840.48 Refugees/1019 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, November 30, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received November 30—2: 35 p. m.]

674. The Department's 214, November 29, 4 p. m. Reference first sentence: The British Chargé d'Affaires informs me that he knows absolutely nothing of this matter beyond what I reported in my 647, November 22, 5 p. m., paragraph (a). For purposes of necessary identification the name of the individual in question is Godman. It will be noted from the first paragraph of my 656, November 25, 5 p. m.,⁷² that the Chargé decided to drop this lead here for fear of confusing matters both of us considering this wise in view of the unknown personal equations in the highly charged political atmosphere of Berlin. He will now, however, most discreetly feel the matter out with Schacht if possible through his financial counselor who is having somewhat frequent meetings with Schacht on other questions. If he develops anything by this means he will let me know. He says that while he does not wish to cast any aspersions on Godman whom he does not know he is inclined to think that Godman may be endeavoring to pay [*play*] a role without having sufficient grounds for his assertions. Naturally if by any means it could be arranged to have a competent German official proceed to London to visit Rublee it would be a development presumably much to be desired.

Reference sentence 2: The Chargé states that this is obviously a complete misreading of his telegram or a misunderstanding somewhere along the line. He states that in one of his telegrams he did mention a "high ranking emissary" but that this referred solely to the consideration which Germany appears to be giving after I had informed him of an "emissary" to some preliminary meeting with a representative of the London Committee in some nearby country. He is telegraphing his Government at once to clarify this matter.

In order that the Department may fully understand the situation here I will add that after going over the ground very carefully the Chargé d'Affaires and I agreed that in view of the direct relations I was having with the Foreign Office on this subject and taking further note of the Foreign Office's emphasizing the strictly confidential nature of their talks with me he was leaving anything whatsoever of the character of "negotiations" here entirely in my hands. He would, of course, tell me anything which came to him and naturally lend me support at any time it might seem opportune.

Repeated to London for Rublee.

GILBERT

⁷² Not printed.

840.48 Refugees/1027a : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, November 30, 1938—7 p. m.

732. For Rublee. Confirming our telephone conversation this morning, the plan you outlined for Pell's trip to Brussels seems for the first time to hold out hope for some constructive solution. As we understand it, Pell will not undertake any negotiation, but will merely be the agent through whom the German plan will be submitted, in order that it may be studied by the executive committee of the Refugee body in London. Inasmuch as this plan will undoubtedly not be presented in writing, we submit the suggestion that Pell may wish to be accompanied by a highly trained financial technician (perhaps loaned by the British Treasury) to make certain that the financial features are explained without possible ambiguity and in such detail as to facilitate their study in London.

We are impressed with the need for absolute secrecy which will be scrupulously observed in Washington.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1018 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, December 1, 1938—5 p. m.

737. Department's 720, November 23, 6 p. m.⁷³

Guatemala. A note from the Foreign Office states that Guatemala will accept 100 families who will dedicate themselves exclusively to agriculture and that "eventually there may be included a limited number of small industrialists and professors". The Legation states that, in addition, seven Jews have been admitted to Guatemala since 1934 and authorization granted for the entry of 62 more.

Paraguay. The problem is being considered. While a spirit of cooperation is expressed the Government appears to believe that only agriculturists can be admitted.⁷⁴

WELLES

⁷³ Not printed; see footnote 62, p. 836.

⁷⁴ The Department was informed in telegram No. 16, December 16, 10 a. m., from the Minister in Paraguay, that Paraguay was willing to take such Jewish agriculturists as could be located conveniently, scientists and artists without limitation, a small number of artisans, but no merchants (840.48 Refugees/1122).

840.48 Refugees/1018 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, December 1, 1938—8 p. m.

741. Department's 720, November 23, 6 p. m. A formal reply has been received from the Argentine Government.⁷⁵ It expresses agreement with the humanitarian principles of the Committee and states that the Argentine will be represented at the December meeting in the same spirit. It then points out that the proportion of Jews to the population of the Argentine is one of the largest to be found in any country. It concludes:

"At present owing to the economic situation of the country and to the conditions of the labor market, only the admission of professional agriculturists would be considered possible, with sufficient elements to assure their settlement and progress on Argentine soil. The Government will admit with good will any requests which may be formulated under these terms, but they must be effected gradually and within the possibilities of assimilation which circumstances may offer and it is therefore not possible for the moment to make a precise declaration as to the number of involuntary emigrants which the country is able to admit."

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1123

The Chargé in Luxemburg (Waller) to the Secretary of State

No. 25

LUXEMBURG, December 1, 1938.

[Received December 16.]

SIR: I have the honor to inform the Department that the Government of Luxemburg has now announced that it will not, until further notice, permit any more Jewish refugees to enter the Grand Duchy under any circumstances. This action has been taken with the utmost reluctance, and only after several weeks during which the Grand Ducal Government granted temporary residence permits to a large number of Jews in Germany to enable them to escape confinement in concentration camps to which they would otherwise have been sent. The Government of Luxemburg announces that it will gladly cooperate with other countries in receiving and giving residence permits to as many of these unfortunate persons as possible, when and if, international action along these lines can achieve definite results.

⁷⁵ Telegram No. 319, undated, from the Ambassador in Argentina, received November 29, 5:29 p. m., not printed.

The Department will recall that the Grand Ducal Government greatly desired to participate in the Evian Conference, inasmuch as the Government knew that Luxemburg would be one of the first "safety zones" available to hundreds of Jews as soon as new measures made a new exodus necessary. It is impossible to make a close estimate of the number of refugee Jews now in the Grand Duchy. The head of one of the Jewish organizations here tells me that practically every Jewish family in the country is sheltering one or more friends or relatives from across the border. He admits that two out of three Jewish refugees now in the Grand Duchy have entered illegally. Local authorities are not deporting these persons to Germany, inasmuch as this would bring unduly harsh penalties upon them, and the police are, under verbal instructions, turning a blind eye upon the Jews clandestinely here, wherever possible.

The entire police force and *gendarmerie* of the country reinforced by certain army units, are maintaining as rigid a border patrol as is possible, but when hundreds of fear-crazed and desperate men are seeking in forest and mountain regions a chance to slip over an undefended frontier, it is easy to comprehend that a good many will be successful. If the situation were reversed, it is safe to say that very few Luxemburgers could get into Germany, but in this case, the German authorities are not only eager to allow Jews to get out, but in many cases notably during September, bundled helpless groups over the frontier in unwatched places, and threatened them with dire punishment if they attempted to return or confessed that they had been forcibly put into Luxemburg.

The City of Luxemburg, with a high per capita ratio of automobiles to the population, has had not one traffic policeman for more than two months,—all are guarding the frontier.

Many hundreds of Jews who have succeeded in reaching Luxemburg have applied at American Consulates in Germany for immigration visas to the United States. In this case, they call at this Legation soon after their arrival to implore that the Consular Section of these offices write to Vienna, Stuttgart, or Berlin, to request that their dossiers be sent to Luxemburg in order that this office may in due time arrange for them to be examined and receive their visa at Antwerp. Belgium will not admit them without a letter from this office granting them an appointment for final examination and issue of visa at the Consulate General at Antwerp. Until this week, the Government of Luxemburg would grant residence permits for three months to Jews in Germany having at least 12,000 Luxemburg francs, at the request of their relatives here, and every refugee who had registered at Stuttgart or Vienna was certain that his turn for a visa

would be less than three months. His friends would then come to this office and beg for a letter to the effect that Mr. Blank, having a serial number 12,906, for example, at the American Consulate General at Stuttgart, would receive a visa quota number within three months! While this office has obviously been unable to supply any such letters, it has in many cases telephoned the Consulate General at Stuttgart, at the applicant's expense, and after verification of the latter's serial waiting number, given him a statement that, all other things being equal, he might expect to be examined for a visa within a certain number of months. A great deal of time has been taken up during the last three weeks in this work alone, but it is a comfort to realize that through such cooperation it has been possible for a great many helpless and persecuted people to receive shelter and a waiting place in Luxemburg.

Respectfully yours,

GEORGE PLATT WALLER

840.48 Refugees/1039

The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the Dominican Republic (Hinkle)

No. 115

WASHINGTON, December 1, 1938.

SIR: The President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees has requested Mr. Alfred Houston to visit the Dominican Republic to study the possibilities of settlement there, and he will call upon you in the near future.

As you are no doubt aware, the problem of finding concrete opportunities for large scale settlement of political refugees is an exceedingly difficult one. The Department understands the Legation's views concerning the possibilities of settlement in the Dominican Republic and the reasons for those views, but the expressed attitude of the Dominican Government is more favorable than that expressed by any other Government in this hemisphere. While the figures mentioned by the Dominican representative at London are exceedingly large, it is believed that the attitude of the Dominican Government may make possible the settlement in its territory of very substantial numbers of refugees.

The purpose of Mr. Houston's trip is to investigate the practical aspects of settlement in the Dominican Republic and particularly to seek an understanding with General Trujillo concerning the treatment to be accorded refugees after they have reached the Dominican Republic. I know that you will do everything in your power to facilitate the success of Mr. Houston's mission.

Very truly yours,

SUMNER WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1032 : Telegram

The Minister in the Netherlands (Gordon) to the Secretary of State

THE HAGUE, December 2, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received December 2—11:48 a. m.]

153. In discussing the question of German Jewish refugees with me the Foreign Minister indicated that he was under the impression that if the Dutch should permit a limited number of refugees to reside temporarily in Holland for a maximum period of 2 years our consular officers could give definite assurances as to the eventual admission of these refugees into the United States, and inquired whether this impression was correct. I told him that I could not give an authoritative answer; I did not see offhand how assurances of a completely definite nature could be given, particularly for a period as long as 2 years, but that it was possible that a procedure might be devised which would in practice be almost tantamount to such assurances—i. e., whose effect would be that of a reasonably limited number of refugees who might be allowed provisional sojourn in Holland for a maximum period of say a year, only a negligible percentage would be left on the hands of the Dutch at the end of such period.

Doctor Patijn requested me to ask the Department if the Dutch Government were to allow Jewish refugees such temporary residence what our Government might be prepared to do to bring about their departure from the Netherlands and their admission to the United States at or before the end of a 2 or a 1 year period; if there were any action in this case which we could take to what approximate number of Jewish refugees would we consider making it applicable?

GORDON

840.48 Refugees/1037 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 3, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received December 3—3:10 p. m.]

1391. [From Rublee.] The meeting was held throughout the day Friday.⁷⁶ There were present Winterton, Taylor, Berenger, Andreae, Le Breton and Lobo with their technical assistants. Lobo had not received his instructions and came from Geneva on his own initiative following my personal message to him.

1. I opened the proceedings by making my report informally. I gave details of the three aspects of my problem: (1) the negotiation with Germany; (2) the negotiations with the countries of settlement,

⁷⁶ December 2.

and (3) short term plans in the countries of refuge. I need not give you the details of this report since it followed essentially the substance of my 1355 of November 25, 10 a. m.⁷⁷

2. Mr. Taylor followed with a detailed account of what our Government, the President's Advisory Committee, and private persons in the United States were doing and planning in behalf of refugees. He told the Committee of the President's attitude toward extending temporary visitors' visas and spoke in very general terms of the plans for an international corporation to aid refugees. He laid emphasis on the fact that recent relations with Germany presented a mosaic and stressed that the Committee must have definite information with regard to the number and character of persons in Germany who must be emigrated. He concluded by stating that consideration has been given to the fact whether our Government, in case Mr. Rublee is successful in accomplishing his definite object, would be in a position to make a grant to assist refugees. He cautioned that although there was no telling how it might be handled by Congress, a contribution of this sort might be considered if a real solution could be found.

3. Berenger once again spoke of the number of refugees France had received in recent years and of the various steps which had been taken in their behalf. He said that France had examined the situation in their colonies to determine if a contribution might be made towards the settlement of refugees, and it had been decided that if all the other participating Governments in the Evian Committee would make a specific contribution, France would consider the settlement in Madagascar and New Caledonia of 10,000 persons but not persons of German origin. In other words France would settle in its colonies 10,000 refugees from other countries and would absorb in the metropolitan area 10,000 German refugees who, Berenger said, had crossed the frontier illegally in the last few weeks and were now lodged in various jails. He explained that they could not settle Germans in the colonies or mandated territories because the Government in Germany might change and then they would have a minority problem on their hands.

4. Berenger then said that it had been agreed in the meeting between Daladier and Chamberlain⁷⁸ that when Ribbentrop came to Paris next Monday Bonnet⁷⁹ should take up with him and discuss the details of a plan whereby involuntary emigrants from Germany might take with them approximately 20% of their property. Berenger said that Bonnet was prepared to carry out this agreement. It appeared from remarks made by British officials after the meeting

⁷⁷ Not printed.

⁷⁸ The President of the French Council of Ministers and the British Prime Minister conferred in Paris on November 23.

⁷⁹ Georges Bonnet, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

that Berenger's statement was an indiscretion and that the fact of the conversation between Bonnet and Ribbentrop should not have been revealed.

5. Berenger purported to quote Chamberlain as discussing an alternative financial plan in some detail, should Germany prove unwilling to allow the refugees 20% of their property, which would involve an international loan upon the security of Jewish property in Germany. With regard to this Berenger observed that France could not consider the idea of an international loan on behalf of refugees. He said that he had taken this up in Paris with various financial personages and that the conclusion was unanimous that the flotation of a loan of this nature was out of the question.

6. Winterton spoke briefly to the effect that the British Government could not approve or disapprove the idea of an international loan at this time. He believed however that in view of the imminence of the negotiation with Germany it was very dangerous to discuss action by the Evian Governments of a financial nature in behalf of refugees since it was still his belief that the major contribution should be made by Germany.

7. Le Breton closed the morning session with a repetition of his Government's views that they could only take agricultural settlers and in any event he said he was unable to make a specific statement on behalf of his Government. He emphasized his belief that no financial contribution would ever be secured from Germany, that the Committee should proceed on this premise and should urgently consider how each immigrant might be assured a minimum of pounds 200.

8. At the afternoon session Lobo explained that he had come on his own initiative, that he had no instruction from [his] Government and that he was not therefore in a position to make a specific statement. He said that there had been difficulties with the German immigration to Brazil and feeling was very strong against admitting large numbers of people although he could record the fact that a petition of students to the Government had recently advocated the admission of refugees. In conclusion he referred to the fact that new laws relating to immigration would come into effect on the first of the year and that the admission of persons would depend to a greater extent on the Executive.

9. Andreae expressed opposition to the idea of an international loan for refugees and in any event said that it was not a question which the Evian Committee should properly take up. He revealed that his Government had been studying the possibilities of settlement of refugees in their overseas possessions and had found certain openings for a small scale settlement possibly to the extent of 100 families in Surinam. However, a large amount of capital would be necessary for this enterprise and it depended on how much money the Jewish organi-

zations and individuals could produce. The remainder of Andreae's statement dealt with the difficulties which the Netherlands Government was facing with regard to transmigrants.

10. Winterton closed the general remarks by repeating the details as to the British contribution made in the House of Commons recently by the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary, referred to the fact that 200 Jewish children had arrived that day and more would follow running into many thousands, and mentioned that the Australian Government had announced the day before that it would accept 5000 refugees annually for the next 3 years. Winterton went in some details into the Guiana project, said that it would comprise 40,000 square miles instead of 10,000 as mentioned in Parliament and said that the British Jewish organizations were making a plan to begin a survey at once.

At this point Mr. Taylor asked the French and Dutch representatives whether their Governments would be willing to contribute in the Guianas as well as the British. Berenger and Andreae replied in the negative.

11. Winterton concluded his statement by telling what the British Government had done in Palestine emphasizing that the British had offered the Jews a national home in Palestine, not Palestine as a national home for the Jews, and said that further action taken with regard to Palestine was contingent upon the conference which had been called by McDonald.

12. At this point I raised the question which had been causing considerable confusion in the efforts to relieve the deplorable situation of the refugees. The Evian resolution defines my mandate as, first, negotiation with the German Government, and second, negotiation with the countries of settlement to find a solution of the refugee problem. The claim is made that the resolution indicates that persons who have left Germany but who have not found a final place of settlement are in my charge. These people are clearly in the charge of the League High Commissioner. The question of duplication of mandate causes very considerable confusion among the workers for the refugees and causes me embarrassment because these people and the refugees themselves believe that I am responsible for a solution of the problem in the countries of refuge and that I should make recommendations and take steps to improve the situation. I asked the officers for a clarification of this point in order that I might know whether I was to be held responsible for the intermediate stage of refuge or whether it was to be the responsibility of the League High Commissioner, and in short, just what their desires were. A very heated discussion followed in which Berenger, Andreae and Winterton indicated that they wished no interference with what their Gov-

ernments were doing and that in fact they wished both the League High Commissioner and myself to keep out of this situation. I said that I was satisfied as a result of this discussion that the officers did not wish me to have any responsibility in this matter and that henceforth I should consider that I was relieved of this responsibility. Winterton suggested as a compromise that he would call a meeting with Emerson and Malcolm.

13. The Committee then took up the question of the new meeting and it was felt that in view of the imminence of the negotiation with Germany that it would be wise to put it off until January. Lobo, who agreed with this decision, stressed that an opportunity would thus be given for Secretary Hull to bring the matter up at the Lima Conference where the Foreign Ministers of the Latin American Republics would be present. Lobo once again emphasized the great importance of the action Secretary Hull might take at the Lima Conference [with] the representative of his Government, and of course with the representatives of the other Governments, when he came to see us this morning.

14. The final matter that came before the meeting was the request of the Polish Government, made through the Polish Ambassador, here to Winterton, at Paris to Berenger and at Washington to Mr. Taylor, that Poland be given an opportunity to present its case to a meeting of the Committee, in particular the situation of the Jews who have been forced to leave Germany but whom the Polish Government does not recognize as citizens of Poland. The general consensus of the meeting was that the Poles should not be admitted and that the Jews whose citizenship is in question between the Poles and the German Government should not be included within the scope of the Committee's action. It was agreed that Winterton should inform the Polish Ambassador that it was not within the competence of the meeting of the officers to reach a decision on this question. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/1038: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 4, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received December 4—10:45 a. m.]

1392. [From Rublee.] My 1391, December 3, 6 p. m. numbered paragraph 4. Following the meeting we questioned British officials with regard to the meeting of Bonnet with Ribbentrop. They explained that the Prime Minister had discussed this matter with Daladier during the visit to Paris and had suggested that since no member

of the German Government was due to come to London in the near future an opportunity would be presented during Ribbentrop's visit to Paris to clarify the situation with him. They said that they regarded our negotiation with the Germans as the main effort but thought that the French might obtain useful information if Bonnet reviewed this situation with the German Foreign Minister.

At luncheon at the French Embassy today we asked Berenger whether Bonnet proposed to raise any specific matters with Ribbentrop. Berenger in reply explained that Chamberlain had suggested that the French should make an effort to draw out Ribbentrop with regard to the question of involuntary emigration and Daladier had agreed that this would be done. Berenger said that he doubted whether much would come of this *démarche* but promised to inform us of developments immediately after the conversation. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/1056a : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, December 5, 1938—8 p. m.

753. For Taylor and Rublee. The question of conducting surveys of British Guiana as suggested by the Prime Minister on November 21 has been discussed with the Advisory Committee. The Jewish Organizations represented on the Committee have been considering the possibility of colonization in British Guiana and are inclined to regard it favorably from the point of view of geography but, as a result of the British attitude concerning Palestine, they are inclined to question the possibilities of settlement from the political point of view. They envisage sending first a negotiator, who would have the approval of the British Government and the Intergovernmental Committee, to discuss the question with Colonial officials in Georgetown and then, if his report is favorable, sending a technical mission to investigate the suitability of the areas which may be made available.

They desire to follow your wishes in every respect and, if you believe it desirable that the British Government's offer should be actively followed up, they would be prepared to send a negotiator in the very near future, otherwise they contemplate giving the matter further study here before taking action.

We are inclined to believe that it would be advisable to follow up the British Government's proposal actively both in London and on this side.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1048 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 6, 1938—3 p. m.
 [Received December 6—11:55 a. m.]

1396. From Rublee. Your 732, November 30, 7 p. m. We immediately urged upon the German intermediary, who is arranging the meeting at Brussels on Thursday,⁸⁰ the possibility of having a British financial expert accompany Pell. He has now replied that his principals would rather call off the meeting than have a British representative present. They are prepared to make a business proposition to Pell as Assistant Director of the Committee and are prepared to have Cotton⁸¹ present as my personal representative.

I might add that Cotton is fully qualified to report on financial matters. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/1049 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, December 6, 1938—4 p. m.
 [Received December 6—2 p. m.]

697. 1. Woermann asked me to see him today and informed me in the following sense: a contact had been made with Pell in London whereby it had been arranged that Pell, for the purposes which he had previously outlined to me as reported in the second paragraph of my 664, November 28, 5 p. m., meet with an "unofficial German" in Brussels on December 10. I could not ascertain from him any identification of the German in question other than that he was "from Vienna".

Woermann emphasized the "private nature" of the meeting and his feeling that publicity given to it in any form would militate against a successful outcome.

Woermann in all that he had to say stressed the "unofficial" nature of the arrangement. I felt nevertheless it to be tactically desirable to bring it as close to the official plane as might be possible. Woermann in response to my inquiries finally stated that the arrangement was with the full knowledge and consent of the German Government. I then recalled to him that the Ambassador had in October presented the American position in respect of this matter to the Foreign Office (Department's 179, October 15, 3 p. m.) and I inquired whether the

⁸⁰ December 8.

⁸¹ Joseph P. Cotton, Jr., assistant to the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee.

relationship of the German Government as he had just expressed it to the Brussels meeting could be regarded as an "answer" to the Ambassador's *démarche* at the Foreign Office to which I had referred. He replied that I could construe it as an "answer". I then said that although as I understood it there had been no "joint *démarche*" similar action had been taken in October by the British and French and I inquired whether he was therefore giving a like "answer" to the British and French Embassies. He replied that he was solely informing me of the Brussels arrangement.

2. In view of the background of our relations here on this score I have imparted the foregoing only to the British Chargé d'Affaires.

3. In my conversation with the British Chargé I asked him what had developed in respect of exploration which he had proposed to undertake through his financial counselor concerning Schacht's possible relationship to this matter as reported in the first paragraph of my 674, November 30, 5 p. m. He told me that before approaching Schacht in any manner on this score he had thought it advisable to ascertain the views of London on such a step and that he had received instructions that the matter was not to be broached with Schacht in any manner whatsoever.

Incidentally the Chargé told me that although he was not officially informed he knew it to be a fact that Schacht is at present in London for the ostensible purpose as he understands it of conferring with the Governor of the Bank of England. He added he felt certain that Schacht's being in London had nothing at all to do with the Jewish question and that although there might be attempts to associate his presence in London with that matter he personally felt that any Schacht angle to the picture could be dropped for the moment.

Repeated to London for Rublee.

GILBERT

840.48 Refugees/1055 : Telegram

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, December 7, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received December 7—10:07 a. m.]

701. Embassy's 697, December 6, 4 p. m. Woermann has just called me on the telephone and informed me that the Brussels meeting had been postponed for a week. He said that this postponement was solely because of the illness of the German who would attend.

In relation to my telegram under reference Woermann is at present Acting Foreign Minister. Repeated to London for Rublee.

GILBERT

840.48 Refugees/1071b : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, December 7, 1938—1 p. m.

760. For Taylor and Rublee. The President has asked Ambassador Phillips on his return from leave to take up personally with Mussolini certain aspects of the refugee problem and endeavor to secure his interest. He would appreciate your asking Pell to meet Mr. Phillips in Rome on December 22nd for a conference. His trip, if any question should arise, could be explained by a wish to spend part of the holidays in Italy.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1077a

*President Roosevelt to the Chief of the Italian Government (Mussolini)*⁸²

WASHINGTON, December 7, 1938.

MY DEAR SIGNOR MUSSOLINI: The decisive action which you took last September,⁸³ which was so powerful a factor in assuring the avoidance of hostilities, is recognized everywhere as an historic service to the cause of world peace. The results of your efforts have provided a practical demonstration that even grave international crises can be resolved by negotiation without resort to armed force.

It is with this recollection in mind that I write to you today.

The problem of finding new homes for the masses of individuals of many faiths who are no longer permitted to reside freely in their native lands, and are obliged through force of circumstances to find refuge abroad, is one of immediate urgency. Both for those governments which desire to bring about the emigration of such individuals, as well as for those governments whose peoples feel it their duty and their desire to help so far as they may be able in the task of resettlement, the problem presented is one of grave complexity. Unless there is effective international collaboration, the prospect of a successful solution is not hopeful. And unless a solution based on justice and humanity can be found, and found promptly, I fear that international relations will be further embittered, and the cause of peace still further prejudiced.

I have, of course, given earnest thought to this matter and certain projects have occurred to me in which the United States could well

⁸² Draft copy unsigned. The American Ambassador in Italy delivered the President's letter personally on January 3, 1939, to the Chief of the Italian Government.

⁸³ In connection with the Munich Conference; see pp. 566 ff.

collaborate.⁸⁴ I am requesting Ambassador Phillips to ask an audience of you as soon as may be convenient to you after his return to Rome, and to submit these thoughts to your consideration, and to discuss them with you.

It would give me genuine pleasure to feel that you and I were working together along constructive lines toward a solution of this problem, and that thereby we might be contributing toward a happier and a more peaceful world.

I take this occasion to convey to you my best wishes and the assurances of my highest regard.

Very sincerely yours,

840.48 Refugees/1077a

*Memorandum Elaborating the Points Referred to in President Roosevelt's Letter to the Chief of the Italian Government (Mussolini), December 7, 1938*⁸⁵

While the Intergovernmental Committee at London has achieved some measure of success in planning, in a practical way, for the resettlement of refugees, adequate results have not as yet been produced. The President of the United States believes that only by virtue of international collaboration involving coordinated policies, based on justice and humanity, on the part both of countries of emigration and countries of reception can the problem be settled in a manner which will not tend to engender further international bitterness and ill-will.

If a general plan can be found sufficiently ample in scope, and practical in character, which in his judgment holds out assurance that the problem which has arisen will be solved in consonance with justice and humanity, the President stands ready to request of the Congress of the United States that it agree to assume an appropriate share of the cost.

In searching the areas which would appear to lend themselves to resettlement, President Roosevelt has been particularly struck with the appropriateness of the Plateau, a small portion of which lies in the southwestern section of Ethiopia, and the greater portion in areas lying to the south of Ethiopia. It has occurred to him that the Chief of the Italian Government may believe that adequately financed colonization of refugee families in this area would be in accord with plans which the Italian Government may have formulated for the development and economic reconstruction of Ethiopia.

⁸⁴ See memorandum *infra*.

⁸⁵ For modification of this memorandum, see telegram No. 133, December 30, 7 p. m., to the Ambassador in Italy, p. 885.

If the Chief of the Government should see merit in this plan, and should care to make it his own and urge other states holding sections of this Plateau to do likewise, the President of the United States would be prepared to give the proposal as a part of a general plan his public support.

Of great importance is the German attitude on this question. Mr. Rublee, the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee in London, has made as yet unsuccessful efforts to discuss these matters with authorized representatives of the German Government. If any co-ordinated plans are to be carried out, the German Government will necessarily have to furnish full information as to probable emigration, and furthermore, some method must be agreed upon through which emigrants will not be forced to leave Germany as paupers. In this connection, it is understood in the United States that the main obstacle from the German point of view to the elaboration of such a plan lies in the difficulty of procuring foreign exchange in sufficient quantities to allow the emigrants to have cash in hand. The President has suggested that this difficulty might be met at least in part by permitting refugee emigrants to spend their German marks within Germany to a sufficient extent to provide themselves with supplies indispensable for their resettlement, as for instance, farm implements, clothing, and other requisites. If the German Government would permit emigrants from Germany to take from that country such articles for their use, up to a sufficient per capita value, the exchange difficulty would, of course, be greatly lessened.

It is the earnest hope of the President of the United States that the Chief of the Italian Government will favor this suggestion, and, in such event, will further it in such manner as he may deem appropriate.

840.48 Refugees/1058 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 7, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received December 7—11: 55 a. m.]

1403. From Rublee. We have been informed that the Brussels meeting with Pell and Cotton tomorrow has been canceled. Preliminary information received through our German intermediary here is that there were too many cooks; that the French had taken up the general problem and specific financial points with Ribbentrop; and that the latter had been obliged to take a position. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/1069 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 8, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received December 8—2:25 p. m.]

1411. From Rublee.

1. Your 753 of December 5, 8 p. m. We took up with the British the proposal to send a representative of the Advisory Committee to British Guiana for contact and investigation. They replied informally today that the British Government has arranged with Anthony de Rothschild to prepare the settlement in British Guiana and to take such steps as are immediately necessary as surveying, et cetera. The suggestion is made, and will be repeated formally in a few days time, that Americans who may be interested in British Guiana should establish contact with De Rothschild and his new Settlement Committee.

2. We have been in contact since September with the Austrian ex-service men's group who wish to emigrate from Vienna. They have recently established relations with the Ecuador Land Company, with headquarters here and at Atacames, which is willing to settle them on its plantation. The point has now been reached when a request should be made to the Ecuadoran Government that this group, consisting of 800 persons, who have considerable agricultural training and may be able to bring out their tools and equipment with the consent of the Gestapo, be permitted to enter Ecuador. The British are prepared to instruct their Minister at Quito to collaborate with our Minister in addressing a request to the Ecuadoran Government for their admission. Parenthetically, the Ecuadoran Minister here declines to take the original initiative, but if the request is made to his Government he will be prepared to follow it up by furnishing particulars and making arrangements with the representative of the Vienna group. I hope that you will agree that this request can be made.

3. The Foreign Office informs us that a report has been received from the British Ambassador at Buenos Aires to the effect that the Paraguayan Government has decided to impose an immediate prohibition of the entry of Jewish immigrants including these already provided with the necessary visas. He adds that there are 64 immigrants either on the steamer to Asunción or awaiting transportation at Montevideo. The British wish us to join with them in an approach to the Paraguayan Government with a request that the visas which have already been granted should not be canceled. The British are making a similar request of the French. For your confidential information, we are informed that some 2 months ago a British private Jewish organization sent investigators to look into the possibilities of settle-

ment in Paraguay. Following their return here the Paraguayan Minister approached the private organization and said that unless they would immediately negotiate to buy a large tract of land which was the property of the Paraguayan Government at an exorbitant price which was indicated the Paraguayan Government would issue a decree prohibiting the admission of Jews into the country. The private organization declined even to consider the matter and the Minister said "they would see what would happen". [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/1072 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State*⁸⁶

LONDON, December 8, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received December 8—6:43 p. m.]

