Subject: "Conversation with Goering on the break of relations."

In view of the many attacks on American citizens in Germany, not only in Berlin but in practically every part of the country, it was quite obvious that in due course things would come to a head. The attacks which the Nazis made were not limited to Jews, they attacked Jew and Gentile indiscriminately. The largest number of foreigners who suffered were the Poles. The Polish Ambassador in Berlin, Lipksi, was in a difficult position. It was already obvious from the beginning of the regime in early 1933 that Germany was going to eventually attack Poland. The absorption of Poland was definitely on the program. Lipksi was therefore in a very difficult position in many ways and could do very little in making representations about attacks on Polish citizens which were taking place daily practically all over the country. There were very few Frenchmen in Germany and there was very little reason for the French Embassy to intervene, that if there had been any reason it was quite obvious that they would not have. François Poincet told me very clearly that he thought that we, that is, the American Embassy were making a mistake on these individual cases as there were much greater issues at stake than a few individuals. He was talking just like the Nazis. So far as the British Embassy was concerned it did very little. There were very few cases really on which they could make representations as the number of British, at that time, in Germany was limited. On the other hand, for those of us who had realized the degree to which Britain had gone all out to protect her citizens wherever they might be and under all circumstances, it was rather distressing to see that because as François Poincet, the Frenchman, said there were greater issues at stake, that nothing was done by the British Embassy in these cases. This did not deter us from going into every case fully and analytically.
In one way it was unfortunate for us that there were so many of our citizens in Germany. Germany had been a favorite place for American students. The German medical schools were full of American students taking post-graduate medical work. We had people in the music schools, we had people in the opera, we had people in the technical and engineering schools, and we had a good many professional men, lawyers and doctors in particular, who had established themselves in Germany. Many of these were Jews. They were singled out, of course, for attack, but as I've already said, the attacks were made indiscriminately.

I find that I failed to mention that the Czech Ambassador in Berlin was very active in presenting to the Foreign Office and to the appropriate officials cases of Czechoslovakian citizens who were maltreated. The Czech Ambassador at the beginning of the Nazi regime was Mastney. He was an experienced diplomat and he knew Germany, and he knew the Nazi regime very well, and he was a man of a great deal of courage. His performance in the Czech Embassy those days was really outstanding. I have just said that it was perhaps unfortunate for us that among the Americans living in Germany at the time of the beginning of the Nazi regime there were so many Jews. Perhaps in many ways this was a very fortunate thing. The maltreatment of American citizens was frequent; had it not been that the cases were brought to the attention of the Department of State and to the higher officials of our government by the Embassy and by the Consulate General and had the American newspapermen in Berlin not been so conscientious and so courageous in reporting to their papers and their agencies, a good deal of time would have passed and a good deal more time was saved before American public opinion became aware of what was really happening in Germany. What was reported by all sources on the development of the Youth Movement on
military preparation, on the whipping up of public opinion, and the arousing of prejudices by the Nazi regime, what was said about the development of the SA and the SS, and of the economic controls and financial controls set up in Germany, all these things had great interest for the American public. But they did not understand these things as thoroughly as they did the maltreatment of American citizens. The fact, therefore, that the Nazis did so much in the beginning of the regime to maltreat American citizens did a great deal towards awakening public consciousness in the United States of the real character of the regime.

It is hardly necessary here to say that one of the primary duties of our representation abroad, from the Ambassador on down, is the protection and advancement of American interests and this includes the protection of individual American citizens in their rights guaranteed under international law and under the laws of the country. When the laws of a particular country are of a character that they are obnoxious to establish public opinion and practice and are not in accord with our own laws and those of civilized countries, it is the duty of our government and its representatives abroad without any special instructions in individual cases, to take appropriate action before the government and local authorities of a country. We, therefore, did not need any special instructions in the Embassy or in the Consulate General in order to take the appropriate measures to protect American citizens in their rights. It is customary, in our own practice in the conduct of foreign relations, that the primary duty of protecting individual American citizens and our economic rights is placed in the Consulate General. There are times, of course, when the Embassy has to intervene as it may be the only means of reaching the highest levels in the government. In Berlin, therefore, from the very outset of the Nazi regime, the principal responsibility
for the protection of the rights of American citizens, whether with re-
gard to their person or their properties, fell on the Consulate General.
I had, on the whole, an excellent staff. The work of the Consulate
General was extremely heavy and with the advent of the Nazi regime it
became much heavier. The reporting responsibilities in the field of
economic and commercial matters and financial matters greatly increased
in scope and quantity and importance. I was extremely fortunate in
having with me as my principal assistant and administrative officer,
Raymond Geist. An officer of considerable experience, great courage
and understanding, a very real knowledge of German and of Germany. With­
out him it would not have been possible for me to carry through the
heavy responsibilities of the Consulate General in the manner in which
they were carried through. He was a bachelor and completely devoted
to the interests of our government. He was a man of extraordinarily
good judgment, his feet were always on the ground. What was most import­
ant, however, was his broad general knowledge and his understanding.

