Berlin, Germany, June 22, 1933.

SUBJECT: Transmitting a memorandum on the development of military sport in Germany.

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a memorandum on "Military Sport as now Being Popularly Developed in Germany" which has been rapidly organized in this country since the accession of the National-Socialist party to power. It will be remembered that on September 13, 1933, President von Hindenburg by decree established the so-called "Reichskuratorium fuer Jugendverrichtigung", the announcement of which caused very unfavorable comment in the press of certain European countries.

It was felt then by those who have sincerely espoused the cause of peace in Europe and have hoped for a better understanding between Germany and her former enemies, that this public measure in Germany was calculated to fan the war spirit and militarize mentally, if not practically, the youth of Germany.

The events which have taken place in this country since
since Adolf Hitler became Chancellor, have not on the whole been conducive to convincing the rest of the world that Germany is not longing to become again a first-rate military power. The preachments of the National-Socialists during the many years they were struggling to obtain control of the Government, the public statements of the leaders of the party and the doctrines which have been integrally incorporated into the party's platform and for years proclaimed to the adherents, have all definitely contributed to a conviction that Germany has absolute intentions of training her youth in the arts of war. In fact, this conviction has so strongly dominated the policies of France and her allies, and it is believed with reason, that the course of European politics has been largely influenced by it. The difficulties at the Disarmament Conference in Geneva arise consistently from this conviction; and certain European countries which have most cause to fear a recrudescence of the military spirit in Germany have not been blind to the real movements which are here on foot.

Notwithstanding the pacifistic speech which the Chancellor made after President Roosevelt had appealed to the world for the adoption of a spirit of understanding and conciliation, it is reasonably sure that the position taken by the Chancellor was not shared by the rank and file of the members of his party. The careful observer in Germany
Germany who knows what is actually taking place, realizes that the German youth everywhere is brimming with the enthusiasm of military recrudescence; and the nationalism which is being fanned throughout the nation is not directed against a threatening enemy, but rather envisages the day when the German nation, again in possession of its full military strength, will be able to impose its will upon that part of Europe which denies its right to assert its political and territorial claims.

There is no question but that the German youth is extremely palpable to forms of idealism which the leaders of the National-Socialist party have well understood and whose greatest claim to leadership rests in a perfect understanding of German psychology. Millions of Germans will be content if no economic betterment takes place, so long as the national pride and glory is advanced and so long as they may be identified with a throbbing movement in the country which asserts the popular "hero" idea and the supremacy of the German race. One need not admit that this fostering of a military spirit of leadership and discipline is necessary in Germany today in the face of potential internal discords; as undoubtedly coping with internal political intrigue is a practical question which will consistently concern the German Secret Police and not the millions of youth who are practicing the art of war.

The movement, however, has not only been extended to
to embrace the so-called private army of the National-Socialist party, the uniformed Sturm-Abteilung (S.A.) and the Schutz-Staffel (S.S.), but has likewise gathered in the numerous organizations of the younger men and boys throughout the country. Boy scouts are generally being organized into the Reichskuratorium; and though it is not possible to afford these youths at once the intensive training which the Reichskuratorium had adopted in its manual, various simple exercises are carried through so as to make a beginning and to prepare the boys for their subsequent introduction into the general military training. The boys are given frequent opportunity to go out into camps, to march with heavy knapsacks, to learn discipline and in a general way get accustomed to the rigors of outdoor life. The program of re-invigorating the youth is being pushed with such zeal that it is now a common sight in Germany throughout the country to see battalions of youths marching in and out of the villages, towns and cities wherever one goes.

Attention is particularly called to the resume appended to the enclosed memorandum, of the guiding principles of the Reichskuratorium Hand Book, a copy of which is transmitted herewith.

Respectfully yours,

George S. Messersmith,
American Consul General.

Enclosure:
Memorandum with resume attached,
Hand Book, 820.02 GSM/RIG/HP