1414. Personal for the Acting Secretary from Rublee. My 1403, December 7, 3 p. m. The representative of the German Embassy assured us that we would receive further explanation of the cancellation or postponement of the Brussels meeting in the course of yesterday. He said that this telegram was being deciphered and that undoubtedly he would have further details. However, late last evening he called merely to state that it was now understood that the meeting had had to be put off in view of the sudden illness of the principal negotiator on the German side. He regretted that he could tell us no more.

During the day we had a telephone call from Berenger's office in Paris. We were told that the matter of refugees had been raised by Bonnet in his conversation with von Ribbentrop. The result was very bad. Ribbentrop, when pressed, had said to Bonnet that the Jews in Germany without exception were pickpockets, murderers and thieves. The property they possessed had been acquired illegally. The German Government had therefore decided to assimilate them with the criminal elements of the population. The property which they had acquired illegally would be taken from them. They would be forced to live in districts frequented by the criminal classes. They would be under police observation like other criminals. They would be forced to report to the police as other criminals were obliged to do.

⁸⁶ A White House memorandum dated December 10, 1938, to the Under Secretary of State reads: "Will you please have the marked part of this carefully checked? I should like to have some verification. If there is any truth in it, the time will come when we can bring it out for the benefit of humanity. F. D. R." (840.48 Refugees/1072). The "marked part" is the portion contained in the second and third paragraphs.

The German Government could not help it if some of these criminals escaped to other countries which seemed so anxious to have them. It was not however willing for them to take the property which had resulted from their illegal operations with them. There was in fact nothing that it could or would do.

From our German contact we have information that the French raised the question of refugees not only in principle but concretely in respect to the financial aspects of the question. Berenger, while attending the officers meeting, gave a hint that his Government was preparing to take this line. We attempted to dissuade him from crossing wires with our negotiation and he assured us that he would do his best to keep the discussion of refugees on a general plane but he added Chamberlain had requested Daladier to take the matter up with Ribbentrop and so it would have to be taken up. Winterton denies this.

The British assured us this morning that they did not communicate to the French the details of the financial plan which they now tell us they have prepared but which they are holding back for the present. They say that they are as mystified as we are about the French move and do not know what specific financial proposals Bonnet may have raised with Ribbentrop. With regard to the visit of Schacht to London we have no conclusive information. The British will say no more than that the visit is imminent. The Germans say they are not at liberty to discuss the matter. [Rublee.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/1069 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, December 9, 1938—2 p. m.

763. For Rublee. Your 1411, December 8, 5 p. m. As a matter of general policy, this Government does not desire to make representations to the government of any other American republic jointly with some non-American power. Please endeavor to discourage this type of request in the future while making it clear, of course, in the instant cases as well as in similar cases which may arise in the future, that this Government will be glad to do what it may directly and of its own initiative in friendly discussions with the governments of other American republics to further a satisfactory solution of refugee questions.

The specific questions dealt with in paragraphs 2 and 3 of your telegram under reference will be taken up by me directly with the representatives of Paraguay and Ecuador in Washington.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1081: Telegram (part air)

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

BERLIN, December 9, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received December 10—9:05 a. m.]

709-710. I have felt it to be essentially desirable to explore in every direction available to me here what may be expected of Germany in its handling of the current Jewish problem. From an official of the party who was present on the occasion described below I have ascertained the following direct and in the strictest confidence.

Goering in the course of a talk which he gave before a recent private meeting of all German gauleiters said that they "must not be surprised if they should hear of his being in conference with groups of Jews". He did not go beyond this in his general talk but in conversation with his intimates after the meeting he disclosed to them that Hitler had a few days previously confided to him the liquidation of the Jewish problem. He admitted that what had begun as a party policy had now developed into a "problem" for Germany both internally and externally and that it was his intention to proceed forthwith to its solution. He would approach the matter solely as a technical and economic question and it would be consistently handled only on that basis. The logic in this lay in the circumstances that the "problem" which had been created was itself in large part economic. Whether or not it could be entirely traced directly to the Jewish question the facts were that German exports in certain directions were beginning to show an alarming decrease. As an indication of this he cited that an official of the I. G. Farben Company stated that that concern estimated that it was facing a curtailment in its foreign orders of about 40 percent.

Goering stated that his plan which he hoped to carry through envisaged the complete elimination from Germany of all Jews within a period of 3 years. He said that it was of course "absurd" to expect these emigrants from Germany to leave completely lacking in funds as that was contrary to reasonable economic principles to which he intended to adhere throughout and that this factor in the immigration was something to which he was giving his attention. He did not go into details as to what he had in mind respecting this but I feel that my No. 675, November 30, 6 p. m.,⁸⁷ may be noted in this connection.

Goering stated further that he himself could see no reason why Mr. Rublee if he felt inclined to do so should not shortly come to Berlin to talk things over. He expanded on this by saying that while Germany positively would not enter into official relations with the

⁸⁷ Not printed.

Evian Committee nor in any official sense "recognize" it, it would nevertheless be interesting to know what facts the Committee had at its disposal and what general procedures it might suggest for working the matter out. He said that such general procedure or ideas could be implemented only in their specific application and could not be formally adopted as a program, particularly not as a public program. Germany in line with its generally announced policy would enter in this respect into no international or multilateral arrangements whatsoever. It would in this matter as in all others adhere strictly to the principle of solely bilateral relationships. He hoped that it might be possible to enter into separate pertinent arrangements with each country concerned. While these would undoubtedly vary with each country in line with special circumstances which might become apparent in each case certain procedures or ideas such indeed as those which the Evian Committee might have in line would be both interesting and presumably useful insofar as they prove to be susceptible of practical and specific application.

In connection with the immediate foregoing it will be recalled that my knowledge of the proposed Brussels meeting derives solely from the Foreign Office. In view of personal equations with the Government here it would, I feel, be interesting to know if possible whether the "unofficial" German who may attend the meeting in fact "represents" Ribbentrop or Goering.

In respect of the foregoing I will say that I am personally satisfied that the account of the meeting and the statements of Goering are substantially a correct recital of what actually occurred.

GILBERT

840.48 Refugees/1074 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 9, 1938—4 p. m.

[Received December 9—1:40 p. m.]

1416. From Rublee. Your 753, December 5, 8 p. m. Pell discussed with Anthony de Rothschild today the British Guiana project and the relationship of the new Emigration Committee, of which Rothschild is chairman, with the President's Advisory Committee. Rothschild believes that the two Committees should work in the closest collaboration because as he stated frankly a substantial part of the money will have to come from the 4,000,000 Jews in the United States. He believes that it would be advisable for Warren⁸⁸ to enter into correspondence with Finlayson, who served on the League of Nations

⁸⁸ George L. Warren, Executive Secretary of the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees.

Financial Committee and has been appointed Executive Secretary of the Emigration Committee.

Specifically with regard to the British Guiana project, Rothschild is of the opinion that immediate contact and preliminary investigation should be made by representatives of the Advisory Committee for the reason that the United States is geographically nearer Guiana. He says that he will do everything to facilitate the contract between the Advisory Committee's representative and the local authorities at Georgetown, and would welcome an immediate response by telegraph as to whom the Advisory Committee plans to send and the approximate time of his arrival Georgetown.

Rothschild expressed keen interest in the possibilities of settlement in Ecuador. It appears that he is in intimate relationship with the Ecuador Land Company and is convinced that if we can come to terms with the Ecuadoran Government there are possibilities of settlement in the country on a large scale. He wishes to be kept informed on developments in this connection. [Rublees.]

KENNEDY

840.48 Refugees/1032: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Minister in the Netherlands
(Gordon)*

WASHINGTON, December 9, 1938—8 p. m.

95. Your 153, December 2, 1 p. m. While the humanitarian attitude of the Netherlands Government as reflected in its desire to grant temporary refuge to certain refugees from Germany is well understood and appreciated by this Government you should make clear that there is no provision under our immigration laws or practice which would make possible in any considerable number of cases the cooperation with the Netherlands authorities which would be envisaged by the procedure outlined in your telegram. Such a procedure would involve what is equivalent to eventual guarantees that the refugees will be able to emigrate eventually to the United States. Should the Netherlands Government admit substantial numbers of refugees with the understanding, however indefinite or implied, that they would later be admitted into the United States, and should substantial numbers of these refugees later be found inadmissible into the United States, the possibility of serious misunderstandings between the two governments over this situation is apparent.

Under existing immigration laws it would not be possible for American Consular Officers in Germany or elsewhere to give definite assurance that applicants for visas would be found qualified to receive them when their turns are reached under the quota or that it will

become possible to take final action in their cases within any specified period. The Immigration Act of 1924⁸⁹ requires a Consular Officer to refuse an immigration visa to an alien who he finds, or has reason to believe, is inadmissible into the United States under the immigration laws. The qualification of an applicant therefore cannot be determined until he appears for final examination at the consular office. In view of the quota restrictions of the act and of the present large demand against the German quota, it would also be impossible to forecast with any degree of accuracy the precise time within which the cases of applicants may be reached under the quota for final consideration.

The question which has been raised with you by the Foreign Minister is undoubtedly based on the fact that our Consular Officers in Germany have in a limited number of cases issued letters to minor children and to certain persons confined in concentration camps or in immediate danger that their documents have been examined and found to be adequate and that their turn on the waiting list of the quota to which they belong for final examination for a visa will probably be reached in a given number of months. On the basis of such letters the governments of various countries apparently have permitted the temporary admission of such aliens for residence pending their name being reached on the waiting list and final examination for a visa before an American Consular Officer in an intermediate country. It is in no sense intended by this Government that such letters should be issued as a general practice or in large numbers as it might be construed as equivalent to granting promissory notes on the quotas and as indirectly assuming an obligation vis-à-vis other governments that in a given time an immigration visa may be issued. It is obviously impossible for an American Consular Officer to give any assurance that a visa will be issued until the final examination for the visa takes place and this cannot take place until the name of the applicant is reached on the waiting list.

The humanitarian attitude of certain governments in receiving refugees for temporary residence pending immigration to another country is appreciated but it should be made clear to the Foreign Minister that this Government can assume in no case any obligation beforehand that an immigration visa permitting an alien to proceed to this country will be granted. While it is to be anticipated that most of those aliens who may undergo a preliminary examination for a visa before one of our Consular Officers in Germany and whose application is provisionally approved will eventually be able to satisfy the requirements of our immigration laws when their turn is reached under the quota for final examination, no guarantees can be given in any individual

⁸⁹ Approved May 26, 1924; 43 Stat. 153.

case. Such letters which may be given by our Consular Officers in connection with a preliminary examination may possibly be of assistance to the Netherlands authorities in considering in individual cases whether they wish to grant the refugee permission to enter the Netherlands to reside until their turns shall be reached for final consideration but such letters cannot be considered in any sense as a guarantee by this Government that an immigration visa will eventually be issued.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1074 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson)

WASHINGTON, December 12, 1938—4 p. m.

770. For Rublee. Your 1416, December 9, 4 p. m. Warren has communicated direct with Rothschild. In connection with preliminary studies, please advise specifically what part of British Guiana the 40,000 square miles comprises. Is the figure of 40,000 confidential?

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1101 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 13, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received December 13—4:12 p. m.]

1427. From Rublee. My 1391, December 3, 6 p. m. paragraph 12. The meeting between representatives of our office, the outgoing League Commissioner and the incoming League Commissioner, which the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee recommended, was held with Winterton in the Chair this morning. The object of the meeting was to clarify the respective spheres of the activity of the Commissioner and the Director.

Sir Herbert Emerson said that he did not question the Director's sole responsibility to negotiate with the German Government. For obvious reasons, the League Commissioner could have no contact with Germany and in consequence the effort to obtain the collaboration of the German Government in this work was exclusively in the hands of the Director. It seemed to him that in the second sphere of activity, that is to say, contact with the countries of refuge in dealing with such problems as transmigration and refugee camps, he had the sole responsibility, although of course he welcomed at all times the advice of the

Director. With regard to the third area of activity, that is to say, the negotiations with the countries of settlement for the final placing of involuntary emigrants, it seemed to him that there was, under the Evian resolution and the League resolution, a duplication of mandate. Thus, he was directed to "assist the governments and private organizations in their efforts to promote emigration and settlement," while the Director was mandated to "approach the governments of the countries of refuge and settlement with a view to develop opportunities for permanent settlement." Emerson said that he had no choice but to comply with his mandate and it was his intention to negotiate actively with the governments of the countries of settlement to promote emigration and settlement. He said that he had already discussed his plans with representatives of various governments which are members of the League and had been assured of their full support.

Winterton said that his Government as a member of the League was bound to support the High Commissioner. At the same time, his Government was a participant in the Intergovernmental Committee and would second any efforts which the Director might make to open up places of settlement. He believed that a solution consisted in weekly meetings in his office between the Director and the Commissioner, where views might be exchanged on current developments and a harmonious plan of action formulated.

Pell, who represented us at the meeting, made no commitments as to the future relationship of the two offices. [Rublee.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/1109a : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, December 13, 1938—6 p. m.

774. For Rublee. Admission of aliens into the Philippine Islands, although governed by certain of our immigration laws, particularly the Act of 1917,⁹⁰ is not subject to numerical limitations. Refugees who have independent means or whose support is assured by the local Jewish community and who are otherwise admissible are currently being admitted. The Commonwealth Government has been requested to consider how many refugees could usefully be absorbed annually and it is anticipated that specific information will be available in time for announcement at the forthcoming meeting.

The Commonwealth Government is completing plans for the colonization of Mindanao by Filipinos and large sums are available for

⁹⁰ Approved February 5, 1917; 39 Stat. 874.

general development purposes. Large scale allocation and expenditure of these sums may, however, have to await the outcome of various legislative measures which will be discussed during the forthcoming session of Congress. The island has an area of some 37,000 square miles, is sparsely inhabited, much of it is in the main favorable climatically, and is believed to be capable of supporting a very considerable population. President Quezon has indicated willingness to set aside virgin lands there for colonization by Jewish refugees who wish to engage in agriculture or related activities in the development of the island, including health and other public services. This Government has indicated approval of such a project and it is hoped that specific, if preliminary, information concerning it can also be announced at the January meeting.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1074 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, December 14, 1938—8 p. m.

781. For Rublee. Department's 770, December 12, 4 p. m. In view of the large area which the British Government has offered to make available in Guiana for the settlement of refugees, we assume that that Government does not contemplate any legislative or administrative limitation upon the rate at which refugees may be admitted to the colony, in other words, that the British Government has no objection to the settlement there of refugees, in substantial numbers, as rapidly as the physical and financial difficulties can be overcome. We would also like to have the British Government's views as to the ultimate numbers of refugees who might be permitted to settle there. This information is of importance in connection with the immediate survey which is contemplated and will of course be important in connection with such financing as may later be undertaken. Please endeavor to obtain it as soon as possible.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1101 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson)

WASHINGTON, December 14, 1938—9 p. m.

782. For Rublee. Your 1427, December 13, 5 p. m. We agree that the High Commissioner should have primary responsibility for deal-

ing with the problems of transmigration and refugee camps and believe that it would be wise to leave this field to him.

With respect to negotiations with the countries of settlement, the respective mandates of the two bodies obviously cover much the same ground. We nevertheless wish to re-emphasize our desire that the work of the two bodies in this field should be closely coordinated and avoid duplication. You may wish to emphasize our position to Winterton and Emerson, and to express to the latter the hope that he will approach his task in a similar spirit. The proposed weekly meetings appear to afford a reasonable machinery for effecting close cooperation. This will not, of course, in any way lessen your responsibility for carrying out energetically the Committee's mandate in this field.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1108 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 15, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received December 15—9:50 a. m.]

1436. Personal for the Acting Secretary from Rublee. Halifax has arranged for me to be present at a meeting at 6 o'clock this evening in Winterton's office when Schacht will present a plan. Montagu Norman⁹¹ and Leith-Ross⁹² will also be there. The Foreign Office says that Schacht has informed them he does not have plenipotentiary powers. He merely has authority to present the plan in behalf of his principals; he will not be prepared to discuss it. Accordingly the British propose to receive the plan without comment and to turn it over to me for purposes of negotiation. That this will be the procedure will be made plain to Schacht. [Rublee.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/1116 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

PARIS, December 15, 1938—2 p. m.
[Received 3:36 p. m.]

2117. Reference to my telegram No. 2108, December 13, 6 p. m.⁹³ I called upon Bonnet at noon today. In response to my inquiry concerning the discussion with Ribbentrop on the refugee problem, he

⁹¹ Governor of the Bank of England.

⁹² Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government.

⁹³ Not printed.

told me the following: He had not mentioned the matter at all to Ribbentrop on the first day of the latter's visit December 6 because the Ambassadors and certain experts were present and he was certain that Ribbentrop would refuse to discuss it in their presence. He raised the question however in the conversation which he had alone with Ribbentrop the afternoon of December 7 in the latter's room at the Hotel Crillon. Ribbentrop immediately replied that he refused to discuss the question officially as between Foreign Ministers. Bonnet inquired whether he would be willing to discuss it personally and unofficially. Ribbentrop agreed to this and the conversation on the subject continued for half an hour.

Ribbentrop began by stating that there were two categories of Jews—bad Jews and good Jews. All the Jews in Germany were bad Jews; they had come from the east, poverty stricken and diseased. They have wormed their way into all the important activities of German life and had become rich at the expense of the German people. There were still 800,000 of these bad Jews in Germany. On the other hand other countries such as France and Great Britain had the good Jews and it was because of this fact that these countries had failed to understand the strong feeling against the Jews in Germany and the necessity for Germany to rid itself of them.

Bonnet explained to Ribbentrop that he had no wish to mix into German internal affairs but that Germany was creating a problem for other countries by forcing them to accept people whom Ribbentrop himself had referred to as bad Jews and that the settlement of this problem would be greatly facilitated by some cooperation from Germany. Ribbentrop had thereupon admitted that the problem was an international one and had stated that he had recently heard Hitler himself refer to it as an international problem. Bonnet asked whether the German Government would be willing to facilitate the handling of this problem by allotting to the Jews forced out of Germany foreign exchange representing the value of their property confiscated in Germany. Ribbentrop replied that Germany had no foreign exchange and that the most that could be done would be to let refugees take with them in reichsmarks a percentage of the value of their property.

Bonnet said that he had then asked Ribbentrop if the German Government would agree to send a representative to meet representatives of the London Refugee Committee informally on some neutral territory to discuss the whole problem. After some discussion Ribbentrop had agreed that a representative of the German Government "who would not be a Jew" should meet in some neutral country with French, British and American representatives from the London Committee, it being understood that such a meeting would be absolutely personal and unofficial. Zurich had been mentioned as a possible

meeting place. I asked if any date was in mind for such a meeting. Bonnet said not as yet.

Bonnet emphasized that Ribbentrop's willingness to have Germany represented at such an unofficial meeting should be kept secret. If it leaked into the press that would be the end of the matter. He said that I had undoubtedly noticed that in the statements and information given to the press during the Ribbentrop visit no mention had been made of discussion on the refugee problem. Ribbentrop had insisted upon this stating that if any report was published that he had discussed the refugee problem he would immediately deny it. Bonnet said that upon leaving the Hotel Crillon the afternoon of December 7 he had therefore informed the press that the conversation had been about economic questions; in point of fact there had not been a word said about economic questions and the hour's conversation which he had had with Ribbentrop on that occasion had been devoted solely to two problems: the refugees and the question of Spain.⁹⁴

I remarked that I had heard stories to the effect that Ribbentrop had been pretty brutal in what he had said about the Jews, that he had stated that they would be treated as criminals in Germany and that he had refused to consider doing anything to assist in handling this problem. Bonnet said that while Ribbentrop had spoken at length "in a tone which can be readily imagined" of the "bad Jews" in Germany he had not placed them in the category of criminals and he had agreed to have Germany represented in the personal and unofficial meeting to which reference is made above. Bonnet said that he had obtained the impression that Ribbentrop personally regretted the way in which the German authorities had treated the Jewish problem recently and that Ribbentrop would be disposed to assist in so far as he could in efforts to handle this problem on a more reasonable basis.

WILSON

840.48 Refugees/1119 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 15, 1938—9 p. m.
[Received December 15—5:40 p. m.]

1440. Personal for the Acting Secretary from Rublee. My 1437 [1436], December 15, 2 p. m. The meeting took place as arranged. Schacht presented his plan orally saying that it had the approval of Goering and was the best that could be put forward, although it did not necessarily exclude other plans, if a better could be found. The

⁹⁴ See pp. 149 ff.

atmosphere of the meeting was extremely agreeable and it concluded by Schacht assuring me that I would be welcome in Berlin, if it was found that the plan presented a basis for discussion. Schacht did not say that the plan was a "take it or leave it" proposition but said that whatever observations we might have should be presented quickly because otherwise he did not know what would happen to the Jewish community in Germany. I explained that, of course, we would have to take it up with the governments, notably the American and British Governments, which would entail some delay but I hoped that I could give some indication of our attitude very rapidly.

Briefly, the plan as outlined was as follows. Schacht said there were 600,000 Jews in all under the Nuremberg laws in Germany, that 200,000 were old people who would have to remain in Germany, that 250,000 were women and children, and that the remaining 150,000 were workers. The plan contemplated the emigration of 150,000 workers over a period of 3 years at the rate of 50,000 a year.

Schacht said that the Jewish property in Germany amounted to approximately 6 milliards of marks. The plan contemplated that 1 milliard 500 million marks should be put in trust with trustees, one of whom would be a Jew. The Jews outside of Germany would have to raise a loan of the equivalent of 1 milliard 500 million marks in foreign currency either all at one time or in three annual installments. The loan would bear interest at 4 percent and would be amortized at the rate of 2 percent annually. Interest and presumably amortization would be used to buy German goods in Germany. Schacht said that Germany would not concede one cent out of the proceeds of its exports. He also said that as a condition of the plan persecution of Jews would cease.

As the plan was presented orally and no written memorandum was left by Schacht, Winterton is calling a meeting tomorrow morning at which Leith-Ross and other Treasury and Foreign Office representatives would be present when points which may be obscure will be clarified and the strategy of dealing with the other governments and the German Government will be mapped out. I shall report more fully after this meeting. [Rublee.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/1121: Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 16, 1938—3 p. m.
[Received December 16—11:30 a. m.]

1441. From Rublee. At the meeting held at Winterton's office this morning it was decided that two committees should be set up im-

mediately with me as chairman. The first committee should consist of governmental financial experts representing the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, and possibly Sweden. The second should consist of prominent Jews representing the American, British, French and Dutch Jewish communities, to which might be added representatives of the church group who are more particularly interested in the fate of the non-Aryans. I am taking steps immediately to consult with the French and the Dutch. The British have designated Leith-Ross and it is very important that a qualified American should serve on the committee. You will know best who should be given this responsibility, although it occurred to me that Butterworth⁹⁵ might be qualified to serve. It is also essential that some representative of American Jewry who has financial experience, should be selected to serve on the second committee. Possibly you would wish to get in touch with the President's Advisory Committee and ask them to designate a representative who is now in Europe and would be prepared to take part in the discussions which must begin in the early part of next week.

Schacht impressed upon me the importance of reaching a decision as soon as possible in view of the uncertain situation in Germany. [Rublee.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/1121 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, December 16, 1938—7 p. m.

790. For Rublee. Your 1441, December 16, 3 p. m.

(1) I feel very strongly that it would be inadvisable to have an American official serve on the first Committee that you mentioned, quite apart from the fact that there is no qualified official available for immediate service.

(2) It might be possible to arrange for an American banker to serve on this Committee but he would have no more than a general knowledge of the financial technicalities involved, without background of Treasury procedure, Treasury opinion, or the considerations of policy of interest to other branches of our Government. I therefore see no immediate advantage in trying to arrange for the attendance of an American banker though if you feel strongly on the point I shall be glad to give this possibility further consideration.

(3) As soon as the detailed plan foreshadowed in your 1440 has been received we shall arrange for a joint conference of State and Treas-

⁹⁵ William W. Butterworth, Jr., Second Secretary of Embassy in the United Kingdom.

ury officials to consider the points involved and will telegraph you without delay our reaction.

(4) With regard to the second Committee mentioned in your 1441, we are already in touch with the President's Advisory Committee in New York and will telegraph you as soon as it has agreed to designate a representative.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1129 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 18, 1938—4 p. m.
[Received December 18—12:30 p. m.]

1447. From Rublee. We have consulted privately with prominent Jewish leaders here and have heard from the Jewish leaders in Paris. They are categorically opposed to the setting up of a private committee which would lend an air of credulity to the idea that there is such a thing as world Jewry. They believe that the matter should be considered exclusively by the governments. Accordingly I have decided to drop the idea of a private committee which was urged upon me by Winterton and with regard to which I have had some hesitation.

The meeting of technical representatives of the governments will take place on Tuesday morning. The French and Dutch have appointed representatives and Leith-Ross will represent the British. I assume that you will acquaint me with the views of our Government in advance of its meeting. [Rublee.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/1119 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson)

WASHINGTON, December 19, 1938—8 p. m.

798. For Rublee and Taylor. Your 1440 and 1442⁹⁶ of December 15th and 16th. We have been in close touch with both the Treasury and the President's Advisory Committee with relation to Schacht's plan.

(1) No one who has been consulted believes that it would be possible to raise the sum mentioned, or even an appreciable part of it, under the terms outlined. The plan is generally considered as asking the world to pay a ransom for the release of hostages in Germany and to barter human misery for increased exports.

⁹⁶ Latter not printed.

(2) An analysis of the plan would indicate that Germany would be making no present contribution whatsoever, and even her ultimate contribution would never be more than allocating some foreign exchange resulting from extra exports to meet interest and amortization on vast sums raised abroad. Even this is not a clear cut contribution as in return Germany would be converting refugees and subscribers to the bonds into potential sales agents for German goods in foreign markets.

(3) From a more technical point of view it is difficult to see how Germany can give the subscribers to the bonds a direct lien on the portion of the Jewish property held in trust. At best the bonds would seem to be issued on a contingent basis, namely that interest and amortization would only be paid if, as and when the necessary sum was raised by extra German exports. Further, the question arises whether acceptance of this scheme would involve relinquishment by the individual emigrant of title to his property and sanction of the principle of confiscation by all concerned.

(4) Neither Advisory Committee, Treasury nor the State Department feels that the plan holds out any hope of acceptability. On the other hand, we realize that we must proceed with care lest by summary rejection, the plight of the Jews in Germany be made even more serious. It is accordingly suggested that you merely emphasize the feeling of all groups that subscriptions to these bonds would not be forthcoming on the basis of Schacht's plan.

(5) Not by way of instructions but to show you the way in which our minds are running, we should add that the general feeling is that if once a concrete plan for settling refugees were worked out far more money would be subscribed as a straight loan to some central committee, not bearing interest and to be repaid ultimately by the individual refugees when they are in a position to do so, this loan to have no connection with Germany, German exports or the liquidation of refugee property in Germany. We shall develop this thought in a later telegram.⁹⁷

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1119½ : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, December 21, 1938—6 p. m.

802. For Taylor and Rublee. Department's 798, December 19, 8 p. m. The following is an effort to develop the suggestion in point 5 of the telegram under reference :

⁹⁷ See *infra*.

We estimate, from information which you also have, that the current rate of admission of refugees from Germany into other countries for permanent residence is in excess of 80,000 per year and that this rate is rapidly increasing. This movement is taking place on the financial basis of what the refugees are now allowed to take with them from Germany, plus a small amount of actual financial assistance from relatives, friends, or charitable organizations, plus the system of affidavits of support. We are confident that this rate could be substantially increased by the creation of a fund to be used for two purposes: (1) the financing of specific group settlement projects in new areas, and (2) the making of loans to emigrants having no other means or assurance of support at so much per person up to a fixed moderate maximum per family (for example 500 dollars per person with a maximum of 2500 dollars per family). This financing might be carried out along the following lines:

A central financial organization with headquarters at London and agencies in other countries might be created under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Committee. The officers of this organization would be men of the highest caliber and qualifications to act as trustees and administrators of a very large resettlement fund. The organization would be empowered to negotiate for, to solicit and to receive contributions from any source. It would be the focal point for all efforts to raise funds for resettlement purposes and the repository of all funds so raised. While the manner of raising such funds is a question for consideration by your Committee of financial experts, we are inclined to favor provision whereby the organization, after it should have obtained by gift a specified very considerable amount of unencumbered capital (i. e. capital fully at the disposal of the organization without obligation to repay but with obligation to conserve as far as possible and to use for the purposes of the trust) would have power to issue long-term debentures perhaps bearing a low rate of interest, payable only in case the interest received during the preceding half year on the organization's loans be sufficient for the purpose. Provision could also be made for retirement of the obligations by lot as principal payments were received. The obligations could be issued in any denomination in any major currency, and should be issued only in connection with special offerings of new "senior" or preferential capital which would have priority as to possible earnings over the original unencumbered capital obtained by gifts and any later additions to such unencumbered capital by gifts specifically indicated as capital gifts.

The financing of group settlement projects might be undertaken through loans by the central financial organization to separate entities, new or existing and governmental or private, which would be

responsible to the central organization for the carrying out of the specific projects with which they were entrusted and for repayment of the sums loaned. The terms of loans to individuals would be determined by the central organization and it is assumed that the terms would be extremely liberal and would allow the emigrant ample time to establish himself before any payments would be required.

No definite commitment could be made as to the amount of the fund which might be raised for this purpose, but an initial drive might be made for 50 million dollars of unencumbered capital to be appropriately apportioned between the countries in which the money might most probably be raised. This amount would be sufficient to provide actual, if limited, capital or settlement for at least 100,000 persons who would otherwise leave Germany destitute. The raising of a similar amount by debentures would provide for an additional hundred thousand persons.

Such a system would bear no relation to liquidation of property in Germany and would not impair whatever title the refugee may have to his property there. Furthermore, it would not be dependent for repayment upon increased German exports.

It is noted that the Schacht Plan makes no provision for the maintenance of old persons or others unable to leave Germany. Charitable organizations in this and other countries have been sending large amounts of money to Germany for the relief of such persons. While it is important not to recognize the principle of confiscation by making specific suggestions as to the use of property taken from persons in Germany, emigrants might well be permitted to contribute such portions of their property as they desire to a fund for the maintenance of persons unable to leave Germany. This would appear both more appropriate and more practicable than the use of such funds for payment of interest and amortization on a foreign loan.

The most natural use for the mark funds of individual emigrants is in the purchase of supplies indispensable for their resettlement, including clothing, personal effects, farm implements or other tools, and similar requisites. Permission by the German Government for emigrants to use their funds for the purchase, either before or after departure, of these requisites in reasonable amounts for their own use would naturally involve practically no foreign exchange and would be of great assistance in meeting the problem of resettlement.

