



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

Confidential

February 12, 1935.

Dear Messersmith:

The best of thanks for your letters of January 19, January 25 and February 1. I also have a vague impression that I never thanked you for a long letter you wrote me some time ago about Geist. My personal feeling is that he should remain on in Berlin where his work is outstanding but when the time eventually comes for his transfer, I shall say my say (for anything that it is worth) to the Personnel Board in favor of his being given an assignment where his political ability will tell.

First of all, let me tell you how delighted I am that I shall have occasion to see you early in April. I am sorry that your Mother is not so well and that the trip is partially on her account, but there will be many compensatory features and a chance for you to exchange news and opinions on political and service questions with the Secretary and others will I hope be one of them. I shall

send

The Honorable
George S. Messersmith,
American Minister,
Vienna.

send a memorandum to FP and FA recommending that they frame your orders in such a way as to enable you to have the days you want in Berlin.

Returning to comment on your letter of January 19. It continues to be a comfort that the Austrians feel that they have the local situation well in hand as we continue to get reports from other capitals in Europe that Germany's next move will again be in the direction of Austria and through a recrudescence of the local Nazi movement. I note that you feel the "Government in Austria will not feel itself secure until Austria has a non-interference pact with Germany", and again that "The Government feels that once Germany's hands are tied by some open agreement they can breathe freely and not before." I wonder if any non-interference agreement could effectively stop a policy of infiltration and boring from within.

As to the question you raise of whether Austria is by sentiment monarchic or republican, we have heard from private and confidential sources that the Germans expect that by the end of 1935 Otto will again be on the throne of Austria, and that such an accession of the Hapsburgs to Power in Central Europe would be viewed by Hitler and Goering as the first step in the process of closing in on

Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia and presumably opening up to the Germans a way toward the East. As this does not check with any other items we have had, or with deductions I would logically make, it would be helpful to have any comments or corroborative evidence you might be in a position to give.

Meanwhile, we are waiting to hear of Hitler's reaction to the Franco-British approach of last weekend.

We are still recuperating from the Senate's vote against ratification of the World Court Protocols. It is to make the role of our representatives in Europe, particularly those negotiating on disarmament and kindred subjects at Geneva, more difficult. I have spent a good deal of time discussing the World Court situation with a number of Senators I have met out at dinner and even those who voted for it tell me that in their opinion this did not represent the wishes of the majority of their constituents. They point out that Father Coughlin had on many previous occasions, however, urged the public to write or telegraph their Senators against a certain measure, but never before had he struck a responsive chord in the public. Be that as it may, we cannot fail
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to draw two lessons: the first, that there is still in the country a latent bloc of ultra-nationalistic isolationist sentiment; the second is that an active minority is still able to block any progress along cooperative lines.

With the best of wishes to you and Mrs. Messersmith in which Lilla would join,

As ever, sincerely yours,

PM