The reporting on individual cases of mistreatment of American
citizens, both as to person and property, became very heavy. We reported
on every case with great care, accuracy and completeness. Both Geist
and I felt that it was absolutely necessary that our government should
have full and adequate information. The main burden of the principal
reporting fell on him and on me, and this in spite of the fact that our
days were very much occupied with the attention to the many matters which
came before us. I am sure that at the time there were some of the offi­
cers of the Department at home who had to read these reports and who
felt that they were too detailed. Geist and I would have been very happy
to make these reports shorter, but we were of the opinion that the matter
was so serious, being so close to it and seeing it in all of its impli­
cations, that our reports had to be full and complete. They were necessary for the adequate background of the Department in forming its opinion of the broad developments in Germany. In addition to these long reports which we had to write on so many cases and interventions, I was preparing this weekly letter on the overall situation for the personal information of the higher officers of the Department and of the President.

It was very encouraging to Geist and to me and to those who assisted us so ably in this reporting and in the gathering of the information necessary for it, to know that these dispatches and reports from the Consulate General were being read in the Department and that the information was getting into the proper places, including not only second but the highest levels. It was often ten, eleven or even midnight before Geist and I were able to return to our homes. We had a faithful corps of stenographers and assistants who were perfectly willing to remain till any hour in the evening and be ready for duty early in the morning. We spent many hours in the Gestapo, some of my assistants spent many hours in the police stations. It was a difficult and at times a heart-breaking task. We were able to get a good deal of relief but it was usually after the act and when an American citizen had already been badly mistreated or killed. When there was a casualty it was usually due to the consequences of the physical mistreatment received. Men like Goering and Dr. Diehls, the head of the Gestapo, with whom we were constantly in touch, were always willing to help after the act. Geist and I came increasingly to the conviction that these attacks would not cease unless some drastic action were taken by our government. The German officials were paying more attention to us than they were to the representations of the other chiefs of mission and their assistants in Germany, but that was not sufficient to stop the attacks. These things
were not very remote from us. I recall one morning after I'd arrived at the office early, Geist came into my office and he looked rather white. He said he wanted me to go with him to the Visa Section. I asked him what for as I was very busy. He said there was a matter there requiring my attention. I made no further protest in spite of what was before me and accompanied him. I should add that at that time we had in effect the system in the Consulate General of giving the physical examination for aliens as well as the other usual examinations before granting a visa. This was for the purpose of facilitating entry on arrival at American ports where the further examination was made by our immigration authorities and Public Health authorities, but could be more of a formality because of the thorough work which had been done on the application at the Consulate abroad. We had, therefore, a Public Health officer of our government stationed in the Consulate General, and in the Visa Section we had a very large room for the physical examinations. On one side were a number of booths with curtains in front of them for women; on the other side of the room were booths for the men. The applicant, after a preliminary examination by the doctor, went into one of these booths and undressed to the degree which the doctor considered necessary and after the doctor had examined him or her in the booth, he dressed and came into the big room. That morning as I came into the big room I saw that the doctor was looking very serious. Without a word he and Geist led me to a booth on the men's side of the room. They pulled aside the curtain, there was standing there a man with his back to me. From the neck down to his heels he was a mass of raw flesh. He had been beaten with whips and in every possible way until his flesh was literally raw and bleeding. I took one look and got as quickly as I could to one of the basins where the doctor washed his
hands. I returned to my office and Geist gave me the story. I forget the name of the American but it is in the dispatches which we sent to the Department at the time. He was a young American doctor who after having completed his post-graduate work in a German university, was asked to remain as an assistant professor. In connection with the exercise of his assistant professorship, the pay for which was very small, he was permitted to practice in one of the suburbs of Berlin. The night before all this that I'm reciting took place; he had been taken out of his office by some SS men and taken to a tavern there in the suburb where they had their headquarters. He had been beaten practically to near death. After all this mistreatment, in the early hours of the morning he was thrown out into the street and in some way or other he found his way to the Consulate General in the early hours of the morning and was there when it opened. There was nothing that we could do except to inform Goering and Diehls. They of course expressed as usual great regret. The young doctor was taken care of in a hospital in Berlin and was able to travel after some weeks to the United States.

