Dear Mr. Secretary:

We did not need Wilson's confidential telegram of November 12 to confirm what we already had to know — that the wholesale arrests, plundering, pillaging and terrorizing of innocent and helpless men and women throughout Germany in the last days was due to orders of the German Government. The cynical statements of Goebbels have insulted the intelligence and outraged the feeling of decency of practically all people outside of Germany and are in their way as mad as the acts undertaken within Germany by the Government against a part of its people.

Of all the many acts of the present German Government against innocent and defenseless peoples, these last are the culmination. For a Government to order and to carry through such wholesale action against a part of its people, and to threaten the rest of the world with further action if it should even pass censure, is an irresponsible and mad act that our Government cannot pass unnoticed.

We have throughout our history let it be known where we stand on matters of principle and the decencies. We have not failed to do this recently. Whenever such acts in the past have been committed, or permitted by Governments, in countries
countries which the world has considered less civilized, we have spoken and acted. The proud record of this Government and of our public conscience shows this. (Russia, Turkey, Rumania.) When a country which vaunts its civilization as superior commits in cold blood and with deliberation acts worse than those we have in the past dealt with vigorously, the time has come, I believe, when it is necessary for us to take action beyond mere condemnation.

It is my belief that unless we take some action in the face of the events in Germany of the last few days we shall be much behind our public opinion in this country. We shall run a grave risk of losing the leadership of opinion which our Government now has and this at a time when this leadership is all important in our most vital interests. It is my considered opinion that some action by our Government is called for.

I therefore suggest you consider recommending strongly to the President that Ambassador Wilson be ordered home immediately "for consultation". This step to be taken by cable and the Ambassador told to return by the first sailing. To the Press the President and you could merely say that he had been ordered home "for consultation" and it would not be necessary to make any comment.

I believe that you may be sure that you will find the Press almost unanimously behind such action and that it will read into it all the necessary implications without any comment.
comment from this Government. I think you will find general and enthusiastic approval throughout the country of such action. It is my further considered opinion that the country is waiting for something of this kind and that not doing it will be a definite letdown and set us back in our general stand and policy.

As to the effects of such action, I believe that it will be excellent in Germany. It will give heart to the right-thinking people there who are in the majority, if impotent. It will give the German Government food for thought. It will not stop action against Jews and Catholics, but it will stem the orgy. In England and in France such action on our part can only be helpful as it will be in Europe generally.

Calling back our Ambassador "for consultation" cannot interfere in any way with our relations, political or commercial, with Germany and our interests in Germany will not suffer. We shall be just as well off with the remaining representation there which can amply take care of all of our problems so far as it is possible to care for them. In fact, I am confident it will strengthen our position vis-à-vis the German Government. It can have no appreciable effect on our commercial relations, for Germany is only buying from us what she has to buy and will continue to do so.

It can have no effect on the refugee problem or the efforts of the Intergovernmental Committee, for it has been quite obvious
obvious that the German Government does not wish to receive Rublee except to use his visit as a pawn in the game of endeavoring to secure a basis for economic negotiations of a wide character which, in any event, we could not enter into. The only worthwhile result which Rublee's visit to Berlin could have would be to make it possible for the German emigrants to leave with a modicum of their goods. I have felt from the outset that it was useless to think that the Germans could or would make any reasonable arrangement to this end. The events of the last few days put it out of the question for the German Government is now showing its hand fully in the matter of expropriation.

It is my thought that when Wilson comes home, he can be kept in the Department usefully until such time as the President and you may believe it desirable for him to return to Germany.

I need not say that these instructions to Wilson if they are to be effective should be transmitted within the next day or two.

G. S. Messersmith.