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Amsterdam, January 19, 1939.

Mr. George M. Messersmith,
State Department,
Washington. D.C.



Dear George,

I must apologize for not having written before, but I wanted to wait until my judgment was sufficiently sure. I am sorry to tell you that during the two months travelling through Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and France, I have hardly found anybody who was not extremely pessimistic about the future development on this side.

More so, I was astonished to find the different countries bordering on Germany or Italy infected to such a terrible degree by the "German disease". This creates a very great uncertainty in the state of mind in these countries which is not exactly but very similar to the state of mind which prevailed in Germany, say until the end of 1937.

I had a very interesting talk with Dr. Somary in Zuerich, whose name you doubtless know, and who in 1917/1919 took care of the commercial interconnections between the Ukraine and South Russia and Germany. He assured me that the grain transports, even

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under the terrific pressure which was ^{then} used by the German military forces, were not a success and he is in great doubt whether Germany, even if it would succeed in "organizing" the Ukraine, would be able to get enough food-stuffs out of the Ukraine to ^{possibly} feed the German people.

Lacking success in this direction there is every reason to believe that Mr. Hitler will have to try to find another way out and this can only be by attacking the Western countries.

I was told by many reliable persons that in Germany the events of the November 1938 have decidedly created a disgust with nearly every intelligent individual, even party members very often expressed themselves in this way.

While in Locarno over Christmas and New-Year I met some very fine ^{business-men} ~~people~~ from Genoa and they assured us that the dissatisfaction with Mussolini in the upper part of Italy - especially so in Triest, Milano and Genoa - is growing very quickly and the Italian people are decidedly against war of any kind.

I do hope that you and your wife are enjoying the best of health and both, Bonnielee and I, send you both our very best love.

P.S. We are sailing with the French steamer "Champlain", leaving Europe on February 8th.