I recall that one evening about that time, about ten o'clock, from the Gestapo while Geist and I were still in the Consulate General, we got word that an American, who had been in jail for some days in Königsberg, was in a serious condition in the principal headquarters of the Gestapo in Berlin. The word about the man came to us from Dr. Diehls himself who requested that I come down to the headquarters and see him. It was a case of a young student which had occupied us for some time. He had been in prison in Königsberg for a considerable time for no reason whatever except that he was a Jew. As our efforts to get his release had been unsuccessful, Geist himself made the trip to Königsberg to see the young man in the jail. On his return we saw Dr. Diehls
and he agreed that he was not able to properly control the people in Konigsberg and that the best thing to do was to get the young man to Berlin to the headquarters of the Gestapo where he would deliver him over to us so that we could send him to the United States. As a matter of fact, we were expecting his return to Berlin that day and we had made arrangements for his sailing to the United States.

When we got to the headquarters of the Gestapo about eleven o'clock that evening, after Dr. Diehls had called us, he saw us and told us that he regretted that an unfortunate incident had taken place on the return of the man to Berlin. Specific instructions had been given concerning his treatment, he had taken the precaution of sending some of his own men from Berlin whom he could trust to Konigsberg to bring him back to Berlin. Apparently, Diehls told us, on arrival at the Gestapo headquarters and after being turned over to the people there by the ones who had brought him from Konigsberg, he had been terribly beaten and maltreated and was in a serious condition. Diehls obviously was afraid that the man might die and that was why he sent for us. I never saw a man more full of abject excuses. He said that he had done everything he could to see that this man got into our hands safely. He spoke pretty bitterly about the kind of help he had; he asked us what could be done. Geist and I told him that the first thing to do was to see that the man was taken immediately to a proper hospital, which we indicated, and where we were sure he would get proper treatment, and then to leave him in our hands and we would see that he got to the United States as soon as he was able to travel. We were ready to leave. It would be difficult to describe the feelings of Geist and myself. Diehls seemed to want to talk and he kept us there. He spoke of the difficulties that they had in controlling their people. They did not
want these things to take place; in any event he did not want them to take place. In spite of his best efforts these things were happening. I think that Diehls in many ways was sincere. He had been a good civil servant before the Nazis came in and he had joined the Nazis with the advent of Hitler to the chancellorship only for the purposes of opportunism but he became a completely subservient instrument of the regime. As Geist and I were leaving Dr. Diehls put out his hand to shake hands. I could see that he was doubtful as to whether we would take it. Geist and I shook hands with him. Diehls was really distressed, there is no doubt about that. He observed, "I wonder how you can shake hands with me after what has just happened".