We consider that the foregoing conception of the creation outside Germany of a large resettlement fund and of the use of emigrants' funds in Germany for charitable purposes and for the purchase by them of necessary goods for their own use might be worked out as a counter proposal to that made by Schacht. From the German point of view this scheme would have the primary objection of not assisting

German exports other than of goods for the personal use of the emigrants. We feel strongly, however, that no system which made the refugees agents for German goods or which assisted Germany to profit by its campaign of persecution could be accepted. Under the Schacht proposal Germany would not receive any foreign exchange for the additional exports resulting from its operation. A proposal such as that outlined above would not require any additional contribution in foreign exchange beyond the minute amount now allowed to certain refugees (any reduction of which would naturally result in a corresponding deceleration of the emigration rate) and would allow Germany to retain all foreign exchange accruing from a legitimate development of her regular exports. The export of goods for the personal use of emigrants is unobjectionable and, in view of the large numbers of persons leaving Germany, might be substantial.

The boycott being wholly unofficial, obviously no commitment could be made concerning it. Nevertheless the attainment of a just and reasonable solution of the German refugee problem should materially improve sentiment and would thus tend to increase German exports more than any conceivable proposal along the lines of the Schacht plan.

We would like your opinion, and that of the British, French and Dutch experts as to the means of raising such a resettlement fund and as to the feasibility of negotiating further with the Germans along these lines, involving perhaps an expression to the Germans that we considered Schacht's proposal the basis of discussion. Considerations of strategy might suggest the advisability of making the undertaking to raise such a fund conditional upon cessation of persecution in Germany, assurance of humane maintenance for persons unable to leave Germany, and the cooperation of the German Government in facilitating the mechanics of orderly emigration.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1169 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 22, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received December 22—1:45 p. m.]

1461. From Rublee. We have heard confidentially from Lobo who says that he has received his instructions in preparation for the full meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee and that they are most disappointing. His Government, which he believed would take approximately 5,000 involuntary emigrants a year for the next 3 years, now states that it merely will take 3,000 in all, on condition that

they are proven agriculturalists and possess the sum of 500 pounds each plus fares and settlement expenses. Lobo adds that he has not been instructed to accept a vice chairmanship. His instructions merely state that he should serve as Brazilian delegate. His general conclusion based on conversations with several Latin American representatives is that it would be useless to hold a full meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee unless there is a radical change in the situation. [Ruble.]

JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/1181 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, December 28, 1938—3 p. m.

[Received 5:20 p. m.]

1465. Personal for the President and the Acting Secretary of State from Myron Taylor. In reviewing the history of the Intergovernmental Committee, we must recognize that our original objectives were:

(1) to organize and hold a meeting of a committee consisting of the representatives of the 32 governments which had agreed to participate;

(2) to create a permanent organization;

(3) to persuade the representative of a foreign government, preferably the British Government since it has most to offer in the way of places of settlement, to serve as chairman;

(4) to secure the active collaboration of several of the principal governments through their acceptance of vice chairmanships, i. e. France, the Netherlands, Brazil, Argentina, in addition to the United States;

(5) to appoint a director and assistant director;

(6) to secure a British secretary;

(7) to establish a permanent office in London for the purposes (a) of undertaking negotiations with the German Government to effect an orderly emigration over a period of time which would permit the absorption of involuntary emigrants in countries of final settlement in reasonable circumstances and to arrange for the transfer of the assets of involuntary emigrants to the fullest extent possible in order that they might be more easily established in their new homes on a self supporting basis, and (b) of negotiating with the governments of the countries of settlement the establishment of involuntary emigrants in permanent homes.

We can record that the Intergovernmental Committee was established; that the permanent office was created with the desired personnel and that some progress has been made in negotiation with the countries of final settlement. In addition, through the Committee

and the Director's office the attention of the governments which had lagged but little behind the private organizations, has been focused on the urgency of the problem; the serious nature of the refugee situation has been kept before the public in the principal countries; the activity in behalf of refugees has been centralized; the committee has served as a focal point for the settlement of innumerable daily problems which added up make a splendid showing. Moreover, Rublee has been indefatigable in appraising the highly complex general problem and in formulating plans for the immediate infiltration of refugees and long range plans of settlement. No one has been turned away from the Director's door, with the result that his office is perhaps between [*better?*] informed that [*than?*] any other agency on the daily developments in the refugee problem and the schemes which are afoot for its solution.

In the meantime, thousands of refugees have left Germany, some to obtain temporary refuge in the countries surrounding the Reich, others to proceed in small groups to places of final settlement. The British Government, which at the outset adopted a largely negative attitude, is now making a substantial contribution, taking children in large numbers from Germany, according refuge to transmigrants, absorbing selected persons at a rate which almost equals the rate of the American quota and opening up portions of its colonial empire to long range settlement. To this must be added the contributions of the Dominions. Thus, Canada is taking more of these persons than is generally known. Australia has decided to take immigrants at the rate of 5000 a year for the next 3 years and of this number at least 3000 a year will be involuntary emigrants from Germany and Austria. Other countries, which I shall not enumerate, have been making substantial contributions in the way of granting temporary refuge to transmigrants and of absorbing immigrants in greater numbers for final settlement.

In short, our Government's initiative has materialized in a greater movement of refugees, a greater public interest and sympathy in the question, a greater showing of support of the private organizations in the form of contributions and a greater pressure on the governments to act.

We have encountered difficulty only with regard to the negotiations with Germany, but Schacht's visit to London has removed this difficulty and laid the bases for negotiations with the German Government. Rublee, as you know, has been consulting the principal governments and is now assured of support to the extent that he has notified Schacht that he plans to be in Berlin on January 5 for the purpose of exploring with the German Government the methods of emigrating refugees from Germany in an orderly manner and of financing this emigra-

tion. The work of the Committee and its Director in the period immediately ahead is therefore clear. Rublee will explore every avenue of accord with the Germans and establish either that they will contribute a part to the general solution or that nothing positive is to be expected of them. I believe that Rublee should be given the freest possible hand in these conversations, since of course he must report any result back to the full Committee for the approval of the participating governments.

Rublee's report, which will record success or partial success or no success, will form the subject matter of the full Committee meeting some time in January. If Rublee is successful the Committee will have to remain in session until agreement is reached between the participating governments on the terms of refuge and settlement of the involuntary emigrants who must leave Germany during the 3-year period proposed by Schacht. If Rublee has been unable to reach a satisfactory agreement with the Germans the Committee will have to determine how the outside nations are to deal, irrespective of action by Germany, with the refugee problem. In any event there will be adequate material for discussion so that the Committee will not have to fall back on general statement of facts which at best would constitute a repetition of the statements made at Evian.

The full Committee moreover will have to consider a reorganization of the machinery. Rublee made it plain to you and to me when he accepted the office of Director that he could only occupy this function for a limited period. He will wish to withdraw at the end of the German negotiation, that is to say after he has presented his report to the full Committee. A successor will have to be chosen and I believe that the other governments will expect us to indicate a choice.

In this connection we have reached the conclusion that the time has come to place a greater share of responsibility for the actual direction of the work of the Committee on British shoulders. Britain is the greatest colonial power and has the land available for settlement. London is the seat of the Committee. The city of London is best suited to the purposes of a refugee settlement and economic corporation. Winterton, it is true, is chairman but his position is largely honorary. What is needed is a British director who will assume real responsibility.

There is the further consideration that we have made the most of our contribution, namely, that we are taking a full quota of refugees from Germany and Austria. Unless we have something further to offer of a specific nature, and our instructions do not indicate that we have anything concrete in view, we shall be compelled to take a less conspicuous part in the search for places of settlement, although

we shall still have a commanding position in the Committee through the vice chairmanship and vice directorship.

With these ideas in mind, we have looked over the field since my coming here and have been most impressed by the personality, experience and drive of the new League High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Emerson. He enjoys the full confidence of those in highest authority here, is a trained administrator (he was for many years Governor of the Punjab) and is mastering every detail of the refugee situation. We can think of no one better suited to continue Rublee's work. The fact must not be overlooked, moreover, that to substitute a new man at this time who will be wholly unacquainted with the details of the problem would involve a waste of time, of money and possibly of human lives.

In making this recommendation, with which Rublee is in full accord, I do not overlook the fact that there is a certain difficulty from our point of view arising from the fact that Emerson is technically an official appointed by the League. What I propose, however, is that the functions of the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee and League Commissioner should be combined merely in the person of Emerson. The activities would be kept distinct. Emerson, on the one hand, would have his League offices and assistants to deal with questions relating to countries of refuge and liaison with the private organizations. On the other hand, Pell would continue, for a time at least, as Vice Director for the Intergovernmental Committee, maintaining the liaison with the governments of the countries of settlement. This solution would, it seems to me, contribute to greater efficiency, would avoid overlapping and duplication of authority and yet would preserve the independent and interdependent relationship of the Intergovernmental Committee and the League.

It must be kept in mind, furthermore, that the work of the Committee is about to enter upon a third stage where a large part of the work will be administrative and will have to be handled by a refugee, economic, or financial corporation which will carry on the great administrative task involved as well as the control of the vast funds which will be necessary for purposes of settlement. Clearly, whether Germany contributes a guarantee or not, such an organization, which might be called the International Resettlement Foundation, will have to be created. It will be a long term activity which should not fall on the shoulders of the governments.

I should appreciate it if you would give the solution outlined above your very careful consideration and inform me as soon as practicable whether it meets with your approval. I should like this information in order to take steps to come to an agreement with the British and

others while Rublee is in Berlin in order that the full meeting of the Committee may hear not only Rublee's report but receive a concrete recommendation with regard to its future work.

This telegram has the endorsement of Rublee and Pell. [Taylor.]
JOHNSON

840.48 Refugees/1181 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)

WASHINGTON, December 30, 1938—5 p. m.

816. For Myron Taylor. Your 1465, December 28, 3 p. m. The President and I see considerable merit in the idea of letting Sir Herbert Emerson succeed Rublee after the conclusion of the meeting of the full committee provided we can be certain that the work of the committee will be carried forward with full vigor and that it will not become a subsidiary of the League High Commission. We appreciate greatly what Rublee has done and will note his resignation with very real regret. If, however, Emerson is elected Director, the possession by the British of both the Chairmanship and the Directorship would seem to give them too great a predominance as opposed to the United States which would have only a Vice Chairman and the Assistant Director. In the circumstances, do you feel that Winterton would be willing, if approached tactfully, to surrender the Chairmanship to you, thus creating a more or less even balance between the two national influences? It is obvious that Pell should remain on for 4 or 5 months at least with the new Director. However, we are anxious to have him return to the Department as soon as practicable and will be prepared to select another competent man to succeed him as Assistant Director.

Please let us have your views as soon as possible.

WELLES

840.48 Refugees/1199 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Italy (Phillips)

WASHINGTON, December 30, 1938—7 p. m.

133. Taylor and Rublee have suggested⁹⁸ that the approach that you are to make to Mussolini⁹⁹ should be somewhat modified as a result of the forthcoming visit of Rublee to Berlin. We have ap-

⁹⁸ In telegrams Nos. 1472 and 1473, December 28, 11 p. m., and December 29, 6 p. m., respectively, from the Chargé in the United Kingdom; not printed.

⁹⁹ See draft letter of December 7, from President Roosevelt to the Chief of the Italian Government, p. 858.

proved their suggestion that you should omit from the memorandum¹ references to a possible financial contribution to be made by the United States, and that you should refrain in conversation with the Duce from mentioning any numbers of refugees, or specific amounts required for financing their emigration.

On the other hand, we have rejected a recommendation of Taylor and Rublee that you also delete a reference to the President's suggestion that emigrants be permitted to purchase the necessary supplies in Germany for colonization; we feel that it might be useful for Mussolini to have a tangible thought on which to open the question with the Germans, and a thought on which his influence might usefully be brought to bear.

The memorandum should accordingly be changed to read as follows: Omit paragraph 2; rewrite paragraphs 4 and 5² to read as follows:

"Of great importance is the German attitude on this question. The Chief of the Government has undoubtedly heard that Dr. Schacht, during his recent visit to London, established a formal contact with the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee and put forward certain proposals of a specific character relating to the organization of emigration from Germany over a specific period of years and to the financing of this emigration. At the invitation of the German Government, the Director now plans to visit Berlin early in the New Year for the purpose of continuing the discussions. An essential point of the financial discussions will be the difficulty of procuring foreign exchange in sufficient quantities to allow the emigrants to have cash in hand. The President has suggested that this difficulty might be met, at least in part, by permitting refugee emigrants to spend their German marks within Germany to a sufficient extent to provide themselves with supplies indispensable for their resettlement, as, for instance, farm implements, clothing, and other requisites. If the German Government would permit emigrants from Germany to take from that country such articles for their use, up to a sufficient per capita value, the exchange difficulty would, of course, be greatly lessened.

"It is the earnest hope of the President of the United States that he may count upon the friendly interest of the Chief of the Italian Government in a general and satisfactory solution of this international problem."

WELLES

¹ *Ante*, p. 859.

² i. e., the last two paragraphs, formerly the 5th and 6th before the omission of former paragraph 2.

DECISION BY COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS
TO POSTPONE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE ¹

500.C112/1317 : Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Harrison) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, January 29, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received January 29—6:06 a. m.]

1090. My 1089, October 6, 10 a. m.² In view of the fact that many states including some of the chief military powers have still not defined their attitude to the principle of a convention on publicity for national defense expenditure the Council yesterday unanimously decided to postpone fixing the date for a new meeting of the Bureau until the next ordinary session of the Council.

HARRISON

500.C112/1345 : Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Harrison) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, May 11, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received May 11—2:45 p. m.]

1091. Reference 1090, January 29, 11 a. m. The Council today decided that the Bureau should meet during the session of the Assembly in September, the exact date to be fixed by the Secretary General.

HARRISON

500.C111/1067

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

No. 335 Political

GENEVA, September 2, 1938.

[Received September 9.]

SIR: . . .

Disarmament.

The Assembly will have before it the replies of the governments on the two proposals contained in the Assembly's resolution of Sep-

¹ For previous correspondence, see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. 1, pp. 1 ff.

² Not printed; see telegram No. 1086, September 17, 1937, 2 p. m., from the Consul at Geneva, and footnote 45, *ibid.*, p. 23.

tember 30, 1937,³ namely (a) the conclusion of an international convention on the publicity of national defense expenditures, and (b) the examination of internal measures for the supervision of the manufacture and trade in arms, ammunitions and implements of war.

I am informed by a member of the Secretariat that the Third Committee of the Assembly will be constituted again this year to consider the disarmament questions on the agenda or any other aspects of disarmament which may be raised during the Assembly. The Bureau of the Disarmament Conference, in accordance with a decision taken by the League Council on May 11, 1938,⁴ will also hold a meeting during the session of the Assembly to consider the situation as regards the two questions referred to above.

The Secretariat, so I have been informed in confidence, has been giving consideration to the question as to whether the Third Committee or the Bureau should meet first. This question of procedure has some significance as regards the continuation of efforts on those aspects of disarmament which have been proposed or may be proposed as being at present susceptible of further development. The Secretariat is inclined to the opinion that if the Bureau meets first nothing will come of it and serious consideration of these questions will be further retarded. On the other hand, if the Third Committee meets first, it may give new directives to the Bureau and contribute a certain impetus to its further efforts. Stated in another way, if the powers (Great Britain and France presumably having the controlling voice) decide that the Bureau meet first, this may be considered as an indication that they are not prepared to pursue these questions further at the present time. On the other hand, a decision on their part for the prior meeting of the Third Committee would tend to indicate a desire to keep the matter alive.

Respectfully yours,

HOWARD BUCKNELL, JR.

500.C111/1068 : Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Harrison) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 12, 1938—10 a. m.

[Received September 12—6:35 a. m.]

1092. Avenol⁵ informs me in confidence that as now planned and in order to avoid embarrassment item 27 on the agenda concerning

³ League of Nations, *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 169, p. 138.

⁴ League of Nations, *Official Journal*, May-June 1938, p. 318.

⁵ Joseph Avenol, Secretary General of the League of Nations.

bombing from the air will be referred to the Bureau of Disarmament Conference.

HARRISON

500.C111/1074 : Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Harrison) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 14, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received 2:30 p. m.]

1093. My 1092, September 12, 10 a. m. In the Third Committee this morning the President announced that the replies of governments on the question of the publicity of national defense expenditure would be considered by the Bureau of the Disarmament Conference which would meet before the end of the Assembly. He also announced that the replies on national control of manufacture of and trade in arms would be considered by the Third Committee and suggested that the Committee recommend that governments again be approached on this question as many had not replied.

A Secretariat note⁶ giving a brief history of the question of the protection of civilian population from air bombing was circulated and it was agreed to hold a general discussion of this subject. Documents mailed.

HARRISON

500.C1113/91 : Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Harrison) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 27, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received September 27—1:30 p. m.]

1098. My 1097, September 24, 1 p. m.⁷ Drafting Committee has completed draft report and resolutions which will be considered by the Third Committee tomorrow morning.

Confidentially informed by Aghnides⁸ that many delegates are opposed to meeting of Bureau of Disarmament Conference at this time and that Council will probably take decision postponing meeting.

HARRISON

⁶ September 13, 1938, *Protection of the Civilian Non-Combatant Population Against Air Bombing in Case of War* (A.III./3.1938).

⁷ Not printed.

⁸ Thanassis Aghnides, Director of the Disarmament Section, League of Nations Secretariat.

500.A15A4 Steering Committee/592 : Telegram

The Minister in Switzerland (Harrison) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 30, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received September 30—2:50 p. m.]

1101. Reference my 1098, September 27, 5 p. m. second paragraph. Council in private meeting this afternoon authorized Secretary General to call meeting of the Bureau at a more propitious time.⁹

HARRISON

⁹ No further meeting of the Bureau of the Disarmament Conference was called.

PROTOCOL SIGNED JUNE 30, 1938, BY THE UNITED STATES, FRANCE, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM PROVIDING FOR NAVAL ESCALATION UNDER THE TREATY OF MARCH 25, 1936¹

500.A15A5 Construction/113

Memorandum by Mr. Robert T. Pell of the Division of European Affairs

[WASHINGTON,] February 14, 1938.

The reply, dated February 12, 1938,² of the Japanese to our note of February 5,³ querying them with regard to reported construction in naval vessels in excess of the limits provided in the London Naval Treaty, 1936,⁴ neither furnishes the information requested nor establishes a concrete basis for naval discussion with them. The Japanese state that they "cannot but consider that the discussion suggested by your government would not conduce in any measure to the realization of their desires concerning disarmament."

Accordingly, under provisions of the naval treaty, the next step will be consultation with the other Parties to the London Treaty—that is, Great Britain and Dominions, and France—to determine whether there should be escalation and, if it is decided to escalate, the degree of escalation.

Escalation may take place under either Article 25 or Article 26 of the London Naval Treaty, or both. The basis for escalation under Article 25 is the authorization, construction or acquisition by a power not a party to the treaty of a vessel not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions as to standard displacement and armament provided by Articles 4, 5 and 7 of the treaty.

The basis for escalation under Article 26 is a change of circumstance materially affecting the national security of a high contracting party.

Evidently, since the exact nature of construction by Japan has not been established without question, there is a definite advantage in proceeding under Article 26, citing the refusal of Japan to furnish information with regard to its naval construction as a circumstance materially affecting national security.

¹ For correspondence relating to the treaty of March 25, 1936, see *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, pp. 22 ff.

² *Foreign Relations*, Japan, 1931-1941, vol. I, p. 304.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

⁴ Department of State Treaty Series No. 919, or 50 Stat. 1363.

In any event, one party to the treaty must notify that it is its intention to escalate, specifically to depart for the current year from the annual program of construction. We could take this initiative but there is a decided advantage in waiting on the British who will thus give the lead to greater naval construction.

Thereafter, under the provisions of the treaty, the "High Contracting Parties shall consult together" with a view—Article 26—to agreement as to whether any departures are necessary in order to meet the situation or—Article 25—with a view to reducing to a minimum the extent of the departures to be made.

It will be seen that in this consultation there will be scope for considerable negotiation. It is imperative therefore, that in advance of consultation this Government should have clearly in mind what it proposes to suggest and the extent to which it will escalate. This Department, which will have the immediate responsibility of the consultation, should have a specific indication from the Navy Department of its desiderata in this respect.

500.A15A5 Construction/115

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of
European Affairs (Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] February 16, 1938.

The French Chargé d'Affaires, Jules Henry, called on me this afternoon to read me a telegram he had just received from Paris. This was to the effect that the French were viewing with some concern the prospect of escalation by the British and Americans following the recent Japanese note declining to communicate the qualitative nature of their future building programs. Great Britain was tied by special treaties, to which France had consented, with Russia and Germany. If Britain should now resume qualitative freedom in building, Russia and Germany might well follow suit, not to mention Italy. France would have to base her building program on action taken by Germany and Italy. She had, therefore, every interest in seeing that the proposed escalation was as moderate as possible and requested very much that before taking any final action the American Government would consult the French Government.

I replied to Monsieur Henry that no move had been made to date. We were expecting to be approached by the British Government because Great Britain must prepare her estimates by March the first. We were not under the same pressure for speed as our building situation was as follows: the present naval bill was merely an authorizing bill increasing the amount which might subsequently be appropriated for without new enabling legislation by 20% over existing levels.

Only after this authorizing bill was passed would we ask for specific appropriations. In any event, action must be taken before May 1st when we must under the terms of the London Naval Treaty inform the co-signatories of our building plans.

Meanwhile, I could assure Monsieur Henry that before taking final action we would discuss the matter with the French Government.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

500.A15A5 Construction/112 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, February 18, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received February 18—3:25 p. m.]

143. My 136, February 16, 7 p. m.⁶ The Foreign Office advises me informally that in consultation with the Admiralty they have been giving very detailed consideration to the Japanese reply to our notes delivered at Tokyo on February 5. They hope to have informal discussions with ourselves and the French early next week in regard to future policy and action. The Foreign Office says that the British Government assume and hope that no action will be taken by the United States until an exchange of views can be effected.

JOHNSON

500.A15A5 Construction/124 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, March 1, 1938—10 p. m.
[Received March 1—7:39 p. m.]

174. My 166, February 28, noon.⁶

1. At the meeting this evening there were present Sir Robert Vansittart⁷ and two Foreign Office officials, Lord Chatfield, Captain Phillips of the Admiralty, M. Cambon⁸ and French Naval Attaché, Captain Willson⁹ and Millard.¹⁰

2. The British officials said that the Japanese Ambassador on his own initiative had called at the Foreign Office and asked what assurances regarding naval construction the Japanese could give to elimi-

⁶ Not printed.

⁷ Chief Diplomatic Adviser in the British Foreign Office.

⁸ Counselor of the French Embassy in the United Kingdom.

⁹ Captain Russell Willson, American Naval Attaché in the United Kingdom.

¹⁰ Hugh Millard, First Secretary of the American Embassy in the United Kingdom.

nate the necessity for escalation which would be satisfactory. The Foreign Office had replied tentatively that any assurances must be acceptable to all three London treaty powers and communicated to them, and (a) must indicate that the Japanese Government have not constructed, are not constructing, and have no present intention during the period of the treaty of constructing any ships outside the treaty limits; (b) must be supplemented by figures of maximum tonnages in the categories and the maximum calibre of guns; (c) due warning must be given of departures from these assurances. Commenting on the above M. Cambon suggested that to the foregoing be added a request for an assurance that Japan would not build non-treaty vessels for other powers. The British for their part accepted this idea.

3. In commenting on the above proposals the point was made by the British representatives that in their opinion it would be possible and in fact probably desirable to escalate without delay and to proceed with any discussion concerning this possibility during the 3 months period provided by the treaty before the escalation becomes effective.

4. The Japanese Ambassador had asked whether in such an arrangement Japan would reciprocally be given similar information. The Foreign Office replied that they saw no objection.

5. The Japanese Ambassador asked if publications would be necessary. The Foreign Office replied that Parliament would have to be informed at least to the effect that the assurances given were satisfactory but that it would not be necessary to publish figures.

6. The Foreign Office said this interview was highly confidential and if it became public any chance of success would be lost. After the meeting the Foreign Office said privately to the American representatives that they at least "knew" that the Japanese Ambassador had reported his conversation to Tokyo. They were not hopeful that anything would come of it but asked (a) whether the United States thought the conversations should continue, and particularly asked for an early reply; (b) whether the United States Government had been approached in a similar sense.

7. The French Counselor said he fully approved continuance of conversations.

8. Lord Chatfield said as regards escalation and speaking informally the Admiralty regarded capital ships as the dominant question and only desired to consider escalation in that category for the present. These were merely his "first reflections". He did not mention gun calibres.

9. M. Cambon read a statement, a translation of which is given in paragraph 11.

10. Lord Chatfield asked what was the United States Government's views and he was informed that the Embassy had no instructions. He and Sir Robert Vansittart said they would be grateful if the Embassy could ascertain as soon as possible from the United States Government any views which it would wish to express regarding escalation; if the United States desires to escalate; in what categories of ships and to what figures; and whether the United States Government wishes to escalate alone or simultaneously with Great Britain and/or France. He offered to arrange another meeting as soon as the Embassy received instructions.

11. M. Cambon's statement:

"Given on the one hand the grave consequences which would result to France by the overturning of the Treaty of London which would involve the putting into construction of capital ships of more than 35,000 tons and on the other hand that the French Government has not itself been able to ascertain with certainty that Japan has undertaken or is undertaking such construction, the renewal of the conversations between the signatories of the treaty has led the Counselor of the French Embassy to insist in the name of his Government to the British and American Governments that they be good enough to take note of the consequences which the first departure from the Treaty of 1936 would have upon the naval position of the powers which have decided to observe the provisions of that treaty.

It goes without saying that it is not our thought to suggest a slowing up of any of the armament measures which Great Britain and the United States of America believe necessary to take to assure their national defense.

But the French Government feels confident that they will make all their efforts in order that most of the provisions of the Treaty of London continues unchanged, in so far as concerns the armament of the powers signatory to the treaty or of those which have accepted its provisions."

M.Cambon explained that the last powers referred to were Germany and Russia.

JOHNSON

500.A15A5 Construction/128

*Memorandum by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs
(Moffat)*

[WASHINGTON,] March 4, 1938.

There are two points of view with regard to escalation:

One held by the Navy, the other advocated strongly by Norman Davis.¹¹

¹¹ Mr. Davis had been Chairman of the American delegation at the London Naval Conference; see *Foreign Relations*, 1936, vol. I, pp. 22 ff.

I. The first point of difference is as to whether we should try and negotiate a joint escalation with the British and if possible the French, or whether we should escalate unilaterally.

The Navy prefers to escalate unilaterally because:

(a) In this way we are perfectly certain of complete independence without outside agreements to provide for our national defense as we see fit.

Norman Davis, on the other hand, favors simultaneous escalation on the following grounds:

(a) Having approached the Japanese simultaneously with the British, having received the Japanese answer simultaneously, we should draw the same conclusions and escalate simultaneously. Otherwise we would be out on a limb vis-à-vis Japan.

(b) Psychologically, he felt that it would be a mistake for us to take the initiative in destroying a type of naval limitation for which historically we had a distinct paternity.

(c) If we escalated unilaterally and in all categories of ships and their armament, it would make the future negotiation of a disarmament treaty infinitely more difficult. Mr. Davis believes that ultimately the world will have to come to disarmament and that we should not prejudice the possibility of success along these lines.

II. The second point where there is a difference between the Navy and Mr. Davis is that the latter only wishes to escalate now for such types as we are actually going to build beyond existing treaty limits. The Navy wishes to escalate for all types and then inform the British that it is not our present intention to build in excess of treaty limitations except in the capital ship class.

III. The third point of difference between the Navy and Mr. Davis is that the Navy evidently wish to escalate under Article 25, which reads:

"In the event of any vessel not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions as to standard displacement and armament . . . being authorized, constructed or acquired by a Power not a party to the present Treaty," etc.

Mr. Davis thought we could not certify that such types have in fact been authorized, constructed or acquired by Japan and that we should therefore escalate under Article 26 which reads:

"If the requirements of the national security of any high contracting party should be materially affected by any change of circumstances, et cetera."

It is noted that escalation under Article 26 applies for the current year to annual building programs while under Article 25 the qualitative limits would be lifted from the Treaty for its duration.

P[IERREPONT] M[OFFAT]

500.A15A5 Construction/129

*Memorandum by the Chief of the Division of European Affairs
(Moffat) to the Secretary of State*

[WASHINGTON,] March 5, 1938.

MR. SECRETARY: I telephoned Norman Davis this morning and told him a little of your talk yesterday. He approved the general approach of the draft telegram ¹² we had prepared in Eu ¹³ and brought out the following additional points to which he asked that you give careful consideration:

(1) It would be a sorry contribution we had to make to European appeasement if we were responsible for breaking down all forms of qualitative limitation, and thus freeing German-Russian building from present restrictions.

(2) As the Navy is building as fast as it can at the moment the question of regaining a theoretical freedom is no longer a technical matter to be decided by naval officers, but becomes a matter of high policy where the civilian branch must remain supreme.

(3) The three naval officers whom he considers the most able, namely, Pratt, Hepburn and Stanley, all concur with him that qualitative limitation should be preserved.

(4) Even if we wish to escalate, there is no need to do so at this time; we can always do it if and when we want to, but to come out before the others and carry the entire onus, not for practical reasons but for purely theoretical reasons, seems to him the bankruptcy of statesmanship.

PIERREPONT MOFFAT

500.A15A5 Construction/126a : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, March 5, 1938—3 p. m.

96. Your 174, March 1, 10 p. m. In replying to the points raised in your telegram under reference you should state our position as follows:

1. We wish to invoke the escalator clause in order to exceed the limits of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, with regard to the size and armament of capital ships.

2. We feel that we should proceed under Article 26 of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, on the ground that we believe that the require-

¹² *Infra.*¹³ Division of European Affairs.

ments of our national security are materially affected by the refusal of the Japanese Government to furnish information with regard to its current naval construction program and regarding its plans for future construction.

3. Accordingly, we make the suggestion that each of the signatories of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, should concurrently and simultaneously give notification to each other of intention of departing for the current year from the annual program of construction in size and armament in the capital ship category.

4. It is our view that simultaneous, concurrent escalation by the powers signatories of the Treaty would have a better general effect than escalation by one power acting alone.

5. We hope, therefore, that the discussions now taking place in London with the other signatories of the Naval Treaty will not be protracted beyond a reasonable limit of time in order that any necessity for unilateral escalation may be avoided.

6. We wish it to be understood that action taken this year in departing for the current year from the annual program of construction in size and armament in the capital ship category will not preclude the possibility of departing at any future time during the life of the Treaty from the annual program of construction in size and armament in categories in addition to the capital ship category.

7. With regard to the initiative of the Japanese Ambassador at London concerning further explorations for the purpose of obtaining from the Japanese Government assurances in respect of naval construction, we have no objection if the British wish to continue these discussions during the 3-month period between the time when escalation is announced and it actually goes into effect. We do not, however, wish these discussions to be used as a pretext for delaying escalation.

