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AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Berlin, Germany, August 8, 1933.

SUBJECT: Fusion of the automobile clubs in Germany
into one organization.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to inform the Department that through a recent order of the Government all of the automobile clubs in Germany have been combined into one organization which is to be absorbed in the so-called "Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps". While this step is taken ostensibly for the purpose of building a stronger and more useful automobile association for the benefit of the members, the real object of the consolidation is to place motor transport completely in the power and under the control of the National-Socialist party.

There are at present four automobile clubs in Germany, the Automobil Club von Deutschland, of which Archduke Adolf Friedrich von Mecklenburg has been the president; the Nationaler Deutscher Automobil Club, of which the Duke of Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha has been

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the president; the Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club, and the Deutscher Touring Club. These clubs have had functions much the same as the automobile clubs in the United States.

Some years ago there was formed by the National-Socialist party the so-called "Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps" which was a party organization, and members of the party who owned automobiles were supposed to become members thereof and to place their automobiles as a patriotic duty at the disposal of the Kraftfahrkorps whenever they might be needed. The Department is aware that one of the favorite ways of the party to keep up enthusiasm has been to hold very large meetings addressed by the leaders, to which attendance of the party members in a particular area was practically obligatory. In order to transport these party members to these meetings and particularly to transport the S.A. men, the party needed automobile transportation which it was not in a position to finance out of its resources. When therefore one of these meetings was to be held, the members of the Kraftfahrkorps were ordered to have their automobiles at a certain spot at a certain time. Manufacturers and merchants who had automobile trucks were called upon and are being called upon constantly to provide these trucks entirely at their own expense for transportation purposes.

As the largest number of automobile owners, however, were not members of the National-Socialist party,

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the transportation at the disposal of the party before March 5 was already found rather inadequate. Since March 5 the movement to enroll in the party increased the membership of the Kraftfahrkorps and in the same measure the automobile transportation available.

The 2,000 kilometers automobile race which took place several weeks ago, was carried out under the auspices of the Kraftfahrkorps and it was used as the opportunity to issue an order that the private automobile clubs shall be consolidated into one organization with the Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps. The details have not yet been completely worked out, but it is quite certain that the arrangements will provide for one organization and that the consolidation will be effective definitely as of October 1, 1933. The head of the new organization will be an S.A. leader, and it is not unlikely that several of the officials of the present clubs who are strongly National-Socialistic, may be associated with him in the governing and managing board of the new united automobile club.

It is believed that the object of the consolidation is in reality not only to place at the disposal of the National-Socialist party and of the S.A. all of the automobile transportation in Germany, but also that the consolidation is a part of the preparedness which certain leaders of the party have in mind for the so-called public defence of

Germany

Germany. In spite of the peaceful utterances of the Chancellor the spirit of the party is military^{istic}, and it has distinctly in mind that if its objects cannot be gained by peaceful means they must be gained by force. To bring therefore the automobile transportation of Germany into one central organization under the control of the Government and of the National-Socialist party, is considered a step in the national defence, for in this way it will be in the power of a single individual to mobilize all public and private automobile transport at particular spots at any moment.

I have thought it worth-while to bring this consolidation to the attention of the Department because it has a significance which is not apparent if the background, which led to the consolidation, is not appreciated. It is only one of the many indications of the really militaristic spirit which lies behind the present reorganization of everything in Germany.

Respectfully yours,

George S. Messersmith,
American Consul General.

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A true copy of
the signed original.
[Signature]