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March 8, 1939.

Personal and confidential

Dear Raymond:

I have your confidential letter of January 31 with which you send me copies of the communications you have received from the consular officers in Germany commenting on the situation with respect to alien clerks. We are very glad to have this and it will be helpful to us, together with your comment, in various ways.

I have so far not yet had an opportunity to discuss at length with Senator Smathers his bill. I have discussed it with him only briefly over the telephone. I am still hoping that he will not even request hearings on it by the Committees. I have been in touch with the Committee Chairmen to whom this bill has been committed and I doubt whether they will bring it up for consideration in Committee unless Senator Smathers should press the matter. I am inclined to think that he will not even press for hearings and, according to present indications, it is likely that the bill will not get further than it now is. If Senator Smathers should decide to press for a hearing, we would, of course, be heard and I do not believe that a Committee of Congress would report such a bill favorably and that even though it should do so that it would pass either House. You will gather from the foregoing that I do not take the situation seriously from a legislative point of view. Of course one can never tell what may happen. I hope before long to have the opportunity of a real talk with Senator Smathers and I am hopeful that we may be able to get him to forget the bill altogether.

I should, however, point out that he is not the only one who is raising this question. We are getting

inquiries

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inquiries constantly from members of Congress with regard to aliens in our establishments. I think these inquiries largely come from complaints which are made by people in this country and that the complaints arise out of immigration cases. In other words, it is this visa work which is causing the offensive on our establishments. It is unavoidable and is part of the picture with which we have to deal. Whenever an alien applying for a visa does not get all that he wants, he, of course, blames it on some clerk or officer. It is impossible for them to understand that we have a law which we must carry through.

Then of course we must realize that there are people in this country who are constantly pressing for us to send certain clerks abroad -- people in whom they are interested and whom we obviously cannot use. These prospective clerks then complain because we use foreigners instead of Americans and, of course, in a big country like this everybody can get a hearing.

All this, therefore, is quite natural and what we must expect, but I think we can deal with it. I do not believe we will have any legislation which will make it impossible for us to continue to keep on our alien clerks.

Now so much for that. I do not, however, take quite as placid a view with regard to the situation as some of our field officers do. You know what I think about our alien clerks and how useful I know they are. Certainly I know how faithful most of them are. On the other hand, I know that the most faithful and the most useful alien clerk we have can be turned into a spy and used against us by the pressures which authoritarian regimes can exert. If there hasn't been more of this than we have had to deal with, you and I must know that it is not because of any strength in human character but because the Governments concerned over there have not chosen to use these people to the full degree as their instruments. There is, therefore, a danger which we must recognize. There is, therefore, a possibility, and even a probability, which is there. We have to act accordingly and, during these times of stress, in certain countries must take extra measures of precaution. I am sure that all of you in Germany are doing this. In other words, we want to keep our alien clerks, but we have got to keep our eyes open.

The

The Quakers, through Dr. Jones and Mr. Pickett, recently offered to send a lot of American college boys and girls to Germany at their expense. There we would hire them in our consulates at a modest salary on a temporary basis and when we were through with them they would send them back to this country at the expense of the Quakers. They discussed this with me and I told them that we couldn't consider it for a moment. If we needed American clerks abroad to replace aliens, we certainly were still able to do that ourselves. I said that in view of all that the Quakers had in mind in Europe, it was not very good policy for them to press such a matter. It looked as though they were trying to plant their own people in our offices and were trying to do the same thing that they were intimating the aliens were doing. I spoke to them very frankly. They offered some very serious criticism of our officers to me recently. I had to speak to them very sharply. As a matter of fact, the Quakers are hoping that this legislation to admit children, extra quota, will pass and that they will have the selection of the children in Germany. That is why they want to plant these clerks in our offices. I am sorry to say this, but I am convinced that it is correct. Dr. Jones is one of the men for whom I have had the greatest respect and I have always considered Pickett very highly, but recently some of us here in the Department have been very much discouraged to find that we cannot continue to give them that confidence we previously placed in them. We are not at all happy about some of the things that they are doing and have been trying to do. I tell you this for your background and so that you may be on your guard. The Quaker organizations now seem to be more interested in having something to do and in doing something rather than in how good or effective what they are trying to do may be. It is the same old story -- once you get up something some people get a job and then they have got to keep on finding something to do on the job. That I am sorry to say is the situation into which the Quakers are getting themselves on this work abroad. In any event, I want you to know that we have rejected in the most categorical way any thought of our availing ourselves of the services of American college people whom they would send abroad so that they would be on the spot and that we could hire them there. I haven't gone into all the reasons why we turned it down, but I think the foregoing is enough. We had plenty of good reason and more than enough to reject their offer, even though it may have been made in entire good faith.

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Should there be any developments in connection with our alien personnel in Germany which you think I should have, I would be very glad to have you write me.

With very good wishes,

Faithfully yours,

A-M: GSM: VNG