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May 12, 1951.

My dear friend:

I wrote you under date of May 9 and at that time I had not had an opportunity to read Hoffman's book, "Peace Can Be Won", which you were good enough to send me. The heavy cold which I have had has persisted and has kept me in bed for some days longer than I anticipated, and I have been able to catch up with a good many things.

I had the opportunity of reading this morning Hoffman's book, and while he states in the foreword that he is more responsible for the program set forth rather than for the text of the book, I am inclined to think that a good part of the writing may be his as well. I read the book with a good deal of interest, for while I do not know Hoffman personally, I have known of him as a business man for years and have always been somewhat curious concerning him. I must say that on the whole my reading of this book has strengthened my good opinion of him, but it still leaves me in doubt as to the degree to which complete confidence may be placed in his political judgments. I think his book is really an excellent piece of work and he is able to think on broader lines and has a sounder appreciation of some of the major problems than I had believed he had. I find myself so fully in agreement with most of the things which he says, but with several major ideas he sets forth I could not go along.

In the last paragraph on Page 57 he wishes to place too much responsibility and power and to give too much scope to the proposed "Overseas Economic Administration". I am quite sure that his recommendation is made in all good faith, but I am equally confident, out of my long experience in government, that in practice it wouldn't work out. The effect of his recommendation would really be to place the whole conduct of our foreign relations, and in fact the formulation of our foreign policy, in such "Overseas Economic Administration", and whatever may be the weaknesses in the present State Department, Mr. Hoffman's solution would not correct the situation, but aggravate it.

I read with particular interest the chapter on "Can We Win?" and particularly the paragraphs in the first column on Page 84. Mr. Hoffman has much greater faith in something happening within

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J. D. Ferguson, Esquire,
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the Soviet Republics and behind the Iron Curtain than I have and than I believe we can have. The only guide that we have in these things is experience, and the lessons of experience lead us to conclusions which are the complete opposite of those of Mr. Hoffman. I have no confidence whatever in internal events in Soviet Russia removing the menace which it is to the world. It is possible that such a thing as disintegration or collapse could take place in Soviet Russia but we cannot reckon on that. To do so would be to disregard all the lessons of experience. That is why that thinking is dangerous, and that idea of course colors a good deal of Mr. Hoffman's thinking on what we should do all along the line.

I think it is important for us to know what Mr. Hoffman thinks, because he is undoubtedly a brilliant and capable man who is rendering and is capable of rendering great public service. John Foster Dulles is a very good friend of mine and a man of great understanding and competence and in international matters has more experience and greater knowledge than Mr. Hoffman. My confidence in the ultimate judgment of Dulles in some respects concerning the world situation with which we are faced has always been tempered by the knowledge that he is a deeply religious man, and while he is in no sense a pacifist, he has a greater confidence in the good instincts of human beings than my experience permits me to have. I know that there are many good people in the world, but I know that there are more people who are selfish and ruthless.

In other words, my experience in these matters for so many years has made me a complete realist so far as action is concerned, while I remain just as much of an idealist as those who would call me a ruthless realist.

I appreciate very much your sending me this copy of Hoffman's book. I am sure on the whole it will be a very useful contribution to thinking in our country, and the fact that the material is printed and presented in the way it is and in such compact form will, I hope, assure it a wide reading.

With all good wishes to you and your wife from us both,

Cordially and faithfully yours,