8. We have received no further communication from the Japanese in regard to their construction program since their reply to our note of February 5. As far as we are concerned this was Japan's final word.

HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/127 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, March 7, 1938—7 p. m.
[Received March 7—3:45 p. m.]

189. Your 96, March 5, 3 p. m. In view of statement in paragraph 5, Naval Attaché suggests following additional information be telegraphed if practicable:

(1) Do we wish to invoke escalator clause for both sub-categories of capital ships or only for sub-category (a)?

(2) Does invoking the escalator clause in regard to armament of capital ships as well as size indicate that we desire to be free to mount guns larger than 16-inch?

(3) Are we prepared to indicate at this time upper limit of size of ships and calibre of guns?

Captain Willson talked informally today with Admiralty experts. They told him that in their opinion and in opinion of legal officers of the Foreign Office qualitative escalation is impossible under article 26 and can be accomplished in time of peace only by making use of article 25. They agree that article 25 does not exactly fit the case but point out that article 26 provides only for departure for the current year from the annual program and that such departure must be within the treaty types. The Admiralty officials suggested an informal meeting between ourselves and the British only for Wednesday afternoon, March 9, at which it was said they expect to discuss the above points.

JOHNSON

500.A15A5 Construction/127: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*¹⁴

WASHINGTON, March 8, 1938—8 p. m.

103. Your 189, March 7, 7 p. m. Replying to the questions raised in your telegram:

1. We wish to invoke the escalator clause for subcategory (a) of capital ships not subcategory (b).

2. By invoking the escalator clause with regard to capital ships we wish to be free to take whatever action may appear to us to be necessary regarding the size of our capital ships and the caliber of guns we may wish to mount on them.

3. We do not desire to fix an upper limit of size of capital ships and the caliber of guns which they may carry.

4. Escalation under Article 25 is open to serious objection. There is no completely convincing evidence that a power not a party to the present treaty has authorized, constructed or acquired a vessel not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions as to standard displacement and armament prescribed by the Naval Treaty. We do believe, however, that the requirements of our national security are definitely affected by the refusal of the Japanese Government to furnish information with regard to its naval construction. We con-

¹⁴ Marginal notation: "OK F.D.R."

strue the words "depart" and "departures" in this article to apply to qualitative limits, as well as the number of ships, in our current program of construction.

5. We note that officials of the British Admiralty have suggested that the meeting on Wednesday take the form of an informal discussion exclusively between the British and ourselves. We believe that it would be advisable, in view of the fact that the discussions were begun on a more general basis, including the French as well as the British and ourselves, to continue on the same general basis, thereby avoiding the appearance that we and the British are attempting to reach some special arrangement exclusive of others.

HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/133 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, March 12, 1938—1 p. m.
[Received March 12—12: 45 p. m.]

207. 1. Your 103, March 8, 8 p. m. At the request of the Foreign Office Johnson and Captain Willson met informally yesterday afternoon with subordinate Admiralty and Foreign Office officials. The object of the British primarily was to give us their views regarding escalation under article 25. They had prepared a lengthy argument in support of their stand, the gist of their contention being contained in the two following paragraphs, the full text being forwarded by mail.¹⁵

"Articles 25 and 26 of the London Naval Treaty were intended to apply to entirely different circumstances. It was article 25 which was intended to apply to the case of construction outside treaty limits by a power not a party to the treaty.

Article 26 is specifically stated to be applicable to any change of circumstances 'other than those provided for in articles . . . 25'. It was never intended that article 26 should be utilized in order to overcome a technical defect in a case for escalation properly falling under article 25. In brief, article 26 was not intended to give any right to depart from treaty limits but only, while keeping within those limits, to effect a departure from annual programmes for the current year already declared."

The British claim that their position is strongly supported by paragraphs 23 and 24 of "observations" annexed to the report of the Drafting Committee of the London Naval Conference, 1936. These two

¹⁵ Despatch No. 43, March 15, not printed.

paragraphs are on page 217 of "Documents of London Naval Conference". While neither article 25 nor 26 of the treaty exactly fits the case, the two paragraphs 23 and 24 above cited appear, in our view, to support the British thesis. The British point out in this connection that escalation under article 26 would have to be an annual affair and would involve first announcing a programme, something which has not yet been done by any power, and then changing that programme. Further instructions are requested concerning these points.

2. Your 96, March 5, 3 p. m. It appears that the Japanese Ambassador reported to Tokyo his approaches here and has received a reply from the Japanese Government that in its opinion the present time was inopportune for explorations along that line. The Foreign Office has been advised and will instruct Ambassador Craigie to use his discretion in the matter as far as any talks with the Japanese Foreign Office are concerned. The Foreign Office here says Ambassador Yoshida is continually making suggestions of various kinds which are later repudiated by his own Government.

The British agree with numbered paragraphs 4 and 5 of your 96, March 5, 3 p. m., and they wish to escalate now with respect to the size but not the armament of capital ships sub-category (a), reserving full freedom of action otherwise. The British interpret numbered paragraphs 2 and 3 of your 103, March 8, 8 p. m., as applying to the immediate present and assume that further discussion will be held as provided in paragraph 3, article 25 of the London Naval Treaty, 1936.

3. The following was furnished as a tentative draft of a note concerning escalation :

"With reference to article 25 of the Naval Treaty signed in London on the 25th March, 1936, I have the honour in accordance with paragraph (2) of that article, to notify Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom find it necessary to exercise the right reserved in paragraph (1) of effecting a departure from the limitations and restrictions of the treaty.

The proposed departure consists in the construction of capital ships of sub-category (a) exceeding 35,000 tons (35,560 metric tons) standard displacement. The precise extent of the departure will depend on the result of the consultations provided for in paragraph (3), but the proposal of His Majesty's Government relates to tonnage only and not to any increase in the maximum calibre of gun permitted for capital ships by the treaty.

The reasons for the above proposal consist in the reports received by His Majesty's Government and confirmed by discussion with the United States and French Governments, to the effect that Japan is constructing or has authorized the construction of capital ships of a tonnage not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions of the treaty."

500.A15A5 Construction/133 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, March 16, 1938—11 a. m.

115. Your 207, March 12, 1 p. m.

1. Although our opinion is unchanged that the legal position would be less vulnerable if escalation were to take place under Article 26 of the Treaty instead of under Article 25, we do not insist upon this point of procedure and are willing to proceed under Article 25 if the other parties to the London Naval Treaty, 1936, are agreeable. However, we are not entirely satisfied with the last paragraph of the proposed draft of a note concerning escalation referred to in your numbered paragraph 3 and suggest in its place consideration of a text somewhat as follows:

“The reason for the above proposal consists in the refusal of the Japanese Government to furnish information with regard to its present naval construction or its plans for future construction, which leaves no alternative to the Governments parties to the London Naval Treaty, 1936, but to accept reports which have been received by these Governments to the effect that Japan is constructing or has authorized the construction of capital ships of a tonnage and armament not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions of the Treaty.”

2. With regard to the last paragraph of your numbered paragraph 2, you should emphasize to the British that (1) we intend that escalation shall apply now to the armament as well as the size of capital ships; (2) that we wish to be wholly free to take whatever action may appear to be necessary regarding the caliber of guns we may wish to mount on our capital ships as well as their size; (3) that we have no intention whatsoever of fixing an upper limit of size of capital ships and the caliber of guns which they may carry, either in the immediate present or at any time during the life of the Naval Treaty of 1936.

3. We call your attention once again to numbered paragraph 5 in our 96, March 5, 3 p. m. expressing our concern that discussions now taking place with the other signatories of the Naval Treaty be not protracted unduly. We would prefer to escalate simultaneously and concurrently with the other parties to the Naval Treaty, but should it appear that an effort was being made to drag out the negotiations we might feel the necessity of taking independent action with regard to escalation.

4. We also call your attention to numbered paragraph 5 of our 103, March 8, 8 p. m. It is desirable that the multilateral character of the present discussions be maintained.

HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/139 : Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the
Secretary of State*

LONDON, March 22, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received March 22—2:04 p. m.]

233. Department's 115, March 16, 11 a. m.

1. By arrangement of the Foreign Office, Johnson and Captain Willson met informally yesterday afternoon with subordinate Admiralty and British Foreign Office officials, together with the Counselor and Naval Attaché of the French Embassy. M. Cambon stated at the outset that his Government regretted that the American and British Governments found it necessary to invoke escalation in the capital ship category. The French will not take this action unless as a result of the British and American action continental powers exceed limits based on the London Naval Treaty, 1936. The French therefore will send a note stating this position and reserving full right to escalate if the continental powers through their programmes make it necessary.

In regard to the question of choice between articles 25 and 26 for purposes of escalation, M. Cambon said that as the French did not intend to escalate the question of which of the clauses is invoked is of no material importance to them. He gave however as the opinion of the French Government that article 25 more nearly fitted the present case than article 26 and expressed the opinion that if article 25 is invoked it might be easier for the Japanese to be brought later to some sort of an agreement. In view of the instruction in the Department's 115, March 16, 11 a. m. we signified our willingness to use article 25 instead of article 26.

2. The British proposed that the notes of intention to escalate should be similar and simultaneous but not necessarily identic and should be so worded as to avoid indicating whether the escalation was to be in tonnage, in guns, or in both. They accordingly proposed certain modifications in the draft note. Paragraph 1 of the note quoted in the Embassy's 207, March 12, 1 p. m. numbered paragraph 3, remains the same. Paragraph 2 reads as follows: "The proposed departure relates to upper limits of capital ships of sub-category (a). The precise extent of the departure will depend on the result of the consultations provided for in paragraph (3) of article 25." Paragraph 3 of the proposed note, which follows the suggestion in the Department's 115, March 16, 11 a. m., reads as follows: "The reasons for the above proposed departures consist in the reports received by His Majesty's Government to the effect that Japan is constructing or has authorized the construction of capital ships of a

tonnage not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions of the treaty. In view of the refusal of the Japanese Government, on being formally approached, to give assurances that these reports are ill-founded, His Majesty's Government have no alternative but to regard them as being substantially correct." The British Admiralty representatives in particular expressed a desire to omit the last sentence of this third paragraph entirely as they feel it will cause unnecessary irritation in Japan.

As soon as the Department has signified its approval or other views regarding the proposed changes in this draft a further meeting will be called with a view to perfecting the final text and arranging for the issuance of the notes. The British propose that when the text is agreeable the American note would be sent by our Government directly to Great Britain, France and Canada, with copies to Great Britain for Australia, New Zealand and the Government of India. The United States Government in turn would receive notes from France and Great Britain. The general opinion was that full publicity would have to be given to these notes, if not of the actual text, at least their substance.

3. The British then brought up the question of the extent of escalation. They re-stated and emphasized their position that while it was neither necessary nor desirable to be specific as to limits in the notes announcing escalation, it was in their opinion required by paragraph 3 of article 25 of the treaty that further discussions take place during the 3-months' period with a view to agreeing, if possible, on new upper limits involving a minimum departure from the treaty. The British desire no increase in armament limits and would like to limit tonnage to about 40,000 tons. They argue, however, that whatever the limit, any limit is better than no limit. Basically this would seem to be the old question of the British wishing to keep down the size of battleships. In their argument that [*they?*] visualize Germany, Russia and Italy building on a no limit basis and they do not like it. The Department's views expressed in numbered paragraph 2 of your 115, March 16, 11 a. m., were of course conveyed. It was obvious to the British that this was a definite and clear-cut statement of the American position but they again referred to the obligations which they said were imposed by paragraph 3 of article 25. They said that in their view the provisions of this paragraph were supported by reference to the records of the Drafting Committee at the London Naval Conference, particularly for meeting number 5 (L. N. C. 35 L.).

Johnson saw Cadogan for a few minutes after the meeting and he also mentioned the earnest hope of the British that the United States would not refuse during the 3-months' period to have technical discussions regarding new upper limits. The British feel that the establishment of a minimum departure from the present limits of the treaty

is of the very essence of the agreement itself and if no minimum departure is fixed they are apprehensive of its effect on the other naval powers.

4. Embassy's 207, March 12, 1 p. m., numbered paragraph 2. Ambassador Craigie¹⁶ has reported that the time is not now opportune for further discussion of the Japanese building programme.

KENNEDY

500.A15A5 Construction/139: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)*¹⁷

WASHINGTON, March 24, 1938—4 p. m.

123. Your 233, March 22, 5 p. m.

1. We are in agreement with the British that the notes of intention to escalate should be similar and simultaneous but not identic.

2. We, therefore, propose to send our note, at a time which will be agreed upon, to the British and French Ambassadors and the Canadian Minister at Washington and to the British Ambassador for transmission to Australia, New Zealand and India.

3. Our note will be as follows:

"With reference to Article 25 of the Naval Treaty signed in London on March 25, 1936, I have the honor to notify Your Excellency, in accordance with paragraph (2) of that Article, that the Government of the United States of America finds it necessary to exercise the right of escalation reserved in paragraph (1) and of effecting a departure from the limitations and restrictions of the Treaty.

The proposed departure relates to the upper limits of capital ships of sub-category (a) and to the calibre of guns which may be mounted on capital ships of sub-category (a).

The above action is motivated by the fact that upon the receipt of reports to the effect that Japan is constructing or has authorized the construction of capital ships of a tonnage and armament not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions of the Treaty, the Government of the United States addressed an inquiry to the Japanese Government and the Japanese Government did not choose to furnish information with regard to its present naval construction or its plans for future construction."

4. We agree that the notes should be released for simultaneous publication immediately after they are delivered for transmission to the Governments signatories of the Naval Treaty.

5. We are willing to participate in discussions under Paragraph 3 of Article 25 during the 3-months period therein provided, with a view

¹⁶ Sir Robert L. Craigie, British Ambassador in Japan.

¹⁷ This telegram was initialed by Norman H. Davis and by Admiral W. D. Leahy, Chief of Naval Operations, in addition to Department of State officials.

to determining what upper limits, if any, may not be exceeded with regard to capital ships of sub-category (a) and the guns which may be mounted on capital ships of sub-category (a).

HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/152

*The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Halifax) to the American Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)*¹⁸

No. A 2452/55/45

[LONDON,] 31 March, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: With reference to Article 25 of the Naval Treaty signed in London on the 25th March, 1936, I have the honour in accordance with paragraph (2) of that Article, to notify Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom find it necessary to exercise the right reserved in paragraph (1) of effecting a departure from the limitations and restrictions of the Treaty.

2. The proposed departure relates to the upper limits of capital ships of sub-category (a). The precise extent of the departure will depend on the result of the consultations provided for in paragraph (3) of Article 25.

3. The reasons for the above proposed departure consist in the reports received by His Majesty's Government to the effect that Japan is constructing or has authorised the construction of capital ships of a tonnage not in conformity with the limitations and restrictions of the Treaty. In view of the refusal of the Japanese Government, on being formally approached, to give assurances that these reports are ill-founded, His Majesty's Government have no alternative but to regard them as being substantially correct.

I have [etc.]

(For the Secretary of State)

A. HOLMAN¹⁹

500.A15A5 Construction/155

*The French Minister for Foreign Affairs (Paul-Boncour) to the American Ambassador in France (Bullitt)*²⁰

[Translation²¹]

PARIS, March 31, 1938.

MR. AMBASSADOR: I have the honor to inform you that the Government of the French Republic has examined with the greatest care the communication in which the Government of the United States of

¹⁸ Copy transmitted to the Department by the Ambassador in his despatch No. 114, March 31; received April 11.

¹⁹ Adrian Holman, First Secretary in the British Foreign Office.

²⁰ Transmitted to the Department by the Chargé in France in his despatch No. 2016, April 1; received April 13.

²¹ File translation revised by the editors.

America was good enough, under date of March 31, to give notification of its intention to free itself from the maximum limitations which the London Naval Treaty of 1936 had set for capital ships of sub-category A.

The Government of the Republic has taken note of the reasons which have brought the American Government to this grave decision. Being anxious to limit as far as possible the bearing and eventual consequences of this first departure from the treaty, the French Government is desirous that an agreement may be reached at a very early date between all the powers which have heretofore conformed, as regards their naval construction, to the limitations at present in force.

Without awaiting the beginning of the consultations which are necessary to attain this result, the French Government wishes to declare that, in spite of the departures to which the American and British Governments are going to have recourse, and as long as no continental European power for its part deviates therefrom, it will continue, as far as it is concerned, to respect with regard to its naval construction the qualitative limitations fixed by the Treaty of London.

Accept [etc.]

PAUL-BONCOUR

500.A15A5 Construction/146 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, April 1, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received April 1—9:25 a. m.]

274. Your 134, March 30, 6 p. m.,²² paragraph 3. Naval Attaché requests following message be communicated:

“It is believed that the discussions will be advanced if before the first meeting we are furnished with general instructions and any technical information that may be necessary concerning the position to be assumed by our Government.”

KENNEDY

500.A15A5 Construction/146 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, April 2, 1938—4 p. m.

137. Your 274, April 1, 11 a. m. At the outset of the discussions with regard to possible new limits on the size and armament of capital ships of sub-category (a) we shall take the position that in view of the lack of precise details with regard to construction in this sub-category

²² Not printed.

by a non-Treaty Power it does not appear to us to be advisable to fix an upper limit of size of ships of this sub-category and of the calibre of guns which they may carry.

HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/154 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, April 12, 1938—8 p. m.
[Received April 12—4:33 p. m.]

303. Your 137, April 2, 4 p. m. Vansittart opened a meeting this morning at the Foreign Office for preliminary discussions under paragraph 3, article 25 of the London Naval Treaty, 1936. The British representatives in addition were Admiral Lord Chatfield, Captains Phillips and Danckwerts of the Admiralty, Holman and Fitzmaurice of the Foreign Office; the French representatives were Cambon, the French Naval Attaché Du Tour, and De Leuze, naval expert of the French Foreign Office; Johnson and Commander Nelson of this Embassy. Vansittart opened the discussion with a general statement regarding its purpose and left the meeting, which was subsequently presided over by Admiral Lord Chatfield.

The views of the delegations were requested. (1) We communicated the instructions set forth in your 137, April 2, 4 p. m. (2) De Leuze, who spoke for the French delegation, said his Government regretted that any derogation from the limits set forth in the London Naval Treaty was necessary and desired that any departure should be within as narrow a limit as possible. He expressed in strong terms their anxiety that if no new upper limit were fixed it would encourage building on the part of continental naval powers which might eventually extend to smaller craft than capital ships and this result would naturally cause great anxiety to his Government. His Government's interest in these present discussions is that an agreed upon upper limit in the category of ships involved in the escalation program be arrived at and made public as soon as possible. (3) Admiral Lord Chatfield said that the delay in announcement of new upper limits for battleships was extremely embarrassing to the British Government in view of its naval agreements, particularly with Germany and Russia, as under the terms of those agreements they will be compelled to announce a definite program to their co-signatories as well as satisfy the House of Commons which is pressing for an early statement of the new British program. The Admiralty, he said, regarded the preservation of the principle of qualitative limitation as of the utmost importance as it had been the burden of the Anglo-American thesis throughout naval limitation negotiations in the past

and he stated that the phraseology of article 25 in particular was that of the American delegation. Both he and Captain Phillips as well as the Foreign Office officials were insistent in pressing their view that any reasonable limit, even a high one, which could be declared was better than setting no upper limit at all, and expressed the hope that our Government would indicate an upper limit which would not be exceeded. They particularly desire a statement of the intentions of the United States and, if the United States is unable to state precisely what will be the limit of its departure, they hope that it will be able to state an approximate figure which it knows will not be exceeded. They also desire to know if possible when the United States can make such a statement. Lord Chatfield made it quite plain that the British are prepared to disclose their own figures as soon as we indicate our readiness to discuss the issue involved with a view to fixing a precise new upper limit.

KENNEDY

500.A15A5 Construction/163

The British Embassy to the Department of State

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

With reference to the "escalator" discussions now proceeding in London under Article 25 of the London Naval Treaty of 1936, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom regard it as most important to reach agreement on new limitations with as little delay as possible. They understand, however, that the United States Government are in some doubt as to whether any new limits should be fixed. Under Article 25 (3) of the 1936 Treaty the interested Powers are bound to endeavour to reach agreement on new limits for sub-category (a) Capital Ships, and it was clearly the intention of the Treaty that there should be new limits if possible. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government it is most important for political and other reasons that some limit should be fixed now, and it seems to them desirable, while avoiding any excessive increase, to fix a limit at such a level that reescalation is unlikely to be required again in the Capital Ships category during the period of the Treaty. The basis of the 1936 Treaty is a system of qualitative limitation to which the interested Powers were committed by the conclusion of the Treaty with the full knowledge that Japan would not be a signatory. This system, as the United States Government will be aware, dates from the Washington Conference of 1922, and his Majesty's Government cannot believe that any Treaty Power would depart from it except in circumstances of the most undoubted gravity. His Majesty's Government believe that the exigencies of the present situation can be fully met without abandoning the principle of an upper limit for Capital Ships. The

position of His Majesty's Government is complicated by the fact that Germany and Soviet Russia, with whom they have bilateral agreements, will be pressing for information as to the British attitude in view of their own building programmes. The period of uncertainty is bound, His Majesty's Government feel, to give rise to anxiety amongst other powers.

With particular regard to the risk that if new limits are fixed the Japanese Government might proceed to build over such limits, His Majesty's Government consider such action unlikely and one that could in any case be met by fresh escalation.

On the other hand the absence of limits in regard to building programmes and a policy of secrecy are, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, even more likely to cause the Japanese Government, in order to avoid any risk, to build to a higher limit than they otherwise would. In actual fact it would no doubt prove difficult for His Majesty's Government, as also perhaps for the United States Government, to maintain complete secrecy regarding the size of their new ships, and in the view of His Majesty's Government there would, therefore, be no permanent advantage in adopting an attitude of secrecy. The Japanese Government, on the other hand, are better placed for this purpose, and it is they who, so to speak, keep the Treaty Powers guessing.

In explaining as above the position of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in regard to this issue, it is desired at the same time to stress the great importance which they attach to it. His Majesty's Government are, moreover, fully prepared to discuss figures as soon as the United States representatives in London are ready to do so. They would therefore welcome at the earliest possible moment a full expression of the views of the United States Government which they venture to suggest might best be facilitated by the despatch to London of a fully accredited expert from the United States Navy Department for the period of the "escalator" discussions. If such an officer were sent it would of course be made clear to the public that his mission was for this purpose only.

WASHINGTON, April 22, 1938.

500.A15A5 Construction/154 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, May 3, 1938—6 p. m.

191. Your 303, April 12, 8 p. m. We have considered very carefully whether despite the factors of uncertainty in the international naval situation, we could agree to new limitations and restrictions as to

standard displacement and armament in sub-category (a) of capital ships to replace the limitations from which the Governments Parties to the Naval Treaty have departed as a result of their action under Article 25.

We have come to the conclusion that, with regard to the size of capital ships of sub-category (a), we can accept a new upper limit of 45,000 tons. This however is the lowest figure we could accept.

With regard to the armament of capital ships of sub-category (a), we are prepared to abide by the existing restrictions, that is, no capital ship shall carry a gun with a calibre exceeding 16 inches (406 mm.).

If it is desired to set forth the agreement in an exchange of identic notes, please collaborate with the British and French experts in preparing a draft text, which we will then examine and if approved authorize you to sign.

HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/163

The Secretary of State to the British Ambassador (Lindsay)

WASHINGTON, May 4, 1938.

EXCELLENCY: I acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's *Aide-Mémoire*, dated April 22, 1938, with regard to the necessity of placing new limits at an early date on the size and armament of capital ships of sub-category (a) to take the place of the old limits provided in the London Naval Treaty, 1936, from which the Governments Parties to the Treaty departed on April 1, 1938, under Article 25 of the Treaty.

I take pleasure in informing you that the American Ambassador at London has been instructed to inform Your Excellency's Government and the French Government that a decision has been reached by this Government that, despite the many factors of uncertainty in the international naval situation, new upper limits of size and armament should if possible be fixed on capital ships of sub-category (a). The details of this Government's decision have been conveyed to Mr. Kennedy, who will be prepared to resume, in behalf of this Government, the conversations with the representatives of the other Governments Parties to the Naval Treaty under Article 25, paragraph 3, of the Treaty.

With regard to the final paragraph of Your Excellency's *Aide-Mémoire*, in which it is suggested that a fully accredited naval expert might be sent to London for the period of the discussions under Article 25, paragraph 3, this Government regrets that it will not be practicable to assign a special naval expert for this purpose.

Accept [etc.]

CORDELL HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/167 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, May 7, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received May 7—11:10 a. m.]

384. Johnson, Captain Willson and Commander Nelson had informal meeting yesterday afternoon with Holman of the Foreign Office, Captain Danckwerts and Commander Bell of the Admiralty. We had previously communicated informally to the Foreign Office the substance of your 191, May 3, 6 p. m. The British referred to this information and expressed their pleasure at our willingness to accept a definite limit for tonnage and to continue within present treaty limits as to calibre of guns. They stated, however, that in their opinion the proposed limit of 45,000 tons, while preferable to no limit, was nevertheless too high. They restated their former arguments as to the danger from the British point of view of other European powers beginning a competition among themselves in building 45,000 ton ships. They admitted that this is improbable except as regards Russia. They fear, however, that Russia might undertake construction of such ships, in which case Germany and other European nations in turn would follow. Notwithstanding our statement that 45,000 tons is the lowest figure that we could accept, the British request that the following be transmitted to our Government for its consideration.

“His Majesty’s Government propose a new upper limit of standard displacement for capital ships of sub-category (a) of 40,000 tons.”

They stated that this proposal was based on the design of a well balanced capital ship carrying nine 16-inch guns and that they were prepared to support this figure with full technical details. They again mentioned the desirability of our having technical officers from Washington familiar with the latest design studies to discuss this question with them. Captain Willson answered that for the purposes of the immediate discussion he was prepared to agree that 40,000 tons was sufficient for a well balanced design carrying nine 16-inch guns and that in his opinion there was no necessity for delaying technical discussions on that point, particularly if it involved the sending over of technical officers from Washington. Willson suggested that, subject to confirmation, it is reasonable to assume that a 45,000 ton ship would carry twelve 16-inch guns and any arguments to be prepared by the British should concern not the displacement required for the 9-gun ship but whether or not the 9-gun ship, as compared with the 12-gun ship, was adequate to meet the position in which the United States finds itself as regards the international naval situation.

The meeting concluded with some discussion as to the relative merits of 9-gun and 12-gun design in which it was apparent the British are

merely maintaining their traditional position in favor of the smaller ship.

Holman said that they would inform the French of this meeting and likewise the other powers with whom they have naval treaties. Johnson told Holman after the meeting that he had no reason to believe that any reduction in the figure of 45,000 tons would be agreed to by our Government but that we would be glad to submit the British proposal for 40,000 tons.

We gather that the Admiralty is preparing an informal memorandum for us in support of their figures and it is understood that another meeting can be held upon the receipt of further indication of our Government's views.

KENNEDY

500.A15A5 Construction/167 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)*²⁴

WASHINGTON, May 10, 1938—1 p. m.

206. Your 384, May 7, 2 p. m. The figure 45,000 tons was reached after careful study of our needs and as indicated in our 191, May 3, 6 p. m. represents the lowest figure which we would be able to accept as a new upper limit for capital ships of subcategory (a). It was largely in the light of the considerations again advanced to you by the British that we agree to set an upper limit at all. We think the time has come for you to point out to the British that we are prepared either to conclude an exchange of notes on a 45,000 ton 16-inch gun basis, or else to recognize that it has not been found possible for the parties to the Treaty to agree on an upper limit for tonnage and armament with the result that each power would retain complete freedom.

HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/171 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, May 13, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received May 13—3 p. m.]

406. My 233, March 22, 5 p. m., numbered paragraph 4. The Foreign Office has advised me informally of the receipt of a telegram from Ambassador Craigie at Tokyo reporting that the Japanese Vice

²⁴ Marginal notation reads: "OK FDR." See also letter of April 27 from the Acting Secretary of State to the President, *Foreign Relations*, The Soviet Union, 1933-1939, p. 683.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informed him on May 6 that the Ministry of Marine had reached the conclusion that proposed informal conversations on subject of assurances in regard to Japanese naval construction intentions could not in present circumstances serve a useful purpose. Ambassador Craigie was reminded at the same time by the Japanese Minister that the underlying Japanese policy in this matter was that Japan's smaller resources as compared with those of the United States and Great Britain obliged her to devise special methods of protection such as secrecy and liberty in the qualitative field and at the present at all events there was no hope of any change in that policy. Ambassador Craigie replied that in that case Japan must take before the whole world the responsibility for a quite unnecessary increase in size of the capital ships of the future and that the British Government could not but draw the worst inferences from the disinclination of the Japanese Ministry of Marine even to discuss this matter in an informal and noncommittal manner.

Copy to Paris.

KENNEDY

500.A15A5 Construction/184 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

LONDON, June 2, 1938—8 p. m.

[Received June 2—4:55 p. m.]

476. My 453, May 25, 4 p. m.²⁵ At meeting this afternoon at the Foreign Office with Cadogan and Holman, Captain Danckwerts and Commander Bell of the Admiralty, Cambon and French Naval Attaché, Johnson and Captain Willson, Cadogan submitted the following draft text of a protocol for signature by the London Naval Treaty Powers:

[Here follows substantially the text contained in telegram No. 571, June 28, 6 p. m., from the Chargé in the United Kingdom, printed on page 916.]

The British propose signature of a similar protocol separately between themselves and the German and Soviet Governments under the terms of the British naval limitation treaties with those governments. The Polish and Italian Governments are to be fully informed of action being taken but no documents are to be submitted to them. Any similar action with Italy will have to await the accession of the Italian Government to the 1936 Naval Treaty. The British-Polish naval agreement has not yet been ratified and it is proposed to withhold ratification until a protocol similar to the one now under con-

²⁵ Not printed.

sideration can be agreed upon with Poland, and the treaty and the protocol will then be ratified at the same time.

KENNEDY

500.A15A5 Construction/188a

The Secretary of State to President Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, June 11, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I submit herewith, for your signature, a full power²⁶ which has been made out for Mr. Herschel V. Johnson, who will be Chargé d'Affaires in London following Mr. Kennedy's departure on June 15, to sign a protocol concerning the standard displacement and armament of capital ships under the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, which has been found acceptable by the Departments of State and Navy. To meet the situation arising out of the Ambassador's expected absence from his post, the full power for Mr. Johnson has been dated June 16, 1938.

The text of the protocol reads as follows:

[Here follows the text substantially as contained in telegram No. 571, June 28, 6 p. m., from the Chargé in the United Kingdom, printed on page 916.]

It is the opinion of this Department that in view of:

(1) the notification which has been given by the United States and Great Britain of their decision to exercise the right provided for in paragraph (1) of Article XXV of the London Naval Treaty of 1936, to depart from the limitations and restrictions, provided in the treaty; and

(2) of the authorization contained in Section 1 (a) of the Naval Act approved May 17, 1938,²⁷

there is sufficient authority for the Executive to enter into the agreement set forth in the protocol.

