

1026
August 25, 1938.

Personal

Dear Hugh:

We were naturally very much interested in Brinkmann's speech before the American Chamber of Commerce in Berlin. Although it seems that Brinkmann made this speech at his initiative by taking the matter up with the officials of the Chamber, I am inclined to believe that Brinkmann himself must have realized that it was a useless gesture. Brinkmann himself is, I believe, a rather solid individual and he should understand our mentality and our situation a little bit better than some of those with whom he is associated. I think he must have realized that his gesture would have little effect. If he intended through it to raise dissension in this country by raising the old question of cotton, et cetera, he was mistaken again in his appreciation of our mentality.

Although you have undoubtedly already seen it, I am sending you herewith the memorandum of the Press Conference for Thursday, August 18, giving the Secretary's comment. As indicative of the fact that Brinkmann's speech and his indirect efforts to raise discussion here in this country had no effect, I am sending you herewith the leading editorial from the Washington Star of August 20. This was characteristic of the editorials which have appeared in the press generally. If a paper, taking the general attitude of the Star, so strongly supports the Secretary's positions, it is, I think, quite significant. You may be interested to know that the speech itself received very little publicity in any part of the press and, what publicity there was, was in the nature of adverse editorial comment. In other words, Brinkmann's speech was not news, but in the

editorial

The Honorable
Hugh R. Wilson,
American Ambassador,
Berlin.

Wilson, Hugh R.

editorial columns the press of every complexion rose to the defense of the Secretary's program and our general commercial policy.

The Trade Agreements program is a settled policy of our Government and I think there are now very few thoughtful people in the country who are not thoroughly behind it. Even though there should be a change of Administration, I doubt whether there would be any change of a basic character in our present commercial policy. I happen to know that at a recent meeting of the Policy Committee of the Republican National Committee, it was decided that it would be unwise to attack the trade agreements program. There is no thought of changing our program in this respect in any detail which would invalidate the program. It is something which we cannot and would not consider. I know that you appreciate all this but I thought you might be interested in these enclosures and this brief comment.

I signed a telegram yesterday authorizing the signing of the contract for the repairs to the Blucher Palace. We are very glad that you were able to make such favorable arrangements for the acquisition of marks for the payment of these repairs and alterations. I suppose this question of the acquisition of marks is in a satisfactory state. It was very well handled. I hope that the repairs and alterations will proceed rapidly so that they will be completed in good time. I think we should make every effort to accelerate them so that you will have no inconvenience whatever in the end. I have seen Larkin since his return and am delighted to know that it has been possible to allocate space of an adequately satisfactory character in the building to all of our establishments. I felt sure that there would be room for everyone except the Treasury Attache, but I was very hopeful that space might be found for him also in the building as this is more satisfactory in Berlin and helps us tremendously in the general problem here when we can assure our people that all of our establishments will be housed in the building.

I am glad to know that you have been able to get a house and hope that you are comfortably settled in it. I need not tell you that we have our hands full here with all kinds of problems.

Cordially and faithfully yours,

Enclosures:
Press Conference;
Clipping.

ApM: GSM: VNG