I have related these few incidents out of so many at this point as background for the conclusions which Geist and I arrived at. We found that there was no doubt that some of the German officials did not wish these attacks to take place. We found that these men were so highly placed, such as Goering and Diehls, that we could expect little except excuses after the act. I realized that public opinion at home would become on edge. I realized that the Department of State and its officers abroad in Germany and, perhaps even high officers of our government, would be criticized for not taking more definite action to stop these outrages. We had reached the point where we had really done everything we could and where we felt that we were getting the collaboration of everyone except Hitler himself, that is to say, we had the collaboration of the two most important men under Hitler in the matter. The SS men and the SA men knew, however, that they were doing just what Hitler wanted and what most of the officials of the regime wanted in giving this mistreatment to foreigners. I knew that it was quite possible that a break of relations would be forced between our two coun-
tries over this mistreatment of American citizens. I did not believe
that this break of relations was desirable because it would have meant
that the hundreds of our consular officials and our Embassy and Consular
General staff in Berlin, who were following things so closely in Germany,
for the information of our government, would be obliged to leave Germany.
This would really cut us off from the sources of information we needed.
It would cut us off from any direct contact with the Nazi regime which
we would have to carry through, and we would have to entrust our in­
terests to some friendly government. I was not particularly interested
myself, neither was the Ambassador, in entrusting our interests to any
other government; we knew that they would not carry on as effectively
as we did. If they were not doing it for their own interests, they
would not do it for ours. I, therefore, passed the word along orally
to the Secretary and to President Roosevelt, that I thought the time
had come when the Ambassador should be authorized to see Hitler himself
and say to him that these attacks on American citizens were so serious
and were causing such a serious situation in our country that unless
they ceased, and ceased entirely, a rupture of diplomatic relations
would become a necessity. Secretary Hull and the President were fully
aware of what was happening in Germany. They were outraged and were
completely behind us in Germany who were endeavoring to put a stop to
these things. They knew that we had done the best we could and that
we were struggling against impossible difficulties. They knew that
nothing would stop these attacks unless Hitler would do something about
it. They, therefore, were quite prepared for the message which I sent.

It was, I do not know how long, but not more than a few weeks
after this oral information had been sent to the President and to the
Secretary, that Mr. Dodd, the Ambassador, called me from the Hotel Esplana-
where he was living, and which was just across the street from the offices of the Consulate General; he asked me to come over immediately. When I arrived at his apartment I was shown to his bedroom. He was in bed wearing several sweaters, he spoke to me in a whisper and said that he was very sick, he said that he could hardly talk. I expressed my regret that he was not feeling well. He reached under the bedclothes and pulled out a letter or a telegram. I do not recall whether it was a letter or a telegram, but reference to the files of the Embassy in Berlin or of the Department or to my own papers will indicate whether it was a telegram or letter. In any event it was a communication from either the President or the Secretary to the effect that he was to see Hitler without delay, and that he was to say to him the following, what he was to say was put into quotation marks. "This is an unusual practice in the giving of instructions to chiefs of mission, instructions are usually formal and direct and precise, but the chief of mission is usually given the opportunity to present this to the Foreign Minister or to the chief of state in the form that he considers best, as long as the substance is precisely adhered to. Although Ambassador Dodd was not experienced in foreign service practice, he did know about this particular practice and he knew that he had to see the Chancellor and to convey to him verbatim, that is, to read to him the instruction. It was to the effect that these attacks on American citizens were creating a situation where we were considering the possibility of a break of relations and that unless satisfactory steps were taken by the German government to put a complete stop to these attacks, which we believed could be done by them in view of the effectiveness of the measures they used in other respects, that our government would have to break relations. An answer was requested without any delay as our government would
and action have to take action within a reasonable period if satisfactory response/
was not made by the German government.

When I read this I had mixed feelings. I realized that it was
what I and others had wished and what the Ambassador himself had wished,
and that it was the thing to do, but that there was a grave possibility
that Hitler would react violently and that a break of relations would
ensue. I realized that it would be undesirable for us not to have the
usual means of communication with the German government directly as it
was the best way of protecting our interests and our people. Besides
that, in the major interest of following the situation in Germany, it
was desirable that we have our people there and have them there openly.
On the other hand, I knew that, from actual experience such as some that
I have mentioned in this memorandum, unless drastic steps were taken
to stop this mistreatment that a break of relations in any event was
inevitable. The thing to do, therefore, was to use the most effective
method of endeavoring to get action by the Nazi regime. I was therefore
pleased at this instruction.