Faithfully yours,

CORDELL HULL

500.A15A5 Construction/200: Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 27, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received June 27—2:20 p. m.]

563. My 535, June 20, 5 p. m.²⁸ Protocol will be signed at noon on June 30. Australia, New Zealand, India and Canada will not sign

²⁶ Not attached to file copy.

²⁷ 52 Stat. 401.

²⁸ Not printed.

as they did not participate in the discussions leading up to the escalation agreement. The Foreign Office will, however, deliver to the American and French Embassies four official communications on behalf of those Governments to indicate their concurrence. The British will at the same time deliver a note to the American Embassy, the text of which will follow that communicated in the Embassy's 476, June 2, 8 p. m. On the same day the British and Germans will sign a protocol but no word has yet been received from Russia.

JOHNSON

500.A15A5 Construction/201: Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 28, 1938—6 p. m.

[Received June 28—2: 40 p. m.]

571. My 563, June 27, 6 p. m. Following is text of proof copy furnished by the Foreign Office of the escalation protocol which is to be signed by French, British and American representatives on June 30 at noon:

“Whereas by article 4 (1) of the Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armaments signed in London on the 25th March, 1936, it is provided that no capital ship shall exceed 35,000 tons (35,560 metric tons) standard displacement;

And whereas by reason of article 4 (2) of the said treaty the maximum calibre of gun carried by capital ships is 16 inches (406 mm.);

And whereas on the 31st March, 1938, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the United States of America gave notice under paragraph (2) of article 25 of the said treaty of their decision to exercise the right provided for in paragraph (1) of the said article to depart from the limitations and restrictions of the treaty in regard to the upper limits of capital ships of sub-category (a);

And whereas consultations have taken place as provided in paragraph (3) of article 25, with a view to reaching agreement in order to reduce to a minimum the extent of the departures from the limitations and restrictions of the treaty;

The undersigned, duly authorized by their respective governments, have agreed as follows:

1. As from this day's date the figure of 35,000 tons (35,560 metric tons) in article 4 (1) of the said treaty shall be replaced by the figure of 45,000 tons (45,720 metric tons).

2. The figure of 16 inches (406 mm.) in article 4 (2) remains unaltered.

3. The present protocol, of which the French and English texts shall both be equally authentic, shall come into force on this day's date.

In faith whereof the undersigned have signed the present protocol.
Done in London the 30th day of June 1938."

JOHNSON

[The protocol as agreed upon, amending the Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, was signed at noon, June 30, 1938, on behalf of the American, French and British Governments by Herschel V. Johnson, Roger Cambon, and Sir Alexander Cadogan, respectively; see Department of State Executive Agreement Series No. 127, or 53 Stat. 1921.

The following communications from the British Foreign Office were delivered at the same time to the American representative: copies of notes from the Governments of Australia, Canada, India, and New Zealand stating the agreement of those Governments that the upper limit for capital ships of sub-category (a) should be 45,000 tons, and a note from the British Government stating that two capital ships provided for in the current year's estimates and to be laid down later in the year would not exceed 40,000 (40,640 metric) tons (500.A15A5-Construction/205).]

STATUS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL DEBTS OWED THE UNITED STATES BY REASON OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR¹

[For exchanges of correspondence in connection with amounts due the United States under arrangements effected by the World War Foreign Debt Commission, see Department of State, *Press Releases*, as follows:

Austria: April 9, 1938, page 465; June 18, 1938, page 694; December 3, 1938, page 375. (See also *Foreign Relations*, 1938, volume II, pages 483 ff.)

Belgium: June 18, 1938, page 681; December 17, 1938, page 453.

Czechoslovakia: June 18, 1938, page 687; December 17, 1938, page 454.

Estonia: June 4, 1938, page 648; December 10, 1938, page 417.

Finland: June 4, 1938, page 649; December 3, 1938, page 402.

France: June 18, 1938, page 689; December 17, 1938, page 459.

Hungary: April 2, 1938, page 423; June 18, 1938, page 691; December 17, 1938, page 455.

Italy: June 11, 1938, page 668; December 17, 1938, page 460.

Latvia: June 18, 1938, page 685; December 17, 1938, page 456.

Lithuania: June 11, 1938, page 670; December 17, 1938, page 457.

Poland: June 18, 1938, page 692; December 17, 1938, page 451.

Rumania: June 18, 1938, page 680; December 17, 1938, page 458.

United Kingdom (Great Britain): June 18, 1938, page 683; December 17, 1938, page 452.

Yugoslavia: June 11, 1938, page 672; December 17, 1938, page 459.

Certain portions of the above Intergovernmental correspondence are also printed in the *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1938* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1938), pages 285 ff., and *ibid.*, 1939, pages 287 ff.; see also *ibid.*, 1938, page 78 and 1939, page 68, "Obligations of Foreign Governments."]

¹ For previous correspondence, see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 846 ff.

CONTINUED INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN
EFFORTS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS TO PROMOTE
COMMERCIAL ACCESS TO RAW MATERIALS¹

500.C1199/321

The Chargé in Switzerland (Bigelow) to the Secretary of State

No. 242

BERN, February 18, 1938.

L. N. No. 115

[Received March 8.]

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a circular letter, No. 32,² addressed to the Secretary of State on February 17, 1938 by the Secretary General of the League of Nations, with its enclosure (document C.577.M.411.1937.II.B.), a copy of the Economic Committee's report to the Council on the work of its forty-seventh session, Part I of which deals with commercial access to raw materials. The Secretary General requests the Government of the United States to be good enough to transmit to him its observations on the Economic Committee's conclusions and the Council's suggestions, mentioned in the circular letter.

Respectfully yours,

DONALD F. BIGELOW

500.C1199/321

The Secretary of State to the Minister in Switzerland (Harrison)

No. 341

WASHINGTON, June 10, 1938.

SIR: Reference is made to the Legation's despatch No. 242, February 18, 1938, enclosing a circular letter from the Secretary General of the League of Nations, requesting the observations of this Government regarding the principles formulated by the Economic Committee of the League, with respect to commercial access to raw materials, in its report to the Council on the work of its forty-seventh session. You are instructed to transmit the following observations of this Government to the Secretary General of the League of Nations:

1. The Government of the United States has studied with a great deal of interest the comments of the Economic Committee upon the report of the Committee for the Study of the Problem of Raw Materials and the principles which the Economic Committee has formulated regarding commercial access to raw materials, to which, in the

¹ For previous correspondence, see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. 1, pp. 803 ff.

² Not printed.

opinion of the Committee, governments should conform, so far as possible, both in their metropolitan territories, and in the colonies, protectorates and other territories over which they exercise effective authority. The considerations mentioned in paragraph 4 of the Committee's comments on commercial access to raw materials, and the other difficulties which might be encountered in securing action on this subject are recognized by the Government of the United States, but it is felt nevertheless that the possibility of prompt action should be given further and continuous consideration. For its part, the Government of the United States will be prepared to give the most sympathetic consideration to whatever action may be proposed.

2. It is the opinion of the Government of the United States that action in this field should be as far-reaching and as effective as proves to be possible. In this respect it is felt that the third principle formulated by the Committee, concerning international regulation schemes relating to the supply of raw materials,³ falls short of supplying the assurances that should be extended to the consumers of raw materials regulated by such schemes. Although the Government of the United States is sympathetic to efforts to organize production and marketing efficiently and on a remunerative basis, it is felt that there is need for much more study and specific consideration of the problems created for consumers in connection with international control schemes. It is the opinion of the Government of the United States that it would be unfortunate if this third principle should be adopted as at present drafted, countenancing insufficiently safeguarded restrictions on the movement of raw materials by international agreement or control. This declaration appears to leave the way open, with insufficient safeguards, to the sort of restriction on the supply and movement of raw materials, through the action of international groups, which would be condemned as unwarranted and untenable on the part of individual governments under the first principle formulated by the Committee.

³ The third part of Section I of the report of the Economic Committee reads as follows:

"C. International Regulation Schemes relating to the Supply of Raw Materials.

"International regulation schemes should be so framed as to admit effective association of consuming interests with their administration, and to make available adequate information regarding their operation. They should be administered in such a way as to provide consumers with adequate supplies of the regulated material, to prevent so far as possible, the price of the regulated material from rising to an excessive height and to keep that price reasonably stable.

"In so far as Governments are themselves parties to a scheme, they will of course be responsible for seeing that the scheme is framed and administered in accordance with these principles.

"In so far as Governments are not themselves parties to a scheme, they should be ready, so far as circumstances permit, to use their influence to secure the application of these principles by their nationals parties to the scheme.

"In either event, they should be ready to take all possible steps to ensure the investigation of complaints by other countries in regard to the operation of the scheme."

The observations of the Government of the United States upon this point will be limited at present to the brief remarks set forth above, but it is prepared to discuss the problems involved in this field in greater detail.

Please supply the American Consul at Geneva with a copy of this instruction. In any discussions regarding this subject which may arise with the Secretariat, reference can be made to the Department's telegram No. 164 of December 3, 1937, 5 p. m., to Geneva,⁴ transmitting for Thompson from Grady⁵ comments, prepared after consultation with this Department, regarding the Secretariat's draft declaration concerning commercial access to raw materials; the comments contained in that telegram apply equally well to the draft declarations now under consideration.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
FRANCIS B. SAYRE

500.C1199/343 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, June 30, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received June 30—1:35 p. m.]

146. Grady informs me as follows:

Secretariat officials have expressed to him their concern over Department's observations on the general principles formulated by Economic Committee respecting commercial access to raw materials. While they understand that the United States might wish to have on record a reiteration of its emphasis on increasingly effective consumer participation in international regulation schemes they express surprise that the United States considers that it would be unfortunate if the general statement "international regulation schemes should be so framed as to admit effective association of consumer interests in their administration and to make available adequate information regarding their operation" et cetera, should be adopted and particularly at the charges that this statement countenances insufficiently safeguarded restrictions on the movement of raw materials by international agreement or control and would leave the way open to the sort of restriction condemned under the first principle formulated by the Committee.

Grady has been asked whether the reply indicates that the United States desires to press for a League study of international regulation

⁴ *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, p. 823.

⁵ Henry F. Grady, American member of the Economic Committee of the League of Nations; in Mr. Grady's absence, he had been represented by Llewellyn F. Thompson, American Consul at Geneva.

schemes or to take steps leading toward an international conference on this subject. Leith-Ross indicated at the last meeting of the Economic Committee the British view that the diversity of conditions made it impossible to lay down specific rules on consumer representation applicable to all regulation schemes and that they should be dealt with individually. He felt and Grady concurs that the report went as far as a general statement of this kind could go. (Consulate's despatch No. 107, political, December 13, 1937^e and enclosure).

Grady desires to know what attitude he should adopt in the event he is pressed in the Committee for specified elaboration of the United States observations referred to above. He is particularly disturbed over the relationship of this question to the conversations which are expected to come up in the Committee looking to the possibility of an expert inquiry into the world cotton situation. The replies so far received generally indicate that the time is not yet ripe for further action on the Economic Committee's statement of principles. An expansion in the Committee at this time of the United States observations along the lines of the Department's telegram 164, December 3, 5 p. m., would appear needlessly to commit the United States idea to a degree of consumer participation in an eventual cotton control scheme, should that develop, which might be embarrassing in negotiations.

The United States reply will not be circulated until Monday.

BUCKNELL

500.C1199/343 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Geneva (Bucknell)

WASHINGTON, July 2, 1938—1 p. m.

81. The observation of the Secretariat officials that you report in your 146, June 30, 5 p. m., seems to be based on misinterpretation or misunderstanding of our attitude. Department certainly is not suggesting the omission of any statement of the nature of that quoted, but is expressing the view that the statement is neither decisive or extensive enough. It is realized that the actual arrangements for consumer participation would have to vary in the case of each international production arrangement. On the other hand, it is believed both feasible and essential to formulate some general statement regarding the character of that representation and the objectives of the restriction schemes that is applicable to all of them.

Just by way of completely tentative suggestion the Department puts forward the following alternative presentation:

"All international regulation schemes should provide adequate participation of consumer interests in their administration of such a

^e Not printed.

character as to extend effective protection to the legitimate interests of such consumers and to guard against the imposition by the restriction schemes of unfair burdens upon consumers. The schemes should be administered in such a way as to make available at all times adequate supplies of the regulated material to consumers within a relatively stable price range which is reasonable with regard to the costs of efficient production.”

For Grady's background information: Department's contemporary experience with the operation of the tin and rubber restriction plans⁷ proves how difficult it has been to secure for consumers' representatives any real influence, how inadequate and difficult it is to determine from the material made available, the reasonableness of prices in relation to cost, and how dominant the controlling producers' attitude is likely to be.

Therefore a strengthening of the statement on the line of consumers' protection seems to be important. Leith-Ross'⁸ explanation of the difficulties is read here in connection with the fact that the British interests represented in tin and rubber have always done their utmost to sustain price, no matter how strict or far-reaching the necessary reduction in production. The working arrangements between the British Government and the producers' interest is very close. End background.

Replying to other queries in your cable:

(1) This Government does not wish to suggest a League study of international regulation schemes or to take steps looking towards an international conference on this subject.

(2) It is suggested that the attitude outlined above should create no embarrassment to the conversations dealing with arrangements for a cotton agreement. This Government would willingly accept arrangements for adequate and effective consumer representation in any cotton control scheme, just as it took the initiative in securing consumer participation in the International Sugar Agreement.⁹

HULL

⁷ For correspondence relating to the restriction of rubber production, see pp. 925 ff.

The United States was not a party to the agreement effective March 1, 1931 (subsequently renewed and extended) to regulate the production and export of tin through an international committee representing Bolivia, Malaya, Netherlands East Indies and Nigeria; for text see British Cmd. No. 4825, *Papers Relating to the International Tin Control Scheme* (London, 1935). See also *Tin Investigation: Report of the Subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs . . . on H. Res. 404, 73d Congress, 2d Session and H. Res. 71, 74th Congress, 1st Session, to Authorize an Investigation into the Extent to Which the United States is Dependent upon Foreign Nations for its Supply of Tin, and for Other Purposes, 1934-1935* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1935), pp. 517 ff.

⁸ Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, chief economic adviser to the British Government.

⁹ See *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. 1, pp. 931 ff.

500.C1199/347: Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, July 12, 1938—noon.
[Received July 12—9:33 a. m.]

154. The final report of the Economic Committee,¹⁰ due to the recent change which has occurred in the tendencies in the United States affecting the general situation, does not contain the extreme pessimism to be found in the Committee's preliminary documents. While admitting present impossibility of multilateral agreements of a general character and pointing out the new or accentuated economic and political difficulties it states that

"progress is possible through the conclusion of bilateral commercial agreements designed to bring about a progressive relaxation of the principal barriers to trade arising from excessive customs tariffs, quotas and exchange control.

A remarkable example is to be found in the efforts made in this direction in recent years by the United States Government and in the results achieved under the guidance of Mr. Hull.

Progress is also possible through collective inquiries and discussions having as their object the investigation of measures for the improvement of material well-being.

For such action to be successful it is clearly desirable that the largest number of states should collaborate; but the cooperation of all nations is not indispensable in this connection."

There was little discussion and no further action on raw materials but note was taken of replies so far received from governments. The Polish member expressed the disappointment of his Government that the colonial angle had been ignored. Grady expressed the view of our Government that greater emphasis might have been placed on more effective consumer representation in control schemes.

Four members of the Economic Committee, including Grady, were appointed to the Mixed Committee to coordinate the work of the various activities of the economic and financial organization. Badulesco, Rumania, and Elbel, France, were appointed assessors to the Second Committee of the next Assembly.

The cotton question did not come up in discussion in the Committee but at a private meeting of Stoppani,¹¹ Grady, Leith-Ross and an Egyptian. It developed that preliminary inquiries of the British and Brazilians showed a lack of sympathy and that further exploitation of the attitude of Great Britain and Brazil are necessary before a decision can be reached on the calling of an expert committee.

BUCKNELL

¹⁰ League of Nations, *Official Journal*, November 1938, Annex 1730, p. 1088 (C.233.M.132.1938.II.B.).

¹¹ Pietro Stoppani, Director of the Economic Relations Section, League of Nations Secretariat.

INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN REVISION OF
THE INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT OF MAY 7, 1934,
TO REGULATE PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF RUBBER¹

856D.6176/486

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary
of State*

No. 3916

LONDON, February 16, 1938.

[Received February 28.]

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copy of a note from the Foreign Office dated February 15, 1938, together with its enclosures, regarding the proposed revision of the International Rubber Regulation Agreement.

Upon receipt of this note, enquiries were made at the Foreign Office as to whether this was the appropriate time for the United States Government to offer any comments it might wish to make on the contemplated revision of the Agreement, and the Embassy was informed that "naturally it was hoped that the provisions of the revised text would commend themselves in their entirety to the American Government" but, should it wish to make any comments or suggestions, this certainly was the time to do so. The Foreign Office went on to explain that it was hoped to reach agreement among the contracting parties in sufficient time for the International Rubber Regulation Committee to make its recommendations in final form before the 31st of March, 1938, by which date, under the provisions of the current Agreement, the Committee must place its recommendations before the contracting governments. While the governments, of course, have the right to accept, either in whole or in part, the Committee's recommendations, it is obviously intended that the governments shall, if possible, agree upon the Committee's draft recommendations, so that the Committee's final recommendations can be accepted *ipso facto* and thus an international conference to discuss the revision of the Agreement be avoided.

The only comment which the Embassy offered was to state that, should this schedule be adhered to, very little time was being accorded the United States in which to study the proposed text and discuss its contents with the appropriate contracting governments.

Respectfully yours,

HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON

¹ For previous correspondence, see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 874 ff.

[Enclosure]

*The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Eden) to the
American Chargé (Johnson)*

No. W 1996/108/50

LONDON, February 15, 1938.

SIR: As you are probably aware, under Article 3 of the International Agreement to Regulate the Production and Export of Rubber signed at London on the 17th [7th] May, 1934,² the present system of regulation is to continue in force until the 31st December, 1938 as a minimum period, and the International Rubber Regulation Committee is obliged to submit a recommendation to the contracting Governments before the 31st March next regarding the continuance or otherwise of the regulation, with or without amendments, after the end of the present year. If this recommendation is accepted by the contracting Governments it will automatically take effect; and in order to secure such acceptance the recommendation, which has been under consideration by the Committee, is being submitted in advance in draft form to the contracting Governments for their observations.

2. I have the honour to transmit herewith for the confidential information of the United States Government a draft Agreement³ embodying the amendments which the Committee proposed to recommend. It will be observed that these amendments include provision for the continuance of the Agreement until the 31st December 1943. A memorandum explaining the principal amendments recommended by the committee is attached.³

3. In order to avoid public discussion of the draft recommendations before they are in the hands of all the Governments concerned, I have the honour to request that the draft may be regarded as confidential until the 22nd February, on which date it will be published with the exception of the specific references to Siam and the proposed Siamese quotas. These are still under discussion between the Committee and the Siamese Government and cannot therefore be made public pending the result of the discussions. The explanatory memorandum will not be published.

4. It will be understood that the recommendations embodied in the enclosed draft are at present only provisional. They have, however, been agreed to by the Committee and by all the representatives of the manufacturers on the Consumers' Panel, including the United States representative. The Committee will meet to frame their final recommendation to the contracting Governments soon after the 15th March.

I have [etc.]

(For the Secretary of State)

F. ASHTON-GWATKIN

² Agreement Between the Governments of France, the United Kingdom, India, the Netherlands, and Siam; for text, see League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CLXXI, p. 203.

³ Not printed.

856D.6176/487a : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in the Netherlands (Gordon)

WASHINGTON, February 23, 1938—7 p. m.

17. It is understood that the International Rubber Regulation Committee has circulated to the signatory Governments a preliminary draft of proposed revision of the International Agreement. We understand it has been the Committee's plan to have copies of this draft before all Governments by February 22, when the draft may become public, with the request that the Committee receive comments of these Governments upon the draft in advance of March 31, by which time the Committee must make its final recommendation to signatory Governments regarding extension of the Agreement beyond December 31, 1938.

You are authorized to inform the appropriate officials of the Netherland Government of the interest of this Government in the terms on which the Agreement may be renewed, and you may state, therefore, that this Government would be glad to be consulted informally regarding its opinion of the proposal, either in the present preliminary draft form or in the final form to be submitted by the Committee by March 31.

A similar instruction is being forwarded to the American Embassy at London.⁴

HULL

856D.6176/484 : Telegram

The Minister in the Netherlands (Gordon) to the Secretary of State

THE HAGUE, February 24, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received February 24—2: 35 p. m.]

20. Department's 17, February 23, 7 p. m. Have conveyed message to Foreign Minister who has no objection to consultation. I had not requested text of proposed revision for transmission to Department as I assumed it had been forwarded from London. I confirmed this by telephone conversation with London Embassy from which I further understood that Viles⁵ has fully informed the Department as to the subcommittee's deliberations. I take it therefore in the absence of further instructions that after examination of the text of the proposed revision the Department will send me further specific views for presentation to the Foreign Office which will initiate the consultation in question.

GORDON

⁴ Telegram No. 83, February 23, 8 p. m., to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom.

⁵ A. L. Viles, president of the Rubber Manufacturers Association, and American representative on the Consumers Panel of the International Rubber Regulation Committee.

856D.6176/484: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in the Netherlands (Gordon)

WASHINGTON, March 12, 1938—1 p. m.

24. With reference to your telegram No. 20, February 24, 5 p. m., you are requested to present a note to the Netherland Government. The note should open with a statement of our appreciation of the attitude repeatedly shown by the Netherland Government with respect to consideration of the interests of consumers, and of the willingness of that Government to receive at this time the comments of this Government upon the proposed form of the International Committee's recommendations. It should then carry the numbered comments of this Government which are to be repeated to you by the American Embassy at London.^{5a}

HULL

856D.6176/486: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, March 12, 1938—1 p. m.

107. With reference to your despatch No. 3916, February 16, you are requested to present a note to the Foreign Office which, after expressing our appreciation of the opportunity afforded us by the British Government to consider in advance the new plan for rubber regulation, will ask the careful consideration of the British Government for the following comments of this Government upon the proposed plan:

(1) This Government approaches the question of renewal of the Agreement with the interest natural to a country consuming such a large proportion of the supply of a commodity vitally important in so many uses, facing the prospect that the supply of that commodity within the next 5 years will be subject to the decisive and restrictive control of other authorities.

(2) Our judgment is that the proposed arrangements still do not give adequate representation to consuming interests; and as long as this is so, it must be regarded by us as a basic defect. It is appreciated that the Rubber Regulation Committee has been giving increasingly attentive and patient consideration to the views of the members of the Advisory Panel, and that a genuine working relationship has been developed. However, in this relationship it appears to us that the members of the Advisory Panel still have only a subordinate place. It is strongly desired that consideration be given to increasing the degree of influence they may have upon the operation of the scheme.

^{5a} See *infra*.

The recommendation is noted that the number of American representatives on the Advisory Panel be increased to two representatives of the manufacturing interests. This Government does not wish to be construed as criticising the effectiveness or the attitude of the representatives of the American rubber manufacturers on the Advisory Panel; on the contrary, there is every reason to believe that under all the circumstances this representation has been well handled. However, it is suggested that the provision for representation on the Advisory Panel should be less rigidly framed so as to make it possible, during the operation of the scheme, to select as at least one of the American members an individual who may not be a representative of the rubber manufacturers, but who may perhaps be selected in some logical fashion as direct representative of the ultimate consumers. This Government has not yet considered the feasibility or desirability of any such system of dual representation sufficiently to warrant any definite suggestion pertinent in that regard at this time. However, it believes it clearly advisable that the provision in the agreement be so phrased as to permit flexibility in regard to the method of selection of the American members of the Advisory Panel.

(3) The general objectives set forth in the opening of the agreement commend themselves but do not seem to be adequate. It is believed that they should be supplemented with a definite statement of the intention or obligation of producers to make available, at all times, now or in the future, all of the rubber that may be required by the world at a price no greater than that required to be reasonably remunerative to efficient producers.

(4) This Government recognizes with satisfaction the fact that in the text of the proposed new agreement the definition of price objective contained in the present one is retained, namely, "a fair and equitable price level which will be reasonably remunerative to efficient producers". However, its observation of the operation of the restriction scheme thus far definitely leads to the conclusion that this general statement of price objective must be supplemented if it is to be a fully protective basis for consuming interests.

This Government suggests that its effective significance would be increased

(a) By the inclusion in the text of the agreement itself of adequate provisions for the collection and maintenance of full data on costs and efficiency of production, and for full and regular reports on the administration of the scheme in each local area. This would involve quite possibly the further extension of standard systems of cost accounting and of records.

(b) By reconsideration of the manner in which, according to this Government's understanding, the available cost data is interpreted in order to arrive at estimates of the price objective of the scheme.

This Government understands that the method that has been utilized is one which averages unit costs of all estate producers, including a considerable number whose records show very low acreage production and very high unit costs. It is believed that the cost basis of these producers has no place, or at any rate only a restricted place, in the computations entering into the determination of price levels consistent with the price objective quoted above; it should be the cost to efficient producers that should be the determining cost.

(5) In the form in which it is proposed to renew the agreement there is lacking sufficiently definite assurance of available adequate supplies at all times. The proposed increase in maximum stocks permitted in producing areas is welcomed as a step tending towards giving such assurance, but it is noted also that this is merely a permissive arrangement and does not require or assure an increase in producer stocks. Would it not be possible to require producers to replace stocks up to certain minimum levels as promptly as possible whenever they are reduced below such levels?

It would seem clear that confidence in the adequacy and stability of supply would be greatly increased if the plan made provision for holding substantial reserve stocks of rubber in or near the principal consuming areas, available for prompt release at any time—the so-called buffer-stock idea.

The existence of such a stock would furthermore increase the assurance of this Government of the availability of supplies of this critical raw material during a period of emergency. In that connection consideration is also requested for a specific provision that there shall be no discrimination in the release of rubber to friendly governments by producing areas in time of war or other emergency.

It is understood that the Rubber Manufacturers Association may put forward for the consideration of the Committee a specific plan for buffer stocks at the meeting of March 29, and it is hoped it will be given careful consideration.

(6) The proposed limitations upon new planting still leave the fear that there might be a shortage of rubber in the event of unexpectedly expanding future demand. This seems to be increased by the fact that even the restricted rights to plant new rubber in each separate area would be non-transferable and canceled if not used in each particular area. It is strongly urged that if limitations on planting are retained, the planting rights should be made transferable between areas in order better to insure some definite expansion of potential supplies.

(7) The prohibition of the exportation of rubber plants to areas not covered by the agreement seems to this Government to be completely open to question. It is this feature of the agreement more than any other which lends color to the possible idea that the agree-

ment sustains and gives official sanction to a scheme that is monopolistic in character.

It will be recognized that were individual governments to apply this principle in regard to other raw materials, a whole new area of commercial restrictions would be created. This Government therefore vigorously urges that this ban on the export of rubber plants be completely removed from the agreement so that the cultivation of rubber may be undertaken without undue restriction in all countries that may by nature or economic circumstances be fitted to do so.

(8) The comments of this Government upon the proposed recommendation for continuation of the rubber regulation agreement are being presented also to the Government of the Netherlands. There would be no objection to circulation of these comments to other governments, or to the members of the International Rubber Regulation Committee.

General instructions are being telegraphed to The Hague.⁶ Please repeat (*mutatis mutandis*) the numbered paragraphs to them in full by telegraph.

For your information with reference to statements made in the Foreign Office note and in the accompanying memorandum explaining the Committee's recommendations, Viles assures the Department that he did not approve the Committee's recommendations, having stated repeatedly that he and the American rubber manufacturers he represents are opposed in principle to rubber regulation, and having made specific requests that the Committee recommend adequate buffer stocks and no limitation on new planting.

Viles expects to arrive in London the 17th and to call at the Embassy on the 18th. He will have certain data which may serve as a background for oral discussions you may have with officials in the Foreign Office, and we have told him that you will be prepared to furnish him with a copy of this telegram for his confidential information.

HULL

856D.6176/493 : Telegram

The Minister in the Netherlands (Gordon) to the Secretary of State

THE HAGUE, March 23, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received March 23—10:49 a. m.]

30. Department's 24, March 12, 1 p. m. In view of the time limit of March 31, when presenting the note in question to the Netherlands Government I requested at least a preliminary expression of its views for the beginning of this week. The Foreign Minister—who said he knew nothing of the matter and had referred it to his experts—asked

⁶ Telegram No. 24, March 12, 1 p. m., p. 928.

me to call on him today and gave me a somewhat indeterminate oral reply as representing such preliminary views.

It was to the effect that the Dutch have no objection to our suggestion that the second American member of the Advisory Panel be a representative of the ultimate consumers rather than necessarily a representative of the manufacturers. Our suggestion number 3 is not objectionable to the Dutch in principle. According to the Foreign Office the same is true of our suggestions 4a and 4b; he says that his experts tell him that our desiderata can be brought about within the wording of the recommendation for regulation renewal as it stands, but he was not too explicit as to whether the Dutch would strongly endorse our views in this respect vis-à-vis other members of the Regulation Committee.

The Minister said that others of our suggestions cover points which have been the subject of discussion with our Government over a considerable period of time and that at present the Dutch authorities did not see their way to accede to our suggestions. I can understand that this is true of our suggestion number 5 but 6 would seem necessarily to be a new question and I have not encountered anything in the Legation's files indicating that our suggestion number 7 has formed the subject of discussion between our two Governments.

The Minister indicated that at its meeting of March 29 certain revisions of the recommendation for the renewal of the regulation agreement would be considered by the Rubber Regulation Committee but he could not tell me just what these revisions would consist of, whether they would be put forward by the Dutch members of the Committee only or whether they already had been agreed upon by the whole—or substantially the whole—membership of the Committee. The Minister was very vague on this point and I only report it for what it is worth; if I can succeed in securing further information in the premises I shall cable it. Copy to London.

GORDON

856D.6176/493 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Minister in the Netherlands (Gordon)

WASHINGTON, March 24, 1938—6 p. m.

27. Your No. 30, March 23, 1 p. m. Within your discretion you are requested to present the following points with emphasis to the Foreign Office:

(1) We should like to rely on the Netherlands Government to support actively the points which they have indicated as unobjectionable to them.

(2) This Government is not convinced that adequate consideration has been forthcoming for the problem of stocks raised in our point 5

and it strongly urges careful study of specific means of meeting this problem. Furthermore, it strongly urges adoption of the specific provision regarding release of rubber to friendly governments in time of war or other emergency, set forth in the third paragraph of point 5.

(3) The American manufacturers strongly oppose any restriction on new planting and this Government urges some liberalization of the recommendations of the committee in this regard.

