

(912) 1
December 18, 1937.

Personal and confidential

Dear Mr. Feldheim:

I have your personal and confidential note of December 17 and you may be sure that I am glad that it has been possible to arrange the question of the visa for Mr. Maiwald.

I have noted with much interest what you say concerning the American Chamber of Commerce in Berlin. During the time that I was in Berlin, I gave this organization very careful study and I found it from our point of view in a very unsatisfactory state. We succeeded in getting, after the greatest difficulty, a rather complete reorganization and I thought we had got it on a sound basis. The procedure to which you refer of having the Aryans and non-Aryans separated at a dinner of the Chamber is, of course, entirely unjustified, improper and should not be tolerated in any organization in which there is any American interest. If such procedure is tolerated in an American organization or one which calls itself American, then something must be done about it. You are, therefore, quite right in calling such procedure un-American.

Your statement that the salary of the Secretary of the American Chamber of Commerce in Berlin is paid by the German Government is of very real importance and one I think we should go into. It is customary, as you know, in Germany for Chambers of Commerce to be considered as official or semi-official organizations. While in this country, of course, they are purely private or business organizations and get no subsidy from the Government. It would not be unusual to get a subsidy

from

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forward

from the Government, but certainly no Chamber of Commerce which calls itself American should get any subsidy from the German Government.

Since you have brought this matter to my attention I feel that it is not only necessary but desirable that the situation should be looked into. It would be helpful to me if you would give me a full account of the dinner at which you say you were present and at which the Aryans and non-Aryans were asked to take seats at separate tables. Perhaps you can give me the date or at least approximate date that this dinner took place and other attendant circumstances which will be helpful. Perhaps you may remember certain persons who were present whose names you could give me. I would be very glad to have you give me any information which you think would be helpful in determining whether any of the expenditures of the Chamber come from the German Government.

I need not tell you that I am considering this correspondence personal and confidential and that in any inquiry which I may have made through official sources there will be no mention whatever of your name or any indication that you have given us any information on this subject.

In view of the increasing propaganda which it appears we have to face and as the times in which we are in are difficult, I think you will have no hesitation in giving me any information which you think may be helpful.

Believe me, with very good wishes,

Cordially and sincerely yours,

G. S. Messersmith

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DAG 31 1937 PM

A-M:GSM:VNG