I could see that the Ambassador was greatly disturbed. After
I had read it he said that this was a very serious matter; I said yes,
it was a very serious matter but he and I were in agreement that this
was the desirable step to take. He whispered that it was of course the
best thing to do and it had to be done, but unfortunately he was ill
and thought he was going to be ill for some days and immediate action
would have to be taken on the instruction. He said that I must take
care of the matter. I told him that this was quite impossible as it
would, under the circumstances, be necessary to bring this matter directly
to Hitler and to read to him the wording of the instruction. This was
a formal definite matter and had to be done and he was the only one to
do it. The Ambassador insisted that I should make the arrangements to see Hitler and, on account of his sickness, convey this message to him. I explained to the Ambassador that it was quite impossible for me to see Hitler with him in Germany. I said that if he were outside of the country there was a remote possibility that Hitler would see me, but certainly with the Ambassador in the country, Hitler would not see the Consul General under any circumstances.

The Ambassador was much agitated; I could not tell how ill he was. He talked in a whisper that I could hardly understand. He said, "I'm very sick, I must leave this matter in your hands. You are the one to take care of it, and if you can't see Hitler you must see Neurath." I told the Ambassador that he knew Neurath as well as I and that Neurath would realize the seriousness of the matter but, notwithstanding that, if I conveyed the message to Neurath by the time that Neurath conveyed it to Hitler it would be a love letter; we had learned that from the past. Neurath trembled in his boots before Hitler and he would not convey such a message adequately to Hitler. I said that this matter was too important to take any chances concerning it.

I realized that it was quite futile to endeavor to get the Ambassador to do anything about it for some days. I realized that some action had to be taken at once. I realized that the Ambassador was sick, perhaps he was not as sick as he pretended to be. He was a man who was timid and fearful in some ways. He loathed Hitler and all his works; he had no desire to have a conversation with Hitler and much less on a subject of this kind. He was in complete agreement, I was confident, that this was the step to take no matter what the consequences would be. I realized that it was up to me; I therefore told the Ambassador that I would see what I could do but, in the first place, it must be under-
stood that I could not see Hitler. He would not receive me. The Ambassador said that I should get the message to someone whom I felt would get it to Hitler adequately.

I returned to my offices across the street. I realized that I could see Neurath, the Foreign Minister, but I knew that it would be useless. I had known Neurath from the beginning of my stay in Germany in 1930. He was a very amiable gentleman. I knew that he would realize the seriousness of the import of the message which was to be conveyed but just because of the seriousness of the message and its implications, he would, when he put it to Hitler, bring it to him as though it were a love letter from the Secretary of State. This had to be avoided at all costs in our interest. I therefore discarded the idea of seeing Neurath before I reached my office. I immediately came to the conclusion that there was only one person who could adequately take care of this matter and that General Goering. I therefore immediately telephoned General Milsh at the LuftfahrtsMinisterium and found him in. I told him that I had a very serious message to convey to General Goering. He said that General Goering was not in the city. I said that in that case I had better come down and see him immediately. He said he would be very glad to see me at once. I immediately went to the Luftfahrts Ministerium and Milsh received me alone. I told him that the Ambassador had received this instruction to see Chancellor Hitler. I told him that it was impossible for the Ambassador to see the Chancellor because he was ill in bed with a bad influenza which might keep him there for some days. The matter admitted of no delay. I was therefore desirous of talking with General Goering who would convey the message to Chancellor Hitler. Milsh said that it would be quite impossible; the Chancellor was out of the city and would not return until the following Tuesday. I said that that would be too late. Milsh
began to take notice and wanted to know what it was all about. I thought it was better to tell him what it was all about or otherwise I would not see General Goering. When I outlined briefly to Milsh what the message was to be conveyed to Chancellor Hitler, Milsh literally turned white.

He said to me, "This is a very serious matter". I said that it could not be more serious. He said that he had strict instructions from General Goering not to disturb him until he returned the following Tuesday to Berlin. He was out of the city, he could not reach him, at least he had instructions not to reach him. I told Milsh that certainly he was in a position to convey a thing of this kind to Goering as other matters which might be of much less importance to the General. Milsh agreed; he unbuttoned the upper part of his tunic and took out from an inside pocket a little black book. He dialed a number which I could see was not a Berlin number. It took him literally half an hour to reach General Goering. As time went on and it was impossible for him to get to talk with Goering, Milsh became more and more disturbed. At the end of half an hour Goering was on the phone and I could hear him bellowing at Milsh for disturbing him, when he had instruction not to do so. Milsh in a few words told General Goering what it was all about and that I was in his office and that he thought it desirable for the General to return to Berlin immediately to see me. Goering did not seem to take the matter with sufficient seriousness. Milsh made it clear to him that a possible break of relations was in the offing. Finally Milsh turned to me and said Goering wished to speak to me. I got on the telephone and Goering, in his rough and uncultured German which he used on occasions when he was disturbed and unhappy, wanted to know what it was all about. I told him the matter was too important to talk
about over the telephone. I briefly outlined the situation to him, why I had to see him, and why the matter could not wait. I told him that unless I could see him I would have to report to my government that every effort had been made to convey the message to Chancellor Hitler and that we had been unsuccessful. Goering said he would be back by four in the afternoon and would see me in his office.

