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A-M

August 20, 1938

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I take the liberty of drawing your particular attention to Ambassador Kennedy's confidential telegram no. 787 of August 18, of which a copy is attached hereto, in which he recounts a conversation he has just had with the Soviet Ambassador in London in which the Soviet Ambassador expresses what Mr. Kennedy believes to be the views of the Soviet Foreign Office with regard to German objectives. There might be a tendency to minimize the views expressed in this telegram coming as they do from a Soviet Ambassador. I would like to say that in my opinion I believe that the Soviet Ambassador has given a fairly correct view of what the real German objectives are. I base this opinion on my long experience and considerable personal contact with leaders in the present German Government. The objectives which the Soviet Ambassador has attributed to the present German Government accord with those which I have heard high ranking officers of the German Government express to me directly or by implication from time to time.

The emphasis which I believe the Soviet Ambassador places upon the importance of the German objectives in

Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia is not too great. The first part of the comprehensive German program involves domination of Austria and Czechoslovakia so as to open the way to Rumanian oil, without which Germany cannot make war, as well as free access to the raw materials and agricultural products of Southeastern Europe. The first step in the German program is domination of Southeastern Europe as this is necessary if any further progress is to be made. This is the reason why I consider, and have considered for the last four years, that the German objectives in Czechoslovakia are definite and unalterable. If Germany should accept any solution of the Czechoslovak problem which does not give her domination and control of that country her whole program for expansion in any direction is stopped.

As I have indicated, I think the objectives which the Soviet Ambassador has attributed to the German Government are correctly stated from the German Nazi Party point of view. I think he has somewhat underestimated the German interest in the Ukraine in which those German Party leaders whom I have known have always indicated they have a direct interest. I am inclined to think, however, that he is correct that, after accomplishing the aims in Southeastern Europe, the plan of the German Government would be to secure economic and political control of Belgium, Holland and Denmark. This, I think,

think, is the second major objective after the first one in Southeastern Europe would have been accomplished. It is my own view that, once these objectives would have been realized, France and England would be in such a secondary position that Germany in practically every part of the world would be in a position to be either a disturbing or dominant factor except in this hemisphere. It is interesting that the Soviet Ambassador in his conversation with Ambassador Kennedy did not raise the question of the German objectives in the Western Hemisphere concerning which there can in reality be just as little doubt as with respect to those which they have in Europe and in other parts of the world. I think we have already adequately concrete information to indicate how definite their objectives in this hemisphere are.

I have taken the liberty of expressing these views to you at this time again, although I have in my letters during the past few years to you expressed them in a much more complete form, as I am convinced that Czechoslovakia has for Germany a primary importance and that, if she fails in her objectives there, it means a stoppage of her whole program. As the present regime cannot change any of its objectives without its whole program falling down and as the Czechoslovak objective is among all these the most vital, I see no letup

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on the pressure on Czechoslovakia and the danger of war over
this question constantly present and not to be minimized.

G. S. Messersmith.

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