During the time that I was Counselor at Fort Erie, 1914 and 1915 and early 1916, there was a good deal of difficulty with Chinamen being smuggled across the river, that is the Niagara River, from Canada into the United States, as the admission of Chinese into the United States was very difficult and there were very special and strict regulations with respect thereto. The smuggling of Chinese from Canada into the United States was a very profitable business. The Customs guards on the American side of the border were particularly vigilant in this matter. It so happened that by mistake American Customs guards shot at a boat which was supposed to be smuggling Chinese and injured a Canadian policeman on the Canadian side of the river. It was one of those unfortunate incidents which are bound to happen, but it created a good deal of friction as the press in Canada, or a part of it, gave a great deal of attention to the incident. I realized that it was important that the matter be settled as quickly as possible and with as little noise as possible, and I occupied myself with it, and without going into any detail the matter was rapidly arranged and satisfactorily, and the newspaper comments ceased.

To my great surprise, the next time that I arrived in Washington I left my card, as was customary in those days, on the Secretary of State. As a very junior counselor officer, I had no thought that I would be received by the Secretary and there was no reason that I could see why he should. I was told I believe the following day after I had left my card by the secretary of Secretary Lansing that the Secretary wished to see me. When I entered the Secretary's office he asked me to be seated and engaged me in general conversation for a while and then went on to say that he had asked me to come in and was very glad that he had this opportunity of my being in Washington to see me personally, as he wished to tell me how much he appreciated the intelligent and prompt and understanding way that I had handled this border incident. I told the Secretary that I deeply appreciated what he had just said to me and that I had never thought for a moment that the matter had come to his attention.
I mention this matter because it was not only characteristic of Secretary Lansing, who was a very courteous gentleman, that he should do this, but it was also characteristic of the way that it was possible to run the Department of State for so many years. There was an esprit de corps in the Department and between the Department and its officers in the field which was really excellent and which was rapidly making our service, even in those early days, one of the best if not the best of the Foreign Services of any government.

Although times have changed and the responsibilities of the Secretary of State are now so tremendous that it is difficult to see how he can carry them, and although the work of the Department has grown so tremendously with the increased responsibilities of our country in all parts of the world, there should be a way found through which that esprit de corps, which is so essential for the maintenance of morale and for the effectiveness of the foreign representation, can be reestablished. Ever since the advent of Secretary Stettinius there has been a fall in Foreign Service morale, due to certain practices, administrative and otherwise. The morale of the Service has probably never been lower than it is today. This problem is now being recognized generally and has been widely aired in the press and attention is being given to it. I will in other memoranda speak of this matter.