I returned at four and Goering received me with General Milsh. He was obviously disturbed because Milsh, who was a man of a good deal of understanding and who had more knowledge of the outside world than most of the people in the Nazi regime, had obviously been telling him how serious this matter was for the Nazi regime and what its effects would be, not only so far as we were concerned but generally. There wasn't any doubt from the very beginning of the conversation that I had been right in assuming that the last thing that Goering and others like him in the regime wanted was a break of relations.

Goering did not endeavor to discuss the seriousness of these incidents. We had discussed this often before. I knew his arguments and he knew mine. He had, I was sure, arrived at the conclusion that it was a serious matter, and that these attacks, especially against Americans, should be stopped, or he would not have given the instructions to Dils, the head of the Secret Police, to endeavor to stop them. Well, could not have taken the attitude that he did towards attacks on Americans unless he had instructions from Goering. After some conversation during which I impressed upon Goering the necessity for quick action, he said to me in a rather brutal kind of German, what did I think had to be done. I told him that I was a representative for the United States government and in this case was speaking for the Ambassador, who was speaking for our government. I said that it was not for me to
indicate what should be done by the German authorities; that they could stop these attacks I was certain, because certainly within Germany they were able to do what they wanted to do. They had shown this. I said this to him in just this language. Goering replied, "You are right."

He turned to General Milsh and asked him to ring for General X (I do not recall the name). In a moment a general whom I did not know came into the room. General Goering said to him, without making any explanation whatever, "General, do you still take stenographic notes?" And the general replied that he did. Goering then dictated something, an order to all the German officials in the Reich. I do not recall the exact wording of the order, but it was addressed to all Landesleiter, to all Landesfuhrer in Germany. It said that if after midnight of that day any attack was made on an American citizen in their area, that is, the area over which they had supervision, that they would be held directly responsible and shot. All attacks on American citizens were to cease immediately. There were to be no discussions of the circumstances; the Landesleiter and Landesfuhrer were to be held personally responsible and be shot in case of any attack. The general taking this down in shorthand did it completely stoically without any expression on his face.

Goering turned to me and he said, "Genugt was?" which is to say "Is that sufficient?" I said to the General that I was sure his order would be obeyed and that it would be effective. I expressed the opinion that if any attack took place in Germany on an American after this order was received by the Landesleiter and Landesfuhrer, it would certainly be an unfortunate accident for the person involved; in this case not only for the victim but for the Landesleiter and Landesfuhrer. Goering gave a broad grin. I asked him whether he would see that, nevertheless in spite of this action taken, he would see that this mes-
sage was conveyed to Chancellor Hitler. He said that it would be conveyed. I said that it was important that it be conveyed textually as those were the instructions of the Ambassador. He said that it would be done. He was very cordial and had all the appearance of a man who felt that he had done a good job and one that he had wanted to do. He showed no resentment, and seemed very pleased and happy. I left his office with Milsh and in the outer office Milsh said to me that I had done a good job.

So far as I know there was no other attack on an American citizen in Germany after that day. This was really extraordinary in view of the fact that, in spite of these strict orders and the enormous consequences for the Landesleiter and Landesfuhrer, one could never tell what a fanatic might do, and Germany was a swarm of fanatics.

I immediately informed the Ambassador of what had happened and he was very much pleased. As I recall he recovered rather rapidly from his influenza.