(4) It is appreciated that restriction upon the export of certain seeds and plants, in connection with control measures, has been a rather settled practice in the Netherlands East Indies. In the case of rubber it is particularly objectionable and it is desired that our protest should be pressed strongly both in The Hague and in London.

If you consider it wise you may seek an opportunity to discuss these points also with Professor van Gelderen⁷ or other experts.

HULL

856D.6176/494 : Telegram

The Minister in the Netherlands (Gordon) to the Secretary of State

THE HAGUE, March 25, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received March 25—3:35 p. m.]

32. Department's 27, March 24, 6 p. m. I had an appointment for this morning with Van Gelderen who had been in London and there had discussed with Sir John Campbell⁸ the points raised in my note of March 15 presented to the Netherland Government pursuant to the Department's 24, March 12, 1 p. m. and after further discussion of these points with him, I took occasion to present to him with emphasis the further views of our Government as received this morning in the Department's latest telegram.

I have just seen the Foreign Minister and have discussed with him at length the points embodied in the Department's latest telegram and have impressed upon him the serious concern with which the American Government regards this whole rubber question especially at this particular juncture when a new 5-year control plan is about to be adopted.

With regard to point 1 of the Department's telegram under reference the Foreign Minister observed that he had only given me a preliminary expression of views at our interview last week (see my 30, March 23, 1 p. m.) which was not entirely tantamount to stating that certain of our suggestions were unobjectionable to the Netherlands Government. However, he did say that he appreciated our solicitude

⁷ J. van Gelderen, chief Netherland delegate on the International Rubber Committee and rubber expert of the Netherland Ministry of the Colonies.

⁸ Sir John Campbell, Chairman of the International Rubber Committee.

in the premises and that the points raised in my note of March 15 as well as those set forth in my note of today would be carefully studied in that light.

Copy to London.

GORDON

856D.6176/496 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, March 28, 1938—2 p. m.

[Received March 28—1:10 p. m.]

254. Department's 107, March 12, 1 p. m., was embodied in a note presented on March 15. Report of discussion with the Foreign Office went forward under cover of despatch No. 90 March 25.⁹

Through Viles, following recommendations of subcommittee arising out of American note have been obtained in confidence:

"The subcommittee are certain that the Committee will desire to give the American proposals their most sympathetic consideration and will be anxious to meet the wishes of the American Government so far as that is possible without conflicting with the main principles of the regulation scheme. The subcommittee have considered the note with great care and they recommend that the suggestions therein contained should be dealt with as follows:

- (1) No comments.
- (2) Article 18 of the agreement should be altered as follows:

'The International Rubber Regulation Committee shall be empowered to and shall within 1 month after the date of its first meeting arrange for the nomination of four persons representative of the consumers of rubber of whom two shall be representative of such consumers in America, and such representatives shall form a panel who will be invited to tender advice from time to time to the International Rubber Regulation Committee as to world stocks, the fixing and varying on the permissible exportable percentage of the basic quotas, new planting, replanting, and cognate matters affecting the interests of rubber consumers.'

These alterations would seem to meet the point taken by the American Government.

(3) It is suggested that to the preamble of the agreement after the words 'and adjusting in an orderly manner supply to demand' the words 'while at the same time making available all the rubber that may be required' might be added.

The subcommittee do not consider that this addition is necessary in view of the present wording of the preamble; but they do not think that there is any obligation to it.

(4) (a) It is suggested that two sentences should be added to article 17 (b) as a result of which the second sentence of this article would read as follows:

⁹ Not printed.

'Such assistance shall include annual reports on the working of the regulation in the territory or group of territories and all necessary statistical information which it is administratively practicable to obtain, including information as to costs of production and administration shall grant ample facilities to duly accredited agents, et cetera.'

(4) (b) As regards this matter—the manner in which the cost data are interpreted—the Government of the United States of America appear to be misinformed. It is the cost to efficient producers to which the Committee directs its attention. The form in which the cost price data for Malaga and the N. E. I. are obtained (in groups of cost prices) enables the Committee to obtain a clear view of the position in this respect.

(5) The question whether a minimum stock should be held by estates (no such regulations are practicable for natives) was formerly considered by the renewal subcommittee; but, after full consideration such a provision was held to be administratively impracticable. Nothing in the present draft agreement precludes the formation of buffer stock; and article 3 (I) specifically provides machinery under which the agreement can be modified or amplified.

The suggestion to constitute a buffer stock will require most careful study, and the Committee will probably decline to take any quick decision on so important a proposal. Clearly it is entirely impracticable to introduce into the draft agreement any provisions dealing with this matter prior to the 29th March. (Viles has handed the subcommittee what it terms 'the rough project of a scheme for the creation of a buffer stock.')

(6) The renewal subcommittee formerly carefully considered the desirability of making planting rights transferable from one territory to another but came to the conclusion that undesirable international complications would result from any such decision. They felt also that the general assent of the governments could not be obtained to such a proposal.

(7) The subcommittee consider that the prohibition of the export of planting material to non-signatory countries is an essential element of the control scheme.

There is in fact an abundance of planting material available outside the controlled area; and if that material is of lower yielding capacity than the planting material obtainable inside the controlled area the subcommittee see no reason why the advantages which would be derived from the use of this latter material should be made available to territories which without any sacrifice on their part are benefitting at least as fully as the controlled areas from the operation of the control scheme. The subcommittee are unable to accept the view that the imposition of this restriction on the export of planting material in connection with a scheme of control is unfair or that serious and detrimental results may be anticipated from it.

The subcommittee believes that even apart from the existence of control schemes such prohibitions of the export of planting material of a special character have been widely imposed by different countries."

856D.6176/496 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, March 29, 1938—5 p. m.

132. Your 254, March 28, 2 p. m. Within your discretion please express immediately through appropriate channels appreciation for the consideration which has been given to points raised by this Government, and in commenting on the subcommittee's reported recommendations you have obtained through Viles, reemphasize our position as follows, with reference to the numbered points in the Department's 107.

(2) It is hoped the committee will give further consideration to this point, since its recommendation will extend no new powers to the consumer representatives designed to increase their degree of influence on the operation of the scheme.

(3) The proposed addition to the preamble is welcomed, but it is our judgment that a fully effective statement should specifically couple the obligation regarding supply with explicit statement regarding price terms.

(4) (b) It is reassuring to learn that the committee directs its attention only to the cost to efficient producers. Nevertheless, it is our opinion that there is need, first for a clarification of the general statement of price objective so as to give explicit meaning in the agreement to the terms "reasonably remunerative" and "efficient producers," and second for definite and reassuring interpretation of this price objective in the administration of the scheme.

(5) We appreciate fully the importance of careful preparation of a buffer stock plan and have no desire to urge the committee to precipitate action. Confidence in the scheme will be greatly increased, however, as soon as adequate reserve stocks are available for prompt release whenever other supplies are insufficient, and it is hoped that the committee will move promptly to develop a plan for such stocks.

Furthermore, this Government attaches great importance to its suggestion for assurance in the agreement that there shall be no discrimination in the release of rubber to friendly governments in time of war or other emergency; it would seem that such assurance could in no way hamper the effective operation of the scheme, and it is urged that it be added to the committee's recommendations at this time.

(6) In view of the fact that the committee's proposal regarding new planting is merely permissive and would provide no assured new planting, we urge that it consider liberalization of the proposed re-

striction in some form. It may be that the committee could recommend that growers be permitted without restriction to substitute newly planted acreage for old acreage now in production.

(7) We are disappointed at the rigid attitude of the subcommittee on this point. If there is no liberalization of the committee's recommendation, it is felt that this matter may well afford a subject for inter-governmental discussion, especially in view of the new international interest in and discussion of export restrictions. This Government is unable to see any justification for an outright export prohibition of this nature, either by individual governments or by governments acting through international agreement. Such action by governments extends uneconomic monopoly control of commodities beyond the field of restrictive action that could be undertaken by private cartels.

HULL

856D.6176/498 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, April 5, 1938—noon.
[Received April 5—9:10 a. m.]

278. Embassy's 263, March 30, 5 p. m.¹⁰

1. Viles has obtained Committee's report which merely states that "the Committee express their formal agreement with the recommendations of the renewal subcommittee".

2. Arrangements were made for Viles to meet last evening under the aegis of the Embassy with the appropriate official of the Foreign Office and in the course of the conversation the information contained in the Department's 132, March 29, 5 p. m., was freely drawn upon.

KENNEDY

856D.6176/504

*The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Halifax) to the American Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson)*¹¹

No. W 5007/108/50

LONDON, 26 April, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: I have the honour to refer to Mr. Johnson's note No. 16 of the 15th March,¹² in which he was good enough to acquaint

¹⁰ Not printed.

¹¹ Transmitted to the Department by the Chargé in his despatch No. 245, April 27; received May 3.

¹² Not printed; see Department's telegram No. 107, March 12, 1 p. m., p. 928.

me with the views of the United States Government on the subject of the draft proposals for the revision of the International Rubber Regulation Agreement put forward by the Rubber Regulation Committee. I availed myself of the authority given in the last sentence of Mr. Johnson's note to communicate the text of it to the Committee, and I have now received their observations on it. I do not think that I can do better than to transmit to Your Excellency a copy of the correspondence which has passed on this subject between His Majesty's Government and the Committee.¹³ A copy of the Committee's final recommendation is also enclosed.¹⁴

2. It will be seen that the Committee, appreciating the very great interest taken by the United States of America in all questions relating to the renewal of the Agreement, have given the fullest consideration in framing their recommendations to the view of the United States Government, and have adopted their suggestions so far as it appeared to them possible to do so without conflicting with the main principles of the regulation scheme. In the cases where the Committee have not felt able to give effect to the views expressed in Mr. Johnson's note, they have furnished full explanations of the reasons which in their view made it impracticable to do so. These explanations seem to His Majesty's Government to be well-founded and will, I think, go far towards clearing up misunderstandings which appear to have existed on certain points.

3. As regards the suggestion that a specific provision should be inserted in the Agreement that there should be no discrimination in the release of rubber to friendly Governments in time of war or other emergency, Your Excellency will observe that a new article 21 has been included in the draft agreement which provides that the Agreement may be suspended at the request of any party in the event of a threat to its security. This article was inserted in the draft at the request of a contracting Government, and its effect will be that in practice the Agreement is likely to be suspended in time of war or other emergency. It would thus render ineffectual any provision of the kind suggested in Mr. Johnson's note, which would in any case seem to be hardly appropriate for inclusion in an Agreement between producing countries.

I have [etc.]

(For the Secretary of State)

WALTER ROBERTS

¹³ Not printed.

¹⁴ British Treaty Series No. 74 (1938): *Declaration . . . Regarding the Regulation of the Production and Export of Rubber* (London, October 6, 1938). A reprint, with certain verbal corrections, was issued in 1939.

800.6176/69

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary
of State*

No. 1035

LONDON, August 22, 1938.

[Received August 30.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to despatch No. 159 of April 7, 1938,¹⁵ and subsequent correspondence regarding the International Rubber Regulation Draft Agreement and to report that Sir John Campbell, Chairman of the International Rubber Regulation Committee, made a public announcement on the evening of August 9 that the contracting Governments had signified their intention of accepting the Draft Agreement which will come into effect on January 1 next for a period of five years.

Respectfully yours,

HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON

¹⁵ Not printed.

INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE BUFFER STOCK SCHEME OF THE INTERNATIONAL TIN REGULATION COMMITTEE¹

800.6354/65 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom
(Kennedy)*

WASHINGTON, June 16, 1938—noon.

277. Your 500, June 10, 7 p. m.² In your discretion you are requested to bring the substance of the following to the attention of the British Government with the request that it place these views before the International Tin Committee. In presenting these comments, you may make such alterations in the text as seem to be desirable on the basis of your current knowledge of the situation.³

"The attention of the Government of the United States has been called to the fact that it is likely that at the next meeting of the International Tin Committee a buffer stock scheme will be approved by the Committee and presumably made effective on the basis of such further action as may be required by the producers and by the governments of the producing areas. Your Government is acquainted with the interest of this Government in the costs of production, stocks and price of tin. It therefore ventures to make the following observations:

First, it is recognized that current prices of tin are substantially below the average level of tin prices since the inception of restriction. Nevertheless, it is also conscious of the fact that world supplies of tin above ground are, viewed from any other angle, still very small. According to the London *Financial Times* of April 28, 1938, visible supplies of tin were 29,000 tons and invisible supplies, 10,000 tons. This combined figure is equivalent to only 20.9 percent of the world tin consumption for the 12 months ending March, 1938, or to 10 weeks' consumption at that level. Furthermore, even this figure is higher than the average figure during the preceding months. It will be recognized that this country, the largest consumer of tin, has a natural concern in the maintenance of adequate stocks of a material so important for both defense and industrial purposes. If the purpose of the buffer stock is to make accessible larger total stocks of tin, it should

¹ The International Tin Regulation Committee was set up under an agreement signed March 2, 1931, extended by agreements signed October 27, 1933, and January 7, 1937. For texts of the tin agreements, see International Labour Office, *Intergovernmental Commodity Control Agreements* (Montreal, 1943), pp. 73 ff.; also see British Cmd. 4825 (1935), and Cmd. 5879 (1938): *Papers Relating to the International Tin Control Scheme*.

² Not printed.

³ The note was presented to the British Government on June 17, 1938.

be welcomed. But the emergence of the scheme at this time, coupled with a further lowering of production quotas, suggests that its inevitable effect, if not its essential purpose, is to immobilize a large part of available stocks rather than to increase them. Further, while some producers' interests may regard the scheme as an alternative to quotas even lower than those in prospect, it is apparent that if it succeeds in its purpose of raising price to the minimum set of £200, the liquidation of private stocks and of the excess stocks held by the scheme implies that quotas will remain depressed for a considerable period of time.

The contemplated price range in itself seems ill-suited to the requirements of consumers over a long range period. The actual price range visualized according to the information of this Government is between £200 and £230 per ton. As already observed, even this minimum price is substantially above prevailing prices. Although what data this Government possesses leads it to believe that this range is unwarranted by the present level of costs, this data is not sufficiently complete and systematic to permit it to form at the present time a reliable judgment as to whether the price range may be considered to be a fair objective of production regulation, i. e., one that would satisfy the general criterion of price formulated at the World Monetary and Economic Conference in 1933, to wit:

'It should be fair to all parties, both producers and consumers, it should be designed to secure and maintain a fair and remunerative price level, it should not aim at discriminating against a particular country, and it should as far as possible be worked with the willing co-operation of consuming interests in importing countries who are equally concerned with producers in the maintenance of regular supplies at fair and stable prices.'

The Government hopes that it will be possible to undertake a full and comprehensive study of the costs of tin production with a view to securing from such study reliable indication of reasonable price objective. In the meanwhile, it wishes to bring before the members of the International Tin Regulation Committee and the interested governments its full reservations in regard to the price and its interest in enlarged stock supplies."

For your own information: The foregoing is addressed primarily to the proposed price range. The question of the principle of an inflexible range raises broader questions than we are prepared to debate at this time.

Please send promptly the exact text of any communication which you may give to the British Government to Am[erican] Legation, The Hague, which is being instructed to present a similar communication to the Netherland Government.⁵

⁴ Paragraph (d) of the report on the work relating to the coordination of production and marketing of the Economic Committee, London Monetary and Economic Conference; League of Nations, Monetary and Economic Conference, *Report of the Bureau of the Conference*, p. 19.

⁵ Instruction to the Minister in the Netherlands not printed; the note was presented to the Netherlands Government on June 18, 1938.

You may show this to Todd ⁶ if he calls at the Embassy.

HULL

800.6354/67 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 20, 1938—6 p. m.
[Received June 20—1:25 p. m.]

537. Todd states International Tin Committee accepted buffer stock scheme with only slight modification.⁷ He made formal objection regarding price pegging and also the height of the price range. It would appear that he conducted himself ably.

JOHNSON

800.6354/72 : Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 24, 1938—5 p. m.
[Received June 24—12:25 p. m.]

555. Foreign Office confirms that the consent of the signatory governments is taken for granted and that it is planned to put the tin buffer stock scheme in effect July 1. The Foreign Office also states that a reply to the American note will be made in due course but it will be mainly a confirmation of the fact that the views expressed therein were made available to the Committee and the interested governments.

From what the London tin market knows of the scheme it for the most part considers that the immediate effect will be bullish and that the price of tin will move well into the pounds 200-230 range before the end of July. Incidentally according to Todd the Tin Committee estimates visible stocks and stocks at smelter at 47,500 tons and 7000 tons in possession of United States manufactures. Tin Committee's definition of normal visible stocks is 26% of the maximum yearly consumption, which in 1937 was 130,000 tons.

JOHNSON

⁶ William B. Todd, European representative of the Steel Export Association of America, resident in London.

⁷ For text of the agreement, signed June 20, 1938, see British Cmd. 5879: *Papers Relating to the International Tin Control Scheme*, p. 12.

800.6354/85

*The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Halifax) to the American Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy)*⁸

No. W 9982/305/50

LONDON, 4 August, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: In reply to Mr. Herschel Johnson's Note No. 217 of the 17th June last, on the subject of the international tin buffer stock scheme, I have the honour to forward to Your Excellency a memorandum prepared by the International Tin Research and Development Council Statistical Office at The Hague.⁹

2. I sincerely trust that the arguments contained in this memorandum will meet the points raised by the United States Government in the Note referred to above.

I have [etc.]

(For the Secretary of State)

GEORGE MOUNSEY

800.6354/100

Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Roy Veatch of the Office of the Adviser on International Economic Affairs

[WASHINGTON,] October 24, 1938.

Participants: Mr. William B. Todd, European Representative, Steel Export Association of America, and Representative of American Consumers on the Advisory Panel of the International Tin Committee,

Mr. Feis,¹⁰

Mr. Veatch.

Mr. Todd came to Washington for a series of discussions regarding the international regulation of tin. Mr. A. L. Viles, American representative on the International Rubber Regulation Committee, sat in on some of these discussions in as much as the attitude of this Government and of American consumers toward both the tin and rubber schemes was given consideration.

In the course of these discussions Mr. Todd supplied the following information:

⁸ Transmitted to the Department by the Chargé in the United Kingdom in his despatch No. 926, August 5; received August 16.

⁹ Memorandum not printed. In this 16-page memorandum, dated July 19, it was contended that existing stocks of tin were excessive, justifying a quota decrease, and that the price level of £200-£230 was fair. The conclusion was that both as regards the maintenance of adequate world stocks and price level the course pursued by the International Tin Committee was fully justified and would be to the benefit of tin consumers and tin producers.

In despatch No. 444, August 16, the Minister in the Netherlands transmitted a copy of this same memorandum as the reply to the note which had been presented to the Netherlands Government.

¹⁰ Herbert Feis, Adviser on International Economic Affairs, Department of State.

1. Mr. Todd himself has had no opportunity to study the tin situation in this country and has not as yet discussed American requirements with the American consumers. His appointment came in June while he was in Europe and, although he has attended three meetings of the International Committee, he has had no opportunity until this time to return to this country to go over the matter.

2. He is meeting with the Executive Committee of the American Iron and Steel Institute on Wednesday to discuss his duties as representative of American consumers on the Advisory Panel of the International Committee. It is his impression that all of the members of the Executive Committee of the A. I. S. I. are manufacturers of tin plate and will be in a good position to discuss the matter, although he intends to suggest the creation of a special subcommittee of the Institute representing the principal tin plate manufacturers. He will urge that adequate statistical data be assembled, probably through the office of the Institute, to give him at all times up-to-date information regarding the requirements of tin in this country, information similar to that worked up by the Rubber Manufacturers Association for Mr. Viles in connection with his representations to the International Rubber Committee.

3. Mr. Todd was nominated by the Executive Committee of the American Iron and Steel Institute, to take the place formerly held by Mr. John Hughes, Sr. on the Advisory Panel of the International Tin Committee. The Executive Committee of the Institute acted on this matter because tin plate manufacturers consume regularly more than 50 percent of the tin imported into this country. At the same time the other principal consumers of tin were invited to express their opinion on the suggested nomination and as a result the nomination was endorsed by the National Lead Association (requiring 15 to 20 percent of total tin used in the country) and the American Can and Continental Can companies, the largest users of tin plate. The American Automobile Association (using perhaps 10 to 15 percent of the total) replied that automobile manufacturers did not have sufficient direct interest in the matter to express an opinion. (On this point Mr. Viles volunteered the information that he had been informed by Mr. Reeves, Secretary of the Association, that the automobile manufacturers had declined to participate because of their desire to refrain from any form of cooperation with the Government.) Mr. Todd hopes that the other principal tin users may be led to cooperate with the tin plate manufacturers in supplying information and in determining the attitude of the American consumers toward the work of the International Committee.

4. At one point in the conversation Mr. Todd noted the fact that the steel people had raised some question as to the desirability of his coming to Washington for conferences on this matter since they feared

any contact with Washington might lead to an increased interest by the Federal Trade Commission in certain phases of their operations.

5. When Mr. Todd appeared at the June meeting of the International Committee, with the request of the American Iron and Steel Institute that he be accepted as the American representative on the Advisory Panel in place of Mr. Hughes, Sir John Campbell, the Chairman of the Committee, refused to accept the request, although he was willing enough to have Mr. Todd sit in on the discussions. Although the A. I. S. I. had made the original nomination of Mr. Hughes, Sir John maintained the position that the change should be made formally, and the matter was not properly cleared up until the third meeting of the Committee attended by Mr. Todd.

6. The British consumers' representative on the Advisory Panel is Sir William Firth, Chairman of the International Tin Plate Association. In the past he has not taken a great interest in the work of the Committee and has attended few meetings; he has, however, attended two of the three meetings at which Mr. Todd has been present. Mr. Todd has the very definite impression that Sir William Firth has rubbed members of the Committee the wrong way, particularly Sir John Campbell, and that as a result he has not succeeded in getting any great protection for the consumers. Mr. Todd's policy has been to refrain from any clash with members of the Committee during these first few meetings, when he was not well informed regarding the position that American consumers wished to take. He has, however, taken occasion to develop friendships with members of the Committee outside of the meetings. The meetings themselves are held in a rather stiff and formal manner and he has definitely the feeling that the essential decisions are made before the Committee assembles.

7. Mr. Todd has secured the greatest help from Mr. Lowinger, representative of Malaya on the Tin Committee and an official of the Colonial Office in London. Mr. Lowinger has a very objective view of the work of the Committee and has been quite willing to speak frankly of the various elements and personalities involved. He assisted Mr. Todd in securing information regarding the Committee's work in the past and at his suggestion, Mr. Todd went to The Hague and secured statistics and other information from officials of the International Tin Research and Development Council, a body created by the International Committee.

8. Up to the present time Mr. Todd has taken a position in the meetings of the International Committee only on the point that American consumers are primarily interested in stability of price, and, of course, price at a reasonable level. He emphasized the fact that the tin plate manufacturers operate on a long-term pricing system, usually announcing prices for a year's period at a time; it would

be a great advantage to them, therefore, if they were able to count upon relatively stable tin prices and did not have to discount the rather violent up and down swings that have occurred in tin prices in the past, even under the control of the International Committee.

9. Mr. Todd discussed with members of the Committee, and with the statisticians at The Hague, the existing information regarding costs of tin mining. At first he was told that there was no full information regarding such costs and no basis of comparison as between different mines and areas. When Mr. Todd expressed the opinion that one of the first functions of an international committee should be to see that costing data were assembled in full and on a comparable basis in all areas, he was told that as a matter of fact producers do have a uniform cost accounting system. He has not as yet secured full information regarding these costs, however.

10. Mr. Todd had gone over the memorandum prepared by the International Tin Research and Development Council, commenting upon the memorandum transmitted to the British and Dutch Governments by this Government, with reference to the operations of the Tin Committee and the proposed buffer stock scheme. In his opinion the reply of the Research Council was inadequate and unconvincing; he hoped that this Government would make a strong reply to it. It was arranged, therefore, that a preliminary draft of such a reply should be sent to Mr. Todd (care of Steel Export Association of America, 75 Wall Street, New York City) before his departure about November 2 so that he might offer his comments to the Department, either by mail or by telephone, before returning to Europe.

11. Mr. Todd has been in England three or four years representing the Steel Export Association of America in its relation to the International Tin Plate Association (in which American tin plate exporters are directly represented) and the International Steel Cartel (with which American steel exporters have a working agreement). Up until this time only the two largest tin plate manufacturers have taken an interest in the work of the International Association, since they were the only ones ordinarily concerned with the export market. Mr. Todd has just succeeded in bringing all tin plate manufacturers into a direct relationship with the International Association, however, and he plans to return to this country every three or four months to keep in constant touch with the American manufacturers. He will expect to come to Washington or to communicate with the Department of State on each of these visits and he hopes that in the meantime we will keep Mr. Butterworth in the London Embassy informed so that he can keep in touch with Mr. Todd there, and also that, so far as possible, we will keep in close touch with Mr. Tower, Secretary of the American Iron and Steel Institute.

PROTOCOL SIGNED JUNE 24, 1938, AMENDING THE
INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT OF 1937 FOR THE REG-
ULATION OF WHALING ¹

562.8F3/1

The British Ambassador (Lindsay) to the Secretary of State

No. 102

WASHINGTON, March 24, 1938.

SIR: I have the honour to inform you that in accordance with the recommendation contained in Paragraph 11 of the Final Act of the Whaling Conference of 1937 ² His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom propose that a conference should meet in London during the week beginning June 13th next to study the results of the 1937-1938 whaling season and to consider the modification or extension of the existing Agreement. They would be glad to be informed whether the United States Government would be willing to appoint a representative to such a conference.

Their proposal that the conference should meet in London is prompted by the consideration that it would be the most convenient place from the points of view of His Majesty's Governments in the United Kingdom and in the Dominions, whereas Oslo, which is the only alternative, is no more convenient than London for any of the other participating countries except Norway.

I have [etc.]

R. C. LINDSAY

562.8F3/17

The Norwegian Minister (Morgenstierne) to the Secretary of State

WASHINGTON, April 25, 1938.

SIR: Acting under instructions from my Government I have the honor to inform you that it has been decided to call an informal preliminary conference of experts in Oslo beginning on May 19th next in preparation for the Whaling Conference to be held in London in June this year.

My Government has requested me to convey to the Government of the United States an invitation to take part in such a preliminary conference and to express the hope that in the event of the invitation

¹ For previous correspondence, see *Foreign Relations*, 1937, vol. 1, pp. 920 ff.

² Department of State Treaty Series No. 933, or 52 Stat. 1460.

being accepted the American representatives to the conference may find it possible to be present in Oslo on the date mentioned.

I have further been instructed to inform you that in the opinion of the Norwegian Government it would be desirable that no reference be made in the Press to the said preliminary conference in Oslo.

Accept [etc.]

W. MORGENSTIERNE

562.8F3/28

The Chargé in Norway (Patterson) to the Secretary of State

No. 172

OSLO, April 25, 1938.

[Received May 10.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's telegram No. 6 of April 21, 1938, 6 p. m.,^s received yesterday through London, relative to its desire to be informed more fully of the possibility that the Norwegian Government might extend invitations to a meeting in Oslo preliminary to the whaling conference due to assemble at London next June.

As the Department was informed by my telegram No. 14 of April 25, 3 p. m.,^s invitations were sent out on that day, through the Norwegian Legations at Washington, London and Berlin, to the Governments of the United States, Great Britain and Germany, to participate in a meeting to open in Oslo on May nineteenth.

My informant, Mr. Valentin Aass, who had been a Norwegian delegate to the London Whaling Conference of June 1937, and on whom I called at the Foreign Office today, stated that he had learned of the intention of the British Government to call a second whaling conference only about six weeks ago when he had had occasion to revisit London. He added that the Norwegian Government would have preferred to have had the conference held in Oslo. However, since that had not been possible, owing to the British initiative in the matter, his own Government had decided that it would be well to have preliminary talks in Norway among delegates of those States which had ratified the London Convention of June 8, 1937. These were Norway, the United States, Germany and Great Britain. Ireland (Eire) was in process of ratifying the Convention and would be invited if ratification had been completed by mid-May. Mr. Aass was not specific in reply to inquiry concerning the agenda of the proposed meeting here, but said that, in general, technical questions would be taken up. He added that the phraseology of the London Convention had shown itself to be ambiguous in spots, so that clarification of portions of its text would be discussed.

^s Not printed.

Mr. Aass remarked that vigorous efforts had been made at Tokyo by several Governments interested in whaling to persuade the Japanese to adhere to the London Convention. It was hoped that the Japanese Government might be represented at London this coming June. However, as yet, the Japanese had shown themselves recalcitrant, having suggested impossible conditions, such as their willingness to conform to the Convention's other sections provided they were permitted to engage in whaling one month prior to the opening of the regular season and to continue it for one month following its close. He professed annoyance that the Unilever firm had purchased large quantities of Japanese whale oil, and so had been instrumental in strengthening the Japanese in their unreasonable position. He understood that Unilever had paid more for Japanese oil than British oil had been sold for. He had expressed his view vigorously to a Mr. Morris, of the British Fisheries Office. This same Mr. Morris, he thought, had been in regular touch with Mr. Herschel Johnson of the American Embassy at London.

Respectfully yours,

JEFFERSON PATTERSON

562.8F3/38

The Secretary of State to the American Delegates⁴ to the Whaling Conferences at Oslo and London

WASHINGTON, May 3, 1938.

SIRS: With reference to your appointment as a delegate on the part of the United States to the International Whaling Conference to be held at London beginning June 13, 1938, and to a preliminary conference to be held at Oslo on May 19, 1938, you will be guided by the following observations and instructions.

In the absence of an agenda of the conference at Oslo, it is expected that its main purpose is to convoke the representatives of the countries which ratified the London Agreement of June 8, 1937, with a view to discussing the reasons for the failure of that agreement to achieve its objectives and the modifications that should be made to that agreement in order to produce the desired results. It seems clear that conservation of the world whale stock has not resulted from the London Agreement. This conclusion may be drawn from the statistics of whale oil production during the past year which show an increase from 2,658,000 barrels to approximately 3,367,000 barrels. Factors that have caused this increase appear to be the barrel tax

⁴ Herschel V. Johnson, Counselor of Embassy in the United Kingdom, Dr. Remington Kellogg, and Commander Wilfrid Neville Derby.

on all whale oil produced in Australian territorial waters and the demand for whale oil which it has been reported certain countries are storing up for future use. Unquestionably under present conditions, the whale stock of the world is being rapidly depleted and neither minimum size limits, prohibited areas nor restriction of the season to ninety days has tended toward conservation. The whaling industry of the United States is less than that of any other country which will be represented at the Oslo conference. The United States has only two floating factories engaged in whaling, one of which it is understood is owned to the extent of eighty percent by foreign interests. The primary object of the United States in participating in the international whaling conferences and agreements is to further the cause of conservation. It may be doubted, as above stated, that the international whaling agreements have resulted thus far in conservation and it becomes vital to obtain tangible results from the forthcoming Oslo and London conferences. Unless this is done, it may be stated that this Government will find it necessary to consider whether it will continue to participate in international conferences or conventions dealing with the regulation of whaling. It is thought that an indication of this Government's attitude, along this line, might help to bring results out of the Oslo and London conferences more effective than the provisions of the existing convention and agreement.

