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February 4, 1939.

Personal

Dear Alan:

I received in due course your note of December 23 with which you sent me a note from Baron Berger-Waldenegg of December 17 which was rather pessimistic. I was just about to reply when I got your note today of January 20 with which you transmitted one from Baron Berger-Waldenegg of January 10. His letter contains the good news that he has been given by Ciano a post as inspector of the foreign branches of the Assicurazioni Generali. This is just the kind of post for which Berger-Waldenegg is fitted and it is the sort of thing that I was looking for for him on behalf of an American firm. I need not tell you, however, how difficult it would have been to get something like that for him with an American firm. I am greatly relieved for I am very fond of him and he is a very fine person. I would appreciate your passing on to him the enclosed note addressed to him.

I note your comment in your letter and I am perhaps a bit more pessimistic concerning the general situation than you are. It seems to me that our friend Il Duce has tied himself up in an awful knot. He is completely in the hands of the Germans and I do not see how he can get out. I do not believe that he has the slightest intention of getting out of Spain. If he doesn't, I can see the Spanish situation bringing on a crisis before long. My own feeling is that the English and French position has a good deal hardened. Certainly the position over here is becoming more clear. The telegrams today indicate almost hysterical criticism in Italy of the President and of our position. It is all so foolish on their part. They may be able to disturb others with words but they will not be able to

overcome

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overcome us either with propaganda or with threats. It may work elsewhere but it only strengthens the position here. I still hold to the original views which I held while I was in Vienna and which you know so well. I think those are the views of responsible people in Government and in the country here generally.

I keep very busy and often wish for a more tranquil life. Mrs. Messersmith joins me in all good wishes. Mrs. Mustard is here with us again and my niece, Anne Layton, is spending some weeks with us.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

A-M:GSM:VNG