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Personal and
Confidential

April 26, 1939.

Dear Mr. Parsons:

If my memory serves me right, I think I spoke to you some months ago concerning the plans which the Departments of State, Commerce and Agriculture had in mind with regard to the consolidation of the Foreign Services of Commerce and Agriculture into that of the Department of State.

I am glad to say that the President yesterday, on the recommendation of the Secretaries of State, Commerce, and Agriculture, gave his approval to the consolidation of the Foreign Services of Commerce and Agriculture into that of State, as a part of the reorganization program under the Reorganization Act. The matter is still confidential and of course will be until the plan is sent to the Congress by the President, which will most likely be on Monday, May 1st. Once the plan is sent to the Congress with the accompanying message from the President, it will be printed and become immediately a public document.

I know of no more constructive step which could be undertaken by our Government under the Reorganization Act than this consolidation of the Foreign Services of Commerce and Agriculture into that of State. The existence of these separate services abroad for Commerce and Agriculture was leading to serious inconveniences in the conduct of our foreign relations, to friction between the Departments in Washington, and between the men in the field, as well as to duplication of effort. This consolidation enables us to present a solid front abroad in our foreign representation and if ever we needed that, we do now.

There will be a number of business men who will probably have the impression that in some way or another
government

Mr. Geoffrey Parsons,
New York Herald-Tribune,
New York, New York.

government is lessening its services to business or to agriculture through this consolidation. The direct contrary is the objective of the plan and with my twenty-five years experience in the foreign field, I can say in every confidence to you that this plan will unquestionably strengthen the position of the government in rendering services abroad to business, to agriculture and to our people in general.

The plan is a very carefully considered one and it is going to the Congress not only with the approval of the President, but with that of the three departments concerned. It has been very carefully worked out over a period of years and it is not something hurriedly thrown together. It is merely applying good business practice to government practice and certainly business cannot criticize government for doing what it would do in business.

The background is very broad of course and, in order to give this background, I have prepared a pamphlet of which I enclose a copy. It looks like a formidable document, but it is not difficult reading. The parts which have been deleted refer to certain committees which already exist and which it did not seem advisable to mention in the reorganization plan as they are not an integral part of the plan. I am also enclosing a brief statement of some of the objectives of the plan. I am unable at this time to send you a copy of the President's message and of the plan as these are confidential until the President sends the plan to the Congress. The essential features of the plan however, are found on pages 47 to 51 of the appended pamphlet.

As this is really a very constructive step and as it is, I believe, one definitely in the public interest, I think it would be highly desirable, and of course very helpful, if you could have someone prepare an editorial commenting on this initiative under the reorganization program. Such an editorial in THE HERALD-TRIBUNE, if it were to appear a day or two after the plan reaches the Congress, would have a great influence throughout the country and would, I believe, do a great deal towards preventing thoughtless adverse criticism of a constructive measure.

I hope you do not mind my writing you about this and I assure you that it would be very helpful indeed

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if you can see your way to do this.

Believe me with every good wish and hoping to have the pleasure of seeing you before long.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

Enclosures:

1. Pamphlet
2. Statement.

P.S. Although I feel quite sure that the President will send this reorganization plan covering consolidation to the Congress on Monday or Tuesday of next week, I believe it would be advisable to await publishing anything either in the editorial or news columns until you know that the President has sent this consolidation plan to the Congress. Once it has been sent down, I believe an editorial will be most helpful as there is always the possibility of purely selfish individuals or pressure groups doing what they can against even so constructive a step as this. I doubt whether there will be any unfavorable criticism but in any event it will be helpful to have constructive analysis rather than purely prejudiced opposition.