Your attention is invited to the following points which may arise in the discussions at Oslo concerning experience under the London Agreement of 1937, and the proposals which are likely to be advanced for the purpose of strengthening that Agreement:

1. There is a definite distinction in the United States between treaties and other international agreements, the former requiring the advice and consent of the Senate for ratification, the latter not requiring such advice and consent. Provisions in the London Agreement contained in Articles 15, 20 and 21 created a confusing situation. The international convention for the regulation of whaling signed at Geneva September 24, 1931,⁵ being a treaty in fact, required approval by the United States Senate before it could become binding on the United States. Because the agreement of 1937 which supplemented the convention added measures of regulation not contained in the convention, it also was a treaty in fact from the point of view of this Government, and had to be referred to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification. This situation should be kept in mind in considering the provisions relating to bringing any agreement reached at

⁵ Signed on the part of the United States, March 31, 1932; Department of State Treaty Series No. 880, or 49 Stat. 3079.

Oslo or London into force as to the United States. This Government has been guided by the provisions of Article 19 of the London Agreement and it should be made known, should the question come up, that this Government endeavored to cooperate in every way it could to bring the London Agreement into force. Ratification was given promptly in the United States, namely, on August 13, 1937, and this ratification was deposited at London on September 3, 1937, completing the action necessary on the part of the United States to bring the London Agreement into force. The reason the Agreement has not come into force has been lack of compliance with the provisions of Article 19 by signatory countries other than the United States.

2. The interpretation of the provisions of Articles 8, 9 and 18 has led to some difficulty largely due to the ambiguous definition of a land station appearing in Article 18, which should be clarified. It seems advisable also to make clear the intent of Articles 8 and 9 with respect to the use of killer boats attached to factory vessels and land stations, and whether the use of killer boats attached to factory vessels would preclude their use with respect to land stations or vice versa.

3. It is also important to stipulate whether a factory vessel which operates in the Antarctic at one season is disqualified from operating under a shore station license during another season. This point was not made definite in the London Agreement of 1937, although it seems to have been the intent of that Agreement to restrict, if not disqualify altogether, vessels which operated in the Antarctic, from operating as land stations.

4. Difficulty has arisen in the United States in connection with the licensing of whaling vessels which have given notice that they intend to operate as land stations in Shark's Bay in the territorial waters of Australia. It would seem clear that the projects of operation in Shark's Bay are inconsistent with the spirit, if not the letter, of the London Whaling Agreement. In considering the points of difficulty here, it may be observed that these vessels have Norwegian killer boats attached thereto which are licensed or chartered from Norwegian companies with the approval of the Norwegian Ministry of Commerce, and are licensed by the Norwegian authorities to engage in whaling. It is also necessary for these vessels to obtain whaling licenses from the Australian Government to carry on operations in Australian territorial waters. Since the governments of the United States, Norway and Australia all signed the London Whaling Agreement, it might be advisable to consider what action is necessary to be taken by the respective governments so that each government will share the responsibility of taking measures to prevent the continuance

of the disastrous slaughter of whales in the proximity of Shark's Bay, which is understood to be close to breeding areas. In view of the ambiguous nature of several of the provisions of the London Agreement, it is doubted whether this Government could prevent the American factory vessels *Frango* and *Ulysses* from engaging in whaling in the territorial waters of Australia, even if that Agreement had come into force as to the United States.

As to the new proposals which may be advanced for modifying and extending the London agreement, it is suggested that the methods utilized by the International Fisheries Commission appointed under the convention between the United States and Canada for the preservation of the halibut fishery of the Northern Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea, might be given consideration. These measures have proven successful in regulating a deep sea fishery. It is thought that by establishing closed areas which are recognized breeding areas, placing time limitations on other areas and providing a maximum catch of whales determined annually by an administrative body, that might be taken from the latter areas, more efficient regulation of whaling might be effected. An administrative body might be set up by empowering the International Bureau of Whaling Statistics at Oslo to perform certain functions. It could doubtless check on the activities of whaling vessels in the various sectors which might be open to whaling until the limitations provided for in those sectors had been reached, whereupon whaling would be prohibited to all countries which had joined the convention. It is not believed that this Government would favor any system establishing quotas by countries or provisions which would outlaw equipment or limit the number of killer boats that might be attached to vessels but would prefer to see measures taken as above indicated which would prohibit whaling altogether in certain areas, place a limitation on the catch of whales in other areas, and place limitations on the quantity of oil processed and the number of whales taken from given areas.

Upon the completion of the conferences it is desired that you submit a comprehensive report of the conference activities, including copies of all official documents and suitable for publication.⁶

Further instructions will be sent to you in regard to the London conference.⁷

Very truly yours,

CORDELL HULL

⁶ Despatch of May 27 entitled "Report of the Delegates of the United States to the Preliminary Whaling Conference Held in Oslo May 19 to 21, 1938", not printed. For report of the London Whaling Conference, see despatch No. 640, June 28, p. 957.

⁷ Such further instructions do not appear to have been of a substantive nature, but concerned travel orders, quarters, and similar routine matters.

562.8F3/26

The Secretary of State to the Norwegian Minister (Morgenstierne)

WASHINGTON, May 5, 1938.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note dated April 25, 1938, informing me that your Government requests the Government of the United States to take part in a preliminary conference of experts at Oslo beginning May 19, in preparation for the Whaling Conference to be held at London in June this year.

In reply you are informed that the President has approved the designation of the following persons as representatives of my Government to attend the conference at Oslo:

Dr. Remington Kellogg, of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.; Commander Wilfrid Neville Derby, of the United States Coast Guard.

Dr. Kellogg and Commander Derby left the United States on the S. S. *Washington*, which sailed on May 4, 1938.

The American Legation at Oslo has been informed by cable of their designation.

Accept [etc.]

For the Secretary of State:
G. S. MESSERSMITH

562.8F3/61

The Consul General at Oslo (Beck) to the Secretary of State

No. 447

OSLO, June 2, 1938.

[Received June 15.]

SIR: In conversations with Dr. Kellogg, Chairman of the American Delegation to the International Whaling Conference at London and Norwegian officials and business men interested in whaling, it has been learned that Germany has stored for future use from 150,000 to 200,000 tons of whale oil. Great Britain has 60,000 tons similarly stored. A vague statement in regard to this was announced to the British Parliament early in May of this year. If hardened and kept in proper condition whale oil can be kept for five years.

According to reliable sources of information in Oslo, as a result of conversations with the American delegation, it is understood that Germany is interested primarily in seeing that the existing agreement be prolonged unchanged, if possible, and that the adherence of as many additional countries be secured. They are of the opinion that the present agreement, if it has widespread adherence, will go far toward solving the question of maintaining an adequate stock of whales. Their position is that since they have no colonies this pelagic fishery

is their only access to animal fats, which are used to a large extent in the manufacture of margarine and other products. The spokesman for the German delegation emphasized price and other factors that made it difficult for Germany to supply her needs with vegetable oils. They maintain that the whole question of whaling regulations should be based on biological factors and that those factors should be clearly established in advance of any additional restrictive regulations. They are sending—and have in the past—seven biologists on their floating factory ships; and, furthermore, their factory ships are utilizing the carcasses to a larger extent than other factory ships are today. The chief by-products they are obtaining are refrigerated meat, meal that is used as food for cattle, chickens, et cetera, and fertilizers. They plan to build and to operate the most efficient and up-to-date equipment on the factory ships. They feel that once this is developed many of these present obsolete and inefficient ships will automatically be eliminated and the operations will then be conducted on more rational lines and thus restriction in the number of ships will automatically curtail production and minimize the excessive killing of whales. They state that they desire to maintain a stock of whales to protect their own investment and to afford them a certain and sure source of animal fats.

On the other hand, the position of the British is not so clear.

As regards the Norwegians, the Government is understood to deplore the decline of the Norwegian companies in this world business but admit that it is largely a matter of their own doing. They are much disturbed over the present low prices of oil and the ensuing overproduction of oil. According to the experience of the American delegates in conversations the past few days, the Norwegians are genuinely interested in such conservation measures as will adequately conserve the existing stock of whales, but they are not clear as to how such a scheme can be effected. They have a large investment and it vitally affects the district around Sandefjord, Tønsberg, et cetera.

The impression has been gained in Oslo that if the present situation continues, the whaling business will not last more than five years from the present.

It was learned that the last available supply of whale oil—34,000 tons or approximately 200,000 barrels—was sold within the past few days in the Netherlands at a price of Pounds 13.10.0. per ton.

Some of the Norwegian producers entertain the private view that the Japanese broke the market by their sale of some 400,000 barrels of whale oil to Unilever, and it is reported that the reason for the sale was that their credit was bad and they were obliged to take what they could get. Unilever is aware of the financial condition of every whaling company and can practically dictate the prices. A member of the

German delegation remarked that the Japanese interests had approached him in regard to purchasing oil and that he had asked him what their position was regarding the international agreement for regulation of whaling. Not having received a satisfactory response, no further negotiations were carried on. Reference to this is made in this office's voluntary report of March 29, 1938, entitled *The 1937-1938 Whaling Season*.⁸

Respectfully yours,

WILLIAM H. BECK

562.8F3/50

The Secretary of State to the British Ambassador (Lindsay)

WASHINGTON, June 2, 1938.

EXCELLENCY: I have the honor to refer again to your note of March 24, 1938,⁹ inviting this Government to be officially represented at a Whaling Conference which will convene at London on June 13, 1938.

The advice and recommendations of the appropriate officials of this Government having been received, I now have the honor of accepting this courteous invitation on behalf of my Government and of informing you that the United States will be represented at the Conference by the following delegation:

Delegates:

Herschel V. Johnson, Counselor of Embassy, London, England,
Chairman of the Delegation;

Dr. Remington Kellogg, Smithsonian Institution; Commander
Wilfrid Neville Derby, United States Coast Guard;

Technical Adviser to the American Delegation:

Joseph T. Keating, Treaty Division, Department of State.

The American Ambassador at London has been requested to apprise the appropriate British officials of the composition of the American delegation.

Accept [etc.]

CORDELL HULL

562.8F3/65: Telegram

The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 16, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received June 16—7:58 a. m.]

519. From Delegates to Whaling Conference:

Our letter of instructions directs us to endeavor to obtain some tangible measure of conservation, particularly a cessation of whaling

⁸ Not printed.

⁹ The note from the British Embassy had been acknowledged by the Department's note of April 6; not printed.

operations after a fixed limit has been reached on number of whales taken or on number of barrels of oil produced. A proposal for an Antarctic world quota along this line has been made and is receiving considerable support. The British and German delegations are most actively supporting a proposal to prohibit killing of humpback whales in all waters during period 1st October 1938 to 30th September 1939. Evidence indicates humpbacks may need additional protection but 1 year prohibition against killing humpbacks will affect some American interests. It appears, however, to be a desirable conservation measure and if American proposal for Antarctic quota is supported by British and German delegations there would seem to be no good reason why we should not support their proposal. These proposals will be taken up on Friday and unless we receive instructions to the contrary we will support the humpback proposal provided our proposal for an Antarctic quota is accepted.

JOHNSON

562.8F3/69 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*

WASHINGTON, June 16, 1938—6 p. m.

279. Your 519, June 16, 11 a. m. For Delegates to Whaling Conference.

Your proposed action approved. You should point out that the Senate will adjourn soon and will probably not meet until January next. Convention cannot become effective until after Senate consents.

HULL

562.8F3/74 : Telegram

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Johnson) to the Secretary
of State*

LONDON, June 22, 1938—5 p. m.

[Received June 22—12:45 p. m.]

545. From Delegates to Whaling Conference.

Following is substance of protocol agreed to by Conference:

(1) Killing of humpbacks prohibited south of 40 degrees south latitude 1 year.

(2) Antarctic sanctuary approved for 2 years.

(3) Antarctic factory ships cannot operate elsewhere within 12 months and vice versa factory ships in territorial waters stationary for season (*Frango* not affected, see separate cable).

(4) Killing of undersized whales permitted at land stations when used as food.

(5) Other articles of minor importance clarifying 1937 London Agreement.

Delegates will sign tomorrow at noon unless contrary instructions are received.¹¹

JOHNSON

562.8F3/96

The American Delegates to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

No. 640

LONDON, June 28, 1938.

[Received July 5.]

SIR: The International Whaling Conference convened on June 14, 1938, in London under the chairmanship of Mr. Henry G. Maurice, Fisheries Secretary, British Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. The Right Honorable William S. Morrison, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, delivered the opening address, a copy of which is enclosed,¹² but attended no further meetings.

The business of the Conference was concluded on June 24 with the signature of the 1938 Protocol amending the 1937 International Agreement for the Regulation of Whaling, and of the Final Act of the Conference.¹³ Copies of each are enclosed. Both the Protocol and the Final Act were signed by the accredited representatives of the Governments of the Union of South Africa, the United States of America, the Argentine Republic, the Commonwealth of Australia, Canada, Eire, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, New Zealand and Norway. Denmark, France, and Japan were represented during the meetings of the Conference by delegates; Portugal was represented by an observer; and the interests of Newfoundland were in the hands of the British delegation. The Conference was informed by the Japanese delegation that their Government was prepared to take the necessary legislative and other measures to enable them to accede to the 1937 London Agreement and the 1938 Protocol after an interval of one year, and that their Government was prepared to observe the principles of the present Agreement as nearly as possible until that time. The Government of Denmark has given notice of its intention of obtaining the necessary powers to accede to the 1937 London Agreement and the 1938 Protocol. The French delegation notified the Conference that their Government was pre-

¹¹ The protocol was signed on June 24, 1938; Department of State Treaty Series No. 944, or 53 Stat. 1794. Pursuant to advice of the Senate, March 8, 1939, ratification was effected by the President, March 16, 1939. See also Department of State, *Press Releases*, April 15, 1939, p. 317.

¹² Not printed.

¹³ For text of the Final Act of the Conference, see Department of State Treaty Series No. 944.

pared to accede to the 1937 London Agreement and the 1938 Protocol subject to two reservations, the first limiting the term "land station" to a fixed or anchored construction which cannot subsequently be employed as a pelagic factory ship, and the second reserving the right to establish or maintain three land stations in French possessions in the Southern Hemisphere.

The United States production is small in proportion to the world total and is consumed entirely in the United States.

The Conference as a whole, in the opinion of the delegation of the United States, recognized that under the present Agreement the number of whales killed annually was so great as to threaten the perpetuation of the whale stock. While appreciating this danger, both from the biological and the commercial viewpoint, the delegates could not agree, under the existing conditions, on any measures which would impose restrictions drastic enough to strike a reasonable balance between the number killed annually and the natural increase of the stock.

Now that all countries having an important interest in the production of whale oil have become parties to the International Agreement for the Regulation of Whaling, further progress may well be anticipated in the acceptance of necessary measures of conservation.

Respectfully yours,

HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON
REMINGTON KELLOGG
WILFRID N. DERBY

PARTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCES, CAIRO, TO REVISE THE REGULATIONS ANNEXED TO THE CONVENTION OF 1932¹

[The conferences convened on February 1, 1938, sitting concurrently as the Telegraph and Telephone Conference and the Radio Conference; the former adjourned on April 4 and the latter on April 8, when the regulations and other acts were signed. The *Report of the Delegation of the United States to the Cairo Telecommunications Conferences* is printed as Department of State Conference Series No. 39.

The United States signed and ratified the General Radio Regulations, the Final Radio Protocol, and the Additional Radio Regulations; see Department of State Treaty Series No. 948, or 54 Stat. 1417.]

¹ See *Foreign Relations*, 1932, vol. I, pp. 865 ff.

PARTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE INTERNATIONAL SANITARY CONFERENCE, PARIS, OCTOBER 28-31, 1938

512.4B3/5

The Egyptian Legation to the Department of State

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

On the initiative of the Egyptian Government, the French Government, as depository of the International Sanitary Treaty which was signed in Paris on the 21st June, 1926,¹ is proceeding to convene an International Congress to be held during the month of October, 1938.

The object of this International Congress will be the modification of the above-mentioned Treaty by the abolition of the Maritime Sanitary and Quarantine Council, and the incorporation of the agreement reached in a Protocol to be annexed to the International Treaty of 1926.

There is no reason for the existence of this Maritime Sanitary and Quarantine Council since the abolition of capitulations,² and in addition its maintenance is in flagrant conflict with the sovereignty of Egypt and constitutes a blow to her dignity because of the existence in Egypt of a highly developed system of national sanitary administration, which handles all sanitary questions in a most satisfactory and perfect manner. Moreover, this double function causes delay in the promptitude of dealing with sanitary questions and disturbs the harmony of measures taken in this field.

It is the intention of the Egyptian Government to deal with the effects of the abolition of the Sanitary Council, so far as the present officials and staff are concerned, in the most reasonable and generous manner, maintaining some of them in her service in order to benefit by their experience and compensating others who wish to resign.

In view of the traditional friendship between Egypt and the United States, and the cordial attitude and most amicable support which the Government of the United States has shown towards Egypt on several occasions at International Congresses, the Egyptian Government feels sure that the invitation which will be forwarded by the French Government will be accepted by the United States, and that her point of

¹ *Foreign Relations*, 1926, vol. I, p. 177.

² See *ibid.*, 1937, vol. II, pp. 615 ff.

view will be supported by the Government of the United States as usual.

Attached hereto is a summary³ of the basis of action of the Egyptian Government at the Congress.

WASHINGTON, 14 September, 1938.

512.4B3/6

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (Alling)

[WASHINGTON,] September 16, 1938.

Mr. Rady, the Egyptian Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, called today and handed me the attached *aide-mémoire*⁴ requesting the support of the United States Government toward abolishing the International Quarantine Board (Sanitary Maritime Quarantine Board). He pointed out that this question was to come up at a conference to which we had been or would be invited by the French Government for the purpose of revising the 1926 Convention relating to Quarantine matters. I told Mr. Rady that I did not know whether such an invitation had in fact been received or whether we were participating in the proposed conference but that I would look the matter up and let him know. He asked if we would be good enough to give him a written reply to the *aide-mémoire* and accompanying document,⁵ which listed the proposals which the Egyptian Government had in mind in connection with the proposed abolition of the Quarantine Board at Alexandria.

512.4B3/17

The Secretary of State to the Egyptian Minister (Hassan Bey)

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to the Honorable the Minister of Egypt and has the honor to refer again to his Legation's *aide-mémoire* of September 14, 1938, with enclosure, expressing the desire of the Egyptian Government for the United States to participate in a sanitary conference to convene at Paris on October 28, 1938 for the purpose of considering the transference to the Egyptian Government of the duties assumed by the Sanitary, Maritime and Quarantine Board of Egypt.

The Government of the United States received an invitation from the French Government⁶ to participate in the conference and Mr.

³ Not printed.

⁴ *Supra*.

⁵ Latter not printed.

⁶ Note dated September 1, from the French Chargé, not printed.

Hull takes pleasure in informing Hassan Bey that the invitation has been accepted and that Surgeon General Hugh S. Cumming, Retired, United States Public Health Service, Washington, D. C., has been appointed delegate on the part of the United States to the conference. Dr. Cumming is the American representative at the International Office of Public Health.

WASHINGTON, October 14, 1938.

512.4B3/26

The Chargé in France (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

No. 3242

PARIS, November 3, 1938.

[Received November 17.]

SIR: In accordance with the Department's instruction No. 1122, of October 14, 1938, File No. 512.4B3/4,¹ I have the honor to report that Surgeon General Hugh S. Cumming, Retired, United States Public Health Service, participated in behalf of the United States Government in the Sanitary Conference which convened at Paris, on October 28, 1938, for the purpose of considering the transference to the Egyptian Government of the duties assumed by the Sanitary Maritime and Quarantine Board of Egypt, as well as the consequent revision of titles II, III and IV of the International Sanitary Convention of June 21, 1926. Second Secretary Edwin A. Plitt was assigned, in accordance with the instruction under reference, to assist Dr. Cumming.

The delegates and their assistants, to the number of 57 of which 24 were plenipotentiaries, took part in the deliberations which began at four o'clock on October 28, and at the opening meeting of which Mr. Anatole de Monzie, the French Minister of Public Works, presided in place of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. This first meeting was confined to the reading of introductory addresses by Mr. de Monzie and the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the latter outlining the reasons for requesting the revision of certain sections of the existing Convention, and taking the opportunity to draw a parallel in his exposition to the abolition of the International Sanitary Control formerly functioning in Turkey under the capitulatory regime.

Following motions made by Mr. de Monzie, the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdul Fattah Yehia Pasha, was appointed a Vice President of the Conference, as well as Dr. M. T. Morgan, Medical Officer of Health of the Port of London and President of the Perma-

¹ Not printed.

ment Committee of the International Office of Public Health, and Senator Professor Count Aldo Castellani (Italy).

Three commissions were constituted, viz.:

1. To deal with coordination under the Chairmanship of the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs;
2. To handle technical questions under the Chairmanship of Dr. M. T. Morgan;
3. To verify the powers of the plenipotentiaries under the Chairmanship of Senator Professor Count Aldo Castellani.

Dr. Cumming was made a member of the first and second commissions. The secretaryship of the Conference was entrusted to the International Office of Public Health.

These commissions met at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and at the International Office of Public Health twice, daily, on October 29, 30 and 31st. They developed a text for the approval and signature of the plenipotentiaries, in which were abrogated certain articles of the International Sanitary Convention of June 21, 1926. They modified some of them, and added an article relating to the role devolving upon the International Office of Public Health in its capacity of consulting council for the interpretation and the application of the International Sanitary Convention.

The conference also noted a declaration made by the Egyptian Government, which was added to the final record of the proceedings ("Acte final").

Of the Governments having ratified the 1926 Convention, the delegates of Belgium, Spain, France, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal declared that they were authorized to accept the suppression of the Maritime and Quarantine Sanitary Control of Egypt. The Danish delegate was absent, but had expressed his consent before leaving. The Norwegian delegate explained that his country had not yet ratified the 1926 Convention and that he, therefore, had to abstain. The Swedish delegate made the same observation and explained that he could, therefore, participate in the conference merely as an expert.

In the course of the meetings, the discussion of the suppression of the Maritime and Quarantine Sanitary Board of Egypt led to the raising of the question of the fate of the Regional Bureau of the Near East, the functioning of which this Board had assured. The International Office of Public Health representative proposed that the Egyptian Government assume the functions of this organization, name its Director, and that it arrange for the constitution of a commission to comprise the technical representatives of the countries previously having jurisdiction thereover. Also, that the President of the Permanent Committee and the Director General of the Interna-

tional Office of Public Health, be invited by the Egyptian Government to participate in its reunions, which are to begin in 1939. It was further recommended that this organization, once established, should function for a period of five years and continue thereafter by tacit renewal. The Egyptian delegates agreed to this in principle.

At the closing session, on October 31, 1938, a convention modifying the Sanitary Convention of June 21, 1926, and embodying the agreement arrived at, was signed by the plenipotentiaries,⁸ and a record of the proceedings of the conference was subscribed by the delegates and their assistants.

Nothing of any particular significance transpired during the meeting. The proposing, by the French Government representative, of the leading Italian delegate as Vice President of the Conference and to head one of the three committees, was commented on as an astute move, not only from the point of view of Count Castellani's outstanding professional position, but also as a political expedient, in view of Dr. Petragnani, the other Italian delegate, having manifested his intention of obstructing the Egyptian proposal in detail.

A complete report of the conference is under preparation by Dr. Cumming.⁹ For the Department's information, there are enclosed two copies each of the text of the modifications of the Convention and of the final record of the proceedings.¹⁰

Respectfully yours,

EDWIN C. WILSON

⁸ The convention of October 31 did not go into effect for the United States; for text, see League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. cxviii, p. 205.

⁹ Not printed.

¹⁰ Neither printed.

**PARTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL (DIPLOMATIC) CONFERENCE
ON PRIVATE AIR LAW, BRUSSELS, SEPTEMBER
19-30, 1938¹**

[For proceedings of the Conference, resolutions adopted, text of proposed conventions (not ratified by the United States) and other pertinent documents, see Department of State Conference Series No. 42: *Fourth International Conference on Private Air Law . . . Report of the American Delegation to the Secretary of State* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1939).]

¹For correspondence on the Third International Conference, see *Foreign Relations*, 1933, vol. I, pp. 940 ff.

UNPERFECTED INTERNATIONAL ACTS OF OCTOBER 11,
1933, AND SEPTEMBER 12, 1938, TO FACILITATE THE
CIRCULATION OF EDUCATIONAL MOTION PICTURE
FILMS

540.61B3/261

The Secretary of State to President Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, September 3, 1938.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On June 17, 1933 you approved the designation of Mr. Curtis T. Everett, American Consul at Geneva, as a delegate on the part of the United States to a conference which convened at Geneva on July 15, 1933, to discuss a draft Convention for Facilitating the International Circulation of Films of an Educational Character. On April 9, 1934 Mr. Everett signed on behalf of the United States the Convention agreed upon at this conference.¹

The Convention for Facilitating the International Circulation of Films of an Educational Character conferred certain authority upon the International Educational Cinematographic Institute which was established at Rome in cooperation with the Italian Government. The International Educational Cinematographic Institute has recently been closed as a result of the withdrawal of the Italian Government from participation in the activities of the League of Nations and consequently the effectiveness of the Convention has been seriously impaired.

This Government has received an invitation from the Secretary General of the League of Nations² to participate in a conference to convene at Geneva on September 10, 1938 for the purpose of considering amendments to the Convention which would remove the difficulties resulting from the suspension of the activities of the Institute at Rome. Although the United States has not yet ratified the above-mentioned Convention, it is agreed by the interested Departments of the Government that participation in the forthcoming conference is desirable.

¹ League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CLV, p. 331. The convention was not submitted to the United States Senate for advice and consent to ratification.

² Dated at Geneva, May 19 (C.L.95.1938.XII.); transmitted to the Department by the Minister in Switzerland in his despatch No. 370, May 21, received June 1.

I should appreciate your informing me whether the designation of Mr. Curtis T. Everett, American Consul at Geneva, as delegate on the part of the United States to the forthcoming conference would meet with your approval. Mr. Everett is now at his post at Geneva and his attendance at the meetings would entail no additional expense to the Government.

Faithfully yours,

CORDELL HULL

540.61B3/262 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Switzerland (Keith)

WASHINGTON, September 7, 1938—7 p. m.

44. Your despatch no. 497, August 18, 1938.³ Please inform the Secretary General of the League of Nations that the President has approved the designation of Mr. Curtis T. Everett, American Consul at Geneva, as the delegate of the United States to the conference in regard to the moving picture films convention. Everett is also being informed to this effect.

HULL

540.61B3/265 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Geneva (Bucknell)

WASHINGTON, September 9, 1938—4 p. m.

103. Your despatch 324 Political, August 15, 1938.³ For Everett. Conference re moving picture films convention.

1. You are authorized to agree to the proposal that the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation shall be substituted for the International Educational Cinematographic Institute in Articles 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12 and 13 of the convention of 1933.

2. As the United States has not ratified the convention provision should be made in the protocol for signature thereof by countries which have "signed" the convention in order that the protocol will be in form for signature by you and by plenipotentiaries of other signatory countries which have not ratified it, as well as by countries that are "bound" by the convention as is now provided in the protocol.

3. You are instructed, therefore, to endeavor to have the words "signatory of or" inserted before "bound" in line 2 of Article 4 and the last line of Articles 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the protocol (next to the last line of Articles 2 and 3 of mimeographed copy received from the

³ Not printed.

Secretary General through the Legation). The text at these places will then read "any Member of the League or non-Member State signatory of or bound by the convention."

4. This Government does not have any proposals to make in regard to the amendment of the convention otherwise than as provided in the draft protocol. If other proposals for amendment are brought forward they should unless time will not permit be referred to the Department for instructions.

HULL

540.61B3/268 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 10, 1938—10 p. m.
[Received September 10—6:12 p. m.]

188. From Everett. Department's telegram 103, September 9, 4 p. m. paragraph No. 5 [4]. The conference on educational films met today and after a general discussion decided tentatively to change the form of the instrument to be concluded in order to simplify the procedure for bringing it into force. Instead of concluding a protocol which would require ratification it is now planned to draw up a procès-verbal similar in form to that opened for signature on June 26, 1936⁵ to alter the latest date of issue of the annual statement of world requirement of drugs provided for by the 1931 narcotics limitation convention.⁶ Such an instrument would include no provision for deposit of ratification and could thus be put into effect by the executive authority in each country unless the national law of the country demanded ratification by a legislative body.

The essential clause of the procès-verbal will comprise what is now article 1 of the draft protocol. Apparently only a change of form is contemplated without any change of substance.

The matter has been submitted to a drafting committee which expects to present a draft to the plenary conference on Monday afternoon. Unless otherwise instructed I shall not raise any objection to the proposed procedure. [Everett.]

BUCKNELL

540.61B3/269 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Geneva (Bucknell)

WASHINGTON, September 11, 1938—1 p. m.

105. Your 188, September 10, 10 p. m. For Everett.

⁵ League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. CXXVIII, p. 299.

⁶ *Foreign Relations*, 1931, vol. I, p. 675.

1. A procès-verbal as explained in 188 is acceptable to this Government.

2. It is important that the procès-verbal should be in form for signature on the part of countries which have signed but not ratified the Convention of 1933, in conformity with paragraphs 2 and 3 of Department's 103 of September 9, 4 p. m., as well as in form for signature on the part of countries which are already bound by the Convention by ratification or definitive adherence.

3. The Department understands that of the signatory countries of the Convention, Albania, Finland, France, Panama, and Uruguay as well as the United States have not ratified. The representatives of these countries at the conference might associate themselves with you in regard to the point covered by paragraph 2 of this telegram.

HULL

540.61B3/270 : Telegram

The Consul at Geneva (Bucknell) to the Secretary of State

GENEVA, September 13, 1938—11 a. m.

[Received September 13—7:48 a. m.]

190. From Everett. Department's 105, September 11, 1 p. m. The conference concluded its work yesterday. It adopted a procès-verbal and a final act. The essential provisions of the procès-verbal are the same as those of the draft protocol. It may be signed on behalf of governments which have either signed or adhered to the original convention. I shall not sign these instruments however until the Department has had an opportunity to examine them. Final corrected copies will be mailed as soon as available. The British delegate announced he would be unable to sign at present because British law required Parliamentary sanction. [Everett.]

BUCKNELL

540.61B3/282 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Geneva (Bucknell)

WASHINGTON, October 13, 1938—7 p. m.

