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May 26, 1939.

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PERSONAL

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The Hon. George S. Messersmith,  
 Assistant Secretary of State,  
 Department of State,  
WASHINGTON D.C.

Dear Friend,

Many thanks for your letters of the 3rd and 8th May and for the interesting information you give me.

I am sorry I have not yet seen my way to go over to the States, but it is impossible for me to leave Brussels at present as there is such a lot to do. You will be seeing my son James one of these days. Horn is sailing for New York in the "Washington" on the 1st June. He will be over there for about ten days with his sister. He has to give a lecture on the Congo at the Belgian Section of the World's Fair, and no doubt he will go to Washington for a day in order to see you. You will probably agree with him on 9 points out of 10, and entirely disagree on the tenth.

May I bother you with the following small matter :- I intend sending my valuable books and manuscripts to America before we finally settle down there, and in this connexion I wrote a letter to Mr. Wait, American Treasury Attaché in Paris, of which I enclose copy herewith, together with copy of his reply. What would you advise me to do in order to obtain that the cases containing these books and manuscripts should not be opened at the customs? I am afraid they might be damaged if the cases were opened.

So far as the situation in Europe is concerned I shall only say a few words: The impression on the part of the German Army about the unreliability of the Italian ally, the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish Agreement, and the negotiations between London and Moscow, have made a very deep impression upon the German Generals and were used by them to postpone any dangerous move so far. I suppose that they have pressed very strongly

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to wait for the outcome of secret negotiations started by a very private and very strange channel with Russia, before any dangerous decision is taken. The private negotiator is said to be the one-eyed Czech General Sirovy.

So the date now mentioned freely in high party quarters as the beginning of the decisive move (15th June) might not be kept and there might be a chance of postponing everything until the beginning of August, but it all depends very largely on the attitude of the other Powers for the next four or five weeks.

It is also possible that nothing will happen until the harvest is over. And if the English-French-Russian agreement is definitely concluded I think this might avert War altogether. Meanwhile, the situation of Hitler - and also that of Mussolini - is becoming more difficult every day.

England is daily getting stronger. I understand they are now turning out every month 100 more airplanes than the Germans are turning out. The Britishers seem much more confident and I find there is an excellent spirit in all quarters. No depression. They are decided to fight if necessary, but would naturally prefer peace. All the companies have already arranged for places in the country to which they will transfer their offices in the event of War.

With all good wishes,

Cordially yours,

*Plummer*