I've often thought, as the years have gone by, that it was a good thing that this message had to be delivered to Goering. Had it been delivered directly to Hitler, being the kind of man that he was, his reaction would have been terrific, at least his first reaction. I think at that stage he would have been prevailed upon not to break relations, but what he would have said to the Ambassador, that is to the American Ambassador, in reply to such a message, would have created nevertheless a serious situation between the two countries that would have made the situation even more difficult. There are times when a break of relations between countries is a useful instrument of bringing pressure. It is, however, a two-edged sword. A break of relations should be resorted to only when it will really redound in the interest
of the country taking the measure. At that time it was important for our officers to remain in Germany. It was important not only that our diplomatic and consular staffs be in the country, but also that our military and naval and air attachés be there. We needed experienced observers in the country. It would have been disastrous for our interests to be placed into the hands of any friendly government. We were really the only government that was taking a strong stand on these matters.

I have always felt certain that General Goering was himself pleased to have this message. He had reached the point where he was against these attacks. He knew that they were doing damage to Germany outside. It had taken a long time for this to penetrate into his mind. He was a man of considerable intelligence but relatively ignorant about the rest of the world. It was difficult for him to understand many things and that even with the best will he might have had to understand. With such a person it is difficult to reason because one is constantly striking against a stone wall of ignorance and lack of understanding. The Nazi officials were swollen with their power, they realized that they could do within Germany, which had been a great country, exactly what they wanted to do. It was no wonder that from the top down most of them had complete disregard for the rest of the world and what it thought and what it did. Goering was one of the only men in the Nazi regime itself, and I'm not speaking of the high officials of the army, who had any real conception, and this came to him slowly, of the repercussions of what was happening in Germany on the outside. With the years that have passed I have often thought of this situation and I believe that one of the most useful services that I may have rendered in Germany was to make Goering understand something about the rest of the world and how it felt. He certainly endeavored, in many respects,
to exercise a restraining influence. I am not in any way endeavoring to mitigate his guilt or to excuse any of his actions. His responsibilities are great and no punishment could have been too great. I only wish to bring this particular phase of Goering into perspective. It was not well understood by most of the representatives of other governments in Berlin. They could have had a great deal of influence on Goering if they had seen fit to take the pains to use it; instead of that many fawned on him, accepted his invitations in Berlin and to his country place outside of Berlin. He was always very jovial and friendly outside of his office when he met the representatives of various countries and particularly at his home. Their friendly response led him to entertain certain illusions.

I am sure too, that General Milsh exercised a certain influence, in a moderating sense, on General Goering. Milsh out of his broad commercial experience, particularly in aviation, before he became a part of the Nazi regime, had learned a lot about the rest of the world and about foreigners. He had no illusions about the growing power of the air force which he was building up. He knew that he was building up a powerful weapon, but he knew what other countries could do. I've often wondered whether in his heart Milsh was ever a convinced Nazi. He went along like all the rest; while this does not in any way mitigate any of the enormity of his offenses, one must recall how many of the German generals, once they realized that there was no use in breaking their heads against a wall, cooperated with the regime. In this respect General Guderian's book is most interesting. As is, Wheeler-Bennett's book entitled "Nemesis of Power", the story of the German Army and of the disintegration of morale in the Army, is one of the most accurate and interesting pictures which has been written of that important period.
from 1930 to 1940. I have known Wheeler-Bennett for many years. He has spent many years in our country. For a time he was a professor at the University of Virginia. I saw him a good deal in our own country and a good deal in Europe. He was one of the men who correctly estimated what was happening in Europe, that is, in Germany and what it meant for his country and for the rest of the world. His book is an excellent one because it is written by a man who had intimate contact with the individuals concerning whom he writes and with the situations which he covers. He had first hand knowledge of so much that he has recorded in his book. I repeat that it is one of the most accurate and important books covering that period and particularly the military aspects of what happened in Germany from 1930 to 1940.

To what has been set forth in these notes and have gone into the matter at such length because I'm convinced that the action we took and which has been described in this memorandum with its background, was one of the important and effective steps that we took. If we had taken other similar steps which recommended themselves by the facts and circumstances at the time, and if France and England in particular had taken the important steps which they should have at the proper times, the Germans would never have crossed the Rhine and much that happened thereafter would not have happened and even the war might have been avoided.