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Vienna, December 6, 1935.

Dear Dunn:

The letter which I am sending you herewith on the Austrian and general situations is rather long, but you may find it interesting. I understand that Mr. Phillips went to London with our delegation and I hope it will prove a pleasant change for I am sure you must all be having long and difficult days in the Department. I think you are all doing a great job and I am tremendously pleased with the attitude we are taking.

I would be glad if the Secretary could find time to see parts of this letter which I am sending you herewith and perhaps you will be good enough to mark those parts which you think would interest him most.

I am sending you herewith a clipping from the LONDON TIMES which you may wish to read at your leisure, as it will give you a little sidelight on Hanfstaengl whose case against the DAILY EXPRESS was up some time ago. Whatever the verdict of the Court may be, Hanfstaengl will be sure to get little satisfaction or prestige out of it. He is trying very hard to re-establish himself in favor in Berlin.

Keith Merrill was here to look over the house in which I live and which I have recommended to the Department we should buy. I am very much pleased that the Department included Vienna in his itinerary. He was pleased with the house and agreed that we should buy it. The purchase price of the house itself is $56,600 and Merrill is recommending that we purchase it and set aside $100,000 for purchase, repairs and alterations, and furnishing. I think you will agree that if we can get a first class permanent home for our Ministers here at a total cost of $100,000 we will be doing an excellent job, and I can assure you that there will be no kicks from anybody about this house. It is equally adapted for the use of a Minister with no family or with a large family, as well as for a chief of mission who has very ample means or one who has to live within his official income.

James C. Dunn, Esquire
Chief, Western European Division,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

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It is really an unusual opportunity and one which we will not have again here. If we do not take this opportunity we will buy anyway in the next few years and get something not so good and pay two or three times as much. The important thing is that we buy now for if we do not we lose this opportunity. The Egyptians are ready to buy it any day and to pay cash, and they have been asked a somewhat larger price than we. I have been able to get a respite until January 15. Merrill says he will recommend to the Department and to the Commission that we buy, but if the money has to be gotten from Congress it will take time and I think we will lose the house, for the owner will not be able to wait as he has a sure purchaser in the Egyptians. Merrill seems to think that the Commission has some money which might be made available for this purchase and I think he was so convinced of the desirability of the purchase that he is going to recommend that available funds be used. This, I think, is very important and I hope that this is what will be done. If you can help the purchase along in any way it will be a splendid thing. The Commission will meet, I understand, early in January and its action then will be decisive. The important thing is that available funds should be used so that we will not miss the opportunity.

My wife joins me in wishing you and Mrs. Dunn and your daughter a very happy Christmas and a New Year filled with all good things.

Cordially yours,

George S. Messersmith.

Enclosure:
1. Clippings from the TIMES