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AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Berlin, Germany, May 22, 1933.

SUBJECT: With reference to the short wave propaganda broadcasts from Germany intended for the United States.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.



SIR:

I have the honor to refer to my despatches Nos. 1188, 1195, 1230, 1239, 1248, 1263 and 1277 with reference to the establishment of a Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda and to its activities, and particularly to my despatch No. 1188 of March 14, 1933, the first of this series reporting briefly on the plans of this Ministry for radio broadcasts to the United States.

It has been difficult for the Consulate General to secure very definite and accurate information with regard to these broadcasts and to the programs. It is possible, however, to say definitely that a short wave program is broadcasted under the direction of the Ministry every evening, which is intended principally for the United States. This information is confirmed by Mr. Doug Brinkley, an American

citizen

citizen who has been in Germany for some weeks and who called at this Consulate General and with whom I had a conversation. The arrival of Mr. Brinkley was announced at some length in the German newspapers some weeks ago at which time it was stated that Mr. Brinkley was one of the best-known broadcasters in the United States who had come to Germany for the purpose of studying conditions and making an occasional broadcast. The stories of his arrival which appeared contained very fulsome praise of Mr. Brinkley and gave the distinct impression that he was one of the leading and popular broadcasters in the United States.

In order to verify this, I got in touch with the representative of the National Broadcasting Co. for Central Europe, who informed me that Mr. Brinkley does not really enjoy this reputation in the United States and that his company has only used his services on very rare occasions. He did, however, confirm that Mr. Brinkley was here and making a weekly broadcast for the Ministry of Propaganda.

During his conversation with me Mr. Brinkley stated that he was making a weekly broadcast in English and confirmed the reports which we had that there was every evening of the week a broadcast under the auspices of the Ministry, to the United States. I asked Mr. Brinkley how long he intended to remain here and he said that he would probably be here for

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some time. It has not been possible to determine whether he was engaged in the United States by the Ministry for this particular purpose or whether he sold his services to the Ministry after he came here, and on this point no definite information could be secured from him. I asked him what the nature of his broadcasts was and he said that he "commented once a week on things happening in Germany as he saw them". I asked him whether he prepared his own broadcasts or whether they were prepared for him through the Ministry, and he replied that he prepared them himself. He admitted, however, that they were "revised" before he gave them. It was obvious from the reserve with which he spoke that the subjects on which he speaks and practically everything that he says, are determined by the Ministry of Propaganda.

Mr. Brinkley is a young man whose general manner did not make a favorable impression on me. It seems quite clear that he has sold his services as "a well-known American broadcaster" to the German Ministry for propaganda purposes and that he is an entirely willing instrument in their hands.

As he is a free agent I contented myself with observing to him how important it was in the really best interests of both the United States and Germany that no distorted, false or in any way misleading information with regard to the situation in Germany

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be brought over the radio or in any other way to our people at home or to any section thereof. I observed that the best interests of people were served by a really proper and complete understanding of conditions prevailing in the respective countries. Mr. Brinkley I noticed was not happy when I ventured this observation at the close of our conversation.

Respectfully yours,

George S. Messersmith,
American Consul General.

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