(954)

February 25, 1938.

Personal and confidential

Dear Raymond:

I have your two letters of January 31 and February 7. So much has happened in the interval that it is difficult for me even to begin to write you my thoughts and this has to be a very short note. Of course in some respects the most distressing feature of all is that when it came to grips between the Army and the Party the result has been so different from what many of us anticipated it would be. I think we must recognize that there is a flaw in the German character and that a certain kind of courage is lacking. Whatever partial authority the Army chiefs may retain, and I think they still retain some, the major issue has been decided, perhaps definitely, and the last feature of the coordination program internally has been carried through. It has been done, I believe, because Hitler realized that he could not proceed with the external program until he had this internal, and it was necessary for him for various reasons to be able to make progress externally.

I can see internal troubles developing within the Party through the rivalries which we know exist and which can only be intensified under the new conditions. Although the situation in Europe has been tremendously weakened and the situation of the Southeastern European States made much more difficult and although we must look to more rapid progress in disintegration, I think the situation is far from lost. The German steam roller may move ahead but the Balkans are too large a morsel even for Germany to swallow and escape a serious indigestion. I look for the pressure to be both political and economic, but more particularly economic for the present.

Perhaps

Raymond H. Geist, Esquire,
American Consul,
Berlin, Germany.

Geist, Raymond H.

954

Perhaps it is best that the English situation should have come to a head and I would not be surprised in its ending up in Eden heading a new government. It all depends, of course, upon whether Chamberlain can break the Berlin-Rome axis which, in my opinion, has never been too strong, but I still see the price which England would have to pay too high and I do not put any faith in the promise of any dictator. All I can see is that the danger of war has been somewhat pushed forward but in a way the eventual conflict only seems to have been made more certain.

We here are closely following the situation and will undoubtedly have to be more reserved than ever but we are going to stick to our guns all along the line. There is going to be no change of policy here.

I hope you will be able to establish very close and friendly contact with the Ambassador. I think I prepared the way for it. I am hoping that the Ambassador and Gilbert will be able to arrange their situation and as they are both fundamentally sensible men they may be able to do so.

I hope your sister is getting on comfortably. I know what a burden you are carrying and I am sure it is a comfort to you to know that others are in the same position. My own task here is growing increasingly heavy but I seem to be holding up under it. We are getting many things done.

My wife joins in love and good wishes to you and your sister.

Faithfully yours,

A-M:GSM:VNG