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Subject: "Conversation with Eric Phipps, the British Ambassador in Berlin, before going to Vienna".

It was, I believe, early in 1934, just before I left for Vienna to be Minister there, that Sir Eric Phipps arrived in Berlin as the new Ambassador of Great Britain to Germany. Phipps had been Ambassador in Paris before coming to Berlin. He was a distinguished ~~great~~ diplomat with a considerable career of useful service behind him.

Very shortly after he arrived in Berlin, John/^{Campbell}~~Gamel~~ White, who was Counselor of our Embassy in Berlin said that Sir Eric had suggested to him that he would like to talk with me. White said that he would be very glad to have a luncheon at his home and that after lunch Phipps and I could leave the ladies and have our talk. I told White that I would be very glad to talk with Phipps, I would be glad to tell him anything I knew about the situation in Germany and about individuals in the regime. I said to White that he knew/^{what}my feelings were about American-British collaboration and that I had had these views for many years. It had been and was my deep conviction that American-British collaboration was absolutely essential in the interest of the two countries as well as in the interest of all the world. I told White that he knew that I thought trouble was coming and that England and we would have to bear the brunt of it before it was over. Any information, therefore, which I had accumulated during my stay in Germany was at the disposal of Phipps. I feared, however, that the conversation would not be as useful as it might be as I doubted very much whether Phipps would take what I said at its real value and would think that I was prejudiced and exaggerating. White said that it was, in any way, a useful thing to do and that he was pleased that I would do it.

We had luncheon and I recall that the ladies were present, and after luncheon Phipps and I went into a conservatory at the White's house off the dining-room. Sir Eric said that he had been told that I

had had so much contact with the leading people in the Hitler regime and that I had had perhaps as much intimate dealing with them as any foreigner. He would, therefore, appreciate it very much if I would give him a picture of the leading people in the Hitler regime as I saw them. I told him that I would be very glad to do this and would do it, of course, with complete frankness and without any reserves as I was talking to the British Ambassador and I was sure I did not need to tell him what my deep-seated views were with regard to American-British collaboration. Phipps said that he had understood this and for that reason particularly also had wished to talk with me. I suggested to him that probably the best way to carry on the conversation would be for him to ask me questions. He agreed that this would be the best way. He began to ask me all sorts of questions about individuals in the regime, beginning with Hitler. He put many **searching** and pertinent questions to me and we covered most of the important figures, or I should say the most important figures in the civilian and military ranks of the regime. He did very little except to ask questions during the conversation. Once in a while he would make a brief observation. I could see, as the conversation progressed, that he was obviously thinking that I was prejudiced with regard to some of these individuals, if not all. Some of the questions which he asked showed that he had certain illusions and inadequate information about some of the principal people in the government. At times I could see a look of surprise on his face at a picture which I drew of an individual or of certain events and I had, as the conversation continued, a definite impression also that he thought I was not only overdrawing the picture but had real prejudices.

The conversation must have lasted for some two and a half to three hours. Had it not been that my feelings with regard to Anglo-American collaboration were so deep and that I realized how important

it was that he have a proper picture of these people from the outset of his stay in the Embassy in Berlin, I would not have had the ^{patience} ~~courage~~ or the interest to continue when I could sense Phipps' incredulity.

As it became late the conversation ended. Phipps thanked me very courteously for my having talked to him so frankly and so fully. I said to him that I'd been very glad to do it but that I had the feeling that the conversation had not really been as useful as it might have been. When he showed his surprise at the statement, I said that I felt that I had to make this statement because I had the very definite impression that he felt that I was both prejudiced and had overdrawn the picture. I said that I was neither prejudiced in the sense that he thought I was nor had I in any sense overdrawn the picture. Phipps made some courteous remark that he thought that I was rather "hard" in my appreciation of some of these people.

I did not see Phipps for any important conversation after this before we left for Vienna in May to take up my duties there. It was not very long after this conversation that the Bartholomew's day massacre took place in Berlin and other parts of Germany on June 30, 1934. It must have come as a shock to Phipps.

About a year later we were making a visit to Berlin for a few days on our way on a trip to the United States. Phipps heard that I was in the city and he called me on the telephone and asked whether I could come to lunch with him at the Embassy. I told him that unfortunately I could not come to lunch as we were in Berlin so few days and were on our way to the United States, but that I would be very glad to come to see him. I called on him at the British Embassy and Phipps said that he had wanted very much to see me for some time. He had to tell me that when we had the conversation about a year ago, just under reference, that he had thought that I had overdrawn the picture and he had

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found how right I was, not only about the situation but about the individuals whom he had questioned me about, and that I had in no way exaggerated or overdrawn anything. The talk had been most useful and he wanted me to know how much he appreciated it.

I told Phipps that I appreciated very much his taking the pains to tell me this but that I could not refrain from saying that perhaps a good deal of grief would have eventually been saved, both his country and mine, if he had taken a little more seriously at the outset what I and some others who had been living so close to the situation had told him.

/dfa