115. Your despatch no. 355 Political, September 21, 1938.⁷ For Everett. Conference on educational films.

The Department has examined carefully the procès-verbal, the final act, and your report. The procès-verbal and the final act are acceptable to the Department and you are authorized to sign them at

⁷ Not printed.

the convenience of the Secretariat of the League of Nations,⁸ making "under the terms of Article IV of this procès-verbal" the same reservation that was made to the Convention of 1933.⁹

HULL

⁸ Mr. Everett informed the Department in despatch No. 398 Political, October 18, that he signed the procès-verbal and the final act on October 17 (540.61B3/287). The texts of the acts are printed in League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. cxviii, p. 111.

⁹ The reservation made to article XX of the Convention of October 11, 1933, stated that the United States assumed no obligation in respect of the Philippine Islands, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or Guam.

RATIFICATIONS OF CONVENTIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT AT SEA ¹

[On October 24, 1936, the International Labor Conference at Geneva adopted the following three conventions, among others, all of which were submitted on August 18, 1937, by the President to the Senate:

Convention Concerning the Minimum Requirement of Professional Capacity for Masters and Officers on Board Merchant Ships. Ratification advised, subject to understandings, June 13, 1938; ratified accordingly on September 1, 1938; Department of State Treaty Series No. 950, or 54 Stat. 1683.

Convention Concerning the Liability of the Shipowner in Case of Sickness, Injury or Death of Seamen. Ratification advised, subject to understandings, June 13, 1938; ratified accordingly on August 15, 1938; Department of State Treaty Series No. 951, or 54 Stat. 1693.

Convention Fixing the Minimum Age for the Admission of Children to Employment at Sea. Ratification advised, subject to understandings, June 13, 1938; ratified accordingly on August 15, 1938; Department of State Treaty Series No. 952, or 54 Stat. 1705.

The three conventions under reference were proclaimed on September 29, 1939.]

¹ See Department of State, *Treaties Submitted to the Senate, 1935-1944* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1945), pp. 23-27, and Department of State *Bulletin*, September 30, 1939, pp. 316-317.

ASSERTION BY LINCOLN ELLSWORTH OF CLAIM TO TERRITORY IN ANTARCTICA FOR THE UNITED STATES

031.11 Ellsworth Antarctic Expedition/89

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Capetown (Denby)

WASHINGTON, August 30, 1938.

SIR: Mr. Lincoln Ellsworth is planning to make another expedition to the Antarctic and his vessel, the *Wyatt Earp* is now en route to Capetown. Mr. Joseph Ulmer, brother of Mrs. Ellsworth, visited the Department in June and indicated that Mr. Ellsworth would be interested in making claims to new territory in the Antarctic on behalf of the United States if it were desired that he do so. Mr. Ulmer implied that if the Department were to make suggestions as to the areas to be visited, in relation to their desirability from the point of view of claiming or establishing American sovereignty, it would probably influence Mr. Ellsworth's plans as to the areas he would attempt to explore. It was explained to Mr. Ulmer that since Ellsworth is conducting a private expedition the Department could not undertake to make suggestions of that character.

It is reported that Sir Hubert Wilkins will accompany Mr. Ellsworth and that his airplane pilot will be a Canadian citizen. It is understood that most of the members of the crew of the *Wyatt Earp* are Norwegians.

Upon the arrival of Mr. Ellsworth in Capetown you are requested to inform him, in strict confidence, that it seems appropriate for him to assert claims in the name of the United States as an American citizen, to all territory he may explore, photograph, or map which has hitherto been undiscovered and unexplored, regardless of whether or not it lies within a sector or sphere of influence already claimed by any other country. It is, of course, preferable that such claims shall relate to territories not already claimed by another country. Re-assertion of American claims to territory visited by American explorers several decades ago would seem to be appropriate if he should desire to explore such areas. You may suggest the possibility of dropping notes or personal proclamations, attached to parachutes, containing assertions of claims, and subsequently making public the text of such claims, together with approximate latitude and longitude of the points concerned. It should be made clear to Ellsworth that he

should not indicate or imply advance knowledge or approval of the Government of the United States but that he should leave it for this Government to adopt its own course of action.

The following information is of interest in connection with the suggestion that Ellsworth might drop notes or proclamations asserting claims on behalf of the United States. Captain Sir Hubert Wilkins, writing in the *Geographical Review*, July 1930, referring to airplane flights made over Charcot Island, wrote as follows:

The drifts were comparatively high, and it would have been risky to have landed upon them even with skis. We could not afford a landing as we were fitted with pontoon gear. However, in order to strengthen claims that Great Britain has for many years laid to these areas, I dropped, near Cape Mawson and near Cape Byrd, the British flag and a document claiming the area for Great Britain. The flag was suspended on a parachute so that it might float in the air for some time and after the weight to which it was attached reached the snow. The text of the document is as follows:

By virtue of authority to do and perform all and every lawful act necessary to take possession of such territories found between the Falkland Island Dependencies and the Ross Dependency in the name of George, by Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, etc., etc., etc., signed by His Royal Hand and given at the Court of Saint James on the 21st day of August 1929 I now float His Majesty's flag above this territory and deposit the record at approximately lat. . . long. . . as evidence of this visit and claim, so far as this act allows, this territory, land and sea, in the name of His Britannic Majesty King George the Fifth.

Dated

Signed.

You are requested to report to the Department promptly regarding your conversations with Mr. Ellsworth. You may inform Mr. Ellsworth that if he should care to communicate to the Secretary of State a report of his expedition, particularly in relation to areas visited and claims asserted, the Department would be pleased to receive such a report.

Very truly yours,

CORDELL HULL

031.11 Ellsworth Antarctic Expedition/93 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Consul at Capetown (Denby)

WASHINGTON, October 22, 1938—11 a. m.

The air mail despatch² referred to in your telegram of October 14, 9 a. m.³ has not yet been received. Please inform Ellsworth that the Department greatly appreciates his indication of his willingness to cooperate in carrying out the suggestions set forth in the Department's instruction of August 30, but because of the highly confidential nature

² Despatch No. 200, October 1, not printed.

³ Not printed.

of that instruction and the Department's desire to avoid any possibility of its contents coming to the knowledge of any person not an American citizen, it does not feel that it may comply with his request that a copy be given to him. You may, however, give him on plain paper the substance of the third paragraph so paraphrased as to give no indication of its source, as well as the text of the quotation from Sir Hubert Wilkins' article.

As indicated in the first paragraph of the Department's mail instruction, the Department does not feel that it can undertake to suggest to Ellsworth the extent of the territory to which he might assert claims in the name of the United States as an American citizen. For his general guidance, however, he may be interested in knowing that while the United States has not as yet asserted any formal claim to territory in the Antarctic regions, it has in various exchanges of diplomatic correspondence always reserved such rights as it may have acquired by reason of the activities of American citizens in those regions.

The extent of American activities in Wilkes Land, Palmer or Graham Land, Marie Byrd Land and Heard Island, and other areas in the Antarctic are of course well known to Ellsworth. The United States has never recognized the "Sector Principle" nor has it formally recognized any claims in the Antarctic asserted by other Governments.

HULL

031.11 Ellsworth Antarctic Expedition/95

The Vice Consul at Capetown (Richards) to the Secretary of State

No. 211

CAPETOWN, November 7, 1938.

[Received December 7.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's telegraphic instruction of October 22, 1938, and to previous correspondence relative to the Lincoln Ellsworth Expedition to the Antarctic and to report the results of Mr. Ellsworth's last few visits to the Consulate General.

Acting upon the authorization contained therein, Mr. Ellsworth was fully acquainted with the context of the Department's telegram of October 22, 1938, and was handed a paraphrase typewritten on plain paper of the substance of the third paragraph of the Department's instruction of August 30, 1938. A copy of this paraphrase is enclosed.⁴

Mr. Ellsworth, although apparently at first somewhat disappointed over what he considered an absence of enthusiastic and concrete support on the part of the Department, expressed his appreciation of

⁴Not printed; the memorandum furnished to Mr. Ellsworth also contained the substance of the fourth paragraph of the Department's instruction under reference including the quoted passages verbatim.

the activities of the Department and of the Consulate General in his behalf and stated that he was fully aware of the reasons for the reluctance of the United States Government to take a more definite stand. He was informed of the Department's appreciation of his willingness to cooperate in carrying out the suggestions contained in the Department's instruction of August 13 [30], 1938, and he left having given the assurance that he would do all that he could to further American claims in any territory he might visit.

The *Wyatt Earp* sailed from Capetown during the afternoon of October 27, 1938, and the American Minister, representatives from the Consulate General, and a large number of other persons were on hand to see off Mr. Ellsworth and his companions.

Respectfully yours,

ARTHUR L. RICHARDS

031.11 Ellsworth Antarctic Expedition/98: Telegram

The Consul General at Sydney (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

[Extract]

SYDNEY, February 22, 1939—4 p. m.

[Received February 22—6:46 a. m.]

Reference the Department's telegram dated February 17, 1 p. m.⁵

1. Owing to stormy and unfavorable conditions Lincoln Ellsworth tells me that he did not touch or see Heard Island. After leaving latitude 70 he dropped from his airplane a copper tube containing an American flag and the following statement:

"Having flown on a direct course from latitude 68.30 south longitude 79 east to latitude 72 south longitude 79 east I drop this record together with the flag of the United States of America and claim for my country, so far as this act allows, the area south of latitude 70 and to a distance of 150 miles east and 150 miles west of my line of flight and to a distance of 150 miles south of latitude 72 longitude 79 east which I claim to have explored."

WILSON

⁵ Not printed.

ATTITUDE OF CERTAIN GOVERNMENTS WITH RESPECT
TO PROPOSED PUBLICATION OF DIPLOMATIC COR-
RESPONDENCE WITHIN LESS THAN FIFTEEN YEARS

026 Foreign Relations/1341a

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Johnson)*¹

No. 2147

WASHINGTON, February 14, 1938.

SIR: As the Embassy is aware, the Department has been following the policy of publishing *Foreign Relations* volumes approximately fifteen years after the date of the documents printed in the volumes in question. This policy was adopted largely because certain foreign governments had indicated that they were reluctant to consent to the publication of their respective documents in the *Foreign Relations* volumes which were less than fifteen years old. In several instances there was reason to believe the governments regarded even the fifteen-year period or "gap" as too close to current events and consents to publish important documents were only obtained by American diplomatic missions after considerable negotiation. In the circumstances, it was felt by the Department that if the *Foreign Relations* volumes were to be "substantially complete" as required by the Department's order of March 26, 1925, a copy of which is printed on page 59 of Publication No. 864,² herewith enclosed, and, at the same time, were to be published at as early a time as possible after the date of the documents or papers compiled therein, the policy involving the fifteen-year period mentioned was best adapted to carrying out the objective of the *Foreign Relations* publication.

While the procedure in question has resulted in *Foreign Relations* volumes being issued which were very well received by the interested public because of their comprehensive content, there has nevertheless been a great deal of criticism over the alleged delay in issuing the volumes. This criticism has been expressed in numerous resolutions of historical and international law societies, in communications from professors, lawyers, publicists, and others interested in international affairs addressed to the Department and to Congress and in various

¹ The same, *mutatis mutandis*, to the American Embassies in France (No. 689) and Italy (No. 262), February 15; the Soviet Union (No. 322), February 17; Argentina (No. 702), February 19; Peru (No. 81), Brazil (No. 92), Chile (No. 326), Mexico (No. 1930), February 23; Germany (No. 911), February 24.

² *Status of the Foreign Relations and the Miller Treaty Volumes* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1936).

articles and statements which have received wide publicity. Copies of some of these resolutions and communications are enclosed together with extracts from relevant articles on the subject.³

Reference may also be made to the hearings before the Sub-Committee of the House Appropriations Committee on the Department's appropriation bills for 1937 and for 1938. During the course of these hearings officials of the Department were questioned in detail regarding the *Foreign Relations* volumes and the reasons for the alleged delay in publishing them. The report of the hearings on the 1937 and the 1938 bills with particular reference to the subject of publications have been reprinted by the Department and issued in pamphlet form (Publications Nos. 864 and 1005⁴). Copies of these pamphlets are enclosed. It will be noted that Publication No. 1005 quotes on page 71 the statement regarding the alleged delay in issuing the volumes which was contained in the Report of the Sub-Committee on the 1937 appropriation bill (Report No. 2286, 74th Congress, 2d Session, House of Representatives). The statement in question reads as follows:

. . . The printing of the treaty volumes and additions to the series of volumes on foreign relations of the United States is approved. The committee does feel, however, that the value of the *Foreign Relations* volumes would be considerably enhanced if the material contained in the different volumes could be released for publication by the governments concerned a shorter time after the events transpire. At present some 15 years must elapse before the foreign governments will consent to the publication of material contained in these *Foreign Relations* volumes. The committee is hopeful that the Department will continue its efforts to convince foreign governments of the value of narrowing the gap between the event and its authorized publication.

It will also be noted that there were included as part of the hearings on the 1937 and 1938 appropriation bills the 1935 and the 1936 reports of the Committee on Publications of the Department of State of the American Society of International Law. It may be added that the latest or 1937 report of this Committee was included and made a part of the hearings on the 1939 Department of State appropriation bill. As these latter hearings have not yet been published⁵ a copy of the 1937 report of the Publications Committee mentioned is enclosed.⁶ It will be observed that the three reports discuss at length the so-called "fifteen-year gap", the discussion in the 1937 report being of a somewhat critical nature.

³ None printed.

⁴ *Foreign Relations Volumes and Other Department of State Publications* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1937).

⁵ Department of State, *International Law Digest and Other State Department Publications* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1938).

⁶ Not printed.

You are requested to ascertain the views of the British Government with respect to the possibility of issuing *Foreign Relations* volumes which will include documents of a date closer to current events than the fifteen-year period mentioned. In ascertaining these views you may do so either by a note addressed to the British Foreign Office or by bringing the matter to the attention of the appropriate British officials in such a manner as you deem advisable. In communicating with the British officials you will, in your discretion, make such use of the material referred to above as you believe appropriate. In this regard you will please inform the British officials that the views expressed in the reports and resolutions of the historical and international law societies and in the communications, statements and articles mentioned represent the opinion of that section of the American public which is very much interested in the foreign policy of the United States and in having documentary material pertaining to this policy published as soon and as completely as possible. In mentioning the reports the attention of the British officials should be especially invited to the statement regarding the fifteen-year delay in issuing the volumes in Report No. 2286, 74th Congress, 2d Session, House of Representatives.

With respect to ascertaining the views of the British Government regarding the possibility of narrowing the "fifteen-year gap", the Department realizes that the British Government may not wish at this time to be committed to a definite publication policy in the future as regards the particular issue involved. If the Embassy can obtain, however, an expression of the views of the British officials on the subject which will give the Department a clear indication of the present attitude of the Foreign Office, it will be of great assistance to the Department in determining the policy to be followed in preparing forthcoming numbers of the *Foreign Relations* volumes.

The Embassy is requested to communicate with the British Foreign Office as soon as possible. An early and complete report from the Embassy will be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
G. S. MESSERSMITH

026 Foreign Relations/1856a

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Japan (Grew)

[Extract]

No. 1445

WASHINGTON, March 2, 1938.

SIR: . . .

The Department desires that in your discretion you ascertain the views of the Japanese Government with regard to the possibility of issuing *Foreign Relations* volumes which will include documents of a date closer to current events than the fifteen-year period mentioned.

The Department would prefer, however, that you refrain from making any approach to the Japanese Government on this matter at this time if you have reason to believe that instead of contributing to accomplishment of the purpose which this Government has in view, such an approach is likely to prompt the Japanese Government to insist upon a further widening of the present gap of fifteen years in respect to its documents. The Department has in mind the statement contained in your despatch No. 953 of September 5, 1934⁷ that an official of the Foreign Office in discussing with the Embassy the question of the publication in *Foreign Relations* of certain documents, expressed himself as feeling that 1920 was rather recent and that many documents were not "dead" in so short a time. Reference is also made to your conversation with the Chief of the Division of Research and Publication when you visited the Department in 1935 and your statement to him that the Japanese Foreign Office was opposed to reducing the so-called fifteen-year gap. While such statements clearly indicate that at the time they were made the Japanese Government was opposed to the publication of its documents in the *Foreign Relations* volumes less than fifteen years old, they do not in any way commit the Japanese Government to consenting or agreeing to publishing documents which are fifteen years old; on the contrary, the statements in despatch No. 953 referred to above would seem to indicate that the Japanese Government does not look with favor on even the fifteen-year interval. In the circumstances, the Department realizes that it might be injudicious to present the question again to the Japanese officials in that it might result in the Japanese Foreign Office making use of the occasion to insist on widening the gap rather than shortening it.

If you feel notwithstanding these considerations that you may safely approach the Foreign Office on this question, you may in your discretion make such use of the material referred to above as you believe appropriate.

The Department will appreciate receiving an early and complete report on any action you may take in response to this instruction.

Very truly yours,

For the Secretary of State:
G. S. MESSERSMITH

026 Foreign Relations/1348

The Ambassador in Brazil (Caffery) to the Secretary of State

No. 389

RIO DE JANEIRO, March 7, 1938.

[Received March 14.]

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's instruction of February 23, 1938,⁸ regarding the publication of *Foreign Relations* volumes and to report that the Embassy has been

⁷ Not printed.

⁸ See footnote 1, p. 976.

informed orally by the Secretary General of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that he perceives no objection, in principle, to the publication of *Foreign Relations* volumes which would include documents of a date closer to current events than the fifteen-year period now observed. The Embassy expects to receive written confirmation from the Ministry of this expression of opinion and will transmit it promptly to the Department.⁹

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
R. M. SCOTTEN
Counselor of Embassy

026 Foreign Relations/1350

The Ambassador in Italy (Phillips) to the Secretary of State

No. 826

ROME, March 16, 1938.
[Received March 30.]

SIR: With reference to the Department's instruction No. 262 of February 15th, 1938,¹⁰ concerning its desire to obtain the consent of the Italian Government to the publication of its documents in the *Foreign Relations* series, which are less than fifteen years old, I have the honor to inform the Department that a member of the Embassy staff discussed this question informally with an official of the Italian Foreign Office.

After having given study to the matter, the Foreign Office now communicates that in principle it perceives no objections to the inclusion in the *Foreign Relations* series documents which are less than fifteen years old, provided that the American Government will continue, as it has done in the past, to submit specific documents to the Italian Government for its assent prior to publication. It is added that consent to the publication of these later documents has been given in principle so as to facilitate the choice of historic material necessary for the aforesaid publications.

A copy in translation of the memorandum from the Foreign Office is enclosed for the Department's information.¹¹

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
EDWARD L. REED
Counselor of Embassy

026 Foreign Relations/1349

The Chargé in Chile (Frost) to the Secretary of State

No. 923

SANTIAGO, March 19, 1938.

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's instruction No. 326 of February 23, 1938,¹⁰ requesting me to ascertain the views of the

⁹ No record of written confirmation has been found in Department files.

¹⁰ See footnote 1, p. 976.

¹¹ Not printed.

Chilean Government with respect to the possibility of issuing *Foreign Relations* volumes which will include documents of a date closer to current events than the fifteen year period now in effect.

The Embassy discussed this matter with the Chief of the Diplomatic Department of the Foreign Office;¹² and the latter, after consultation with the Foreign Minister,¹³ prepared in answer to the Embassy's inquiry an *aide-mémoire* of which a copy and translation are enclosed.¹⁴ The Chilean Government is anxious to meet the wishes of the Department and interposes no objection to the suggested reduction of the fifteen year period. As a matter of principle, however, it would wish to be consulted first as to the documents referring to Chile which would be published in the *Foreign Relations* volumes.

Respectfully yours,

WESLEY FROST

026 Foreign Relations/1357

The Ambassador in Japan (Grew) to the Secretary of State

No. 2838

TOKYO, March 31, 1938.

[Received April 18.]

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's instruction no. 1445 of March 2, 1938, with regard to the attitude of the Japanese Government towards the policy of publishing *Foreign Relations* volumes approximately fifteen years after the date of the documents printed in the volumes. The Department desires that in my discretion I ascertain the views of the Japanese Government with regard to the possibility of issuing *Foreign Relations* volumes which will include documents of a date closer to current events than the fifteen-year period mentioned. Nevertheless the Department prefers that I refrain from making any approach to the Japanese Government on this matter at this time if I have reason to believe that instead of contributing to accomplishment of the desired purpose, such an approach would be likely to prompt the Japanese Government to insist upon a further widening of the present gap of fifteen years in respect to its documents.

In reply I regret to say that all evidence which has come to the Embassy indicates that the Japanese Government regards the period of fifteen years as too short an interval to justify the publication of some of the documents submitted to the Japanese Government by the Department, and there is no reason to believe that the attitude of the Government as expressed informally by an official of the Foreign Office

¹² Benjamin Cohen.

¹³ J. R. Gutiérrez.

¹⁴ Not printed.

and reported in paragraph 3 of my despatch no. 953 of September 5, 1934,¹⁷ has altered in a favorable direction. If our Government were now to seek to reduce the fifteen-year period I believe that in all probability the Japanese Government, when consulted, would express objection to the publication of individual documents in more cases than at present and that one of the important desiderata of the interested American public, including international law societies, professors, lawyers, publicists, and others interested in international affairs, namely that the documents published in *Foreign Relations* be as complete as possible, would be defeated. I think that such an approach to the Japanese officials as the Department suggests would be injudicious in that it might well result in the Japanese Foreign Office making use of the occasion to insist on widening the present gap rather than shortening it. This opinion is naturally speculative but we believe it to be sound.

I have read with interest the various documents enclosed with the Department's instruction and am impressed, as indeed I always have been impressed, with the importance of rendering our *Foreign Relations* volumes as complete and as helpful as possible to the legal and academic world. The great improvement of these volumes in recent years is marked. To aim at earlier publication at the expense of completeness would, I think, be an unwise policy and I have little doubt that so far as the Japanese Government is concerned a reduction of the fifteen-year period—which has been characterized here as already too short an interval—would incur grave risk of impairing the value and purpose of the series.

Respectfully yours,

JOSEPH C. GREW

026 Foreign Relations/1353

The Ambassador in Peru (Steinhardt) to the Secretary of State

No. 370

LIMA, April 6, 1938.

[Received April 12.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's instruction No. 81 of February 23, 1938,¹⁸ describing the policy of the Department of publishing *Foreign Relations* volumes fifteen years after the date of the documents printed in the volumes in question and requesting that the views of the Peruvian Government be ascertained with respect to the possibility of issuing *Foreign Relations* volumes which

¹⁷ Not printed.

¹⁸ See footnote 1, p. 976.

will include documents of a date closer to current events than the fifteen-year period mentioned.

This matter was brought to the attention of the Peruvian Foreign Office in note No. 108 of March 5, 1938, of which a copy is enclosed.¹⁹ The Foreign Office has now replied in note No. 6-3/40 of April 4, 1937, that it perceives no objection to the immediate publication of all kinds of documents of a diplomatic character with the sole exception of those which, by their nature, have a strictly confidential character. A copy of the text with translation of the Foreign Office's note referred to above is also transmitted herewith.¹⁹

Respectfully yours,

LAURENCE A. STEINHARDT

026 Foreign Relations/1358

The Ambassador in Argentina (Weddell) to the Secretary of State

No. 1990

BUENOS AIRES, April 11, 1938.

[Received April 19.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer to the Department's Instruction No. 702 of February 19²⁰ requesting me to ascertain the views of the Argentine Government with respect to the possibility of issuing *Foreign Relations* volumes which will include documents of a date more recent than fifteen years, the period which now governs the publication of official papers in these volumes.

On March 8 this matter was taken up informally with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, from which the Embassy has now received a memorandum dated April 5, giving the opinion of the Ministry's Legal Adviser to the effect that he sees no reason why the Government of the United States should not be informed that the Argentine Government considers that the period may be reduced to ten years. The Legal Adviser makes the condition that this modification can apply only to documents which are not reserved or confidential, as these may be made public only with the knowledge and authorization of all the interested governments. The memorandum concludes with the statement that the Legal Adviser's opinion is adopted by the Ministry.

A copy and translation of the memorandum from the Ministry are enclosed.¹⁹

Respectfully yours,

ALEXANDER W. WEDDELL

¹⁹ Not printed.

²⁰ See footnote 1, p. 976.

026 Foreign Relations/1354 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, April 15, 1938—1 p. m.

[Received April 15—8:50 a. m.]

316. Your written instruction No. 2147 of February 14, 1938. The Department's desire to issue *Foreign Relations* volumes which will include documents of a date closer to current events than the 15-year period has been fully discussed informally with Sir Stephen Gaselee, the official in the Foreign Office who would determine its policy in the matter. Gaselee was sympathetic and said that from the viewpoint of a scholar he quite understood the reasons for the Department's desire. Precisely he said that from the official point of view he agreed in principle. He pointed out, however, that the actual passing upon documents to be published, if involving the Cabinet as such, had to be submitted to Sir Maurice Hankey.²³ This he said would be with the benevolent recommendation of the Foreign Office but Hankey's decision would have to prevail. He also said that some of the Dominions are extremely conservative in regard to the publication of documents relating to them and this was another case where the Foreign Office did not have the last say.

The conversation with Gaselee is being confirmed informally in writing²⁴ and no publicity should be given to Gaselee's statement until we have received a written confirmation or specific authorization from him to make the decision public.

KENNEDY

026 Foreign Relations/1359

The Ambassador in Mexico (Daniels) to the Secretary of State

No. 6518

MEXICO, April 16, 1938.

[Received April 25.]

SIR: With reference to the Department's instruction No. 1930 of February 23, 1938,²⁵ with respect to the desirability of publishing *Foreign Relations* Volumes at an earlier date than the customary fifteen years after the date of the documents printed in the volumes in question, I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy and transla-

²³ Secretary of the British Cabinet.²⁴ See telegram No. 507, June 13, 7 p. m., p. 986.²⁵ See footnote 1, p. 976.

tion²⁶ of a note which I have received from the Foreign Office regarding this matter.

The Foreign Office has stated that it would have no objection to the period's being reduced to ten years, it being understood, of course, that the former practice of submitting the documents to the Foreign Office for approval before their publication will be continued.

Respectfully yours,

JOSEPHUS DANIELS

026 Foreign Relations/1366

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Davies) to the Secretary of State

No. 1178

Moscow, April 16, 1938.

[Received May 17.]

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the Department's instruction No. 322 of February 17, 1938,²⁷ stating that consideration is being given to the possibility of shortening the fifteen-year period which at present elapses between the publication of *Foreign Relations* and the date of the official documents included therein and directing the Embassy to ascertain the views of the Soviet Government towards the possibility of publishing such documents within a shorter interval.

In compliance with this instruction the Embassy addressed a note to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs setting forth the reasons which had led the Department to give consideration to this question and requesting an expression of the attitude of the Soviet Government thereon.

In reply to this note an official of the Commissariat has stated informally to an officer of the Embassy that the Soviet Government from its point of view perceives no necessity for the shortening of the present fifteen-year period, but recognizes that the decision in this matter rests with the Government of the United States. He added that if, however, it should be decided to shorten the present period the Soviet Government would prefer in each specific case to be consulted prior to the publication of any official documents or correspondence relating to Soviet-American relations.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

LOY W. HENDERSON

First Secretary of Embassy

²⁶ Not printed.

²⁷ See footnote 1, p. 976.

026 Foreign Relations/1370: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Kennedy) to the Secretary of State

LONDON, June 13, 1938—7 p. m.

[Received June 13—2:25 p. m.]

507. Your instruction No. 2147 of February 14, 1938. Following informal letter just received from the Foreign Office:

"I can now give a definite reply to one of the two letters you wrote to me on April 19th.

I have consulted Sir Maurice Hankey and we agree that we need have no objection to the period after which the State Department publishes diplomatic and other documents being reduced from 15 to 7 years on the understanding that you will continue as before to send us such of our documents as they wish to publish and will accept our decision if we ask for any of them to be omitted.

The State Department has no doubt already faced the fact that the reduction of this period of 'lag' may lead to other countries requesting the omission of a rather larger number of documents than hitherto. I think, however, you will agree that we are not generally unreasonable."

Copies of the correspondence are being forwarded by pouch.²⁸

KENNEDY

026 Foreign Relations/1388

The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State

No. 2933

PARIS, September 9, 1938.

[Received September 22.]

SIR: I have the honor to refer further to the Department's instruction No. 689, of February 15, 1938,²⁹ and subsequent correspondence relating to the policy of publishing *Foreign Relations* volumes approximately fifteen years after the date of the documents printed in the volumes in question. As the Department was informed by the Embassy's despatch No. 2087, of April 16, 1938,³⁰ a note embodying a full statement of the Department's position in respect of the publication of documents and a summary of the desires of the Department and of representative elements in the United States to see the fifteen year limitation on the publication of documents lessened, was transmitted to the Foreign Office on March 3, 1938. During the interim, occasion was taken to remind the Foreign Office by note and

²⁸ Despatch No. 523, June 13, not printed.

²⁹ See footnote 1, p. 976.

³⁰ Not printed.

personal call of the Department's interest in obtaining an early and favorable response to its suggestions.

The Embassy is now in receipt of a Note of September 1, 1938, of which copies in original and translation are enclosed,³¹ from which it will be noted that the Foreign Office keenly regrets that, for the present, it is obliged to maintain the existing rule. The Foreign Office emphasizes that its diplomatic archives are open to the French public only up to the year 1877, and that the Commission charged, under the auspices of the Ministry, with the publication of diplomatic documents, has restricted its activities to the beginning of the World War. It notes that the American public, which is able to consult much more recent French documents, enjoys a greater privilege.

The decision announced in the enclosure, of course, is in line with the sentiments expressed by Mr. Massigli, Director of Political Affairs at the Foreign Office, in a recent conversation with the Counselor of the Embassy,³² a memorandum of which was enclosed in the Embassy's despatch No. 2873, of August 27, 1938.³¹

In view of the considered opinion expressed by the Foreign Office in the present Note, it is doubted that further representations on this subject would be effective at the present time, but the Embassy will await the Department's instructions in this regard.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:
EDWIN C. WILSON
Counselor of Embassy

026 Foreign Relations/1401

The Chargé in Germany (Gilbert) to the Secretary of State

No. 560

BERLIN, February 2, 1939.

[Received February 18.]

SIR: Supplementing the Embassy's despatch No. 127 of May 3, 1938,³¹ relative to the attitude of the Reich toward the publication of German documents less than fifteen years old in the United States *Foreign Relations* series, I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy in translation of a self-explanatory note³¹ received from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the subject.

It will be observed that the German Government agrees in principle to the publication of such documents, on the condition that they be submitted to the Foreign Office here or the German Embassy at Washington for examination prior to publication.

Respectfully yours,

PRENTISS GILBERT

³¹ Not printed.

³² Edwin C. Wilson.

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