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AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Berlin, Germany, October 20, 1933.

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SUBJECT:

With reference to the attack on Mr. Samuel B. Bossard in Berlin on August 31.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

Robinson

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 1565 of September 2, reporting the attack on Mr. Samuel B. Bossard, an American citizen, in Berlin on the evening of August 31. The Department is aware that the Foreign Office expressed its formal regrets to the Ambassador in this case as a result of the note which the Embassy had addressed to it. In another despatch I have referred to the fact that when Mr. Bossard arrived in the United States he gave a statement to the press that if any foreigner had difficulties in Germany, it was his own fault. I stated that in a conversation which I had had with Staatssekretaer Dr. Funk in the Ministry of Propaganda I was told by him that before Mr. Bossard left Germany, they had been

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in contact with him and showed him what nice people the Germans really were. I gathered the distinct impression that Mr. Bossard had been by the attentions which he was shown and probably also through pecuniary considerations, influenced to make such a statement regarding conditions on his arrival in the United States.

In view of the foregoing therefore it is not surprising that the Foreign Office in its note of October 12, 1933, to the Embassy, in reviewing the investigation made by them of the Bossard case, concludes that "regrettable as the event in itself is, the statements of the complainant regarding the behavior of the policemen at the scene of occurrence do not appear to be borne out by the facts, according to the above findings". I do not believe in view of the recent satisfactory action by the German authorities in the cases of the attacks on Mr. Velz and Dr. Melvihill, that we should take any further action with regard to the Bossard case, which in view of its note of October 12 above mentioned the Foreign Office obviously considers closed. As Mr. Bossard himself has made such a statement of satisfactory conditions in Germany on his arrival at home, I believe that from our point of view there is nothing to be gained by making further representations or

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insisting on any further action in this case.

I do believe, however, it is necessary for the records of the Department to indicate that the investigation made by the State Secret Political Police was very complete. As Hitlerjugend, however, were involved in the attack, and as the authorities are almost as jealous of the prestige of the Hitlerjugend as of that of the S.A., it seems quite clear that so far as the regular police were concerned their object was to clear themselves and to bring no action against the offenders. My conversations with the heads of the Secret Police showed that he was in earnest with regard to this case. He wished to find not only the assailants, but also the policemen who according to Mr. Bossard witnessed the attack and took no action. I happen to have heard some of the conversations which Dr. Diels had ^{with} the police officers in charge of the two police stations in the district of which the attack had taken place, and I could see the difficulties which he would have in getting any results in fixing responsibility. It was clear that the police lieutenants in charge of the two stations concerned were afraid to make any report ~~with fixed~~ ^{but} responsibility, and that in spite of the desires of the head of the State Secret Police to take action he was balked by the silence or misinformation which he received,

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but which misinformation it was impossible to controvert. I am merely transmitting this statement for the purpose of indicating that in spite of the tenor of the note of the Foreign Office and the statement made by Mr. Bossard to the press, the attack on Mr. Bossard was a serious one and the circumstances were undoubtedly as recited in his affidavit made at this Consulate General, of which the Department has a copy, and which was executed the morning after the attack before he had been approached by the agents of the Ministry of Propaganda and shown the extraordinary courtesies which were given him.

So far as the Consulate General is concerned the case is therefore considered as closed, unless the Department considers further action necessary. As I believe it will be impossible to get further action so far as actually finding the offenders is concerned, I believe that in view of other satisfactory developments the case may be considered as definitely closed.

Respectfully yours,

George S. Messersmith,
American Consul General.

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GSM:HP

